



# **JNC Meeting**

20<sup>th</sup> March 2025, GEOAmey Manchester Time: 9.30am

#### **Attendees:**

Mark Eckersley (ME)
Richard Chambers (RC)
Deborah Peters (DP)
Mike Sharrock
Emily Butler
Eamon O'Hearn (EO)
Jim Edgar (JE)
Gemma Raine
Martin Wright
Paul Williams
Gavin Redfern
Andy Sharp
Keith Smith
Parris Maddellin

# Role:

Account Director
HR Director
Head of Reward & People Services
Head of Health & Safety (Virtual)
HR Business Partner
GMB National Officer
National Convener (GMB)

Apologies - Gemma Raine, Dave Newsham & Rebecca Burt

# **AGENDA:**

Karen Robinson Rachel Wood Dave Newsham

- 1. Health & Safety Summary (MS)
- 2. Previous Meeting Actions
- 3. Business Update (ME)
- 4. HR Operations Update
- 5. Operations and Sickness Absence (JE)
- 6. Ridgid Bar Handcuffs (PW)
- 7. Limiting Payments on AOD (JE)
- 8. Time off for Reps Agreement (JE)
- 9. ECO Matters (RW)
- 10. SSFWA Review (JE AND AS)
- 11. Uniform (KR)
- 12. Dates for Joint CCM and VBC Meetings (KR)
- 13. Secondments and Progression (KR)
- 14. Employee Forums (AS)
- 15. Scheduling of Phase1 and IPT (AS)
- 16. Distraction Packs (AS)
- 17. D PERS (AS)
- 18. GMB Reps access to SOP/Policies
- 19. AOB





1	Welce	ome and introductions.				
	Apolo	ogies:				
2	Minut	tes of meetings (JE)				
	Review of actions from previous JNCC					
	1	ME and JE to decide whether H&S should be invited at the next meeting	ME/JE	Closed – H&S in attendance at todays JNCC and to attend future meetings		
	2	RC to share contracts with JE once reviewed	RC	Open – work ongoing – DP in attendance at today's JNCC to discuss contractual elements and new draft contracts to be finalized before Christmas		
	3	RC to consider whether to cover contracts in ITC	RC	Closed – Introductions of an Exec welcome slot on ITC		
	4	AS to share specific examples of PCO badge delays with RB	AS	Closed – names shared. Central HR team working with local base admins to capture full list to chase.		
	5	Meeting to be arranged with RG, JH and JE to move forward a review of Control Point Officers.	ME	Open – work ongoing – initial meetings taken place		
	6	RC to review current practice for advertising internal vacancies	RC	Closed – correct internal processes reiterated		
	7	RB to request size guide from uniform supplier	RB	Closed – requested and sizing packs put together		
	8	ME to follow up progress on quality assurance in Logistics Centre	ME	Closed – QA to recommence in LC from October 2024 – ME to maintain governance		
	9	ME to work with GMB to construct criteria for OIC payments	ME/JE	Closed – productive meeting on 17.10 and follow up in November		
	10	ME to review current Manchester bus lane provision and explore options for expanding	ME	Closed – advised to use lanes and challenge any fines centrally		
	11	RC to review Recognition Agreement and explore options for formalizing facility time	RC/JE	Closed - proposal for 1 day per quarter with provision that TU reps return to the workplace following ad hoc ER meetings		
	12	RB to undertake review of current employee forums to ensure fit for purpose	RB	Open – harmonized plan being drafted by Sukie Sangha (HRBP) – expected 05/12/2024		
	13	RC to review communication channels	RC	Closed – ME to invite FLMs to monthly management calls and RMs to arrange quarterly FLM meetings within their regions		
	14	RC to explore option for back to the floor days for trainers	RC	Closed – considered and not deemed necessary. Court visits during ITC and more robust deployment of ad hoc trainers back to operation should cover off.		
	15	RC to review training cancellations and look at	RC	Closed – ongoing BAU review		

