

Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel

20th November 2020

OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S PERFORMANCE REPORT

1. Purpose of the report

1.1 This report provides an overview for the Police and Crime Panel of:

- Levels of recorded crime for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. This includes an exploration into the statistical release that identified Devon and Cornwall as the second safest area in the country, as published by the Office of National Statistics for the 12 months to 30th June 2020 (published on 28th October 2020);
- OPCC assessment of current performance against the strategic indicators for the Police and Crime Plan 2017-2020 'Safe, resilient and connected communities'.

2. Recorded Crime in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (Office of National Statistics (ONS))

2.1 The ONS publishes data on levels of recorded crime and trends on a quarterly basis. The latest figures on recorded crime – which cover the year to 30th June 2020 – were published by the ONS on 28th October 2020.

2.2 In the 12 months to June 2020, total crime in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly decreased by 9.5%. Whilst this is consistent with the national trend, the decrease has occurred at a higher rate – total crime has decreased by 4.9% in England and Wales as a whole. A total of 95,632 crimes were recorded across the force area, which is equivalent to 54 crimes per 1000 population. This is notably lower than the national average of 84.7 crimes per 1000 population.

2.3 The latest quarter of this 12-month period was affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and related lockdown restrictions. The yearly 9.5% decrease was mainly driven by substantial falls in crime during April to June 2020. This reflected the increase in time people spent at home during the lockdown period, a reduction in opportunities for theft in public spaces and the closure of the night-time economy. During this period there were significant decreases in theft offences as well as violence with injury offences.



- 2.4 Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly now has the 2nd lowest rate of crime in England and Wales, as well as the 2nd lowest rate of victim-based crime. Although the crime rate in Devon and Cornwall has decreased since the previous ONS release¹ (from 57.0 crimes per 1,000 population to 54.0), North Yorkshire have now overtaken Devon and Cornwall in the rankings to have the lowest crime rate in the country, at 53.3 crimes.
- 2.5 Compared to 41 other forces in England and Wales our area had:
- o the lowest rate of residential burglary offences
 - o the second lowest rate of theft offences; and
 - o the 3rd lowest rate of violence without injury offences
- 2.6 Levels of violence with injury offences have decreased by 9% compared to the previous year. Over the same period, offences that comprise the serious violence category² have decreased by 6%.
- 2.7 Levels of domestic abuse and serious violence remain areas of concern. Nearly 4 in 10 cases of violence with injury were identified as domestic abuse incidents. Alcohol is flagged as a factor in 33% of cases of violence with injury. These areas are recognised in the multi-agency Peninsula Strategic Assessment (PSA) and are key areas of investment and focus for the PCC’s Commissioning Intentions Plan and local Community Safety Partnership plans.

Attached at Annex 1 is the OPCC’s crime profile for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly which has been prepared following the latest ONS data release in October 2020³. This crime profile is also published on the OPCC’s website at <https://www.devonandcornwall-pcc.gov.uk/about-us/police-performance/crime/>.

3. The Police and Crime Plan Strategic Indicators

- 3.1 The current reporting arrangements in place for the Police and Crime Panel are based on the strategic indicators set out in the PCC’s Police and Crime Plan “Safe, Resilient and Connected Communities”.
- 3.2 A narrative commentary is included below for each of the measures. The purpose of this is to provide narrative to support the infographic and the necessary interpretation required to explain the OPCC’s judgement.

RAG	Previous judgement key	New judgment key
	Currently achieving expected attainment level	Content
	Achievement of attainment level at risk	Requires additional scrutiny
	Not achieving expected attainment level	Of concern – action being taken

Overall performance against the Police and Crime Plan Strategic Indicators

¹ Year ending March 2020

² Murder, attempted murder, section 18 GBH and wounding

³ The ONS dataset also excludes data for the City of London due to its low resident population.

3.3 The OPCC’s assessment of performance to-date against the headline strategic indicators for the performance year ended 30th September 2020 show most indicators at Green – ‘Content’. This is the latest data for all indicators that are available unless stated otherwise. Due to the short timeframe between the September and November Panel, there has not been a significant change in the grading of judgements and as such performance mirrors the picture reported to the Panel in September 2020. The infographic for November 2020 is included at Annex 2.

Summary:

	November 2020 Panel	September 2020 Panel
Green	6	6
Amber	2	2
Red	0	0
Ungraded	3 ⁴	3
	11	11

3.4 Two indicators remain graded as amber (additional scrutiny) in this report:

- waiting times for 101 non-emergency calls;
- Priority victim satisfaction.

i. 101: non-emergency calls waiting longer than 10 minutes- AMBER

3.5 Between the reporting period 1st October 2019 to 30th September 2020, 65% of all 101 calls connected through the IVR system were answered within 10 minutes. This is a slight increase from 64% which was reported to the Panel in September 2020 and performance remains above the baseline attainment figure of 62%. Nonetheless, the Commissioner has retained this indicator at Amber until continued improvement is evident.

