



Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel

3rd July 2020

UPDATE REPORT

This report draws the Police and Crime Panel's attention to a number of matters that have arisen, or progress that has been made, since the last Panel meeting in February 2020.

1. Policy Developments

1.1 National investment in 20,000 new police officers

At the meetings of the Police and Crime Panel in both September 2019 and February 2020 updates have been provided on the Prime Minister's announcement in July 2019 that an additional 20,000 new police officers would be recruited nationally. As part of the funding settlement for 2020/21 £750m additional funding was provided with £168m (£3.9m for D&C) being ring-fenced and paid in line with the progress in recruiting. The Home Office have since agreed that 84m (50% of the ring-fence) will be 'repurposed' to allow for expenditure on COVID-19 pressures.

The first 6,000 officers have started to be recruited with over 3,000 already in training nationally. The allocation for Devon and Cornwall Police is 47 in 2019/20 and 94 in 2020/21, a total of 141. As at 30th June 2020, 70 of the 141 have commenced their training with further intakes in progress. A number of pre-requisite processes have been adapted nationally and locally to virtual methods in order to move forward with the recruitment of these officers.

1.2 Violent Crime Prevention

The focus and scope of the work has been jointly led by the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable. We have agreed the objectives of this programme of work, the commissioning of evidence to inform interventions and have been exploring the governance options and infrastructure required to drive it forward.

The overall aim is to have less people at risk of perpetrating or becoming a victim of homicide and serious violence in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

- (i) To develop and implement a new public health and partnership approach to address the causes of inherent violence within our communities;
- (ii) To build on proven interventions and implement new preventative and evidenced based approaches to address the causes of violent crime and reduce offending;



- (iii) To explore a partnership model to delivering preventative, evidenced based approaches which are known to reduce death/serious injury from serious violence;
- (iv) To make Devon and Cornwall more resilient and intolerant to violence in the community;
- (v) To make Devon and Cornwall more unattractive for serious and organised crime groups;

The breadth and possibilities of this work is vast and therefore research has been undertaken with the support of experts in their field to identify what is possible during the timescales outlined, where there is a clear evidence base for action and where would be the best point to intervene to secure the best possible long term solutions in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. To date the programme has been focused on assessing the current landscape and reviewing current evidence based practices. This has included conversations with a variety of specialist organisations who work within the serious violence arena and local partners including Public Health England, Director of Public Health (Cornwall Council and Plymouth City Council), the South West Academic Health Science Network, and those connected to the trauma informed network of the World Health Organisation.

Domestic Abuse Deep Dive

Devon and Cornwall has also agreed to be one of four policing areas to undertake a deep dive into Domestic Abuse during COVID 19 supported by the Home Office and Number 10. The Commissioner and Chief Constable have agreed that this work will support our wider work on prevention of violence.

Preventing gang violence – the Turning Corners project in South Devon and Torbay

The Turning Corners intervention operated in South Devon and Torbay from November 2018 to end March 2020, following receipt of over £500,000 from the Home Office's Early Intervention Youth Fund. Turning Corners was a collaborative project led by the Police and Community Safety Partnerships which sought to identify and reduce young people being at risk of becoming engaged in violence and gang activity primarily focusing on Newton Abbot and Torbay

A conference to share learning from the project was held at the English Riviera Centre, Torquay, on 10 March. It was opened by the Commissioner and attended by nearly 200 professionals from public, private and third sector organisations. The Turning Corners Project was subject to a Home Office evaluation undertaken by an independent team and the evaluation report is still awaited.

Whilst the project has formally ended, Devon County Council Youth Intervention Team are ensuring that young people identified within the Turning Corners project continue to be assisted. Additionally, the Turning Corners project analyst has been seconded to the Safer Devon Partnership to build on the learning from the project and to develop a strategic profile of intra-familial and extra-familial youth violence in Devon. Safer Communities Torbay (Torbay's community safety partnership) is funding a six month continuation of the Youth Violence Prevention Worker post to ensure continuity for young people within the project. These two initiatives have been supported by the Commissioner through funding to the CSP.

In Torbay the Council has facilitated partnership conversations that produced a bid

led by Active Devon to the Home Office's Youth Endowment Fund to support a youth outreach project in Torbay which builds on the learning from Turning Corners and existing partnerships.

Youth Intervention Project

In the PCC's Commissioning Intentions Plan for 2020/21 the Commissioner committed to a financial investment of £100,000 into a community project which would prevent youth offending, increase community safety and reduce the likelihood of young people coming to the attention of the police. The development of this project is progressing and will be focused on engagement through sport. An OPCC Project Manager has been allocated and work is underway to identify suitable community partners. As this project progresses we will be able to update further at the next panel.