ways to reduce occurrences





16	RB to review availability of clinics for Hep B in conjunction with provider	RB	Closed – issue in Wales – seeking alternate pharmacy locations.
17	Joint Comms HR/JNCC – around right to be represented at meetings	RC	Open – Joint comes to go out regarding timescales and employee right to be represented at meetings
18	ME to review £1 allocation for OIC payment in Leicester	ME	Open – ME to address
19	ORM Training – ME to organize	ME	Open – Not everyone has attended the ORM training yet ME to speak with JC
20	ME to speak with IT regarding tablets	ME	Open – Reporting on YP's. ME to send out expectations on this
21	RC to share LTS/STS data with JE	RC	Open – High level LTS/STS data to be shared with JE
22	ME to set up meeting with Jamie Wakeman, RW & PM	ME	Open – Meeting to be set up with JM, RW & PM to discuss ECO routes
23	RC to allow GMB Reps access to SOPs/Policies	RC	Open – RC to allow GMB reps access to policies/sops potential via Kronos tiles

# 3 Health & Safety Summary (MS)

ME: So, Mike the first few slides were at group level, were they?

MS: Yes.

EOH: So, slides were England and Wales what's group?

ME: The first 4/5 slides were. EOH: It includes Scotland?

ME: Yes, and then following slides split between England and Wales.

JE: Is there any reason for RIDDOR's being up?

MS: Last year multiple incidents on occasions, WM 2/3 incidents with multiple officers in each incident.

JE: What is Evotix going to give us?

MS: It will be able to pinpoint and drill down to times, places and dates and is currently being tested.

EOH: Thank you for comparative figures for England and Wales, what do those stats look like against the proportion of movements, do they track against number of people?

MS: I don't but Ray Grace, Head of Safer Custody, tracks that and does supply this but that doesn't form part of these metrics.

ME: The accident frequency rate (AFR) - does this measure hours worked?

MS: AFR does monitor hours worked.

ME: It would be worth having note of that for the ratio of prisoners handled per region for context.

KR: The first 2 months is higher on UOF and Assaults compared to last year.

MS: It is, but I don't know whether it's the introduction to RBH that has driven this.

KR: Prisoners to staff on duty in areas with extra assaults which would line in with the perception of officers feeling unsafe, sickness is high currently and it would be interesting to see if there's a correlation.





MS: ROSS doesn't give me that currently, something that the new system would be able to give us.

ME: No suggestion that resource shortfalls led to those incidents occurring?

MS: No, some are still under investigation, no trend indications to suggest that.

KR: Point out from ours and members perspective, RIDDOR's are important, trends are higher for assaults, not all end up in RIDDOR. On the ground perspective it's on assaults and UOF occurring. They aren't all and everything on report.

MS: Injury/accidents we look at – UOF comes under Safer Custody side. We carry out investigations at a higher level.

MW: Looking to see if use of RBH has anything to do with RIDDOR's from this year, when did we start using them?

ME: 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> February.

MW: How many were at the start of the year, and since then?

MS: It's within the first couple of months.

EOH: We welcome what you have done, important detail. Next level, staffing and correlation of events and even more specific of England and Wales, we don't have anything to do with SCCPES results, we would really appreciate what is happening in our courts here

MS: Absolutely understood. Will take that onboard.

RC: Did the presentation work?

JE: It gave the info we wanted.

EOH: If we had it before hand, we could have prepared for questions and goes quite quickly. Maybe something we can consider in pre-meet.

RC: We want as much info upfront and can be a productive meeting rather than takeaway and come back. Going forward there won't be another clash with the JNC meeting.

# 4 Previous Meeting Actions

#### **OIC** payment - Closed

ME: There were a couple of discussions around this concern in Yorkshire and have now moved forward.

JE: Did we finalise the criteria?

ME: We shouldn't allocate a Supervising Officer based on length of service, balanced, measured approach to that, red line if an officer is within their probationary period who is not an experienced ECO/DBO. From the management team's perspective, if there are performance issue managers to manage locally with regards to the allocation of the OIC.

PM: No officers in charge in Leicester VB, never got this, we don't get that, it's on the sheet, used to get it but for about 2 years we never get that.

ME: Clearly there is some confusion there.

DP: Okay.





ME: I will take an action to address this - £1 per hour that gets allocated to the OIC, assigned by the VBC, on any Youth Services move, due to the responsibility for ensuring that the quality of service provide is high, enhanced care takes place, data quality is good etc. (ACTION)

# Recognition Agreement formalising facility time - Closed

#### **Employee Forums - OPEN**

Relaunched on back of engagement survey, re-energise going forward.

