

APCC General Meeting Minutes: Thursday May 27 2021:

Item 1: Welcome from the APCC Vice Chair and minutes of the last meeting:

- Roger Hirst (RH), the Vice Chair of the APCC, welcomed new and returning PCC colleagues to the APCC General Meeting, and congratulated them on their recent successes in the PCC Elections. He provided a brief update on proceedings for the meeting.
- RH reflected that PCCs can influence both community safety in their own elected area and also nationally through working together with the APCC, and it was important that the APCC is perceived as the body representing all police governance. APCC General Meetings are an opportunity for members to come together and discuss and progress current issues and common concerns.
- The minutes of the last meeting (20.1.21-21.1.21) were agreed as a true and accurate record. KB asked for 2 additions to be made to the business crime section relating to the 'Keeping Christmas Kind' campaign and the opportunity for PCCs to go back later in the year to the HASC to provide evidence on retail crime.

Item 2: Welcome from the Home Secretary – Rt Hon Priti Patel MP:

- The Home Secretary, Priti Patel, congratulated PCCs on their success in the May election. She noted the PCC role is a critical one in addressing challenges / opportunities and in delivering for the public.
- The Home Secretary noted the positive news on County Lines, with over 1,000 arrests nationwide last week. This demonstrated the government's focus on cutting crime / restoring confidence in the CJS. The Police Uplift Programme (PUP) had also recruited 8,771 more police officers and forces are feeling strengthened and supported – not just with financial backing for policing but because of the strong commitment from the government to cutting crime and delivering for the public.
- The Home Secretary noted it will be important to demonstrate how the PUP investment is reducing crime. The Home Office is introducing national measures to demonstrate delivery and PCCs have a key role as leaders in guiding and supporting their police forces, including delivery against the national priorities:
 - Reducing murder and other homicide
 - Reducing serious violence
 - Disrupting drugs supply and county lines
 - Reducing neighbourhood crime
 - Tackling cyber crime
 - Improving satisfaction among victims.
- The Home Secretary particularly highlighted the importance of support for victims – and victims of domestic abuse in particular - and the PCCs role in local provision of victims' services. Democratic accountability is key, and government recognises the importance of the local priorities reflected in Police and Crime Plans. This approach must be based on data and evidence, and PCCs help to ensure this via their scrutiny role. Government, PCCs and others are 'one team' supporting policing and the CJS – the Home Secretary's door is 'always open' and she encourages PCCs to raise issues and concerns with her.
- The Home Secretary then highlighted some key crimes of concern.

Anti-Social Behaviour – This is a big part of the Home Secretary's postbag, as it is for PCCs, and as reflected in Police and Crime Plans; it blights lives and is often linked to drugs. Many PCCs are committed to putting more police patrols on the streets to reduce ASB, which she supports. It is also important to support community development and increase 'pride in place'.

Drugs – Drugs lie behind much crime and ASB. The Home Secretary said they were linked to half of homicides and acquisitive crimes. The government will come down hard on recreational drug use which fuels markets that exploit the vulnerable. The Home Secretary heralded 'brilliant' work on County Lines and the 'whole systems' work being developed via the government's investment in Project Adder.

VAWG – Violence against women and girls is a big priority, and PCCs will hear more about this in the months ahead, including the findings of the end-to-end rape review. We need to get to grips with digital/technologically enabled abuse and to take a tougher approach on sentencing.
- As PCCs develop their Police and Crime Plans they will be thinking about how to deliver on these priorities locally and the Home Secretary is keen to hear back on good practice and what's working. On CT and SOC, the Home Secretary highlighted the impact of Operation Venetic. A CT Operations Centre will ensure forces are aware of threats and have the resources to deal with them. On the Police Uplift Programme (PUP) the Home Secretary highlighted the once in a generation opportunity to recruit future leaders from diverse backgrounds.
- Finally, the Home Secretary highlighted the importance of working as a team across the policing family, with PCCs a key part of that team. She updated on the work on the PCC Review: Delivery of Part 1 is under

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way and Part 2 will be launched shortly; the government looks forward to engaging with PCCs and the APCC on this.

- There followed a Q and A session.