3.6 Between 1st October 2019 and 30th September 2020 - just over 570,900 calls were connected to IVR. Over this period, the average wait time to speak to a call handler has been 8 mins 42 secs. However, it is recognised that some callers, particularly at peak times, will have experienced much longer wait times.

3.7 As previously identified to the Panel, 101 and the fluctuations in performance cannot be considered in isolation and must be considered in its broadest context incorporating the volume of 101 calls, 999 calls and alternative 101 contact methods which are all handled by the same call handlers. During periods of high 999 demand, call handlers are often diverted away from answering 101 calls to prioritise emergency calls which pose the highest risk,

⁴ As reported to the Panel in February 2020 it is the Commissioner’s view that the three measures included in the infographic in 2019 in place of the previous VFM indicators from Her Majesty’s Inspectorate (which are set out in section 6 of this report) should be marked as ‘ungraded’. These measures are not indicators of performance but provide important information regarding the relative funding position and resource levels of our area compared to other areas in England and Wales.

with potential threat to life. Subsequently, during these busy periods, waiting times for the 101 telephone service may be impacted. Similarly, an increase in 999 calls can also impact on performance for other 101 contact methods including, Web Chat and 101 Email. Devon and Cornwall Police have recently published a live 101 monitoring board on their website which allows members of the public to see the number of calls waiting and the expected time to get through to a call handler - with the warning that wait times could be affected if there is an increase in calls to the 999 emergency number. The monitoring board can be accessed here: <https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/contact/>

- 3.8 The deep dive into the 101 service that was presented to the Panel in September provided a greater insight into police contact management and detailed the complexities of this working environment and the challenges in managing and maintaining strong performance for both 999 and 101, particularly in view of the increases in demand for 999 and 101 services and the growing complexity in the nature and duration of calls.
- 3.9 Over the past 4 years the Commissioner has supported an investment programme of over £1.3M to enhance the technology within 101. It was hoped that this could help to alleviate pressures on the control room and to reduce waiting times for those who need to call 101 - the impacts of which have been less effective than desired due to the factors cited above. This has included investment in a new telephony system (IVR) which has previously been identified to the Panel. Whilst this has not had the impact on the proportion of calls that were answered within 10 minutes as anticipated, it has delivered some real benefits to the public and vulnerable victims of crime. Calls which are identified in the IVR as high priority including calls relating to: Domestic Abuse; Hate crime; Missing persons; Roads and Sexual offences are consistently answered more quickly with average call wait times below 6 minutes.
- 3.10 While answering 999 emergency calls must take priority within the contact centre, the Commissioner remains concerned about the length of waiting times that can arise for all other 101 calls and the impact this can have on individual callers.
- 3.11 The Commissioner is committed to taking additional action to see how we can further improve the service. As identified to the Panel in September, the Commissioner will be carrying out a review of the 101 service supported by volunteers and experts. The review will focus on three key areas: defining and setting customer service standards, understanding and assessing the delivery services to the public and continuous learning and development within the contact service. An additional line of inquiry was recommended by Councillor Derrick - and other Panel members who were in favour - to explore 'what additional measures or investment are necessary to restore the 101 service up to an acceptable standard', this will be explored as part of the review. Scrutiny activity has commenced, and the report is due in December.
- 3.12 The Panel recommended that the Commissioner's judgement of Amber should change to Red. The Commissioner has considered the Panels comments but has made the decision to keep her judgement at Amber pending the findings of

her own 101-scrutiny review - which is currently underway - and given that the current performance level remains above the baseline attainment figure of 62%. The Commissioner has taken on board the feedback from the Panel and is finalising the scope of her scrutiny review.

ii. Priority Victim Satisfaction AMBER (12 months to September 2020)

