

Hertfordshire Criminal Justice Board
Draft Minutes
17th December 2020, 14.00-16.00

Attendees:

CC Charlie Hall, Hertfordshire Constabulary (Chair)
PCC David Lloyd
Jaswant Narwal, CPS
T/ Chief Supt Cath Akehurst
Kevin McGetrick, Hertfordshire OPCC
Sara Miles, CJ Manager, Hertfordshire OPCC
Christopher Barclay, Hertfordshire OPCC
Sharn Elton, NHS East & North Hertfordshire CCG
Paul Millan, Noble Solicitors
Nick Smith, Youth Justice
Tom Moreton, Deputy Director for Hertfordshire, BeNCH CRC
Beth Stamp, HMCTS
Clare Weston, NHS England
Ian Miller, HMCTS Cluster Manager, Beds, Cambs & Herts
Neeve Bishop, NPS
Anthony Roche, North Herts DC
Bethan McPhee, Hertfordshire OPCC Secretariat

Guest:

Steve Johnson-Proctor, NPS East of England Regional Director

Apologies:

ACC Genna Telfer, Herts Constabulary
Jenny Coles, Director of Children's Services, HCC
Fergus McMullen, Independent Chair Community Liaison Group
Claire Mullarkey, Head of Crime, South East Region
Katie Price, HMP The Mount

Item	Updates
1	<p>Introductions & Apologies</p> <p>CC Charlie Hall chairing the meeting today. He welcomed board members and NPS East of England Regional Director - Steve Johnson-Proctor. Apologies were noted as above.</p>
2.	<p>Chair's Introduction</p> <p>Challenges continue as a result of the pandemic and the backlog in the courts. Some announcements of additional court rooms and some further commitment to this in the spending review.</p>

	<p>PCC David Lloyd told the group that The National Criminal Justice Board met a couple of weeks ago with policing colleagues sharing concerns about the backlog. Points to note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A greater agreement that there is a backlog, and the understanding that this is a real issue. • Not a meeting of minds about figures as yet. • Some further opening of nightingale courts. • Rollout of vaccine will help. • An undertaking that in the Spring – they will look at the whole CJ system to see what needs to change. <p>Nationally MoJ are looking at a number of pieces of work / projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victim and Witness Attrition Project – Commissioned by the Silver Command Group - meets fortnightly to discuss victim and witness issues arising from the CJS response to Covid-19. • Data project - To improve CJS understanding of data sources with a focus on the impact of Covid-19. • Youth Justice Task and Finish Group - looking at levels of remand in the youth estate.
<p>3.</p>	<p>Review of minutes and Action Log from 30th September The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate reflection of the discussion.</p> <p>The open actions of the Action Log were reviewed and discussed.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Performance & Recovery</p> <p><u>Items escalated by PPMG:</u> Pressures are sitting in the Crown courts for more serious cases. Noted that cases being received are not slowing down. Suggestion from PPMG to review data in March 2021 for the next HCJB when we would be able to look at 12 months of data relating to the pandemic and its impact.</p> <p><u>Challenges:</u> Data – is that it needs to be put into context. Performance currently is not comparable to previous pre-pandemic times. Cases are having to be pulled out of order dependent upon their nature. Therefore, not seeing the ordinary flow of cases usually seen. Delay in the Mags court – less cases going into crown courts. Need to focus on case type – look at vulnerability and risk.</p> <p><u>Trial blitzes:</u> Acknowledgement that these could have been done better. Need to look to see how we can operate more smartly in the mags courts. Volunteers in place for Jan & Feb Saturday courts.</p> <p>Ian Miller updated the group with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing some work over Xmas to try to reconcile numbers. • St. Albans – 3 courts currently open. Looking at opening a 4th in Jan and a 5th at the end of March. • Extension to the Peterborough Knights Chamber. • Slowly getting back to almost pre-covid levels.

- Continuing to look at the old Watford mags court.

PCC Lloyd commented on his appreciation for the enabling work – but concerned that it had taken some time to get to this point.

The Chair highlighted the huge amount of work that is being done amongst the agencies to bring down the backlog and the need to keep this focus going forward.