Q & A:

- **Roger Hirst (Essex):** Looked forward to continuing to deliver PUP and highlighted the importance of crime prevention and not just detection, with PCCs ideally placed to deliver on prevention locally.

Response: The Home Secretary strongly supported the need for prevention and the importance of developing evidence-based practice.

- **Stephen Mold (Northamptonshire):** Welcomed commitment on the CJS, while noting the impact of backlogs on victims and witnesses. Can the Home Secretary continue to raise this with the Attorney General/MoJ Ministers?

Many PUP recruits are relatively young and inexperienced. Could the Home Secretary look at other pathways into policing other than the degree route to attract people with life experience?

Response: The Home Secretary will continue to highlight issues with the CJS, recognising that backlogs corrode confidence and lead to victim attrition. Magistrates are working through cases and addressing backlogs. PCCs should look for opportunities to pull the regional CPS into discussion with policing early on; there is a lot of discussion of this challenge through the national Crime and Justice Taskforce, which is chaired by the PM. If there are issues locally, then she encouraged PCCs to also let the Home Office know so these could be picked up nationally, noting there is work to do to develop good data nationally, including on courts. The government has tasked the system to pull data and information together to provide an overview and pick out regional differences.

On police officers, experience and life skills are important, and retention is important e.g. looking at changes in pension arrangements to keep people in the service. The College of Policing is being reviewed and the Home Secretary encouraged PCCs/the APCC to feed into this. The College needs to deliver for policing in the 21st century, with investment in the right professional pathways and career development.

- **Kim McGuinness (Northumberland):** Anti-social behaviour is the number one priority for many communities, and there is a lot of frustration that police, local government, and others are not more joined up in their approach. Could the Home Secretary raise this with MHCLG Ministers, noting the potential role for PCCs given their convening powers?

Response: The Home Secretary agreed that this was a problem, we need a system wide approach. It is frustrating for the public where they feel the local authority could do more to for example tidy up an area or address fly tipping and they do not understand why they do not work with the police to support that.

- **John Campion (West Mercia):** Welcomed the Home Secretary's priorities, and particularly the vision on VAWG, but noted the biggest killer in West Mercia is the roads. How would this be addressed?

Response: Road traffic deaths should be picked up via the national policing priorities, for example where deaths are linked to dangerous driving; and with roads getting busier again it was important to raise awareness around preventing road deaths, including focussing on hotspots.

- **Katy Bourne (Sussex):** Thanked the Home Secretary for the investment in VAWG, in Sussex a normal spend was £1.5 million a year but had spent £3.4 million this year – more than twice as much - and this was delivering huge benefits. Sussex is also working to encourage people to report business crime, it is important that it is understood that if the figures go up as a result that this is not because of an increase in offending. *(See below for response)*

- **Jeff Cuthbert (Gwent):** Welcomed the emphasis on victims and VAWG, noting that in Wales the key partners were devolved, so it would be a different model. It is important that there was a commitment from both governments to work together to ensure equivalence of service and response in England and Wales. *(See below for response)*

- **Festus Akinbusoye (Bedfordshire):** Highlighted the importance of a narrative on prevention and proactive and not just reactive policing, as this would reassure local residents. *(See below for response)*

- **Donna Jones (Hampshire):** Highlighted the importance of prevention and the need to work with the DfE to prevent young people being drawn into crime in the first place, with drugs a key concern. *(See below for response)*

Response to KB, JC, FA and DJ: The Home Secretary replied there would be more from the government on direction of travel on crime in the summer, including a commitment on communities and the importance of working together as one system to deliver safety for the public. Prevention must be at the heart of the approach and relying on the CJS is not sustainable – locking people up tends to create a vicious circle. We must bring together policing, the CJS, local government, social services and other partners and localise this approach.

The Home Secretary took note of KB's point about improved reporting of crimes being misinterpreted as showing more crime. We need to work together to explain why numbers are going up and provide a narrative for media and public understanding of the figures. On data and evidence there is a need to improve consistency so let us work together to capture and share good practice and streamline data

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capture and presentation.

- RH thanked the Home Secretary for an excellent presentation and for her generosity with her time and her response to the PCCs' questions.

