



Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel

5th February 2021

COMMISSIONER'S 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 November 2020.

1. Policy Developments

1.1 COVID Response

Policing

The police involvement in managing the pandemic continues to be an evolving picture with policing playing a pivotal role in the coordination of the local and national effort. The policing approach throughout has been to support the public in following the regulations by engaging, explaining and encouraging, and enforcing with a fine as last resort.

A new national lockdown was introduced on 5th January 2020. The Chief Constable has made it clear that where the public are not responding to policing interventions then there will be a need to move more quickly to enforcement by issuing a fine.

Additional resources have been put in place locally, supported by £700,000 of funding from the national funding of £30 Million for policing which was announced in October 2020 to support COVID 19 regulation compliance and enforcement. This funding operates alongside the £30 Million in funding provided to local authorities to support compliance and enforcement activities in local areas.

This funding has supported the deployment of dedicated COVID cars to provide dedicated proactive patrols and to respond to reported breaches, additional capacity within the control centres and a COVID intelligence cell to co-ordinate the police and partnership response.

As part of the police response a pilot has been launched which provides an enhanced allowance of £750 to Special Constables who commit to carrying out eight eight-hour dedicated shifts over December and January as part of our COVID 19 surge response. This is the first time nationally that such an allowance has been paid as special constables were previously only able to claim expenses. This is an important pilot both in the context of our response to the pandemic but also to explore the opportunities that similar surge allowance schemes could provide.



A new online COVID 19 Reporting Tool has been launched which enables people to report suspected breaches of the regulations. This national tool supports national reporting, eases pressure on 101 and ensures that the required information is collected at the time of report.

The reporting tool can be accessed via the Devon and Cornwall Police website or via <https://www.police.uk/tua/tell-us-about/c19/v7/tell-us-about-a-possible-breach-of-coronavirus-covid-19-measures/>

The OPCC continues to submit monthly reports to the Home Office to secure reimbursement of PPE (medical and non-medical) costs, 75% of lost income and spend associated with surge funding.

The policing response continues to be focused around the 4Es (Engage, Explain, Encourage and Enforce) in line with the national policing approach.

In December 2020 Devon and Cornwall Police received 1680 reports of suspected COVID 19 regulation breaches. The force attended 393 reports and 108 Fixed Penalty Notices were issued. To date in January 2021 (up to 17th January 2021) Devon and Cornwall Police received 2551 reports of suspected COVID 19 regulation breaches and attended 610 reports as well as conducting 1143 stop checks and dynamic engagements through proactive patrolling. 207 Fixed Penalty Notices were issued. It is important to recognise that not all reported breaches will be attended by the police following assessment and that in some cases multiple reports may be made concerning a single incident.

In December 2020 Devon and Cornwall supplied officers through Mutual Aid to Kent to assist with the pressures at ports and borders arising from the emergence of the new COVID 19 strain.

As noted below in section 1.7 below Devon and Cornwall Police are working to reinstate virtual remand hearings from custody centres in cases of confirmed or suspected COVID 19. This follows the cessation of these arrangements at the end of November 2020 for all cases in view of the impact on front line police resources.

OPCC Independent Custody Visiting Scheme

The OPCC has continued to monitor government and PHE advice regarding Covid-19 throughout the pandemic. The Risk Assessment governing physical custody visits has been revised in consultation with police Health and Safety Department when necessary, and a new set of guidelines followed by custody visitors.

A further decision has been taken to suspend physical visits in response to current threats to reduce the risk of transmission within custody suites between visitors, staff and detainees. Alternative means to assess the care of detainees in custody have been put in place. These have included: Daily telephone conferences with HQ Custody, monitoring of measures in place to control Covid-19, introduction of virtual visits (made using Skype to allow detainees to speak directly to volunteers), and review of custody logs, ad hoc requests for information from HQ Custody. The custody visiting scheme is assured that the care of detainees within Devon and Cornwall is good and the alternative means of scrutiny that the scheme has in

place are suitable replacements when physical visits must be suspended.

PCCs COVID 19 Safer Summer Scheme

In July 2020 the Commissioner launched the 'Covid-19 Safer Summer Scheme' to provide targeted measures in 20 hotspot locations across Devon and Cornwall as a direct response to the unlocking associated with COVID 19 and the anticipated rise in anti-social behaviour. The total costs for the delivery of the COVID 19 Safer Summer Scheme was £392,551.85. The full evaluation report has been shared with partners and national contacts and is being published on the OPCC website. An interim set of findings were shared with all local authorities through the LRF in October 2020 to support them in considering their marshal arrangements as part of the £30 Million funding announced by the government in October 2020 for COVID 19 compliance.