1.3 Victim Care Recommissioning

Between January and April 2020 the current Victim Care Network (the network of 46 victim services who take referrals from the police Victim Care Unit) was evaluated. The network has been in place for five years and has not been fully evaluated for some time. Therefore it was important to see how well the model was working, whether it provided value for money and was offering the best support possible for people affected by crime. The evaluation found that whilst victims were receiving a good service overall, there was lots more which could be done to improve the service offer, ensure better governance, increase value for money and improve overall care for victims.

Following these findings, it was agreed by the Commissioner that a new service would be commissioned for victim care to take effect from April 2021. The approach will be characterised by improving the victim experience and moving towards sustainable improvements over a longer period of time.

All of the current victim care providers were informed that the contract will be recommissioned and now have the opportunity to consider how they might like to be part of the commissioning approach going forward. Market engagement events are due to commence in July and the OPCC are currently engaged in conducting 1-2-1 meetings about what the future might look like. The initial reaction from local victim care providers has been positive and they welcome the opportunity to find longer term approaches to supporting victims locally.

1.4 National Grants and Funding

During the COVID 19 pandemic there have been numerous opportunities for the Commissioner to bid for funding, or to share funding opportunities with other statutory partners as well as the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector. The office has shared regular weekly-emails to the sector detailing the funds they could apply for, including government, philanthropic and commercial sources.

There have been two opportunities from central government funding for victims and witnesses. The first is from the Ministry of Justice. Each area was asked to inform the Ministry of their local need which was done by seeking information from the sector. This resulted in £3 million being submitted to the Ministry in relation to Devon,

Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

This information was collected and analysed nationally. Ultimately the Ministry has made funds available locally in line with the regular 'victim grant' awards which are based on population density on a geographical basis. In total the Commissioner received £596,000 to be awarded to charities that support victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence. This funding was to be distributed in line with criteria set out by the Ministry, through an OPCC administered application process. The OPCC convened a panel to consider applications which included representatives from local authority commissioners, wider stakeholders and lived experience.

In the proceeding process the OPCC did not receive applications for the full amount of funds available from local organisations. This is likely to be as a result of the very stringent conditions regarding what could be applied for and when this must be sent. In addition organisations who support people affected by sexual violence could also apply to the 'rape support fund' simultaneously. The OPCC received applications totalling three quarters of the fund available and is currently finalising the final award process.

Once finalised the results of the funding panel will be publicised on the OPCC website, which will detail the full amount awarded and who was awarded. The only other opportunity presented for funding for victim services during the pandemic has been for funding for sexual violence therapy from NHS England. Locally we made two bids to support the reduction of waiting lists for victims of rape and were successful in confirming funding for Devon Rape Crisis for £41,000 and Cornwall Women's Centre for £37,000.

One of the services promoted through the fund was the Teacher's Helpline set up with Operation Encompass. The Commissioner included this in the funding bid for it to be rolled out nationally and this was successful. Now every teacher has access to a professional via this helpline to offer advice on how best to deal with a child affected by abuse.

1.5 Special Grant Application

The Commissioner would like to thank the Panel for their help in supporting the Special Grant submission and joining her in a delegation to deliver it to the Policing Minister last year. Unfortunately, the bidding criteria was refined to ensure its core purpose was strictly adhered to and we were not successful in recent rounds. There will be further opportunities for the Panel to support the Commissioner's continued efforts to secure long term funding that reflects our challenges should the funding formula for the national distribution of the revenue grant get re-considered. However, there is no timetable for this yet.

1.6 Summer Policing for 2020

The impact that the continuing COVID-19 pandemic will have on tourism for summer 2020 is to some extent unknown. This is both in terms of the level of tourism we will see and also whether continued restrictions may result in different challenges for policing, such as an increase in the volume of 'informal' social events outside of traditional evening and night-time economy structures. Preparations for policing the

summer are well advanced and the operational summer policing plan will commence from 1st July 2020. Devon and Cornwall Police will be operating a silver command structure across the area throughout the summer in order to ensure that policing arrangements are adaptive as the situation develops.

The Commissioner made a specific provision for £400,000 in the 2020/21 budget to support summer policing activities and this funding is being used to support a number of innovative practices, including the expansion of collaborations with partners such as Independent Domestic Violence Advocate cars, joint mental health response units and the provision of additional capacity in key areas such as hospital accident and emergency departments, call centres, investigation and resolution centres and telephone statement taking as well as bespoke policing plans to aid connectivity and tackle crime and disorder in public spaces such as beaches and parks.

1.7 Safer Towns

In February 2020 the Commissioner updated the Panel on plans for the coming year for the safer town project which had originally commenced in Cornwall in partnership with Safer Cornwall. The Commissioner set out her plans to support a wider network of towns to take forward place-based approaches to community safety, through the establishment of a safer towns network.

Under the network the OPCC, working with local CSPs, would offer towns support in a number of areas, including: multi agency engagement days, training opportunities in areas such as bid writing, a local online survey, assistance with data analysis to create community profiles and an annual conference to share best practice across the network.

