

Police Accountability and Legitimacy Group (PALG)

Police Headquarters

13 March 2019

MINUTES

Attendees

Police and Crime Commissioner's Team

Lee Jones - Chair (LJ)

Chief of Staff (Interim)

Hannah Jenkins-Jones (HJJ)

Scrutiny and Assurance Manager

Sarah Mahon (SM)

Engagement and Assurance Officer

Jackie Trow (JT)

Quality and Standards Manager

South Wales Police

Chief Superintendent Phillip Ashby (PA)

Assistant Chief Constable Jenny Gilmer (JG)

Detective Sergeant Russell O'Rourke (RO)

Detective Constable Sian O'Shea (SO)

Chief Inspector John Wainwright (JW)

Detective Chief Inspector Mark Vaughan (MV)

PALG Members

Alex Drummond (AD)

Independent Advisor

Emma Tobutt (ET)

Sport Wales

Jasmine Jones (JJ)

Gypsy Traveller Wales

Miranda Evans (ME)

Disability Wales

Paul Dear (PD)

Welsh Government

Steve Bartley (SB)

Older People's Commissioner

Steve Warner (SW)

Gofal

Tony Hendrickson (TH)

EYST

Rebecca Frohwein (RF)

Hafal

1. PALG overview and purpose

LJ informed the group that the first part of the meeting would be dedicated to providing PALG members with an overview of the Commissioner's role and the purpose of PALG. As there were a number of new members, LJ and HJJ wanted to ensure they provided this clarity to ensure members were clear on the relationship between PALG and the Commissioner's scrutiny role.

HJJ informed the group that PALG was established 2 years ago and was originally seen as a joint group between the Commissioner and South Wales Police. The recent governance restructure had provided the opportunity for this to be reviewed as it was important that the Commissioner had an independent group that supported him in holding the force to account. It was intended that PALG would therefore operate as a group that could support the Commissioner's scrutiny and oversight function. The organisational expertise amongst the

membership was noted but Members were encouraged to support and challenge all aspects of PALG agenda items and were reminded they would not need to restrict themselves to contributing only on issues their organisation represented. HJJ advised that PALG played an important role in helping the Commissioner exercise his duties and that Members were invited to use their position on the group to challenge South Wales Police performance and make suggestions for improvement

HJJ provided an overview of the Commissioner’s statutory responsibilities as outlined in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (PRSA). These included, holding the Chief Constable to account in the exercise of his/her functions, giving a voice to the public, especially victims of crime and having a Police & Crime Plan in place.

LJ and HJJ presented the operational model which had been developed as a reference document in assisting members with suggested questions when receiving an input at PALG. LJ shared the ‘PALG feedback and outcomes monitoring form’, which captured all the feedback received since PALG had been established and outcomes that had arisen as a result. This demonstrated the value that the PALG group had already added.

LJ concluded by emphasising that PALG would only work with good membership and attendance. LJ was keen to ensure that PALG represented a broad range of organisations in order to ensure a holistic approach to scrutiny and engagement. LJ asked in instances where meetings were due to have low attendance, whether members felt that the meeting should go ahead. The group agreed that their preference would be to cancel the meeting, as there was value in hearing and learning from other organisations and this would be difficult to achieve if only a couple were in attendance. LJ confirmed that this would be the agreed approach in the future.

2. Minutes and Actions

The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed as a true record with no matters arising. The actions from the previous meeting were discussed and the following updates were provided:

No.	Action	Lead	Update
1	AFR session	Hannah Jenkins-Jones	Completed – Session held on February 4th 2019. Unfortunately no PALG members were able to attend.
2	Produce report containing county lines demographic breakdown.	Chief Superintendent Danny Richards	Completed – As a result of the feedback received from PALG members at the previous meeting, Chief Superintendent Danny Richards had now produced a report on the demographic breakdown of individuals associated with County Lines. This had been shared with PALG members for discussion at 13/3/19 meeting. In addition to this, the presentation used to deliver inputs to partner agencies had also been amended following concerns around the messaging and possible unconscious bias as a result of the images used.