Item 3: APCC Board update – PFCC Roger Hirst:

- RH updated PCCs on some of the big issues affecting the sector including Part 2 of the PCC Review; a Review of the College of Policing Review which will involve PCCs; and the publication of a White Paper on fire reform.
- The APCC is currently working with legal advisors to update / amend the Articles of Association for the APCC to reflect the changes in membership as a result of the recent elections. Any changes will be consulted upon across members prior to the APCC AGM in July, where there will be a vote taken on the revised Articles.
- Business as usual is being progressed through group leads, with the 3 remaining APCC Board members (RH, KB and Simon Duckworth) seeking to appoint 1 Labour rep in order to allow the Board to be quorate and deliver on BAU. This will only be for a time-limited period until the July AGM where the new Board will be voted in.
- RH thanked PCC colleagues for their interest in the national portfolios. Alun Michael, PCC for South Wales and current Labour interim lead thanked RH and Paddy Tipping, the previous Chair of the APCC and PCC for Nottinghamshire, for their work on police finances with the NPCC. RH thanked Mark Burns-Williamson, Julia Mulligan, Michael Lane and other former PCCs for their previous contributions to APCC work.

Item 4: Welcome & keynote from the Policing Minister – Rt Hon Kit Malthouse MP:

- The Policing Minister, Kit Malthouse, congratulated PCCs on their success in the May elections. After the 'heat' of the elections, he encouraged PCCs to come together as a group with a common focus on driving down the numbers of victims of crime.
- The last 12 months had been challenging, but they had also helped develop a more collaborative approach, bringing APCC/PCCs, the Home Office, NPCC and others together. The Minister had enjoyed update meetings with PCCs and wanted to build on these going forward. It is important to respect the mandate from local communities, but also to build a shared sense of common purpose.
- The Minister stressed the importance of getting the 'tone' of the relationship between PCCs and Chiefs/ Forces right from the start, with the right balance between challenge and support. He highlighted some key areas of focus:
 1. *Police Uplift Programme:* The PUP is going remarkably well, with numbers approaching 9,000. PCCs have a critical role in delivering 20,000 in the next 18 months. He noted some aspire beyond this number, which is welcome, but there is a need to recognise the pressures created on the system i.e. new recruits need to be welcomed, supported, and trained. The duty to recruit extends well beyond welcoming new police officers at the parade; the first 24 months is critical for retention. We need to take advantage of PUP to increase diversity and forces should 'strain every sinew' to reach under-represented communities; to shift 'diversity' of 'stock' we need to outperform on 'flow'. The government will support local work on diversity e.g. through data monitoring and national advertising.
 2. *Crime:* When KM became Policing Minister he attended meetings of both the APCC and NPCC and noted that crime did not figure on the agenda – he hoped that the challenge on this has provided a 'wake up' call. PCCs should be curious about crime, with a questioning approach. PCCs need to know where crime hotspots are; crime tends to concentrate in some areas – by addressing 'hotspots' we can impact on violent and acquisitive crime. Analysis of policing practice shows that successful interventions often have a sharp geographical focus. The Minister encouraged PCCs to consider (for example) the work of Alex Murray at the Society of Evidence Based Policing (e.g. the You Tube video [here](#))
 3. *Drugs:* Drugs play a huge part in crime – both violent and acquisitive, and in retail settings. The government is committed to eradicating County Lines and is making progress, but it is a '2 steps forward, 1 step back' process. 'Exporting' areas are doing some great policing work with 'importing' areas. For example, in Norfolk over 100 lines have been cut to 13 lines via collaborative work with the Met. In Kent County Lines have been halved from 80 to 40.
- It is not just about enforcement – the government is investing in Operation Adder projects, bringing partners together to focus on tackling drugs – including prevention and treatment. The government hopes to expand this work soon, with PCCs able to play a key role through their convening powers. The PCSC Bill also includes a duty to prevent serious violence for other local agencies such as health and local authorities. Finally, the Minister noted that the Safer Streets Fund was having a good impact on crime – the government hoped to launch Round 3 soon, with a focus on VAWG.
- There followed a time of Q and A.