#### H&S data - Closed

Risk assessment training – not everyone has been on it – (ACTION)

ME: My expectation was you would attend ORM training, I will raise with our RMs to ensure that this is planned

# Joint comms HR/JNCC right to be represented at meetings – OPEN

# Rep to meet with Resourcing Manager in Manchester – Paul Williams identified on this. - Closed

ME: There has been some confusion on who was going to represent the union reps., Sam Jones and Stacey Slavin will be in touch with Paul Williams to arrange for this to happen during week commencing 7<sup>th</sup> April, as it's important we have the right person to raise the points.

# Young offender movements looking at SOPs with Mark - Closed

ME: I shared two letters with Kev Mace, which includes what is required with regards to Youth Services needed from a contractual perspective. Young Persons can be moved on non-cellular vehicles based on risk assessment and can also transport them in cellular vehicles. This expectation is very clear on what the Authority requires from GEOAmey us, and we must plan according to that requirement. Kev Mace held a meeting with Rachel Wood and went through the requirements.

#### **ECO locations & Rota model**

ME: I made a commitment that the Head of Logistics would look at our Youth Services resource versus demand model as part of the Fleet renewal programme. This has been completed and took account of expected volumes over the next 3 years from an HMCTS, HMPPS and Police perspective. Our Head of Logistics is content that our model is right, albeit if we were modelling again there is a question mark over the level of ECO resources based in Leicester due to the closure of Rainsbrook STC that was a significant collection and delivery point up until closure, however, it is not our intention to change this at this point. We have 8 ECO vacancies at this time





which will be affecting working hours and when we looked at the option of having ECOs based in the North East (Spennymoor) it does not make logistical sense as the number of Young Persons accommodated in Newton Aycliffe SCH is extremely low, the majority are transported to/from HMYOI Wetherby when attending courts in the North East.

AS: Can we see that?

ME: I am happy for Jamie to talk someone through that, but it is commercially sensitive, so I would not be prepared to share the data set.

AS: If we don't see it, we can't give an opinion on it.

ME: Happy for Jamie to talk through with Jim or other reps.

JE: This is why ECO population is asking for this to be relooked at as some officers are doing 12-hour days constantly.

KR: Overall management of it – the perception on ground is that no one is looking and seeing what is happening.

ME: There is 1 person dedicated to Youth Services within the Logistics Centre all day, two shifts.

KR: Is that 1 person daily?

ME: From a resource management perspective proportionally, it is far greater that Adult Services, one person constantly overseeing c.15 moves in-day and planning for the following day.

EOH: Involve key members of the committee whilst these works are being reviewed and done.

There may be parts that we need to understand.

ME: We will make arrangement for our Head of Logistics, to go through the modelling with the relevant union reps before the next meeting.

#### IT tablets - Reporting on YP - OPEN

ME: Asked Lee Whipp to do some instructions on this. The way the system has been designed there is no way around this workflow. The Authority were insistent that we captured the data as part of CDI 2.7 (providing enhanced care) early into the contract and for us to ask those questions, which is aimed towards when Young Persons are being transported in non-cellular vehicles and can't be removed from the process when collecting Young Persons on cellular vehicles at this stage. Communication on expectations on how to ensure data is entered correctly (e.g. not applicable in the comments box) will be completed imminently.

#### **MoJ Badges**

JE: Rebecca had closed off badges but still having an issue with badges.

DP: We received a large number of badges last week that we ordered in September. It is a delay with the supplier (SCCL) who do our vetting and are the only organisation that can produce the badges. We have asked if we can do them, but we can't as we have been told that they have to be done by SCCL. The team are working through it, doing as much as we can and flagging for quicker turnarounds.

AS: Never had this issue when it was handled by MoJ/HO.





#### 5 Business Update (ME)

GEOAmey have engaged the MoJ on the impending National Insurance increase that will result in our tax bill significantly increasing from 1 April 2024.

The prison population challenges continue and be a concern for the foreseeable future, however, despite this we have delivered some good results since the start of the year.

Serious incidents continue to be of concern, although it is extremely pleasing that we have had zero GEOAmey culpable RIE incidents since November 2024.