3	Produce final report on achievements under the previous Equality Plan.	Chief Inspector John Wainwright	Ongoing – This had now been deferred to Chief Officers as there was currently a gap in resources leading on inclusion and equality in force. C/I John Wainwright was currently awaiting clarification from Chief Officers on who was best placed to conduct this work.
4	Circulate final Joint Equality Plan	Hannah Jenkins-Jones	Ongoing – The new plan has been drafted and comments received at the previous meeting had been taken on board to shape the strategy. The plan would be circulated to PALG members following final sign off by the Commissioner and Chief Officers.
PALG members welcomed county lines being revisited in the future in order drill down further into the intersectionality.			

3. Sex Work

Detective Inspector Mark Vaughan had been invited to provide an input on South Wales Police’s response to sex work following a request from a PALG member. MV informed the group that South Wales Polices’ definition of vulnerability was *“A person is vulnerable, if as a result of their situation or circumstances, they are unable to take care of or protect themselves from harm or exploitation”*. MV advised that this could at any point in time encompass any person.

MV provided a brief overview of the history of sex work in South Wales and referred to the historical sex trade based in Cardiff. The emphasis historically was on prosecuting street sex workers, which resulted in them attending court and paying a fine. This approach was inadvertently encouraging sex workers back to working on the streets, in order to earn what they had paid in fines. Police tactics changed overtime as it was recognised that South Wales Police was not addressing the individuals who were exploiting sex workers. Initially, the operational response wasn’t a long term strategic approach as the measures put in place ended up ‘moving the problem’ as opposed to solving the problem. MV advised that historically the vast majority of sex workers were female, had different addictions and were much older in comparison to what the police were responding to now. The emphasis on vulnerability had not been considered and very rarely did sex workers report violence to South Wales Police.

MV went on to discuss the progress that South Wales Police had started to achieve over recent years. MV informed the group that they had started working with Safer Wales in Cardiff upon realisation of the need to prioritise the vulnerability of sex workers, as opposed to enforcement. MV noted that the sex workers appeared to be getting younger and their addictions growing stronger. MV provided an overview of ‘Street Life’, which offered support to street sex workers, ensuring they were safe, whilst also gathering intelligence and referring on to South Wales Police or Ugly Mugs. Ugly Mugs was a national charity who provided protection for sex workers who were often targeted by dangerous individuals and were reluctant to report incidents to the police. Their main mission was to end violence against sex workers. MV advised that Ugly Mugs managed a large database of intelligence related to sex workers, which with consent, they were able to share anonymous intelligence to the police.

MV provided information about the change in approach that South Wales Police had taken, from criminal to preventative routes, including an overview of the Cardiff diversionary pathway, which involved a five stage process for those working in the sex trade. The pathway was designed to 'force' sex workers to engage with support services in order to address addictions. MV outlined the five stage approach used for this purpose.

MV advised that there was a non-uniformed sex work liaison officer working alongside Street Life in Cardiff. The aim of this role was to build trust and check on the welfare of sex workers. They also acted as a liaison with the community to deal with concerns and educate.

MV went on to provide an overview of the Sex Workers Operational Team Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (SWOT MARAC), which was a forum where higher risk sex workers were discussed and care packages put in place. MV discussed the referral mechanisms that were in place, which enabled a partnership approach to put in place safeguarding mechanisms and identify trigger points.

MV provided an overview of the typology associated with sex work, differentiating between street sex workers, indoor sex workers, independent sex workers and internet based sex working. MV also discussed that for some individuals sex work was a lifestyle choice, whilst others were exploited and trafficked by organised criminal gangs into the sex trade. MV provided an insight into the prevalence of internet based sex working and the complexities of tracing and identifying locations where the activities were taking place. MV referred to the covert operation that Cambridge police had conducted, which was aimed at ensuring sex workers weren't victims of exploitation and slavery. MV advised that although South Wales Police's intelligence team do monitor adult services websites, there were no plans in place to conduct a similar operation.