HCJB Performance dashboard – exception reporting:

Dashboard circulated (relates to the last quarter (July – September 2020). with papers in advance of this meeting.

Performance dashboard Some highlights of which:

- Guilty pleas at first hearing in Mags is up.
- Guilty pleas at first hearing in Crown is up but below national average.
- Average hearings per contested case in Crown has increased to – this is consistent with the national picture.

It was noted that the Witness Care Unit is going through a restructuring – which will be in place by April.

The Chair highlighted the good work that is being done in Hertfordshire with Victims & Witnesses to keep them on board.

Remote Evidence Centres:

There is some concern that where cases get listed – the remote evidence centres (having been set up) won't get used.

Action: Chair suggested that Supt Cath Akehurst revisits some of the cases with Marios Wheeler to see whether any cases can get pushed through these remote evidence centres.

Herts flow through the CJS:

Flow through presentation was circulated in advance. Points of note:

- Numbers remain high in the courts
- Data set does not show (as we do not receive information on this) the timeliness of trials in the Magistrates Court.
- Magistrates Court trials - HMCTS are looking at what they can do to put on extra courts and bring some of this work forward.

The Board were told that in March, the PPMG sub-group intend to have a review of data over the previous 12 months which will hopefully show some improvements. This will be brought to the next Board meeting.

5. Probation Reform Programme

Steve Johnson-Proctor, the Eastern region Director, shared a presentation with the group. Highlights of which:

- The National Probation Service (NPS) will be responsible for managing all offenders on a community order or licence following their release from prison in England and Wales.
- The NPS will continue to deliver those services reserved to the public sector such as advice to court. From June 2021, the NPS will also deliver offenders' unpaid work and behavioural change programmes in England and Wales.

The voluntary sector will play an enhanced role in the probation system. These are currently being procured under the dynamic framework with there being 4 lots:

- Accommodation
- Employment, Training, Education (ETE)
- Personal wellbeing
- Women

There will be 12 probation areas across England and Wales and Hertfordshire is in the Eastern Region area along with Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex.

Each area will be overseen by a new dedicated regional director who will provide strategic leadership and be responsible for the overall delivery and commissioning of probation services.

Steve was asked for some reassurances around partnership working. He explained that the schemes are locally focussed. His role is to offer support to those local schemes.

Chair asked for some reassurances around continuity of service. Steve explained:

- Lessons have been learned from the past.
- Some excellent work going on in both the NPs and CRC. There shouldn't be any difference in service delivery going forward.
- Confident that things will be managed fairly seamlessly going forward.

Some discussion followed around information sharing.

Chair thanked Steve for his contribution to the group today.

6. **Integrated Offender Management**

Sara Miles shared a comprehensive report that has been completed on IOM. Highlights of which: Changes over the past 5 years.

Similar picture across the Eastern Region.

IOM has become police heavy.

Overlap between IOM exec Board and the re-offending sub-group (which sits under the HCJB).

Unable to 'sell' the benefits of IOM to partners to get greater resourcing – need to use available data better.

National review has concluded that every area should have an IOM co-ordinator & a IOM analyst.

Key findings:

- Cohort Clarity
- Female Offenders
- DA
- Serious Violence

	<p>C2 Cohort (as part of IOM) has changed over time. Don't have the same prolific cohort that we once did. Crime type may have changed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pathways. What do we need? What services do we need? • Funding and resources can present a barrier, evidence of impact and cost saving upstream. • Partnership – is it integrated? <p>Action: Sara will send out report to all members of the group – and would welcome any comments and feedback.</p> <p>Chair thanked Sara for the work on the report and look forward to receiving the report and recommendations.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Any other business</p> <p>Kevin McGetrick asked for some reassurances around the use of the Remote Evidence Centres. The need for eligible cases to be reviewed and sent through to those centres. Cath Akehurst reiterated her intention to look at cases with DCI Maz Wheeler and see what could be pushed through.</p> <p>Future Agenda Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dashboard. • Report on pre-charge bail and RUIs. • Racial Disparity
	<p>Next meeting: Thursday 25th March 13.00-16.00</p>

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