As at March 2020 seven towns within Devon had been identified to join the network (Cullompton, Cranbrook, Axminster, Tiverton, Ilfracombe, Torquay Harbourside, Paignton, Barnstaple and Bideford) and had received seed funding to support their work. The OPCC was working with the CSPs for those towns to develop community profiles, plan engagement events for early summer and to explore what training opportunities would benefit the town. However due to the COVID -19 pandemic response there has been a delay in moving forward with these plans. Local participants have been focused on other activities linked to their local COVID-19 response and the opportunity for both training sessions, engagement days and a conference have all been constrained by the restrictions in place to manage the pandemic.

The OPCC has remained in contact with the local CSPs to offer any immediate support and reiterating the Commissioner's intention to move forward with the support provided by the network but recognising that towns are currently constrained in capacity. A proposed new timetable, which is being finalised for discussion with safer town representatives will include a survey this summer to understand training needs and local plans (and how these may have altered as a result of the revised challenges due to the pandemic). We are also looking at opportunities to use webinars to support training during social distancing and scoping what options might exist for engagement activities within the current environment. The Commissioner is also in contact with the CSPs with a view to expanding the network's offer to a wider range of towns at the time it is appropriate to do so.

1.8 Business Crime Approach

Under the PCC's Approach to Business Crime¹ work continued in February and March, in partnership with Devon and Cornwall Police and the South West Business Crime Centre to explore opportunities to set up new Business Crime Reduction Partnerships or other business crime prevention initiatives. This initiative was launched in November 2019 and before the lockdown restrictions were imposed business crime prevention assessments had been completed in St. Austell, Bodmin, Teignmouth, Wadebridge, Helston, Newquay, Saltash and Liskeard. These business crime prevention assessments help towns to understand the options that may be available to them and to consider what if any steps they wish to take. Assessments scheduled for other towns had to be postponed due to Covid-19 restrictions. It is intended that this work will recommence as soon as practicable, recognising the wider challenges facing town centres.

The Commissioner had made financial provision in the PCC Commissioning Intentions Plan for 2020/21 to provide some contributory seed funding to towns to help them take forward business crime prevention improvements but the COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on these plans. There has been a delay to a number of business crime prevention assessments as a result of the COVID 19 restrictions and the Commissioner is acutely aware of the different position faced by town centres and businesses. As such the Commissioner intends to utilise the £50,000 funding set out in the Commissioning Intentions Plan in a different way and is working with business representatives to explore how this funding can be used to support business recovery and sustainability for SMEs. The OPCC has been approached by the South West Business Council to explore a pilot for a new local business resilience centre focussed on fraud and cyber crime. This would strengthen the links between the police, the private sector and academia to enable businesses to better protect themselves from crime and provide a single, trusted source of information.

As businesses recover from COVID-19 restrictions and look to recommence trading, the OPCC's business engagement approach has been adjusted to better meet the needs of local businesses. The OPCC is looking at how it can provide enhanced support to watch schemes and other initiatives in the Evening and Night Time Economy (ENTE) to ensure they can resume their important role in helping to keep people safe and secure on a night out.

The OPCC has also provided a range of information and support to business in response to the Covid-19 restrictions.

- The OPCC website provided information to signpost businesses to help and support including Government grants that were available. <https://www.devonandcornwall-pcc.gov.uk/covid-19-info/> A dedicated support email address was established for businesses to use should they have any specific enquiries for the OPCC.
- The OPCC joined a number of other public and private sector organisations

¹https://devonandcornwall.s3.amazonaws.com/Documents/Our%20information/Key%20document/PCC_Business_Crime_V2.pdf

- on the Covid-19 Taskforce established by the South West Business Council.
- At the request of the Federation of Small Businesses, the OPCC worked with the Devon and Cornwall Police Cyber Protect Team to facilitate a webinar for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) giving advice on how to protect themselves and their businesses from online crime, scams and fraud. The event was well received, and further webinars will be arranged upon request.

1.9 CCTV

In February and March 2020, prior to the pandemic restrictions the Commissioner was pleased to support additional CCTV investment in a number of areas:

- Torbay Council – camera capacity at Beacon Cove -£1,500
- Cornwall Fire, Rescue and Community Safety Service - additional capacity at the Monitoring Hub - £15,000
- Falmouth Town Council – three additional cameras - £8,300
- Perranporth/Perranzabuloe Parish Council - eight CCTV cameras - £15,000

It is recognised that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted on progress in this area as towns are focused on wider emergency response matters. The OPCC has been in contact with towns to understand their position and to offer assistance to help move forward when they are able to do so.

The Panel will recall that at the end of 2019 North Devon District Council received funding from the OPCC to develop a monitoring hub service and to update its own system. Work to commence implementation has been affected by the pandemic response but the OPCC are working with North Devon to understand when this work might be able to commence.

