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**Report to:** Police Authority  
**Date:** 8 December 2021  
**Subject:** Chief Constable's Report  
**Sponsor:** Chief Constable  
**For:** Information

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## 1. Purpose of report

1.1 The Chief Constable's report brings to the attention of Members of the Police Authority, items that the Chief Constable wishes the Authority to note.

## 2. Operational Context

2.1 Recorded crime year to date (30,628) is 32% less than 2019-20 levels (44,804). With the release of all lockdown restrictions on the 19 July, it was expected that crime would increase. However, crime levels have remained steady, close to 2019-20 weekly figures. Other points of interest include:

- Positive outcomes for 2021/22 have increased by 1.2% when compared to the same period last year.
- The number of active investigations has increased over the last few months with the bulk sitting in over 6 months category (3,637), lower than in previous months.
- Those issued bail has doubled since August, with 72% (302) issued within the past 30 days or less, similar % to previous months.
- Those released under investigation has increased slightly since August
- Victim charter compliance is currently sitting at 84%, slightly lower than what was seen in the summer (88%)
- Year to date, the 24hr crime recording level is at 81% (-9% off target) & the 72hr crime recording is at 91% (-4% off target).

2.2 There have been a number of notable incidents which have taken place since my last note:

- On Sunday 31 October 2021 a major incident was declared following a train collision between two trains (GWR & SWR) in Salisbury. Thankfully, there were no fatalities and casualty figures were low with 30 being assessed at the scene and 16 being conveyed to hospital for medical attention. Sadly, the SWR train driver remains in hospital having received life changing injuries. BTP took primacy for the incident and my thanks go to ACC Sean O'Callaghan and his team for taking the lead on coordinating the response across an array of emergency service and industry partners enabling the hand back of the site to NWR on the 6th November. The recovery operation and investigation at site remained challenging throughout the incident, with carriages and lifting creating unique challenges for engineering teams, search officers and investigators. This was my first Major Incident as Chief Constable

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at BTP, and I was hugely impressed by the way we took control of the scene and the specialist skills that were on display. For me this illustrated the unique and vital role BTP has to play in responding to incidents such as these across the rail network.

- The UN COP26 Climate Change summit took place in Glasgow from 31 October – 13 November 2021. It was the largest ever security mobilisation in UK history with 8,000 police personnel assigned. This included mutual aid assets seconded to Police Scotland by means of a Police Support Unit (PSU), Specialist Response Units (SRU) and Explosive Search Dogs (ESD) in addition to the BTP operation which included public order, search, dogs, working at heights and protestor removal teams. The whole commitment totalled 300 BTP officers/staff. In support of the 'green' credentials for the event, the rail network was used extensively by delegates and officials. 4,000 delegates each day used the rail network to attend the conference. 46 escorted train journeys involving the Royal Family, Cabinet Ministers and Foreign Dignitaries were undertaken by the Special Movements team during this 2 week period. These included HRH Prince of Wales, the Prime Minister and the Mayor of London.
- Operation Tungsten was a collaborative County Lines deployment for four weeks in October around Basingstoke and was designed to assess the impact of intensive, fixed location deployment, on local drug supply. Operational tactics were varied, but the town benefited from a constant, visible police presence for the duration. The operational outputs for BTP included; 17 arrests, 10 drug/9 weapon seizures and 10 safeguarding interventions. The Policing Minister was personally briefed at the conclusion of the operation and expressed an interest in expanding the approach into other regions.

2.3 We are also progressing our efforts to unify safety and security across the network through developing a pilot to test a more collaborative and integrated policing and security model, led by the Network Policing portfolio. The pilot will seek to demonstrate that an integrated approach to security in a major public space provides a clear purpose and common aims to a presently fragmented model. This should have a variety of benefits such as a positive effect upon passenger and staff confidence, performance, joint-working arrangements, intelligence sharing and public and stakeholder satisfaction. The concept has been subject of discussion informally with industry figures with a stake in key hub environments, and a set of key stations have been identified as pilot sites. The plan is now to convene an early meeting with industry stakeholder colleagues and to progress towards a Programme Board.