MV advised that in 2016, conversations had taken place in Parliament around the legalisation of prostitution leading to a national debate around vulnerability and criminality of sex working. Discussions were still taking place at a national level about this and a decision was yet to be made. MV referred to number of guidance and research documents (e.g. Beyond the Gaze' research, National Sex Work Guidance), which he would be willing to circulate to members.

Questions

JJ queried the 5 stage diversionary pathway and asked how it would apply if a sex worker did not have an addiction MV advised that the main objective was for the sex worker to receive support regardless of the issue. This could include housing, finance, etc.

Further to the National Ugly Mugs overview, AD wanted to clarify that the national database referred to, contained a list of perpetrators as opposed to sex workers. AD also wanted to clearly differentiate between street sex workers and sex workers, as it was important to note that there were also autonomous and empowered groups who chose sex work as career. AD expressed concern about people not reporting a crime against them in fear of receiving a caution which could affect chances for a career in the future (particularly in the case of students).

PD asked whether there was data available providing a breakdown of numbers, scale, and demographics. MV advised that data sets weren't currently available, however they would be gathering this information in the future as a result of engagement opportunities being explored. The findings from the commissioned research would also assist with understanding the landscape.

ET agreed that it would be beneficial to capture this data in order to get into a position to understand the trend and the causes that were influencing people into sex work. ET felt that if an understanding of the root causes was captured, identification and response could be tailored. JJ agreed and added that by identifying the 'risk groups' that were likely to fall into sex work, earlier identification and preventative measures could start to be put into place.

The group discussed the number of contributing factors that could be influencing people into entering sex work, such as austerity, mental health, domestic abuse and substance misuse. Women subject to domestic abuse whose partners were reliant on substances could be forced into sex working in order to fund the perpetrators addictions. AD added that men, non-binary and transgender sex workers were also involved and it was important to see this as not just women only.

TH added that sex work could be seen as a more viable option of income as the stigma attached to sex work had reduced significantly. This was fuelled by the sexualisation portrayed in the media and across social media channels.

The group flagged that there was no representation at PALG from a substance misuse and domestic abuse organisation and that this would be a useful consideration going forward. The group also discussed the involvement of underrepresented groups, who were subject to these discussions. As the Bristol University research was due to be published in June, an agreement was made to revisit this agenda item when the research has been launched. HJJ also suggested it may be worthwhile setting up sub-groups outside of the main PALG group in order to explore subject matters like this in further detail.

LJ thanked everyone for their contributions and noted it was a worthwhile discussion. As suggested by members, LJ asked whether it was possible for MV to ascertain whether any data could be sourced and shared with the PALG group at the next meeting.

ACTION: SM to circulate Sex Work guidance document links

ACTION: HJJ to explore possibility of setting up future sub groups where relevant.

ACTION: MV to source available data on sex workers across South Wales.

4. Any Other Business

LJ asked whether any members had any updates they would like to share with the group.

SB informed the group that the Older People's Commissioner had launched a consultation regarding their priorities. As a result of the consultation, they would be launching a strategy which aimed to be published by the beginning of April 2019.

TH advised that they had received a number of calls from schools regarding pupils involved in far right groups. As a result, PREVENT EYST were delivering a whole range of interventions to schools around this.

SW informed the group that Gofal were currently going through a re-brand, due to be launched in May. A further update would be provided at the next meeting.

LJJ and HJJ informed the group that the Commissioner's scrutiny programme was due to commence, with hate crime being the first deep dive topic. They were keen to ensure partners and victims fed into this process and advised they would be in touch with members to gather their views and seek opportunities to speak to victims of hate crime.

SM informed the group that the Commissioner was in the process of developing his annual engagement plan and welcomed suggestions from members of any engagement events or stall opportunities that the Commissioner’s team could be involved in.

Action Table

Action	Description	Person Responsible
1	Circulate Sex Work guidance document links	Sarah Mahon
2	Explore possibility of setting up future sub groups where relevant	Hannah Jenkins-Jones
3	Source available data on sex workers across South Wales.	Mark Vaughan