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Q & A:

- Alun Michael (South Wales):** Welcomed an evidence-led approach and noted that it was more difficult to build evidence on prevention. During Covid-19, policing has had to respond to events (e.g. in Swansea) that were unexpected/not predictable. Would work be undertaken to look at this experience and develop understanding of how we respond to these kinds of events?

Response: With 70%-80% of crimes we can have a good guess at 'who', 'what' and 'where' and our intelligence should be telling us what is coming (e.g. we know every murderer has an average of 7 previous convictions). We need to shift focus towards prevention: our aim should be less victims of crime not more people caught or in prison.
- Sophie Linden (MOPAC):** Welcomed the focus on drugs, and highlighted work in London funded via MOPAC to rescue and support young people out of County Lines. How can we get and sustain a national service that offers this support? It is important that the serious violence duty properly covers VAWG and not only street violence. There is a need for sustainable funding for VRUs and other key initiatives.

Response: The safeguarding aspect is critical, and government does need to look at sustainable funding for work with young people – 12 months is not enough. The Minister is hopeful for a multi-year Spending Review in 2021. While the recent impact on County Lines is great, it needs to be sustained – the successes last week followed 16 months of sustained effort – personally, the Minister would not support 'crack downs' or 'blitzes' unless they were part of a sustainable solution to the problem.
- Simon Foster (West Midlands):** Home Office funding for violence reduction/county lines has not yet been received, with the West Midlands currently underwriting £1.4 million, meaning services cannot make referrals, prevention work is paused, and there is management uncertainty. Could the Minister say when the West Midlands will receive this funding?

Response: The Minister would take this up with officials and get back to the PCC.
- John Campion (West Mercia):** Has the Minister been successful in getting Chief Constables to focus on crime reduction? Did he think the THRIVE approach could be a barrier to engaging with prevention?

Response: The Minister hopes so. He has agreed with police on a national performance monitoring system enabling sharing of comparative performance in crime reduction. He also noted a generational shift in Chief Officers, bringing new perspectives that could help to push change.
- Donna Jones (Hampshire):** Highlighted concerns about the CJS response to VAWG, and the need to improve rape reporting, prosecution, and conviction. She would drive this locally as chair of LCJB; it also needs to be driven nationally through the Crime and Justice Taskforce.

Response: The Minister reassured DJ that this was an area of 'enormous focus'. Conviction rates were shockingly low, although it was positive that reporting had doubled in the last 4-5 years. The PM had personally tasked the Minister with leading on this and was working with a 'hit squad' (including the NPCC and CPS). The Rape End-to-End review would be published shortly. ISVAs are being expanded by around 700. He urged DJ to see the LCJB as an important vehicle for system focus on VAWG.
- Tim Passmore (Suffolk):** Raised the issue of the Funding Formula review. How would this be carried out and when? It is important that rural areas are not left behind, they face costs in tackling crime that is spread out across a wider geographic area.

Response: The government will review the Funding Formula before the next election; PCC engagement will be a key part of the review. This is a technical process, and we will need to review variables. The Home Office is currently in the scoping phase i.e. considering what the process will look like. He noted that everyone goes into a Funding Formula process assuming they would come out a 'winner', but not everyone can be. It will take some months, if not a couple of years, to complete a review.
- David Sidwick (Dorset):** There are very few murders in Dorset, and it has not qualified for VRU funding, but there are significant issues with drugs and ASB. Prevention is a priority, and it would be helpful to have funding to support preventative interventions to address these sorts of issues.

Response: While some areas may have few murders when one occurs the impact is enormous. There will be a County Lines problem in Dorset. While funding has been focused on VRU areas, the same model can be applied to an area like Dorset e.g. look at the data on hotspots (if you ask the police and local authorities for their maps of incidents of ASB, do not be surprised if they do not match – this is something to be curious about/push on).
- Dafydd Llywelyn (Dyfed Powys):** A lot of crime is not recorded properly, but if forces improve recording the data will appear to show an increase in crime. How will this be managed/dealt with?

Response: The point is taken. In using data to review performance the focus should be on the relative position of forces and the direction the figures are going, rather than the numbers as such.
- Marc Jones (Lincolnshire):** Welcomed the Action Plan on animal crimes and raised hare coursing. MJ is writing to George Eustice for a meeting; it would be helpful if the Minister could support this.