2.4 As part of our strategy to combat sexual offences and unwanted sexual behaviour on the rail network, following joint work with the White Ribbon Alliance, the Force has successfully secured White Ribbon accreditation by demonstrating an on-going commitment to tackling VAWG. White Ribbon is a charity which is committed to ending male violence against women and girls

and encourages workplaces, organisations, and communities to raise awareness and say 'no' to violence against women and girls. The Force formally announced the accreditation on 'International Day to End Violence Against Women' (25/11/21) and is presently undertaking 16 days of action which includes national activity with industry partners to promote the campaign. As an organisation we must ensure that our accreditation stands up to scrutiny. I want those that wear the ribbon to understand the depth of the issue, and importantly, how to support a colleague if they are approached. To do this we will be rolling out specific training, after which, the white ribbon will be awarded. A summary of further activity being taken to tackle VAWG is contained within a separate report which I have also submitted to this Authority meeting.

- 2.5 Overall there have been 166 suspected suicides across the rail network with an additional 59 injurious attempts. The number of lifesaving interventions has increased to 1,450 compared with 1,279 in the last performance year whilst the number of S136/297 detentions stands at 976. These figures continue to highlight the need for continuing collaboration across emergency services, the rail industry and government to deepen our understanding of potential mitigation measures to safeguard those most at risk.
- 2.6 We continue to work with partners in an effort to prevent loss of life and improve our response to incidents of suicide on the network. These remain complex and unpredictable, which is why, in our role as the NPCC lead for Suicide prevention across all forces, in April we introduced an ambitious intelligence collection pilot that aimed to collate non-personalised suspected suicide information from 45 police forces across the UK. This is crucial to develop a more accurate national intelligence base upon which appropriate suicide prevention strategies can be developed. This pilot has involved BTP working with partners including UK Health Security Agency and Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (formally Public Health England/Wales), Department of Health and Social Care, and Local Suicide Prevention groups. The pilot has now achieved a national picture covering 93% of the population of suspected suicides that have occurred between April 2021 and October 2021 with the outstanding 7% being anticipated to be achieved in early 2022. It is believed that this is the most timely and accurate intelligence picture that has ever been achieved across the UK. This work has prompted consideration of how we approach performance in relation to suicide and disruption to ensure a truer reflection of the actual impact such tragic incidents have on our communities.

### **3. Challenges**

#### **3.1 Manchester Arena Inquiry**

A verbal update will be provided.

#### **3.2 London Estate**

Work progresses on rationalising our London Estate. A board has been established to monitor the program and a steering group including TfL partners to review the consolidation options. Our focus has been upon two options - Belgravia Police Station and Palestra – however, the MPS have revised the offer to BTP/TfL for the lease of Belgravia and, following independent analysis, this may not be a financially viable option. Despite this setback, our Estates team continue to work with TfL on various options and have also approached other industry partners to identify other potential options as we are conscious that, in order to meet our exit date of mid-summer 2024, a decision on the location needs to be reached by the end of December 2021.

#### **3.3 County Lines**

The County Lines Taskforce (CLTF) has performed strongly throughout 2021 and this business year to date, it has been responsible for 347 arrests, 359 drug seizures, the recovery of 95 weapons and it has made 18 referrals concerning modern slavery, where vulnerability concerns have been identified. The CLTF's primary focus remains tackling the exploitation of children and vulnerable adults, used to move commodities across the railway network. It is understood that approximately 20% of those involved in County Lines nationally are children, but for BTP, this figure is closer to 40% and we therefore have worked hard with partners to keep safeguarding at the top of our priorities. However, the CLTF is presently only grant-funded by the Home Office until March 2022. A Spending Review bid to extend its existence to March 2025 has been submitted to the Home Office and, although there are tentative indications this will proceed, formal agreement has not yet been received and a lack of funding presents a potential risk to the future of the CLTF.

### **4. Changes**

4.1 Looking back on the past few months, the Force has seen changes from the strategic to the tactical detail:

4.2 On the 4th of October I presented our new vision - A Force on the move - to our senior leadership team clearly setting out our ambition to increase our sphere of influence in rail and beyond, so we're recognised for our specialist skills and the value we add to keeping people safe on the rail network. The vision centers on upon four key priorities:

- Being focused on the future
- Creating a modern and inclusive place to work
- Pioneering a new generation of partnerships
- Optimising our service delivery

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We have subsequently undertaken force-wide engagement to outline this vision, and I am pleased to say that we have received some 220 feedback reports from teams across the force. Encouragingly, the feedback has been positive and recognises the need for continuous and agile change in the face of ever evolving challenges.