1.2 New Strategic Delivery Partner for Victim Services

In January 2021 the Commissioner announced a new £12 million ten year strategic partnership with Victim Support to provide victim care services across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. The new contracted service will commence from 1st April 2021. As strategic delivery partner to the Commissioner for victim services, this new and innovative contract with Victim Support sets in place a contractual partnership which will enable the delivery and implementation of high quality "Victim Led" services, whilst working strategically with all key statutory agencies to improve the overall victim experience of the criminal justice system. Victim Support will provide commissioning and contracting infrastructure by building support service markets in all localities. These services must include restorative justice provision, services for young people affected by crime and services which will enable effective engagement for people with protected characteristics. Working together with the Commissioner and Devon and Cornwall Police, Victim Support will also identify gaps in victim pathway provision and implement new services in response. These new arrangements are set out in more detail in the PCC's Commissioning Intentions Plan for 2021/22 which has been provided to the Panel alongside the budget and precept papers.

1.3 Operation Uplift – allocations for 2021/22

Devon and Cornwall Police have continued to make good progress in delivering the additional 141 police officers allocated to our area from the initial allocation of 6,000 from the 20,000 national uplift. The Panel have been advised previously of the adaptations made to the recruitment and onboarding process to enable progress to be made during the pandemic. Devon and Cornwall remain on track to have recruited all of the additional officers for 2020/21 allocations by the end of March 2021 alongside delivery of the additional 50 police officers funded through the policing precept in 2020/21. In December 2020 the government announced the allocations for the next 6,000 police officers from the national uplift to be delivered in 2021/22. Devon and Cornwall Police's allocation to be delivered by 31st March 2022 is 141 police officers. This allocation includes a small number of officers to be seconded to regional and national capabilities, in particular the South West Regional Organised Crime Unit.

1.4 Prevention of Serious Violence

The Prevention of Serious Violence programme continues to make good progress. Further

investments have been made with the four Youth Offending Teams across Devon and Cornwall to provide additional support to their Out of Court Disposal processes with young people and also to the Dracaena Centre in Cornwall to work with young people who are referred for additional support to divert them away from escalating antisocial behaviour. The Board has also increased the capacity of the peninsula's restorative justice service, called Make Amends to introduce family support work in this important evidence based intervention. Partners across the public sector have been participating in and supportive of the development of the Serious Violence Needs Assessment commissioned from Crest Advisory. The final report is due in Spring 2021 and this will be of benefit both to the prevention of serious violence programme but also to local community safety partnerships who are anticipated to receive new legal duties to support a multi-agency approach to preventing and tackling serious violence later in 2021. The Serious Violence programme director is due to start on 1st February 2021.

1.5 Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Funding

The Panel were advised in November 2020 that the Commissioner and domestic abuse service providers across Devon and Cornwall had successfully secured funding from the Home Office Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Intervention Fund. Home Office funding of £417,395 combined with contributory funding from the Commissioner and local authorities of £215,959 provided an overall programme total of £633,354 to support this work. The programme aims to break the cycle of violence, help individuals to address their behaviour and bring about lasting change. In addition to working with those who cause harm, the project also focused on helping members of the public and specialist teams within local authorities to identify the signs of abuse and give them the skills to intervene safely.

The key achievement of the project to date is the close working relationship developed between partners and the level of collaboration in order to drive the project, particularly during the challenging lockdown period and against considerable time constraints. From the progress reports received, the project is currently supporting over 70 perpetrators and includes 28 adult victims and 27 child victims. As part of these interventions, there has also been 2 referrals into drug and alcohol services, 5 into mental health services, 1 counselling referral and 2 GP referrals. The positive outcomes achieved in such a short space of time reflects the hard work and commitment of those involved with the project. It is too early to evaluate the impact of these interventions but there has been the following initial feedback captured from participants:

- *“ I would like to formally note my expression of gratitude and sincere thanks to my worker for their kindness, patience and caring support, and also, to share my thanks to the supporting Change 4U Team”*
- *“My worker has provided excellent support and understanding throughout. Their support and counselling was particularly appreciated during a period of significant personal crisis and vulnerability, lasting several weeks where they were my only support contact. They have always been un-judgmental, been there for me and endeavoured to provide positive advice and support, through some very difficult times.”*
- *“Being listened to in a non-judgemental way and then having my actions and thoughts reflected to me so that I could see how I had to change.”*

The projects timescales remain challenging with a requirement to spend the Home Office funding by the 31st March and has increased further following the national lockdown announced on 4th January. The Steering Group meets monthly to monitor progress and spend and to work together to mitigate risk and maximise this funding opportunity. Particular challenges are being felt in the training elements of the project. While training has been converted into online delivery, capacity to attend is constrained and is expected to remain so for the coming weeks given that the intended participants are all engaged in delivering front line services.