Response: The Minister would be happy to do this.
- Emily Spurrell (Merseyside):** Welcomed the comments on diversity and recruitment and highlighted the importance of building relationships with communities locally over time. Sustainability of funding was

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very important – funding for IVCAs was welcome, but it needed to be sustained.

Response: The Minister agreed on the importance of sustainability and hoped for a 3 year Spending Review in 2021; finances would, of course, be tight coming out of the pandemic. On diversity, he would be writing to PCCs and Chief Constables on disparity between forces and hoped to spark curiosity about this. He noted the excellent performance of Nottinghamshire, which has outperformed other forces, and had an approach that involved reaching out into communities. He also noted work with Channel 4 on short films where a diversity of police recruits talk about policing with their communities.

Item 5: Welcome & update from the Director General, Public Safety Group, Home Office – Patricia Hayes:

- TH welcomed new and returning Commissioners. She heads a public safety group within the Home Office of around 1,500 staff. It is responsible for all parts of the law enforcement system – including the NPCC, the NCA, intelligence, crime strategy, crime outcomes and integrated planning; as well as having responsibility for fire. The team has worked closely with the APCC, and there was a good, open culture which was supporting a creative, collaborative relationship between the Home Office and the APCC/PCCs. TH particularly noted the PCC role in supporting and trialing innovative approaches to crime reduction.
- New system governance gives the Home Office a more active role in system leadership than in the past through the National Policing Board (NPB) and its sub-boards - the Strategic Change and Investment Board (SCIB), the Crime and Policing Performance Board (CPPB) and the Police Uplift Programme (PUP) Board – as well as a new Police Covenant oversight group. These enable the system to come together to drive crime reduction, working across territorial policing, SOC and counter terrorism.
- While delivering on their local priorities, PCCs have good opportunities to work on national issues e.g. as national portfolio leads. In the short-term TH highlighted:
 - PUP and workforce issues (engaging via PCC Kim McGuinness as the workforce lead)
 - The SCIB consultation on a forward look at the SCIB's work
 - Force Insight work that will pair each Chief Constable with a senior Home Office official.
- On current workstreams, TH highlighted:
 - *The Spending Review:* Feedback on how the sector had worked together in 2020 had been positive and it is important to build on this model. The priority will be funding for the PUP programme.
 - *The PCC Review:* Progress is being made to implement the Part 1 recommendations and Part 2 will kick off soon, with a focus on helping PCCs to get 'upstream' of crime.
 - *The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR):* The SPR is due to be published this Summer. This is important for addressing regional and national policing challenges – the government is keen the SPR becomes more of a 'living process' and is reviewed and refreshed every couple of years.
 - *Exploitation and abuse:* The Home Office is determined to put the best people and our best efforts into reducing these crime types including child sexual exploitation, VAWG, and modern slavery. The Home Office is working though a massive response received after it reopened the VAWG consultation.
 - *Serious Organised Crime (SOC):* A strong regional response to this crime is critical, and ROCUs need to continue to receive strong PCC commitment and support.
 - *Covid-19:* Responding to the HMICFRS review of Policing the Pandemic. There is much to be proud of but we have not got everything right and there is work to do on managing borders, in country compliance and on international travel.
- The government is anticipating a challenging summer for policing, with issues including policing Covid-19, protests, policing the G7, the Euro footballing championship, and a return of pre-Covid crime types. The Home Office looked forward to working with PCCs to meet these challenges.

Item 6: Welcome & keynote from Minister for Building Safety and Communities - Lord Stephen Greenhalgh:

- The Minister welcomed newly elected PCCs and set out his department's expectations for the forthcoming White Paper on fire reform. The White Paper will relate to England only.
- The Minister explained how the Home Office PCC Review, conducted last year, included a focus on fire governance, seeking learning on the barriers / challenges as well as opportunities that PCCs had experienced to seeking to take on fire governance. This element of the PCC Review had identified several lessons learnt from the early adopter PFCCs and those PCCs who had engaged with the legislative process enshrined within the Policing and Crime Act 2017 that require PCCs interested in voluntarily taking on fire to submit a business case to the Home Secretary for decision.
- The Minister expressed his gratitude to the fire and rescue sector for its response to the pandemic, but highlighted shortcomings identified by HMICFRS that made clear the case for reform. In addition, the Minister described how fires and related fatalities have reduced in recent years and the nature of risk has changed. The Hackitt Review, inquiries into Grenfell and the Manchester Arena terrorist attack, alongside HMICFRS individual inspection reports identify significant barriers to reform.
- The Minister explained his vision for reform is based on professionalism, people and governance (PPG) and that the White Paper, due for publication this summer, is structured around these key themes.

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- The government would like to see professionalism accelerated with effective structures put in place to develop senior leaders. The Minister described the need to define the role of firefighters, building in valuable lessons from the pandemic.
- On governance, the Minister clarified the value in moving away from appointed committee structures to single elected individuals, with direct oversight and accountable for the service. A clear demarcation between oversight and operational running of the service was also required. The model of elected individuals would provide benefits that include a mandate to deliver local priorities based on what local public want. Control over estates and funding will provide levers for effective governance, accountability and transparency.
- The Minister's vision included creating a parity of esteem between fire and policing, with operationally independent Chief Fire Officers and greater precept flexibility. Additionally, the Minister explained a need to ensure people working in the sector are paid properly for the roles they perform and that the existing pay practice is outdated.
- The Minister concluded his address by encouraging PCCs to engage with the White Paper and to discuss the merits that the PFCC governance model offers with local leaders, including MPs. The Minister also highlighted the opportunity for PFCCs to share their progress to further demonstrate the benefits of the model and suggested a workshop session would be useful.
- There followed a Q & A session.

Q & A:

- **Mark Shelford (Avon & Somerset):** Supported this approach and supported collaboration across the bluelight services.
Response: Liked this thinking, there is a lot that can be done here. We need a College for Fire and in due course align it more with policing.
- **Katy Bourne (Sussex):** Asked can you bring our PCC terms of office in line with the county council elections to support the development of this approach? Last time we were given support to do a review of fire which enabled PCCs to say we were not wasting taxpayers money when conducting this review. Is this available again?
Response: Attracted to more time for PCCs but not sure how this can be done. Will raise it with the Home Secretary. Made commitment to stay close to PCCs on oiling/supporting the wheels of change.
- **John Campion (West Mercia):** Noted PCCs will face opposition from FRAs but will provide the Minister with information to support collaboration and opportunities for community safety e.g road safety.
Response: We need to capture that improved governance can enable positive change for culture, efficiencies and public safety within the White Paper.
- **Jeff Cuthbert (Gwent):** Highlighted that whilst Wales is separate, collaboration is still something of importance to Welsh PCCs and all public services must collaborate through public service boards. We already work closely with fire and have achieved a lot through formal merger.
Response: We want to recognise the benefits FRS have enjoyed from being part of local government but equally there are many examples elsewhere of where County Councils are struggling with their budget at the expense of fire and it has not worked well.
- **Philip Seccombe (Warwickshire):** Commented that the PCC experience has successfully got public support because it is mandatory. There is a good local FRS in my area but we cannot take it on unless mandated.
Response: We are clear voluntary transfer does not work. Mandating is our firm view. We expect noise to be directed at the Home Office and Ministers but we are focussed on making services better for public.
- **Tim Passmore (Suffolk):** Looked at this previously but struggled with getting costs from FRS as they are intertwined within the County Council and help with this would be useful. Asked should we consider removing the right for Fire Unions (as is the case with Police) to strike in the White Paper?
Response: We want to see service continuity and whilst the paper will not include removing the right to strike, agree it should be considered in future.
- **Marc Jones (Lincolnshire):** The term extension would buy sufficient time for transition and aligning to the County Council elections helps but transition from County Council areas will be challenging in terms of staff and costs, we could not fund this. Supported moving all 3 emergency services under one governance.
Response: Recognised these challenges and supported the governance vision for all emergency services.
- **Stephen Mold (Northamptonshire):** The PFCC model provides real benefits for policing and fire. Made an open day offer for CFOs and PCCs.
Response: Thanked PFCCs for their work and highlighting that there are opportunities to make back office savings which can be reinvested in the frontline.
- **Darryl Preston (Cambridgeshire):** Was supportive and supported issues around the term. The other issue is around timing with local government devolution running at the same time. At what stage do we push the button if going to the combined authority model?
Response: Assumes may devolve policing under a metro mayor/combined authority model eventually and recognised that is a local decision.

