

Questions submitted to the Police and Crime Commissioner

The following questions were submitted to the Police and Crime Commissioner by members of the Police and Crime Panel between February 2021 and November 2021. The Commissioner's responses are given below:

Submitted by Professor Adrian James, Independent member – 2nd February 2021

Clarification sought – April 2021

Final response – 11th January 2022

Question: Will the PCC ask the Independent Ethics Panel (IEP) to start producing auditable recommendations from their work (for monitoring)?

The IEP and it is not an auditable body.

However, when required the IEP does produce reports and makes recommendations to the PCC and SYP. All recommendations are tracked either via the IEP's work programme or other internal OPCC or SYP meetings depending on which is the most appropriate.

Submitted by Professor Adrian James – 30th August 2021

Final response – 11th January 2022

Question: Does the IEP monitor the use of Tasers by SYP and does this include monitoring the ethnicity of those who are Tasered?

Yes, this is included in the use of force update.

Submitted by Professor Adrian James

Final response – 11th January 2022

Question: The (IEP Public Accountability Board) report states that "*Separately under the digital policing heading, consideration is being given to the use of drones.*" What consideration is being given to the ethical issues raised by the use of drones, including the potential for breaches of civil liberties? what guidance will the IEP give to SYP regarding their use? and how will their use be monitored by the IEP if it is decided to use them?

Response:

This piece of work is currently in its early stages so the Independent Ethics Panel is unable to answer these questions.

Submitted by Cllr Tim Baum-Dixon – 20th August 2021

Clarification sought – September 2021

Final response – 11th January 2022

Question: I noted from the Commissioner's update at the previous meeting that Rural Crime has been included in the appendix to the Police and Crime Plan as an area of concern. However, I also noted from one of the responses in the work plan that the rural crime stats are not kept by the Force. Is this correct? If they are do you have them at Ward level?

Response:

In the new transitional Plan, reference is made in Treating People Fairly – Priority 3 – to rural concerns. They have had a greater focus in recent months and the force now has a rural and wildlife crime strategy, with a sergeant co-ordinator based at Ring Farm with two officers there, and other officers in the districts being trained.

Does the councillor want to know about crimes committed in rural areas or against farmers – such as theft or damage to crops – or does he want to know about wildlife crimes committed against animals/birds.

Response from Cllr Baum-Dixon: In essence all of the information listed in the comments would be useful.

Question: It would be good to have a clear definition of what constitutes Rural Crime and Wildlife Crime, then breakdown under those two headings into the constituent elements. Similar to what we have for Hate Crime for example. I would also like to see where these crimes happen at ward level if possible.

Response:

There is currently no standard report specific to rural or wildlife crime. As rural or wildlife crime is not a specific Home Office offence in its own right, a bespoke report will need to be created each time the data is needed. The report will need to pull out relevant data from the police computer system using keywords input by officers dealing with such offences which characterises a crime as a rural crime or wildlife crime. The OPCC will work further with SYP to create such a report and will include data in the quarterly performance report once available and data is judged to be of appropriate quality.

Submitted by Cllr Peter Garbutt – 24th September 2021

Final response – 11th January 2022

Question: Is there any policy within SYP about sitting with engines running – a Sustainability Strategy or Environmental Strategy?

Response:

Whilst there is no specific policy, we do encourage operational staff not to leave engines idling unless absolutely necessary and this is an action our staff can take to contribute to our climate action targets. We monitor and report idling vehicles using our telematics system to encourage engines to be switched off whenever possible but we also acknowledge the reasons for leaving engines running in operational and response vehicles - to enable a rapid response where all relevant in-car police systems are instantly available.

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Submitted by Professor Adrian James – 8th October 2021

Final response – 11th January 2022

Question: The recent report "A Duty to Protect: Police use of protective measures in cases involving violence against women and girls", published by HMICFRS, the IOPC and the College of Policing states that:

"Changes need to be made to the way the police, civil and criminal courts co-ordinate their work so that important information, and consequently victims' safety, does not fall between the gaps that currently exist in the system" and argues that such changes should include "better data collection on the use of protective orders and research conducted on what works."

The report also states that :

"it is important that the police consider the full range of protective orders that may be available when making arrangements to keep victims safe."

Given the PCC's commitment to protecting vulnerable people, how does he intend to give effect to these recommendations and to ensure that SYP are making full use of the measures that are available to protect vulnerable women and girls?

Response:

In 2018, the force established a strong internal governance process in support of delivery against HMICFRS actions and is committed to undertaking activity in support of improvement.

The Deputy Chief Constable holds a regular HMICFRS Gold Group meeting with the Senior Command Team, where they are accountable for progress against the HMICFRS causes of concern, areas for improvement and recommendations relevant to their areas of business. Each Senior Command Team member holds separate meetings with their respective portfolio heads of department and districts and feeds progress into this Gold Group.

The Strategic Delivery Unit within the Performance and Governance department supports the Deputy Chief Constable and the Senior Command Team with HMICFRS related work and actions. The SYP HMICFRS Force Liaison Officer (FLO) working within the Strategic Delivery Unit provides an effective two-way link with the HMICFRS Force Liaison Lead Officer (FLLO). The FLLO attends regular meetings with HMICFRS to ensure the force is up to date with HMICFRS related work.

Every active HMICFRS action plan for SYP, with the causes of concern, areas for improvement and recommendations, is recorded on a "tracker". This aligns the strategic lead officers and the business area owners to current progress against the action plans (and now cross-references with the new force management statement areas). The console and tracker is managed by the FLLO in the Strategic Delivery Unit and it allows the force to access other forces' reports (where they are graded as outstanding) so best practice can be researched.

Officers in the OPCC have access to the tracker and can monitor progress against the recommendations.

The PCC and Chief Executive also have regular meetings with HMICFRS where any issues or concerns can be raised.

Submitted by Professor Adrian James – 5th November 2021

Final response – 11th January 2022

Question: Do SYP have a comprehensive environmental strategy that includes, for example, increasing bicycle patrols in urban areas and increasing the proportion of electric vehicles in their fleet?

Response:

Our Sustainability strategy is comprehensive in scope and our targets around carbon emissions and staff welfare are both of relevance here. As we develop our Road to Net Zero Plan (which is underway) and prioritise activities in relation to reducing emissions from our fleet and our built estate, we will be considering how we decarbonise all of our fleet including transitioning to ultra-low emission vehicles and enhancing the fleet of bikes/e-bikes available to our Neighbourhood Teams. The Force Cycle Lead is already working to increase the uptake of Neighbourhood Teams utilising bikes when on duty.

The Sustainability Strategy can be seen here

https://www.southyorks.police.uk/media/6282/sustainability-syp_sustainability_strategy_2020_2025.pdf

A Sustainability Update is scheduled for PAB in February 2022.