- 3.13 Priority victims are those that are victims of serious crimes which include domestic abuse, hate crime, sexual offences, attempted murder as well as victims who are persistently targeted, vulnerable or intimidated. The latest available survey data indicates that 71% of priority victims are satisfied with their overall experience with Devon and Cornwall Police, a slight improvement on the figure reported in the previous Panel meeting (69%). Nevertheless, the latest figure is based on a smaller sample, as the surveying of priority victims was temporary suspended for three months⁵ due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Commissioner has therefore retained this indicator at Amber until continued improvement is evident.
- 3.14 As suggested, the latest available survey data indicates that 71% of priority victims are satisfied with their overall experience with Devon and Cornwall Police. Police 'Action taken' and 'Kept informed' are the key drivers to overall victim satisfaction. Satisfaction levels for these areas are lower than satisfaction levels for Police 'Ease of contact'; 'Arrival' and 'Treatment' which has impacted on the overall victim satisfaction level.
- 3.15 As reported to the Police and Crime Panel previously, during the initial weeks of the COVID pandemic the PCC commissioned Access to Victim Support 24/7 online and by telephone; Operation Encompass Teacher's Helpline; Providing funding to Devon Community Foundation and Cornwall Community Foundation to their COVID Emergency Funds.
- 3.16 The Commissioner has facilitated over £1.33 Million of investment to support Devon and Cornwall communities since March 2020 and has recently secured an additional £400k to enhance perpetrator programmes in the peninsula.
- 3.17 The OPCC is in the process of recommissioning victim care services and the specification was published on the 30th of September with providers submitting their bids for assessment at the end of November 2020. This work will be completed by the end of 2020/21 and was set out in the PCC's Commissioning Intentions Plan which was submitted to the Panel in February 2020.
- 3.18 Alongside this Devon and Cornwall Police are delivering a project to redesign and enhance their victim and witness care service arrangements. The importance of regular engagement with victims to support their recovery and keep them engaged in the criminal justice process will be an important factor in this work.

⁵ April, May and June 2020

4. Commentary on **GREEN** strategic indicators

Public Confidence: ‘Police do a good/excellent job’ GREEN (Based on 12 months to March 2020 – **Please note: This data has not been updated since September’s Panel.**

- 4.1 Due the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic the face-to-face Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) was suspended on 17 March 2020. A telephone-operated version of the CSEW (TCSEW) was specifically designed to allow The Office of National Statistics (ONS) to continue measuring crime during this period whilst face-to-face interviewing is not possible. However, the change of mode has meant that the questions on public perception by police force area are currently unavailable.
- 4.2 However, a new module of questions included in the TCSEW around perceptions of crime, the police and anti-social behaviour during the COVID-19 pandemic at a national level have been published. Across the three interview months, more than two-thirds of adults gave the police a positive rating for the work they were doing in their local area, with around half saying they were doing a good job (between 49% and 50%) and one-fifth saying they were doing an excellent job (between 20% and 21%). This compared with 4% to 6% of adults who said that the police were doing a poor or very poor job. In addition, between 90% and 92% of adults were satisfied with the way local police were responding to the coronavirus pandemic (fairly satisfied, 63% to 67%; very satisfied, 25% to 28%). The commissioner is encouraged that the national survey results indicate strong satisfaction levels with the way local police were responding to the coronavirus pandemic.
- 4.3 In the absence of updated public perception data for Devon and Cornwall, the Commissioner has retained this indicator at Green and the narrative supporting the Commissioner’s judgment remains the same as reported to the Panel in the September Performance Report⁶.
- 4.4 The indicator is marked as Green as the Commissioner does not intend to carry out additional scrutiny at this time. However, the OPCC will continue to monitor these indicators closely during 2020-21.

Public Confidence – the public have overall confidence in the police GREEN (Based on 12 months to March 2020 – **Please note: This data has not been updated since September’s Panel.**

- 4.5 Due the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic the face-to-face Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) was suspended on 17 March 2020. A telephone-operated version of the CSEW (TCSEW) was specifically designed to allow The Office of National Statistics (ONS) to continue measuring crime during this

⁶ The Performance Report presented to the Police and Crime Panel on the 25th September 2020 can be accessed via the Plymouth City Council website, here:

<http://democracy.plymouth.gov.uk/documents/s105812/PCP%2025%20Sep%2020%20-%20Performance%20Report.pdf>

period whilst face-to-face interviewing was not possible. However, the change of mode has meant that the questions on public perception by police force area are currently unavailable. As a result, the commissioner has retained this indicator at Green and the narrative supporting the Commissioner's judgment remains the same as reported in the September Performance Report.

- 4.6 Nevertheless, despite the ONS data not being currently available, the Commissioner is reassured that public confidence remains high. This summer the Commissioner's office undertook an independent scrutiny review of Devon and Cornwall Police's enforcement powers during Covid-19. The scrutiny Panel, comprised of members of the public, concluded that the Police have enforced Coronavirus regulations legitimately, appropriately and proportionally. Similarly, results from Devon and Cornwall Police's own surveying of the public in May, indicates that 41% of respondents said that they fully support the approach Devon and Cornwall Police have taken to enforcing the COVID-19 guidelines and 91% said they had qualified support.

