**Police Accountability and Legitimacy Group (PALG)**

Microsoft Teams

9 December 2020

**MINUTES**

**Attendees**

**Police and Crime Commissioner’s Team**

Lee Jones - Chair (LJ) Chief Executive (Interim)

Hannah Jenkins-Jones (HJJ) Strategic Lead for Scrutiny, Assurance and Equality

Sarah Mahon (SM) Engagement and Assurance Officer

Michelle Cooper (MC) Policy Officer

Suzi Graham (SG) Policy and Research Officer

**South Wales Police**

Marc Attwell (MA) Superintendent, Corporate Services

Jenny Gilmer (JG) Assistant Chief Constable

Martyn Jones (MJ) Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Manager

**PALG Members**

Emma Reed (ER) Barnardos

Judith Major (JM) Hafal

Alex Drummond (AD) Independent Member

Amy Taylor (AT) Independent Member

Wasim Said (WS) Independent Member

Catherine Docherty (CD) Independent Member

Soraya Kelly (SK) Independent Member

Rizwan Ahmed (RA) Independent Member

Samar Small (SS) Independent Member

Holly Taylor (HT) Welsh Refugee Council

Reynette Reynolds (RR) Oasis

Claire Skidmore (CS) Race Equality First

Suzanne Boccoum (SB) South Wales Victim Focus

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

LJ welcomed attendees and noted apologies. LJ welcomed new independent members to the group and advised that the addition of independent members aimed to bring wider perspectives to the issues discussed at PALG meetings. Independent Members introduced themselves.

1. **Action updates**

**Seek information about whether ethnicity fields on NICHE are mandatory**

MA provided an update further to previous discussions about mandatory fields on NICHE. MA confirmed that ethnicity was not a mandatory field on NICHE. Whilst officers were instructed to record this information, this did not always happen. MA advised that South Wales Police had limited control over what NICHE looked like and would need to seek agreement across over 20 police forces and get the provider to update the system should there be any need to amend categories. MA provided reassurance that their digital service division were aware of this issue and that the force would maintain oversight of it.

1. **Updated Terms of Reference**

HJJ informed the group that the terms of reference had been updated to reflect the specific role of independent members. HJJ noted that independent members had been vetted, to enable them to be involved in additional activities outside of PALG meetings. Examples of these activities included reviewing body worn videos and other quality assurance work. HJJ asked for feedback on the updated terms of reference.

SS queried whether the Terms of Reference should include information on how many members should be present for a quorate meeting. HJJ agreed to consider if this was required and asked for any additional comments to be emailed within a week.

1. **Joint Equality Plan Update**

MJ provided an overview of the Joint Equality Plan, which included objectives that South Wales Police and the Police & Crime Commissioner’s team felt should be prioritised to meet the aims of the General Equality Duty. MJ provided a brief update of progress and planned activity against each of the objectives:

Neurodiversity

MJ advised that the force was researching into the public sector employer’s obligation to pay for assessments of employees who were potentially neurodivergent. The force was also reviewing the policy on the matter of neurodiversity assessments. MJ noted that proposed organisational route maps had been drafted for those seeking information on neurodiversity and those requiring support.

Learning Disabilities

MJ advised that they were working closely with All Wales People First on the development of planned activity. The force was also engaged with Welsh Government on the work of learning disability hate crime. Conversations were ongoing to explore the expansion of the force’s Keep Safe Cymru scheme, which was aimed at anyone in the force area with a learning disability, mental health, dementia and/or communication need.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities

MJ noted that the pandemic had led to no progress in terms of regional contact with the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller support group or the tactical or strategic group. MJ informed the group that there had been a number of incidents in the last few months where partners, police and members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community had worked together to ensure successful outcomes for all involved. A number of advocacy agents had also come directly to the relevant sectors for support working with the community members.

Community Cohesion

MJ advised that discussions had been held with the Violence Prevention Unit (VPU) to use their dedicated analyst to bring together data from all key agencies into one product. This information would allow the force to better understand communities and ensure resources were tasked in the right place. Work was still ongoing to establish an Independent Advisory Group (IAG) to support operational policing. COVID restrictions were the main reason for these delays. MJ provided an overview of the newly introduced Data Management Tool, which provided detailed information covering a wide range of policing powers such as use of force, stop and search, arrest and custody data. The force now had the data to understand where disproportionality, particularly in stop search, was taking place. Task and finish groups were looking to be developed to review and respond to this data in more detail and link to Community Cohesion.

Workplace Equality

MJ advised that the force had established a Sexual Harassment Task and Finish Group. A Sexual Harassment toolkit was also in development. MJ informed the group that a series of ‘Let’s Talk About Race’ sessions had taken place with officers and staff across the force. Due to Covid, recent sessions had been held virtually. The force was also raising awareness of the Employer’s Initiative, which was a network aimed at helping and supporting staff who were enduring domestic abuse or who were perpetrators. This also included useful resources such as a domestic abuse toolkit for employers.

Representative Workforce

MJ provided a brief overview of the activity conducted by the force’s Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Recruitment Team. Recent activity included 2 outreach events, which had been well received. Many more virtual events were planned for the next period. The team had also delivered upskill sessions for potential minority ethnic candidates for the PCSO application process. The force was also working hard to improve staff and officers understanding of the aim and purpose of the BAME Recruitment team.

Engagement with Children and Young People

MJ advised that the Commissioner’s team and the force had been developing ‘Young Voices Conversations’, which built on the Children’s Rights Charter. The aim of Young Voices Conversations were to create a method by which children and young people from an array of backgrounds, had the chance to speak to representatives to provide feedback on how the police was perceived and issues concerning them. It also provided a facility to share and test policies and operational activities with young people. MJ advised that a training package for the Children’s Rights Charter had also been completed and was ready for implementation.

1. **Victims Strategy**

MC provided an overview of the Victims Strategy, which contained the vision of the Police & Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable to put victims firmly at the heart of policing approaches. MC advised that there would be a delivery plan sitting behind the strategy to ensure the objectives in the strategy were maintained. MC also noted that the strategy had been aligned to the revised Victim’s Code of Practice. MC referred to the Victims Law that the government had pledged to introduce. This would strengthen the rights of victims and hopefully encourage confidence and faith in the Criminal Justice System.

MC informed the group that the strategy had been written in consultation with partners, and it was important that PALG members formed part of this consultation process. MC invited feedback on the strategy. AT noted that she was eager to be involved in the development of the strategy and had several comments that she would like to feed back. MC welcomed the feedback and suggested this could be followed up outside of the meeting.

1. **Any other business**

LJ thanked the group for their input and encouraged PALG members to share any feedback they had on reflection of the meeting with HJJ.

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| **AOB** | 5.1 LJ thanked the group for their input and encouraged everyone to share their feedback in relation to the questions for consideration in the presentations. |