The Commissioner is aware that there continue to be some specific challenges in Devon as towns who were seeking to connect into a potential new monitoring hub in Exeter have not been able to progress as they await decisions by Exeter City Council on whether to progress. The Commissioner is seeking a decision on this matter by the end of August 2020 to allow this work to move forward. The OPCC has facilitated discussions for these towns with other potential monitoring hubs, although these have been affected by the scale of activity required within local authorities to manage the pandemic. The OPCC is engaging with all towns to understand their likely timetable for progressing this work and to see what, if any, additional assistance the OPCC may be able to offer to support towns to move forward. This includes the potential for greater use of mobile CCTV opportunities to assist towns facing intermittent challenges.

1.10 Rural Crime Team Expansion

The Panel received a comprehensive report at the meeting in February 2020. This outlined investments in the Rural Policing Team and the Chief Constable's commitment to further expansion to support rural communities. The two new rural affairs officers are due to start on 1st July once released from their current roles, joining PC Chris Collins and PC Martin Beck

- PC Kerry Whitting (currently based in Bideford)
- PC Julian Fry (currently a youth intervention officer based in Tavistock)

2. Road Safety

2.1 SW Peninsula Road Safety Partnership

The Panel has been advised previously about the establishment of a new partnership to significantly reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads within Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. The partnership, which is chaired by the Commissioner, brings together representatives from the following organisations and represents the largest geographic road safety partnership in England:-



The second meeting of the partnership was held on the 23rd January 2020 where partners agreed and signed off the South West Peninsula Road Safety Strategy including the following vision, strategic aims and interim casualty reduction targets:-

Vision Zero

‘Our shared vision is for the road network of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly to be free from death and serious injury.’

This vision should not be regarded as a short or medium term casualty reduction target but reflects our aspirations for the long term and a shared view that death and serious injury should not be an acceptable consequence of using our road network.

Strategic Aims

To deliver our vision, we will work together in partnership, to drive changes which:-

- Prevent death and serious injury as a consequence of using our road network and;
- Improve our post collision response and care

Milestone Targets

We believe the time is right to introduce formal and challenging targets to which all partners can subscribe and as an incremental step toward achieving our vision and strategic aims we have agreed the following collective milestone targets for the peninsula:-

- Reduction in the number of road related deaths by 50% by 2030²
- Reduction in the number of road related serious injury casualties by 50% by 2030

Each of the local authority elected member representatives have agreed to formally adopt this new strategy through their own governance arrangements.

The Commissioner has agreed to take the lead on providing support to the partnership for its governance, administration, finance/treasurer, stakeholder engagement and communications. The third meeting of the partnership was due to take place on 18th March, but was postponed due to COVID 19. However, the partnership subsequently met on 23rd June.

To meet the stated aim of vision zero we know we need to work even more closely alongside our communities who both want to see improvements and will actively participate. The Commissioner has tested a 'Call for Ideas' in partnership with Cornwall Community Foundation with £25,000 which has identified three community led projects which are outlined further below in this update.

The Partnership are also aiming to carry out a further Action Day during the summer to further test the approach that was trialled in Cornwall at the start of 2020. This initial pilot involved a mixture of enforcement, education and engagement around a known collision hotspot with the Safer 38 campaign group, the police, Highways England, fire and rescue services, HM Revenue and Customs and local councillors.

2.2 Road casualties during COVID 19

The COVID-19 restrictions and lockdown has presented particular challenges to road safety. Despite greatly reduced traffic movements and Government rules banning travel in all but exceptional circumstances, Devon and Cornwall still experienced a number of tragic fatalities and injuries on the roads, including a 27-year-old who lost his life in East Devon when his car came off the road on 23 May. A man who died on the A38 and two motorcyclists were seriously injured in a collision on Dartmoor. Later in May another motorcyclist was seriously hurt in a crash in north Devon and more recently two cyclists, one of them just 15, were seriously injured in separate collisions involving other vehicles in Cornwall.

We are unable to name these victims but they and too many like them are the reason road safety must be a higher priority for all. The Commissioner offers her deepest condolences to the families and friends of these victims.

During the weeks when all but essential travel was prohibited, the Commissioner and Chief Constable issued strong 'do not travel' messages, the 'Come back Later' campaign and the Commissioner publishing an open letter asking people not to travel to Devon and Cornwall to prevent additional pressure being placed upon the NHS and emergency response services <https://www.devonandcornwall-pcc.gov.uk/news-and-blog/multimedia-hub/police-and-crime-commissioner-writes-open-letter-to->

² The required percentage reductions are based upon a baseline of the average numbers recorded between 2014 and 2018 inclusive.