Service outcomes in since start of the year:

- HMCTS service from a 'time' perspective less than 5 hours per month
- Females transported within 2 hours of court decision 11 out of 13 months
- Youth Services outcomes Achieved 100% of 19 CDIs in Feb, 1 failure in January
- · Service to the Police significantly improved Achieved overnights & Late Notes targets
- Returning 97% of prisoners returned 30 minutes before closing time
- 99.4% of IPTs completed within required timeframe 90% target

#### Other points of note:

- Some serious concerns regarding officers 'speeding' and totally avoidable 'Road Traffic Incidents'
   which is putting people at risk and damaging our reputation!
- Resource levels in line with our target operating model 97%, 101% including ITC
- Attrition remains a concern, although the number of officers leaving for 'new jobs' is lower than
  perceived by our officer community 21% of all leavers in February
- Non-effective (Absence, Suspensions etc) remains too high but has improved
- Substantial Investments continue despite the financial challenges ROSS replacement, Telephony &
   IT infrastructure, ORM, Power BI, Fleet renewal programme
- Tender process has commenced for the SPS contract, recently confirmed by SPS

Overview of our Objectives (Digital by Default, Officer Availability, Self-Inflicted Corporate Injuries and Employee Engagement) was delivered to the JNCC Committee, as per communication to our colleagues in the WOU.

Share LTS/STS data with JE - (ACTION)

# 6 HR Operations Update

# 7 Operations and Sickness Absence (JE)

JE: Operation or in hospital wasn't counted within Absence management and wouldn't trigger any action? It has disappeared from the policy. Formal request to include it back in the policy so it will not be counted for disciplinary action.

RC: Was in policy 2014, then disappeared before me. As far as we can see a planned operation has never been counted anyway. Don't think it would be affected.





EOH: We can all agree what the intent of the policy but the fact its acknowledged but not factored in should be included in policy, to be very clear about it.

JE: 3 exceptions maternity, operations and AOD.

RC: Let me check and have a conversation with JE. There was a discussion about the perceived inconsistency in applying absence processes across regions.

# 8 Rigid Bar Handcuffs (PW)

PW: The way the policy is written prevents anyone from using them.

ME: As soon as we received the policy we raised some concerns with PECS around having to have two officers present when in use, however, this is an NTRG policy that must be followed, we cannot deviate from this policy.

PW: It looks like a straight copy from HMPPS.

ME: I can see your point that this may appear that it doesn't fully take into consideration our operating model with one officer in a dock on many occasions.

PW: Wouldn't it be a good idea to write our own policy or when MoJ gave opportunity to introduce them?

ME: We spoke to the MoJ about this 12 months ago, gave them feedback and raised our concerns. The way it has been left is that we can't take the policy and design our own because NTRG effectively underwrite the policy and framework we operate under.

KR: Can we get reassurance from the company. The company is training us to use 1-1 and it would be unfair for the company to discipline an officer when we are given minimal sight or to not use it because of the policy and getting disciplined for an escape.

ME: This is why we have spoken to the MoJ to get a firm position.

AS: In Newport Crown Court when the Prison Service attended, they had RBHs on them.

JE: can we leave that with you to progress?

ME: Yes.

# Limiting Payments on AOD (JE)

JE: How can the company know how long a person is going to be off for AOD? From the members perspective, this seems like a cost cutting exercise.

DP: In reality, when the panel sits, we have a list from the health provider and a list of typical time frames. We never get this at the point it's happening it could be a month later, so we do put reviews in with HR and managers regarding OH and GP reports. What we have to be very careful about is some stay off for a long period of time and this has to be controlled and measured. The way we do this is through OH and GP reports. We are giving more time off at the moment than we should be due to the review period beneath it.

JE: It is currently 3 days unpaid.





DP: sickness is a month in arrears, so that sickness won't come out of that month's pay. Sickness and ROSS reports aren't being completed properly or very limited information and we have to push it back for more detail. We are trying to get more information.

JE: Grievances have gone up, refusal or limitations on AOD.

DP: Said yes to 9, no to 7. When we do get detailed reports, we check if training was involved, were things followed. Somethings that come through are injuries and not assaults.

RC: Let's review the whole process.

JE: Did ask to be on the panel but never have been.

RC: Will take it away and take a review of the process.

# Time off for Reps Agreement (JE)

RC: Jim, Mark and I came up with a proposal, and the JNCC discussed it yesterday. Any feedback should be shared with Jim who can then feedback to me for consideration.

