



Mayhill Disorder Progress Report Swansea Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel

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Context

On the 18th May 2021, a report was received by the Ambulance Service of a 19 year old male Ethan Powell in cardiac arrest in an address in Swansea. The male was conveyed to hospital but he sadly passed away. On 20th May 2021 a vigil was planned to celebrate Ethan's life and crowds gathered in Mayhill, Swansea. The vigil escalated quickly from a balloon release into a spontaneous incident of large-scale disorder. The incident resulted in significant damage to property including vehicles and dwellings with missiles being thrown. Stolen vehicles were set on fire and rolled downhill which caused danger and a significant risk to the community with some expressing fear of their lives. On police attendance, they were also subjected to the attack. A criminal investigation was launched, and numerous charges and convictions were brought against those involved.

Post Incident Review Phase

Following the disorder, an internal and a separate external review was commissioned. The external independent learning review was commissioned by South Wales Police, South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner and Swansea City Council. The independent panel comprised of the former chief executive of Swansea City Council Jack Straw, retired chief superintendent of SWP Martin Jones and Professor Elwen Evans QC.

Following the publication of the external independent learning review South Wales Police commissioned Operation Kendall Phase 2, to undertake a detailed review of the issues and identify lessons as well as any successes of the response and management of the incident. The purpose was to identify areas of learning or issues that could be addressed with the intention of implementing recommendations that would inform a response to similar incidents that may occur in the future.

On February 16th, 2022, a detailed timeline of the events in Mayhill was commenced overlaying all matters. The objective was to ensure the production of a complete picture of the chronological order of South Wales Police's (SWP's) operational response to the disorder, and significantly to create a comprehensive timeline that would include and overlay all information, data points and decisions. To do so, the following activity was undertaken:

- Review all calls received by the Force Control Room (FCR).
- Review all incidents created.
- Review all intelligence received throughout the incident (partnership information, social media, direct reports to officers).
- Examine body worn video, CCTV, and other digital media which had been made available during and since the incident.
- Review all radio transmissions.
- Review all available telephone recordings between officers.
- Review command and tactical decisions and the subsequent tactical deployments.

The findings of this Stage 2 review have received scrutiny and oversight by the College of Policing (the professional body for policing in England and Wales whose role is to support improvement and drive change across the service). These findings are outlined below together with the issues identified therein.

Progress on actions identified:

In total, 44 actions were identified to be progressed and nearly all of these have now been completed. A summary of these actions and their progress is described below:

Thematic Area	Number of Actions	Number of Actions completed	Number of Actions in Progress
Training	11	10	1
Resource Management	13	13	0
Equipment	2	2	0
Force Control Room	9	8	1
Command & Control	9	7	1
Total	44	40	4

Summary of activity

240 Police Commanders in SWP at strategic, tactical and operational levels have received additional training in preparing for, responding to and operating in major incident scenarios. This includes the recognition of and declaration of incidents that meet this criteria, together with adopting the principles of the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) that sets out how blue light services must work together to save life and reduce harm. The College of Policing is developing an accredited training product that will further enhance knowledge and skills in this area.

All Police Commanders, and those wider personnel who form part of the initial response to major and critical incidents, have been provided with role specific action cards that act as an aide memoir in the very early stages of an evolving incident. Action cards have also been created in relation to activating key resources and supporting infrastructure. These action cards form part of the new Force Major Incident Plan which is continuously refreshed, updated and recirculated to Commanders and the wider force.

A daily document is also circulated across the force to those in command roles which outlines the availability of specialist resources and their capabilities. This includes Public Order trained officers and importantly how to mobilise them from across the force area as well as the process for seeking mutual aid support from neighbouring forces.

The force is working through a plan with the aim of increasing the number of public order trained officers on duty. A number of recommendations have also been completed that relate to the improved availability of suitably protected police vehicles that can be deployed more rapidly.

Nine actions were identified for the Force Control Room. This included a review of standard operating procedures to simplify them for staff and to ensure that, where large numbers of calls are being received relating to a single incident, these are linked and escalated to the Force Incident Manager in the FCR. This ensures that a comprehensive picture is provided of what is occurring to inform decision making.

Issues with accessing and viewing the Swansea Local Authority CCTV in the FCR have been resolved. This allows staff in the FCR to view CCTV cameras across the city. A new police system has been implemented which has improved the ability of the FCR to receive and view digital footage that is submitted in order to improve situational awareness.

Likewise, the ability now exists for the body worn video cameras carried by all frontline police officers and staff to be live-streamed into the FCR. This is proving critical in aiding situational awareness and decision making in the FCR and by Commanders.

Consistent with the review undertaken, SWP has recently increased the out of hours capacity and capability of the force intelligence functions. This supplements the intelligence function in the FCR, and for major and critical incidents provides a crucial resource in supporting the intelligence requirements for dynamic situations.

Ongoing work

Force Control Room

Further refinement of the Standard Operating Procedures in the FCR is taking place as the Force has implemented a new call assessment process. A new Command and Control IT platform is also in development and due to be implemented in 2025.

Ongoing work to raise the awareness of FCR staff regarding JESIP principles is also continuing.

Training

Work is ongoing to develop a new approach to capability assurance, testing and exercising to ensure that those involved in major incidents are provided with ongoing continuous professional development.

Command and Control

The effective management of major incidents requires suitably equipped and located command facilities that can bring those involved in responding, including Partners, together. This is a key element of the JESIP principles. The Force has commissioned work to upgrade Command facilities across the force. A user requirement has been developed and work is being progressed to upgrade the facilities in the Command room at Swansea Central Police Station.

Assurance

The College of Policing has retained oversight and scrutiny of our work to address the findings from both reviews.

The force has contributed to and taken part in the national JESIP review with many forces adopting the major incident plan that has been created.

In addition, the force commissioned an independent subject matter expert in JESIP who recently led and delivered the national multi-agency command course to assess our capabilities in this area. Again, our position and progress is seen as best practice.

Finally, the force response to the disorder experienced in Ely, Cardiff last year demonstrated the progress that has been made in the planning for and response to major and critical incidents indicating that we have learned and improved. We are not complacent in this regard.