[tourists/](#)

As the Government eased travel restrictions, the Commissioner and Chief Constable urged people to 'think twice' before travelling to Devon and Cornwall. Against a backdrop of fine weather, several Bank Holiday weekends and the wish by many to travel again after weeks of lockdown, the volume of traffic on the roads picked up rapidly and caused congestion and community tensions at a number of beaches, beauty spots and on the moors.

The OPCC issued messages calling on motorists to take extra care when returning to driving, being particularly aware of the increased number of cyclists and pedestrians and to ensure their vehicles are ready for the road by carrying out some simple safety checks that may also reduce the likelihood of breaking down.

2.3 'Call for ideas' test in Cornwall

In January 2020, the Commissioner provided £25,000 to Cornwall Community Foundation to distribute to road safety projects in the county. The grant had been made available largely from the Property Act fund money that has been raised by selling off items that have been seized from criminals.

Six eligible bids were received with three receiving a grant as follows:

- Godolphin Cross Community Association - awarded £9,000 to reposition road signs with reduced speed limit (down to 20 mph) to:
 - improve pedestrian safety to include minor junctions and the dangerous stretch for walkers to the National Trust estate
 - improve the location of the bus stop for safety,
 - add a critical but short length of pavement near the school and a "safe play" zone.
- Devon & Cornwall Community Watch Association (DACCWA) - awarded £5,000 to procure dashboard cameras to be issued to landowners, farmers and community enabling them to submit footage of dangerous and inconsiderate driving to Devon and Cornwall police Operation Snap.
- Friends of Connor Downs Academy - awarded £1,000 for the purchase of high visibility vests for children. They will be worn on class visits, improving their visibility to other road users and while taking part in cycling proficiency schemes and any other off site activities.

2.4 Mobile phone law enforcement loophole

Most people recognise that driving whilst using a mobile phone is a very dangerous behaviour. So dangerous that the Government increased the fine to £200 and 6 points in 2017.

However a judgment in the case of DPP v Barreto [2019] EWHC 2044 (ADMIN), presents a significant problem for enforcement given the police/ Crown Prosecution Service must now prove 'interactive communication' to secure a prosecution rather than just use of a phone at the wheel. In its response to the Transport Select Committee's enquiry into this matter last year, the Government signalled its intentions to review and update this offence as a matter of urgency.

The Commissioner understands the law is in preparation but the Commissioner is calling for this to be prioritised so that the police can once again enforce this dangerous activity effectively. The Commissioner has written to the Policing Minister urging the Government to urgently introduce legislation to address this matter.

2.5 HMICFRS Review of Roads Policing

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICRS) is due to publish its thematic report into roads policing in England and Wales shortly. At the time of writing the release date is yet to be confirmed. The report is expected to make recommendations for a clearer national strategy and co-ordination for roads policing across the country, which is welcomed by the Commissioner in her role as the national lead for PCCs for road safety matters. .

2.6 Road Safety National Portfolio

It was agreed at the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners Deep Dive in July 2019, that the two areas of focus for road safety would be returning traffic fines money to local partnerships and post-collision response (including victim care).

Returning traffic fines money to local partnerships

The Commissioner and the APCC were hoping to meet with HM Treasury and Department for Transport officials in spring to discuss the APCC's push for local retention of increased traffic fines to support investment in road safety activities. This meeting has not yet taken place due to the wider pressures within the Treasury as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic.

Post collision response

A national workshop for PCC leads will be held to benchmark where we are collectively from an OPCC perspective. This event will be informed by discussions between the Ministry of Justice / APCC on Road Crash Victims but the timing of this work has been impacted by limited capacity within central government as they respond to the COVID 19 pandemic.

The Commissioner is hosting a roundtable of PCCs in July 2020 with government officials and policing leads which will examine the likely continued impact of COVID 19 on progress in these and other road safety matters and develop a revised timeline for activity.

2.7 Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety's report into roads policing and its contribution to road safety

The Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS) has published a report examining the importance of police enforcement to improve road safety and calls on the Government to take steps to increase the prominence of roads policing in England and Wales. The Commissioner welcomes this report and is continuing to work closely with PACTS both nationally and locally via their membership of the SW Peninsula Road Safety Partnership to ensure that greater action is taken to improve safety on our roads.

Some 1,800 people die on UK roads each year –more than twice the number of deaths from homicides and terrorism combined. In Devon and Cornwall in 2018 (the most recent year for which official published figures are available from the Department for Transport) there were 59 fatalities and 794 serious injuries

The report's findings which draws on the research from over 100 individual studies, concludes there is clear evidence that an increase in enforcement will lead to a reduction in both fatal and serious injury collisions. Major studies show strong international evidence that road traffic enforcement has a significant impact on levels of compliance, collisions and casualties.