# **ECO Matters (RW)**

RW: Asked if possible information for each ECO for each base can be provided so it can be seen by everyone to see if the jobs are being shared out fairly and cross decks. The feeling is certain bases are just being used in the local areas and everyone else is getting long distances and hours.

AS: Said this was unfair distribution of workload.

ME: It won't just be in Yorkshire where that's the feeling it would be across the board, should cover this off via Jamie. Not sure whether this gets sent to VBC.

KR: We have it on the whiteboards that I can see where the other ones are going, I get sent all 3 whiteboards, my area and VB's. We look at our local routes and change whiteboards getting on time and assists quicker.

JE: Best way to solve this is to discuss with Jamie. Rachel, Paris and Jamie to meet.

RW: 11 hour ruling and receiving out of hours phone calls at home, when we finish the working day and haven't processed who's going to be on what, these calls are coming in at 7:30/8 and then wanting you in at 6am, which doesn't seem right.

ME: The alternative, if colleagues does not want to be contacting after a certain time (e.g. after finishing shift before all tasks have been finalised which in exceptional circumstances could be 6pm) we would have no option but to tell ECOs to come into work at 6am, which is in nobodys interest.

JE: This is going to cost money.

RW: Already come in at 7 and will call to make changes.

ME: I don't know how many jobs come in beyond this time.

JE: ECO's aren't covered under an agreement, I think we get an agreement that puts in work life balance.





RW: This has been tried 3 times now – the basics was documented and then staff left, and it never got finalised.

ME: We will try and overcome this, we did do a piece of work to see how much this was happening.

JE: Can we do some work and look at ECO hours?

ME: We have done some work on this Jim over the GEOAmey officer community as a general piece over the last 6 months. The 10 officers that worked the most was mainly officers – the ECOs aren't in it.

EOH: Not a relative measure as some could be just below the top 10.

ME: I am looking on a monthly basis when we look at average hours and going off the data in front of me, February, which was a significant upsurge in number of hours ECO's did. We are talking full time employees here in February, which was an excessive period, at an average of 44 hours a week. I accept on those 2 weeks where people are working on the am shift we have some work to do to bring these hours down, however, we also have this with PCOs that 'generally' do 3 weeks of early shifts and reduced hours on PM shifts.

# SSFWA Review (JE AND AS)

JE: This was sent to me by Claire Mace, having call back days for ITC 6 day/5/5 day weeks, can we put an amendment into the agreement for consideration as long as they're getting it back. A lot of new managers don't understand the agreement and have a review to go through it.

# Uniform (KR)

KR: Some uniform sizes are available more than others and officers who have been waiting months are going to buy sizes. Old uniforms are sent through, not new. It is still unform, but not what they were expecting.

A discussion took place about adhering to uniform and appearance standards with an agreement by all that consistency should be applied.

RC: Jim we will take this away and discuss further.

# **Dates for Joint CCM and VBC Meetings (KR)**

JE: Believe that's been rectified.

KR: Still have no dates as such, a long time since mentioned and approved and no movement on it.

ME: We talked about this in October and universally agreed it is a good thing to do. It also came up on the management engagement events, documented in FAQ, as far as I'm concerned, we should be moving to that position. What I did say is we will start this from Q2. I will prompt them to get dates in. It should be agreed with the management team the best time to do these.





#### Secondments and Progression (KR)

KR: Sent an email to you Mark and Lynda, my base manager got another position in compliance on Secondment. The secondment hasn't been offered to backfill her position, which is a rare opportunity. I was surprised that this opportunity wasn't open for people to apply for. What is available to progress skills sets when passed up for positions? People are looking elsewhere where they can progress.

RC: 96% of our managers are homegrown. The one thing my team and I have identified, is that promoted officers get dropped in at the deep end. I have committed to have a pre-manager training course, future managers with skills to do the job to help them get to the next stage, then when successful they have the skills to do the job.

JE: Think PDRs are important for this, not helping attrition, if started to plan.

KR: PDR are good for understanding skillset.

RC: We have been here 9 months, on the radar and agenda, we can't fix everything retrospectively and we are in the process in appointing a new L&D manager who will be able to assist with this development.

KR: Why was there no secondment?

