

ECONOMIC CRIME BOARD OF THE POLICE COMMITTEE
Friday, 5 February 2016

Minutes of the meeting of the Economic Crime Board of the Police Committee held
at Committee Rooms, 2nd Floor, West Wing, Guildhall on Friday, 5 February 2016 at
11.30am

Present

Members:

Simon Duckworth (Chairman)
Nicholas Bensted-Smith
Lucy Frew
Helen Marshall

Officers:

Commander Chris Greany	- Commander (Economic Crime), City of London Police
Nicholas Court	- Economic Crime Directorate, City of London Police
Gregory Moore	- Town Clerk's Department
Alex Orme	- Town Clerk's Department
Amanda Thompson	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Deputy Doug Barrow, Mark Boleat, Deputy Richard Regan, Deputy Henry Pollard and Tom Sleigh.

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were none.

3. MINUTES

The public minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2015 were approved.

4. NATIONAL LEAD FORCE: Q3 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Board received a report of the Commissioner of Police summarising the quantitative and qualitative performance of the City of London Police as the National Lead Force for Fraud in the period of Quarter 3 (Q3) 2015/16.

The Board considered the presentation of statistics within the report and debated potential alterations and additional information which would assist Members in scrutinising performance more accurately.

With regard to disseminations and Force reported outcomes, the Chairman observed that the current format only allowed for comparison between the current quarter and the same quarter of the previous year; it would be helpful to provide a chart or table showing the cumulative statistics and percentile performance across several quarters, thereby allowing for the identification of trends and a more rounded analysis of performance across time. Providing

greater clarity around source figures would also be important; for instance, the dissemination figures at sections 2.1 and 2.5 should make clear that they were from different sources and were therefore not directly comparable.

Members discussed the investigative and prosecution timeframe, noting that cases took on average around two and a half years to conclude, and asked if anything could be done to increase the speed of the process.

The Commander advised that only the investigative part of the timetable was within the control of the police, noting that once cases were referred to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), who required substantial time to prepare cases involving complex frauds, the timetable was out of the Force's control. Following the CPS' preparation, the third stage of the process was for the Courts to consider the case which, again, could take a lengthy period given the complexities involved. The Commander added that the City Police tended to deal with more complex and detailed fraud investigations which subsequently meant that the three stages of the process took longer than with more straightforward crimes. He therefore concluded that the most effective method by which to increase the speed at which cases were dealt with would be to deliver effective fraud prevention work, thereby decreasing the volume of such crimes and consequently freeing up resource to focus more effectively on a fewer number of cases.

A Member noted that the Force had received 5213 disseminations for the period, but with only 2% of outcomes being non-judicial, compared to a national average of 18%. The Commander advised that the reason the City Police received this number of disseminations is because the NFIB (Action Fraud) determined that these reports should be investigated by the City Police either because the locus of the relevant enquiries was in the City or because the case appeared to fit with the Lead Force's role. As to the reason why the percentage of non-judicial outcomes was so comparatively low, this was because this sort of outcome tends to consist of disruptive activity; the City Police generally dealt with larger-scale and more complex fraud cases as the National Lead Force and therefore primarily sought to achieve a judicial outcome. As a result, there was less "disruptive" or non-judicial activity.

It was subsequently asked if it would be possible or appropriate to provide a breakdown of cases in progress according to whether they were still the subject of police investigation, or if they had been referred to the CPS or Court service. This would enable the Force to evidence that it was processing its own investigations expeditiously and make clear that it was not in control of the overall timeframe. Similarly, it was asked if the judicial outcome section could be broken down to clarify what percentage led to prosecutions and what proportion resulted in acquittals. Following some debate as to the practicalities involved, the Commander undertook to explore the most appropriate way in which such information could be provided in an appendix to the report, where practical.

It was noted that there had been a drop of 16% in Action Fraud reports over the last quarter. The decrease was associated solely with reports made via the call

centre and it was believed that this was due the centre's operating company going in to administration. The new operator was now in place and operating an interim solution at 100% capacity, prior to designated funding from the Home Office for a permanent solution coming on stream in April.

In discussing various Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), it was observed that the wording of KPI 2.2 was such that the measure was reliant on the Organised Crime Co-ordination Centre's mapping process. The Commander advised that this was not always fully appropriate for the work of the Economic Crime Directorate, as individuals with a significant economic crime profile – such as an individual perpetrating a multi-million pound Ponzi scheme – would not necessarily be captured within this KPI. It was urged that the Commander revisit this KPI accordingly.

The Chairman took the opportunity to advise the Board that discussions were underway regarding the possibility of inviting Police and Crime Commissioners to an event in the Autumn highlighting the work of the Force's economic crime section.

RESOLVED: That the report be received and its content noted.

5. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no urgent items.

7. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED - that under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

8. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

The non-public minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2015 were approved.

9. ECONOMIC CRIME ACADEMY

The Board received a report of the Commissioner of Police which provided an update on the Economic Crime Academy.

10. RESTRICTED ACTIVITY UPDATE

The Board received a report of the Commissioner summarising notable activity being delivered by City of London Police in its capacity as National Lead Force.

11. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

12. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There were no urgent items.

The meeting ended at 12.45 pm

Chairman

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