Based on the research, and on interviews and consultation with a wide range practitioners, academics and stakeholders, PACTS recommends that the government, and particularly the Home Office, explicitly recognises the scale of death and injury that results from road traffic offences and the vital role of roads policing in combatting it. As a start, the government could specify roads policing as part of its strategic policing requirement. The full report is available on the PACTS website and can be accessed at: <http://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged.pdf>

3. Transforming Justice and the LCJB

3.1 Mental Health in the Criminal Justice System

Based on the success of the pilot of Mental Health Treatment Requirement (MHTR) Orders in Plymouth, further funding has been agreed to support the further roll-out and development of the MHTR. Planning between the CJS agencies, Local Authorities, Devon Partnership Trust and EDP (Exeter Drugs Project) has now commenced. Activity ceased due to the initial COVID19 response but a commissioning framework is being consulted upon in partnership between the OPCC and NHS England to move this project forward over the next few months.

3.2 Virtual Courts

As part of the COVID19 response, all Police Forces were asked to stand up their virtual remand court provision. Due to the 2016/17 pilot, Devon and Cornwall were able to mobilise quickly and were the first in the region (and outside of London) to introduce a virtual remand court using the 'common video platform' (CVP) rolled out by the Ministry of Justice.

CVP has enabled all court users to join hearings by video using Skype or Teams, either from their workplace or whilst working from home. There were ten partner organisations involved in implementation, ranging from the police who have redeployed staff into their custody units to run the court, the judiciary and magistracy and individual defence lawyer practitioners. The virtual remand courts for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly launched in April 2020 and operate out of Bodmin and Exeter. The courts have been running well and are an excellent example of cross sector working, led by the Local Criminal Justice Board under the chairmanship of the Commissioner.

4. National Developments

4.1 Domestic Abuse Bill

The Domestic Abuse Bill is continuing its passage through the House of Commons and completed its Committee Stage on 17th June 2020. The Bill will return to the House of Commons in the next few weeks for Report Stage and will move into the House of Lords for consideration.

4.2 National Consultation on Victims Code of Practice

In May 2020 the Ministry of Justice completed their second and final round of consultation on the revised Victim Code of Practice for Victims of Crime. The first consultation which took place in 2019 was exceptionally detailed and helped to inform the second round, so much so that the second consultation focused only on 6 questions. In essence this round was seeking assurances that the MOJ had identified the correct guiding principles on which the code should be based and whether or not the proposed layout would be beneficial for those whom the code is aimed; namely victims, professionals and criminal justice agencies.

The OPCC considered each of the questions and responded to the consultation, affirming that the principles identified in the proposal adequately covered what was needed. The office made some suggestions around clarity and governance, but gave overall agreement that the proposed changes were suitable and would make a difference for victims understanding their rights and entitlements and professionals interpreting their responsibilities under the code.

4.3 Ministerial Changes

In February and March 2020 the Prime Minister made a number of changes to his ministerial team following from the December 2019 general election. Of particular note in the areas of criminal justice is the creation of two joint ministerial posts between the Home Office and Ministry of Justice which highlight the increased recognition within government of the interdependency between the two departments.

Kit Malthouse MP has been made Minister for State across both the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice, following his previous Home Office appointment as Policing Minister.

Chris Philip MP has been appointed Parliamentary Under Secretary of State across the Ministry of Justice and the Home Office as Minister for Immigration Compliance and the Courts

Other changes include:

Appointment of Lord Stephen Greenhalgh as an unpaid Minister across the Home Office and the Department of Housing Communities and Local Government with specific responsibility for Fire.

Appointment of Kevin Foster MP as a Minister of State for Future Borders and Immigration at the Home Office

Appointment of Alex Chalk MP as an unpaid Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

in the Ministry of Justice whose responsibilities include domestic abuse, victims and racial disparity in the criminal justice system.

The Shadow Ministerial Team has also undergone a number of changes following the election of a new leader of the Labour Party. In the area of policing and criminal justice in particular this includes:

- Nick Thomas Symonds MP as Shadow Home Secretary
- David Lammy MP as Shadow Justice Secretary
- Jess Phillips as Shadow Minister for Domestic Violence and Safeguarding
- Peter Kyle MP as Shadow Minister for Victims and Youth Justice
- Bambos Charalambous MP as Shadow Minister for Crime Reduction and Courts
- Sarah Jones MP as the Shadow Minister for Policing and Fire
- Alex Cunningham MP as Shadow Minister for Courts and Sentencing
- Lyn Brown MP as Shadow Minister for Prisons and Probation

4.4 Safer Streets Fund

In February 2020 the Panel were advised on the launch of the Safer Streets Fund by the Home Office which sought bids from Police and Crime Commissioners across England and Wales to fund initiatives aimed at tackling high levels of acquisitive crimes such as theft, robbery and burglary in residential areas. The Panel were advised that funding could potentially be used for a range of initiatives such as increasing street lighting, installing better locks and gating alleyways. The funding could also be used for activities such as training community wardens, and delivering local crime prevention advice to residents or Neighbourhood Watch schemes. Successful areas could receive a grant of around £500,000 to support activity within that specific geographic area.