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- **Angelique Foster (Derbyshire PCC):** Government need to have that discussion with MPs too. The public are protective of FRS, the narrative around efficiencies might not sit well and stir public opposition.
Response: Speaking to MPs will occur as part of this work. Would like your support as the public want to know the service is effective.
- Roger Hirst thanked the Minister for answering so many questions. Lord Greenhalgh thanked PCCs and PFCCs for their invitation and added that he may well come to Essex to launch the White Paper.

Approved/Agreed Actions:

- The APCC will hold a workshop for PCCs/CEOs interested in progressing fire governance.

Item 7: Presentation from Victims' Commissioner - Dame Vera Baird - followed by discussion on Violence Against Women and Girls:

- This session was chaired by Sophie Linden, London's Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime and Victims' portfolio lead. Dame Vera Baird (VB) welcomed and congratulated both new and returning PCCs.
- VB provided a brief background of the role of Victims' Commissioner, which has been in existence since 2004, and informed that the main functions of the role are three fold; encouraging best practice, promoting the interests of victims and witnesses, and keeping the victim's code under review. There are no specific powers accompanying this role.
- The Commissioner spoke of her work with a wide ranging network of victim supporting organisations, including but not limited to organisations that support male survivors of sexual abuse, victims of anti-social behaviour and relatives of those murdered abroad. VB stressed that the role does not take on any individual victim's case, but policy is derived from the experiences of the numerous victims who get in contact. The Commissioner then works closely with a range of partners such as NHS England, housing authorities, community support, the CPS, probation and parliamentary partners to aid in the implementation of policy.
- VB explained that the role also carries out detailed research into victim services and produces comprehensive reviews to help inform other agencies and bring about change. The most recent report reviews the provision of special measures to vulnerable and intimidated witnesses.
- VB informed PCCs that as of April 1st 2021 a new Victims' Code is in force which sets out the minimum level of service victims can expect from the criminal justice agencies such as the police and courts, whether they choose to report the crime or not. VB stressed to PCCs that as part of their role they are expected to monitor the delivery of these rights and shared that in her opinion many of the rights do not go far enough or are not being delivered at all. PCCs can monitor and scrutinise the delivery of these rights through their role as chairs of Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJB). VB called on PCCs to include an offer to victims within their Police and Crime Plans (PCP).
- Regarding funding VB agreed with PCC comments that government funding is delivered swiftly but in restrictive timescales. An example was the one year ISVA funding which does not allow for the recruitment period and then the intensive length of time needed to build up an established relationship with a victim. It was noted the current victim support workforce is over-worked and thinly-stretched after a busy year.
- VB identified an area of work going forward for PCCs in encouraging local authorities to provide community-based support for victims of domestic abuse who are not able to/do not want to move into a refuge. VB also informed PCCs that she will be writing out to encourage their support in lobbying their MPs to amend a clause in the PCS Bill that calls for local authorities to work together to tackle serious violence to also include VWAG.
- VB highlighted a key issue in the low levels of prosecutions in rape cases which have dropped considerably since 2017. Durham has the highest rate of successful prosecutions at 5.2%. Operation Bluestone in Avon and Somerset was identified as an example of best practice in investigating and prosecuting in this area.

Q & A:

- PCCs queried the announcement of the Royal Commission into CJS as this would be a good opportunity to share views. VB informed there is currently no news on the commencement of the commission.

Approved/Agreed Actions:

- The APCC to share with PCCs the Commissioner's PowerPoint slide outlining rape prosecution rates in each area.

Item 8: APCC Portfolio Updates – APCC Portfolio Leads

- APCC Portfolio Leads provided PCCs with updates on developments in the Finance portfolio, the Police Technology and Digital portfolio, the Victims' portfolio, the Serious and Organised Crime portfolio, and the Workforce portfolio, and on the Police Digital Service. RH thanked Portfolio Leads for their important work in these areas.