Repeat Victimisation: GREEN (12 months to September 2020)

- 4.7 In the 12 months to 30th September 2020 26% of victims (both people and organisations) of crime had also reported at least one offence in the previous 12 months.
- 4.8 This measure includes all crime types and the Panel should note that victims do not have to be the victim of the same type of offence twice to be considered a repeat victim. There has been no change in performance since last reported to the Panel in September and a stable trend continues to be evident. The Commissioner's judgement remains at Green for this measure.

Emergency Calls (999) GREEN (12 months to September 2020)

- 4.9 Based on the latest available data, 84% of 999 calls were answered within 10 seconds and performance remains stable since September's Panel meeting. In the 12 months to September 2020, the 999-service received 265,994 calls. This equates to a 9.7% increase or 23,561 more 999 calls received compared with last year. Across the year, on average, this works out at around an additional 65 calls per day.
- 4.10 The 101 deep-dive presented and discussed at September's Panel meeting highlighted the long-term growth trends in both 999 and 101 calls within Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly which discussed the challenges involved with managing fluctuations in demand, for example in response to road traffic collisions. Similarly, Devon and Cornwall operate within a national system of control room support which provides that all 999 calls in the UK are answered in a timely and efficient manner. This may mean that Devon and Cornwall's 999 calls are transferred to a neighbouring police force at times of full capacity, and Devon and Cornwall may take calls from other police forces in the same instance.

- 4.11 Whilst the Commissioner has concerns around performance continuing to fall below the baseline attainment figure of 91%, the Commissioner is reassured that the average answer time for 999 calls remains low; at 12 seconds (for the 12 months to 30th September 2020). Given that performance has remained stable the Commissioner has decided to retain this indicator at Green but will continue to monitor closely over the coming months.

Attendance time for immediate calls for service: GREEN

(Average (median) time for response – 12 months to September 2020)

- 4.12 The baseline figure of 14 minutes 3 seconds is taken from the 2-year average to the end of 2015. For the 12 months to September 2020 the median time to attend an immediate incident was 14 minutes and 12 seconds across the Force as a whole. Whilst the latest figure is 9 seconds above baseline, stable performance continues to be evident and the Commissioner's judgment remains at Green.
- 4.13 70,286 immediate incidents were attended in Devon and Cornwall between October 2019 and September 2020 – 70% of which were attended within 20 minutes and 87% were attended within 30 minutes.

Emails (101) and texts GREEN *(12 months to September 2020)*

- 4.14 A baseline of 98% has been set for this measure which is based on the first 12 months of full operation and data recording (12 months to December 2017). Email and text traffic to 101 has continued to increase since the baseline year when 71,754 contacts were received.
- 4.15 In the 12 months to September 2020, nearly 137,000 emails and texts were sent to 101, this equates to an average of 11,391 emails and texts received by Devon and Cornwall Police each month. This figure also includes online crime reports submitted via the website (which are converted into email). This represents an increase of 35% or 34,404 more emails and texts received compared to the year to the 30th September 2019. The increase in email and text volumes is not unexpected given the communications from Devon and Cornwall Police and the OPCC to encourage use of this alternative contact method, which is welcomed.
- 4.16 During the 12 months to September 2020, 71% of 101 emails and texts were responded to within 24 hours. This is below the baseline of 98% and represents a 1% increase compared to the data provided to the Panel in September 2020 which covered the 12 months to July 2020 position.
- 4.17 The proportion of 101 emails and texts answered within 24 hours has fluctuated from month to month in the past year which has impacted on overall performance levels for the year. The most recent weekly performance data shows that 100% of emails received have been answered within threshold. However, in order to see an increase in performance across the year sustained improvement is required.

4.18 The Commissioner is aware of the continued significant increase in demand within the call centres and has introduced new ways of working to support sustained performance in emails and text response times. The Commissioner has further welcomed a Covid-19 Surge Grant from central government, to help with increased demand related to Covid-19. This will ensure that additional funds are allocated to the control room to assist in demand management following the new national Covid-19 guidelines. Whilst immediate performance has not improved the Commissioner has decided to retain this indicator at Green given the impending scrutiny of the 101 service and in recognition of COVID-19 and summer impacts. The OPCC will be monitoring this indicator on a monthly basis over the rest of 2020/21.

5. Infographic: funding and resources

5.1 The monetary data contained within the infographic reflects the financial situation for 2020/21 for Devon and Cornwall and compares against our most similar force group and the national average. There has been no change to these figures since they were reported to the Panel in September and the narrative supporting these financial indicators remains the same as was reported in the September Performance Report.

5.2 The data on officer and staff numbers, as also reported in the infographic, reflects the FTE levels for police officers and staff as at 30th September 2020. Recruitment of police officers is continuing to occur with regular intakes of new police officers, through new recruits and transferees from other police forces. This progress has been maintained through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Contact for further information

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