The OPCC worked closely with Plymouth City Council, community groups, stakeholders and Devon and Cornwall Police to explore this opportunity and jointly developed a bid for Stonehouse in Plymouth which involved infrastructure improvements, community development, crime prevention and capacity building in the community. The bid was submitted to the Home Office on 3 April 2020.

Due to the COVID 19 pandemic there has been a delay in decisions regarding the fund and we have been advised that decisions are now not expected until mid to late July 2020, compared to the intended decision date of Mid June. Delivery of the steps and improvements contained within the bid will need to be completed by the end of the current financial year and this presents a particular challenge given the volume of COVID-19 disruption currently being experienced within the public sector. The OPCC will be working closely with the Plymouth City Council and the wider partners involved in the bid to identify any new risks to delivery in light of the current COVID 19 landscape and how these might be managed if our bid is successful.

4.5 Modern Slavery (national programme expansion and Westminster pop up event)

As the Panel are aware the national Modern Slavery Police Transformation Programme has been operating out of Exmouth for the past four years, under the stewardship of Chief Constable Shaun Sawyer as the national lead for modern

slavery and organised immigration crime and the Commissioner as the Chair of the Strategic Oversight Board. The Unit, which has been funded through the Home Office Police Transformation Fund has overseen a significant step change in the national policing response to modern slavery. The funding has assisted policing and wider law enforcement to improve its collective intelligence picture on modern slavery, to enhance the skills of police officers to identify and investigate modern slavery and to embed prevention work to protect future victims.

In February 2020 the Commissioner hosted a pop up event in the Houses of Parliament to raise awareness of the work of the Modern Slavery Police Transformation Unit and the PCC led National Anti-Trafficking and Modern Slavery Network. The pop event included presentations by the National Crime Agency, the national policing unit and the national PCC network. Visitors to the event included the Policing Minister, the Immigration Minister, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Human Trafficking, the Home Office and parliamentarians from across the country. This was an excellent opportunity to showcase this Devon and Cornwall based initiative, to highlight the legacy changes that have come from the project, including ongoing investment by the NCA and to reiterate the continued need for investment to tackle this national threat.

In late March 2020 the Home Office confirmed that it would provide further funding for 2020/21 to the Commissioner to enable the national unit to continue its work in key areas such as improving prosecution rates and now also including the tackling of organised immigration crime.

5. Scrutiny

5.1 Use of Police Powers Scrutiny Panel

Two specific areas of scrutiny have been published since February 2020, a review into how Devon and Cornwall Police use stop and search and a scrutiny exercise to examine the use of policing powers under the Coronavirus Act 2020.

Stop and search: The Panel conducted a review into the arrangements for stop and search within Devon and Cornwall Police. A summary of the panel's findings and recommendations is available on the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner's website at www.devonandcornwall-pcc.gov.uk/about-us/scrutiny/scrutiny-meetings-and-documents. The Chief Constable has considered the panel's findings and formally responded to the PCC setting out his intended actions to progress the recommendations. The Commissioner will receive a further report on this matter in November 2020.

Use of Police Powers during Covid-19: As one of the top three forces for issuing Fixed Penalty Notices, the Commissioner established the panel urgently to ensure that the scrutiny could be considered in a timely manner which was responsive to a pandemic situation. The Panel convened on 4th May 2020 chaired by the Commissioner and considered a range of evidence, including the findings of workshops with police officers as well as legislation, officer guidance, data and body worn video. The Panel's report was completed and published within 14 days from the Panel meeting. The Panel was assured that in general terms Devon and Cornwall Police has used its new Covid-19 powers legitimately, appropriately and

proportionally. The Chief Constable has considered the panel's findings and formally responded to the PCC with his views. A summary of the panel's findings and recommendations is available on the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner's website at www.devonandcornwall-pcc.gov.uk/about-us/scrutiny/scrutiny-meetings-and-documents.

5.2 Out of Court Disposals

The Out of Court Disposals Panel is comprised of specialist practitioners from a range of criminal justice organisations. The panel is independent from Devon and Cornwall Police and makes recommendations directly to the PCC. Panel members volunteer their time to carry out scrutiny of randomly selected cases and examine the police's decision making rationale for the issuing of out of court disposals. This scrutiny enables not only public assurance to take place, but also enables assurances to be provided to partner organisations across the criminal justice system.

The March 2020 meeting of the panel was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the way in which this panel works and the extensive information it considers, for data security / data protection reasons it cannot meet virtually. The public summaries from this panel's meetings are available online at www.devonandcornwall-pcc.gov.uk/about-us/scrutiny/scrutiny-meetings-and-documents.

