

1. Staffing and Pensions

1.1 Question: A lot of the Constabulary's workforce do not stay with the organisation for many years – financially is this positive or negative?

Constabulary's response: The attrition rate of the workforce in the period since the Covid pandemic has slowed down. Understandably each individual has to decide from their own financial perspective when is the right time for them to leave.

Following a successful legal challenge against the 2015 public sector pension reform being discriminatory in respect of moving from a final salary to career average calculation of pension benefits (referred to as the McCloud/Sargeant cases), the options to remedy this discrimination are yet to be resolved by the Government. Therefore, some of the workforce may have chosen to await this decision before leaving the organisation.

The 20,000 new police officers as part of the Government's 'Uplift Programme' also takes into account a projection based on the number of police officers leaving across the police service.

Pension contributions have increased for every officer and staff member. The next Police Pension Scheme revaluation impact will be felt in 2023/24 and an assumption has been made of an increase in pension rates. As with an uncertainty regarding financial impact comes risk. Until the McCloud/Sargeant remedy outcome is known, an allowance has been made in the Acting Commissioner's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). Any valuation impact will be known post-the decision of the remedy.

1.2 Question: Given the 116 police officers projected to leave the Constabulary in 2021/22, this is a lot of officers to recruit given the force need to recruit the same number to 'standstill'. There are many indirect and hidden costs that the public don't see relating to recruiting such as uniform, training, etc.

Constabulary's response: The Chief Constable stated that he is confident that the Constabulary could meet the recruitment target. The Chief Constable/the force receives monthly recruitment reports which indicate there are enough people in the pipeline to secure the required number of recruits. Alternative ways are being looked at for people to enter the organisation, such as the Direct Entry Detective Programme with large numbers showing an interest. Consequently, this level of recruitment does place additional demands on the Constabulary's infrastructure, and that is the rationale for why there is a need for the money raised through the precept for the HR consultants in the Continuous Professional Development Units, and enhancing the Demand Hub, all of which support Officers on the frontline – bearing in mind 60% of response officers have less than 2 years service and 74% less than 5 years service. The Constabulary's challenge is in relation to achieving a workforce that has greater diversity and as such is more representative of the community it serves – that is being achieved through the

Uplift Programme - 37% of new recruits are female and 8% from BAME community, this compares to 30% and 3% in 2018.

2. Financial impact of Covid

Question: Other public services have received financial help for dealing with the Covid pandemic- has the Police?

Constabulary's response: As with other public authorities, Cambridgeshire Constabulary has received Government support to help with dealing with the pandemic, but the force has been affected differently than local authorities. Obtaining Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at the start of the pandemic was an issue, but now a national contract has been put in place to procure these. The net cost incurred by the Constabulary was £1 million after Government support. The Government has underwritten the cost of medical grade PPE, for which the Constabulary has received £350k. The Constabulary also received £308k (referred to as 'surge funding') to fund increased overtime or any other suitable workforce related measure in relation to enforcement of the Covid restrictions. The Constabulary is also able to claim lost income on a quarterly basis (this relates to loss of expected fees and charges).

3. Budgetary Reserves

3.1 Question - do you only have a General Reserve now?

Constabulary's response: A full schedule of earmarked reserves are included in the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)*, and are held for specific purposes such as ill health retirements, insurance, Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA), etc. The monthly Revenue and Capital Monitoring reports which are submitted to the Business Co-ordination Board** display the fluctuations with these reserves.

Police forces are bound by a legal requirement to hold a General Reserve to fund unplanned and emergency expenditure; currently the Constabulary's has a balance of £7.2m. As the Net Budget Requirement has increased in recent years, the General Reserve needs to increase to £8.6m to stay at the 5% which is seen as a prudent level. A new Reserves Fund has been introduced in this draft MTFS to manage risks such as the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP). The ESMCP is a national programme which is a replacement for the Emergency Services Network covering Police, Fire and Ambulance services, indications are that the investment could be in the order of £5m over a 1- or 2-year period from 2023/24. A £0.3m reserve has been created and earmarked to meet any unknown early mobilisation costs relating to the national programme not budgeted for.

* Draft MTFS and Precept Report - Appendix 1, Agenda Item 6.0, Business Co-ordination Board, 20th January 2021

<https://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/accessing-information/decision-making/business-coordination-board/bcb-20th-january-2021/>

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- 3.2 Question: How will you start funding the ESMCP reserve? As £5m is required from 2023/24, it would be useful to understand how the Constabulary plan to build the reserve.**

Constabulary response: The Reserve will start with £300k in 2021/22 which gives the Constabulary the ability to pick up immediate costs for an Eastern Region mobilisation team. There is provision with the Capital Programme of £5 million for any bigger material costs, the majority of which will be for handheld devices for every police officer and vehicle. The Capital Grant is £100k so funding will be through revenue contributions or borrowing.

4. OPCC Budget

Question: The OPCC has made a budget saving this year on the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC) role - have you allocated budget for a DPCC for next year?

OPCC response: There has been a significant underspend in the OPCC staff budget this year in part due to the Chief Executive being seconded to PHE to help with the pandemic. Some of the posts have been difficult to backfill due to uncertainties in timing and the lead-in time for recruitment. The underspend is contributing towards the Constabulary reserves calculations. The OPCC has planned its budget for 2021/22 to enable a new Commissioner to appoint a Deputy PCC and to ensure that the Commissioner can fulfil their statutory duties. As such the 2021/22 budget has factored in for a Chief Executive Officer, and a DPCC should the new Commissioner wish to appoint one following the election.

5. Refurbishment of the Firing Range

Question – has consideration been given to sharing facilities with Norfolk and Suffolk police forces?

Constabulary response: The Armed Policing Unit across Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, and Hertfordshire (BCH) is a significant asset. The Constabulary has looked at facilities in Norfolk and Suffolk, and sometimes uses Northamptonshire Police facilities but these incur extensive travel time.

Given that a counter-terrorism threat also remains, the Constabulary needs to ensure it maintains its capability in armed policing and also to look at other collaborative ventures. The 7-Force collaborative area*** have a single accreditation process, so officers within the BCH Armed Policing Unit have the same accreditation as those that operate across the whole of the 7-Force area, which means they are interoperable across the Eastern Region and nationally.

The current Firing Range is an aging building and it is vitally important that investment is made in new facilities. The Constabulary has scoped out an option for the Firing Range, and as given in the draft MTFs, the cost is dependent on the final proposal and maybe become revenue costs rather than capital

*** Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent, Norfolk, and Suffolk