



## **AGENDA NO: 6b.**

### **INDEPENDENT AUDIT COMMITTEE – 11 SEPTEMBER 2019**

#### **DORSET PCC SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS**

#### **REPORT BY THE SCRUTINY MANAGER**

#### **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

*The purpose of this report is to describe the scrutiny arrangements put in place by the Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner.*

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 A key part of the Police and Crime Commissioner's role is to undertake scrutiny of the police.
- 1.2 Section 17 (b) of the Policing Protocol 2011 states that: "The PCC has the legal power and duty to -  
  
"scrutinise, support and challenge the overall performance of the force including against the priorities agreed within the Police and Crime Plan."  
  
1.3 The Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner has a range of means by which scrutiny of Dorset Police is undertaken, both directly by the PCC and by staff on his behalf.
- 1.4 This scrutiny of Dorset Police takes place both through the senior management teams' attendance at formal Force Boards, a range of informal meetings, briefings, and updates and one to one meetings with members of the Force executive.

#### **2. SCRUTINY THROUGH BOARDS AND COMMITTEES**

- 2.1 The primary Force Board which the PCC, together with other members of the OPCC senior management team (SMT) attend, is the Joint Leadership Board (JLB, the main decision making Board). This meets fortnightly, and is usually attended by the PCC, Chief Executive, Chief Financial Officer and Director of Operations and also supported by the OPCC Head of Communications and Engagement. Through the PCC Challenge mechanism (which is overseen at JLB), the Commissioner has been able to challenge the Force on specific areas of concern, such as Firearms Licensing or the Use of Bail, and instigate work to improve service in these areas. Formal governance through JLB ensures that there is a structured and recorded approach to the PCC's scrutiny.

## Handling Instructions -

### Not Protectively Marked FOIA - Open

- 2.2 The PCC also attends (or is represented at) a number of local strategic governance boards, including the:
- Strategic Performance Board (force performance),
  - Resources Control Board (force and OPCC finance),
  - Innovation Board (force projects and other internal business improvement activity),
  - Legitimacy Board (force activity, internal focus),
  - Standards and Ethics Board (force activity, external focus).
- 2.3 At the alliance level, the Boards on which the PCC is represented include the Working Together Board (main decision making Board comprised of Chief Constables and their Deputies, plus PCCs and their Chief Executives), the Strategic People Board (people and HR), the PRISM Board (ICT change and transformation), and the Independent Audit Committee (strategic audit).
- 2.4 Regionally, the PCC attends or is represented on the South West Police Collaboration Strategic Board (the decision making body for all regional policing activity), and a number of its subgroups.
- 2.5 Given the activity of Dorset Police is conducted at a local, alliance and regional level it is important that the PCC be represented at governance structures across all levels.
- 2.6 Across the wider partnership landscape, the PCC attends, or is represented on, the Pan-Dorset Community Safety and Criminal Justice Board (CSCJB), the Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and the Dorset Criminal Justice Board (DCJB). These groups allow for the strategic alignment of resources and interventions towards shared priority areas, such as violent crime and domestic abuse.
- 2.7 The PCC also plays an active part in the Boscombe Regeneration Board and the Melcombe Regis Board, providing specific focus on the issues affecting areas within Dorset experiencing higher levels of deprivation and socio-economic challenges. Again, the Commissioner is able to challenge systemic issues through these partnerships, an example being court scheduling efficiency through the DCJB which prompted work to increase local court sessions and availability.

### **3. SCRUTINY THROUGH INDEPENDENT PANELS**

- 3.1 Additionally there are a range of independent panels by which the Force are scrutinised.
- 3.2 These include the Independent Custody Visitor (ICV) Scheme which provides an independent check on the welfare of people who are detained in custody. This is a national initiative, supported by the Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA), whereby specifically trained members of the public make random and unannounced visits to custody suites to check on the welfare of detainees and the conditions they are being held in.

The Dorset ICV scheme has between 18 and 24 volunteer ICVs. The ICV Panel meets on a quarterly basis to discuss their findings and feedback to the force. ICVs receive regular training from the OPCC on a range of relevant subjects, including materials provided by ICVA and demonstrations from Dorset Police where appropriate.

- 3.3 Dorset OPCC also operates a number of independent scrutiny panels which review Dorset Police activity and holds the Force to account in the areas of Customer Service, Out of Court Disposals, Stop and Search and Use of Force. Each of these panels has a Terms of Reference setting out the purpose and scope of their activities. Independent members are volunteers, all of whom are vetted and sign a confidentiality agreement in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR. Dorset OPCC arranges induction training for all panel members, together with specific training in the area under scrutiny e.g. Use of Force techniques.

Copies of the ICV reports are published on the OPCC website.

<https://www.dorset.pcc.police.uk/get-involved/volunteering/custody-visiting/visit-reports/>

Scrutiny panel summaries are published on the OPCC website.

<https://www.dorset.pcc.police.uk/information-hub/scrutiny-panels/>.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 This paper has been prepared for the Independent Audit Committee to set out in summary form the arrangements by which the OPCC conducts scrutiny of Dorset Police in all its various forms. These measures help to provide an effective means of holding the police to account on the Police and Crime Commissioner's behalf.

#### **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 This report recommends that the Independent Audit Committee notes the arrangements and discusses accordingly.

**Tom Smith**

Scrutiny Manager, Dorset OPCC