ME: I have said that even if were not putting the VBM position in place for 6 months, or if someone remotely will be supporting, we should still be giving our VBCs some exposure to tasks within the role from a development perspective.

# 8 Employee Forums (AS)

AS: When are they going to start?

RC: This will be after the Engagement survey comes to an end and Sukie is designing the Forums and putting them in place.

AS: So in the next 3 months they should be in place.

ME: The direction I have given to the RM's is that these form part of their objectives and will be measured against. The meetings will be held quarterly with appropriate level of representation. Catalyst will be the results of the survey being available at the start of May and the focus is on this and to have the voice of officer community looking at results and as a team to create a regional action plan.

Is it 1 forum per region every 3 months?

ME: Yes

# 9 Scheduling of Phase1 and IPT (AS)

AS: Feeling that there has not been any scheduling of breaks following prison drop offs.

MW: Think there is an IPT, can be done.

KR: What I would say, drop off, take break and go back in to do the job.

JE: Any facility for LC to organise a break?





ME: This has been discussed before. I suppose from a planning perspective this should be managed locally.

JE: Bulletin out, to communicate breaks need to be happening, instruct our members to take breaks.

#### 10 Distraction Packs (AS)

AS: It was a big thing when they came out, but this facility ended in 2022.

ME: Ones being provided?

JE: Questions raised were not providing distraction packs, but courts are providing them? How do we know what's suitable? Is there any governance?

AS: Most of that's for kids.

ME: 10 courts where comfortable furniture will be provided. The MoJ/HMCTS has purchased this, thought they were comfortable?

RW: The feedback is that they are considered much better than a bench.

#### D PERS (AS)

AS: What's the terminology on DPER?

ME: Person escort?

AS: So, when they came out in 2011 – said that we had to describe every time we write in them it should be detained person. Everything else says prisoner. Got told had to be called detained person but going through all policies it says prisoners.

JE: Who made us change it Mark?

ME: What I would just point to is the fact we have accepted we have to do more work on SOP's to rewrite them and make them more succinct. We are looking for an officer who has operational experience who can help us re-write SOP's.

# **GMB Reps access to SOP/Policies – (ACTION)**

AS: I'm in hearings and I don't see the relevant paperwork and am just going in blind. If I can access as a GMB Rep and PCO the SOP's and policies online, this would be a big help. My work doesn't end when I finish work my work carries on.

ME: Good point we will need to just give it a thought.

JE: Think there was a cost for adding email addresses.

Could just be a GMB account.

DP: Do you use Kronos? We could build a tile to give you access to a tile linked to share point that you can access.

JE: That would be good

DP: There is a tile on Self-service that we can put policies on for employees as well

AS: Would be helpful.





#### **AOB**

18th or 19th June.

ME: Can I just ask the question; we are keen to meet up to start pay negotiation, so wondered when your pay claim will be submitted.

JE: Get survey out for the members for pay claim, if we can get it to you early,

RC: As early as possible, can I leave that with you Jim?

GR: The side door on 2 cells aren't unlocking and claim this is down to someone leaving the door open and let someone out in Wolverhampton.

You have to double press

GR: The lieu days, saying they're going to be taking that in the same year.

DP: For Christmas day they get a day in Lieu but have to take it in the same month.

ME: There is a minority in terms of officers that get premium rate after midnight due to their T&Cs

AS: Thought it got addressed with pay deal

ME: Should look at this, the reality is unless somebody works on a Sunday night, it is generally flat rate, however, there have been very exceptional circumstances whereby colleagues have worked over 18 hours and paid a premium.

RW: Weren't there going to be changes to ECO bed watch

ME: I am still deciding which way to go with this as it does seem a waste of ECO resources to have two officers at home all week when we have not had to respond to a Bedwatch for over 18 months.

KR: Even in this meeting I have noted down 6 areas where it's been down to inconsistency of how we are running, a lot of our issues are coming from inconsistency where managers aren't working the same. It is costing the business a fortune.

MW: Waiting times IPT's?

ME: There is absolute focus on turnaround times in prisons, with the Prisons Minister having expressed any interest in this area. Turnaround times for vehicles collecting prisoners for court is the priority and we have seen some changes. Turnaround time for IPTs is next phase where the management information is going to be focusing on time establishments take to process vehicles during the course of the day.