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- **Finance Portfolio update – PFCC Roger Hirst:**
 - RH firstly expressed his thanks to Paddy Tipping for their joint work especially over the Spending Review. RH now wants the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) to be for 3 years next time and outlined the working group involving APCC, seconded OPCC and NPCC staff working on the next Spending Review. Home Office officials have welcomed our contribution and used it in their discussions with the Treasury. RH had received a letter informing him that a Funding Formula Review will begin in the future which will involve APCC and PACCTS staff in both senior sector and technical groups. RH would welcome a new Labour PCC Finance Lead to work with.
- **Police Digital Service (PDS) Chair's update – PCC Stephen Mold:**
 - SM mentioned the APCC Technology and Digital portfolio induction event on July 7th. SM highlighted that the PDS is our organisation and includes the NCA and the College of Policing. The PDS Board has 7 PCC members and the APCC CEO sitting on it. The PDS would like a board member from the Labour side. PCCs pay an annual subscription towards the PDS whose objective is to harness the power of digital and technology to improve the policing service. The National Management Centre is part of this service. National standards are being launched and the portfolio looks forward to coming to see you.
- **Police Technology portfolio update – PCC Katy Bourne:**
 - KB highlighted that nationally policing could not survive and deliver effectively unless technology is supported and asked PCCs to consider joining the Technology portfolio, it is also a good way of meeting with chief officers from the forces. Policing spends £1.4 billion on Tech per year. The portfolio looks at all major law enforcement national programmes and ones that forces are leading on nationally. The NPCC and the APCC have produced a 10 year technology strategy. KB also highlighted the APCC Technology and Digital portfolio induction event on July 7th and the portfolio dashboard update in the meeting papers.
- **Victims' portfolio update – Deputy Mayor Sophie Linden:**
 - Sophie Linden reported that the APCC Victims' portfolio work includes 1. A focus on the VCOP 2. Consultation on a draft Victims' Law 3. Developing an APCC strong statement on the VAWG framework, New PCCs should look at this work plus NPCC strategy that is being developed in this area. The APCC will continue to make the case for sustainable funding for victims going forward.
- **Serious Organised Crime portfolio including the Strategic Policing Requirement – PCC Marc Jones and Baroness Bev Hughes:**
 - Baroness Bev Hughes highlighted the APCC SOC portfolio induction event on June 8th. This issue affects communities everywhere as shown by recent County Lines work. The NCA have just published the threat which is global and has been increased by COVID-19. Cyber and economic crime and fraud is also a serious threat within SOC. Local, regional and national cooperation is needed. Sir Craig Mackay Review's Executive Summary being published should give momentum, a focus is on ROCUs, and PCCs/Chief Constables should engage with them going forward.
 - MJ highlighted the Review of the SPR which is the Home Secretary's view of key threats and responses. There will be key changes and the APCC will circulate these. PCCs have to be clear on how we have due regard to this in Police and Crime Plans and Annual Statements. The APCC will put together a summary document that will be sent onto the Home Office. We are expecting to see this in June/July. The threats will be the same but the Home Secretary mechanisms will change as will Force Management Statements but this not be overly onerous.
- **Workforce portfolio update – PFCC Kim McGuinness/PCC Peter McCall:**
 - KM highlighted 3 key developments in this area: 1. The PUP Board – Most forces are on track, there is a monthly dashboard PCCs should look at 2. The pay review of 3% which PCCs will be consulted upon 3. The Review of Chief Officers pay and conditions which you will see being taken forward in working groups.

Key points raised by PCCs:

- AM mentioned the regional perspective of the CJS Portfolio.

Approved/Agreed Actions:

- The APCC will forward an EDHR portfolio update from PCC John Campion.
- The APCC will circulate the Breakfast Briefing and Deep Dive induction information to PCCs.

Item 9: AOB and Close:

- KM highlighted the BlueLight Commercial update meeting following this meeting.
- RH and KB thanked Susannah Hancock and the APCC team for the General Meeting today.
- RH closed the meeting and thanked PCCs for their attendance and involvement.