- 4.3 In October I agreed to a review of our shift roster trialling a 6 days on, 4 days off approach in an effort to assess the performance and productivity benefits of such a potential change and, crucially, understanding its impact upon morale and wellbeing. Alongside liaison with the Police Federation and TSSA, we are in the process of working through the finer detail of the trial prior to undertaking a formal consultation in December with a view to undertaking implementation in February 2022.
- 4.4 We have taken a robust position on the issue of the payment of accrued annual leave as this has traditionally presented a notable financial outlay and is not a sustainable or ethical way for us to operate nor does it support our commitment to officer wellbeing. Working closely with the BTP Federation, Superintendents' Association and TSSA over the last few months we are encouraging proper and full use of time off and only authorizing the payments for outstanding leave in exceptional circumstances.
- 4.5 The Technology Team continue to make improvements in updating our IT provision and providing us all with a better user experience. Since June, the Technology Team has issued nearly 600 new laptops to new starters and to replace broken devices. A further 72 laptops are being piloted at various locations. The new laptops are proving to be a crucial enabler for our teams – allowing users to log in three times faster than before. To support this work and the broader development of IT services we have commissioned a peer review, conducted by the MPS, to gain an independent view on where our opportunities and risks lie and how these should be addressed.
- 4.6 It is three months since we launched the DataHub, providing quick access to our data in a simple and easy-to-digest way. Data is refreshed at least once a day, enabling more effective and efficient planning of patrols, providing consistent data for stakeholder meetings and the latest performance and crime trends using evidence to enhance decision-making. It launched with the top ten most significant reports as agreed by the Force - and an additional dashboard has since been added for Intelligence Tasking.
- 4.7 An exciting and important project has been commissioned to explore how we can be the first Force nationwide to become fully electric across our fleet - which would be a real step forward in reducing our carbon footprint.

## **5. People**

### **5.1 Recruitment**

We have launched a new police officer recruitment campaign focused on increasing applicant numbers from underrepresented groups. Paid adverts are live on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, directly targeting females and people from ethnic minorities. We are utilising social media channels, such as

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TikTok, Twitter and Instagram; a video was shared on Facebook and LinkedIn, and the roles are live on our new presence on the Working Mums website. I've been interviewed for a video about my career and a number of LGBTQI+ colleagues were profiled in an editorial in Diva magazine. We continue to make use of social, and national, media channels to demonstrate our progress to date and our desire to attract a diverse workforce. Many of our people have shared their stories both internally, and externally, bravely encouraging others to follow in their footsteps.

The third week of November is national CPD week and we have been running a series of learning events for colleagues on topics as wide ranging as mental health, imposter syndrome, male domestic abuse and bringing forensic science to bear on identifying jewellery. All sessions have been virtual, enabling participation from across a number of partner forces, in addition to our own people. Feedback has been very positive.

## 5.2 Employee Support Associations

Early in November I had the opportunity to spend time with representatives from our 12 Employee Support Associations in Cardiff. Their work is vital in helping us build a modern and inclusive workplace, so it's important to provide an opportunity for them to come together to plan and collaborate. The day saw an excellent programme of speakers from policing, stakeholders from rail, health and wellbeing, and recognised diversity experts. Topics included allyship, the role of the BTPA in promoting inclusion and diversity and understanding the menopause and its impact.

## 5.3 Senior Personnel Changes

Alistair Sutherland took up his post as DCC on the 8<sup>th</sup> of November joining us from the City of London Police. Alistair brings with him 26 years of policing experience and a wide-ranging set of skills which I know will be of significant benefit to the force. He has already taken the opportunity to get out and about across the Force to meet colleagues and getting to grips the challenges and opportunities.

Caroline Sparks has been appointed as the Head of Technology, following the departure of Sonja Browning-Page. I am confident Caroline will bring her strong leadership skills to bear in rebuilding the morale of the team and developing a customer service ethos.

## 5.4 Recognition

I was delighted to host 3 separate Long Service and Good Conduct Ceremonies in November and December recognising the hard work a dedication of 41 officers, 2 Special Constables and 11 members of police staff. At a time where it is particularly difficult to work within policing these events are important to acknowledge the quality of service which our people consistently deliver with courage, compassion, care and professionalism.

REPORT ENDS