6 **Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS)**

In February 2020 HMICFRS published the results of its Integrated PEEL (Police Efficiency, Effectiveness and Legitimacy) inspection of Devon and Cornwall Police which took place in 2019.

The Inspectorate graded Devon and Cornwall Police as GOOD in each of the three categories which was an improved position from the position in 2016 when efficiency and effectiveness were both graded as 'requiring improvement'³. The Commissioner's published response to the HMICFRS report can be viewed on the OPCC website⁴.

In March 2020 HMICFRS suspended all inspection work requiring contributions from police forces and fire and rescue services, to enable them to focus on their vital work during the COVID 19 pandemic.

The HMICFRS has recently published a number of national thematic reports, including on counter terrorism, integrated offender management and child protection. The OPCC is currently preparing formal responses to those reports, in discussion with the Chief Constable. Each response will, as always, be published in due course on the OPCC website.

³ <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/peel-assessment-2018-19-devon-and-cornwall.pdf>

⁴ <https://devonandcornwall.s3.amazonaws.com/Documents/Our%20information/Response%20to%20HMIC%20reports/PEEL/Integrated%20PEEL%202018-19.pdf>

7. Estates

7.1 Exeter Police Station Migration

Following the first phase of migrations to the new Exeter Police Station a decision was made at the end of March to pause further moves due to the COVID 19 restrictions. However, the migration of the Custody facility was accelerated and came into service on 7th April 2020 instead of 20th April 2020. The decision to bring forward the opening date was due to the ability for the new custody facility to better facilitate social distancing in a custody setting and potential detainees with COVID 19 symptoms.

The revised migration plans for the new Exeter Police Station will see the remaining officers and staff moving into the new station during the summer and into the autumn.

7.2 Barnstaple Police Station and Custody Centre

Due to structural issues it has been necessary to seek a new location for a police station after it was decided that repairing the existing station at North Walk was not economically viable as its roof was deteriorating.

Approval for a new police station to be opened on Seven Brethren in Barnstaple has been granted by North Devon Council's planning committee. The accommodation will be an operational patrol base and house a custody facility which will be a self-contained unit within the site with a secure perimeter fence. There will be a public enquiry office located on the ground floor of the building. Some specialist staff will also be relocated to an office at Roundswell.

The Commissioner would like to thank the Armed Forces, North Devon Council, Barnstaple Business improvement District, the local policing team and the office of the MP for all assisting to make this relocation happen at a pace and to everyone's satisfaction.

8 Communications and Engagement

8.1 Significant communications projects since the last Police and Crime Panel

Estates

The OPCC has supported the opening of police stations in Liskeard and Exeter through communications and engagement programmes. This involved working closely with the force over a number of weeks to formulate and execute a complex communications delivery plan, organising community events, signage and opening ceremonies, as well as co-ordinating traditional media coverage of the opening and multi-media elements such as a virtual tour. Both stations were officially unveiled on the same day, with members of the local communities invited to inspect the facilities.

The OPCC is also responsible for external communications regarding the plan to relocate Barnstaple Police Station which has resulted in significant coverage by media in North Devon.

Community Responders launch

The OPCC supported the official launch of Community Responders by organising a regional press call and media interviews and 'Meet the Community Responder' events in the seven locations where they are deployed (Dartmouth, Honiton, Okehampton, Newton Abbot, Cullompton, Crediton and Totnes) where local journalists were given interview opportunities.

#ByYourSide

In order to reassure victims of crime that services were still operating during the lockdown the OPCC have led a new multi-media campaign to support the Devon and Cornwall Victim Care Network and a new 24-hour helpline commissioned via Victim Support.



8.2 Community Engagement

Councillor Advocates

Councillor Advocates – councillors who volunteer to connect with policing and community safety via the Commissioner's office - have been an increasingly valuable tool in both providing intelligence to the office and providing reassuring and helpful information to communities.

The number of those enrolled on the scheme has risen from 95 (at date of last Police and Crime Panel meeting) to 138 by June 15, 2020. We have set a target of enrolling 300 councillors into the scheme by 2021.

In order to better reach councillor advocates, as face to face seminars have had to be postponed, updates have been sent on a fortnightly rather than monthly basis and a weekly podcast has been recorded and distributed during which the Commissioner answers questions sent in by them.

Developing digital channels

The Commissioner's office has been driving digital engagement. Increases are as follows:

- Neighbourhood Alert (OPCC email newsletter): As of May 31, we had 31,610 total users,
- Twitter: A total of 9,406 followers,
- Facebook: A total of 2,113 likes

Facebook Live - The Commissioner has taken part in weekly live question and answer sessions on Facebook during the Covid-19 pandemic, answering questions from members of the public on a range of topics. These posts have significantly above average reach and engagement.

Contact for further information:

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Report prepared on 22nd June 2020