

Meeting	Police and Crime Panel
Date	2 December 2020
Report Title	Update on organisational impact of COVID 19
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## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To provide a brief update on the organisational impact of COVID 19 on Wiltshire Police, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and victim services, since the previous Police and Crime Panel (PCP) on 3 September 2020.

## **2.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

2.1 At the request of the PCP chair, this paper provides a short update of the organisational changes to enable effective and efficient delivery of across the Force, the OPCC and victim service providers. This report focuses on the mitigation and changes put in place organisationally. To avoid duplication, other impacts such as performance, risk and policing policy are not included within this summary.

## **3.0 WILTSHIRE POLICE AND OPCC**

3.1 The joint organisational approach to deliver COVID recovery and response has continued to be refined with frequency and timescales adjusted to match the level of the pandemic. Recognising the cross-over with both response and recovery work required, both response and recovery work has continued in tandem.

3.2 All GOLD, SILVER and BRONZE structures remain in place to manage response elements and recovery (Restart) continues covering:

- Organisation;
- Operations, Community and Partnerships;
- Learning and Innovation;
- Finance and Efficiency and;
- Communications and engagement.

3.3 Highlights of this work include:

- Information is collected daily on both workforce's sickness, (COVID and other, incl. self-isolation)

- Frontline policing delivery remains largely unchanged operating from CPT hubs and police estate. Implementing COVID legislation and regulations continues to be a key part of response work
- Surge contingency plans have been developed to ensure the force can continue to deliver critical functions if COVID reduces deployable officers and staff
- PPE supplies continue to be in place and used at anticipated levels
- COVID related enforcement is reviewed by senior officers to ensure actions are appropriate, proportionate.
- Reviewed and implementing plans to return CCC operations to a single site at HQ
- Police estate is COVID secure with mandatory use of facemasks in police estate and vehicles
- Organisational understanding of which enabling, and support services must be delivered on police estate in preparation for future restriction e.g. elements of staff training
- All other services continue to be delivered from home. Utilising the benefit of agile technology and ICT. The ongoing roll-out of National Enabling Programme Laptops increases this functionality with MS Teams.
- Whilst from a productivity perspective technology has ensured that service delivery continues, the limited social and work contact has impacted health and wellbeing.
- Staff who have an identified occupational health need have been accommodated in police estate, with appropriate COVID secure settings
- The wellbeing strategy is being reviewed to consider COVID impact, risks and mitigations
- Both the OPCC and Force have agreed revised business principles in response to working days losing structure and many staff spending long hours on screens. These practical changes include length, frequency and timings of meetings and ensuring appropriate breaks. These principles have been shared with other organisations locally and across policing.
- Temporary suspension of internal Force governance boards moving to exception reporting during response period to allow enabling services to balance support with response and BAU. The OPCC governance mechanism, assurance and joint planning work continues.
- Health and wellbeing continue to be a priority, recognising the impact of isolation, reduction in face-to-face contact and office setting can have on mental and physical health
- Both the benefits and challenges of working from home have been raised by staff through internal surveys and focus group work. This informs the work of both response and recovery.
- The OPCC and Force have developed a shared organisational blueprint to understand, develop and embed the learning and benefits as a result of COVID, whilst balancing against the gap and challenges identified.
- A significant amount of this relates to future workforce offer, employer offer (health and wellbeing support, agile working and use of technology), employment policies and staff feedback on benefits and challenges. This work will continue throughout 2021 as longer-term implications of COVID and working practices in the wider economy change.
- Wiltshire has been part of the HMICFRS national inspection on response to COVID. This will form part their national report. The informal feedback has been very positive, with Wiltshire providing outstanding work and areas of best practice for policing.

#### **4.0 VICTIMS SERVICES**

- 4.1 Performance management of these services continue in the OPCC with regular contractual and informal meetings with providers. Victim services continue to be determined as essential services. The impact of COVID in the first half of 2020 resulted in adaptation in delivering services and continues to pose challenges due to uncertainty with demand from victims.
- 4.2 Where possible, services have developed alternative approaches utilising online delivery where face-to-face group work was previously provided. This is not suitable for all support,

so all providers meet COVID secure requirements in their buildings and any face-to-face support in the community.

- 4.3 Progress through the Criminal Justice continues to impact on the level of demand in victim services (WCJB update circulated to PCP for information). Backlogs created in early 2020 mean victim caseloads increased and some services have seen increased referrals e.g. domestic abuse.
- 4.4 The PCC has agreed an additional staff member in Horizon Victims and Witness to meet the additional demand caused by CJS delays.
- 4.5 The extraordinary funding of £302,000 for victim services was provided by the Ministry of Justice and administered by the OPCC in August 2020 until November to mitigate the immediate risks to third sector providers and to meet additional demand. The Ministry of Justice has just announced an allocation of further additional funding of £180,000 to support victim services until March 2020.
- 4.6 All services are performing well and frequent monitoring, risk management and performance management is completed to ensure services continue to be provided during COVID.