1.6 G7 Summit in Cornwall – June 2021

In January 2021 the Prime Minister announced that the G7 summit in June 2021 will be held in Cornwall. This important announcement represents a significant boost for the Duchy in terms of both its reputation and economy. The implications for policing will be notable with the arrival of a number of world leaders, wider delegations and the media across a series of locations. Planning has been underway for some time under the leadership of Temporary Assistant Chief Constable Mayhew who has been working collaboratively with the Home Office and government officials to ensure that Devon and Cornwall Police is supported and prepared for its upcoming role in supporting the safe delivery of the summit.

1.7 Brexit

Devon and Cornwall Police continued to work closely with Government and partners to ensure plans were in place for the UK's withdrawal from the EU and continue to do so in January 2021 following the departure from the European Union on 31st December 2020. This includes work through Local Resilience Forum structures with local authorities and wider partners and nationally through the NPCC. Across the peninsula, a Strategic Coordination Group (SCG) chaired by Assistant Chief Constable Julie Fielding and comprising Gold level leads from agencies across the peninsula that work to a similar model to inform the strategic response of partners to Brexit.

A police Gold and Silver command structure was put in place incorporating intelligence, public order, communication and local resilience strands of activity. This structure worked to a National Strategic Threat and Risk Assessment which highlighted all potential impacts on policing due to the UK's departure from the EU. These include

- Strategic Transport Network
- Economy
- People Crossing Borders
- Key Goods Crossing Borders
- Energy, Telecoms & Critical Industry
- Food & Water
- UK Citizens in EU
- Law Enforcement

Within these risks, only the strategic transport network is assessed as high nationally because of the potential disruption at ports and borders and delays to supply chains. Locally, the risk to us is seen as low.

In addition, the Force identified the following risks to Devon and Cornwall and to Devon and Cornwall Police,

- Protest and Community Tension
- Ports and fisheries
- Business Continuity
- Supply chain challenges

There were concerns in the early stages of the operation about the impact of Brexit on our local fishing communities and the subsequent tension this may have caused. This was softened as a result of a Brexit deal being reached but is kept under observation by neighbourhood teams, Key Individual Networks and with partner agencies to assess changes and can respond appropriately if needed.

To support the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) a Planning and Assurance Cell was established to provide a strategic overview of risks and mitigation in place against HMG's Reasonable Worst Case Scenarios (RWCS) to inform and support the SCG in delivering the LRF's D20 EU Exit Strategy. The Cell sits alongside the Multi-Agency Information Centre (MAIC) and works directly with identified lead partners to assess risks and record risk mitigation. D20 refers to the Government's planning arrangements for the combined impact of a second wave of Coronavirus, winter seasonal flu, Brexit, and flooding.

In December 2020 Devon and Cornwall has supplied officers through Mutual Aid to Kent to assist with the pressures at ports and borders there from COVID 19 following the emergence of the new COVID 19 strain. Arrangements have also been in place to support Brexit related mutual aid deployments. In such circumstances staff are taken from areas that will minimise impact on operational delivery within the Force.

The impact of Brexit on Devon and Cornwall Police has been minimal but a multi-agency structure remains in place to monitor the situation.

1.8 Safer Streets Fund (Stronger North Stonehouse Project)

In September 2020 the Panel were advised that £546,000 had been awarded to the Commissioner from the Home Office under the £25 Million Safer Streets Fund for a project focused on tackling acquisitive crime within North Stonehouse. This project is a partnership that brings together the OPCC, Plymouth City Council and Devon and Cornwall Police with Neighbourhood Watch, Make Amends and local community groups to deliver the Stronger North Stonehouse Project. The funding is required to be spent by the 31st March 2021. The Safer Streets Fund provides support crime prevention measures and activities in areas with high levels of acquisitive crime and was available to support infrastructure investment, community development to reclaim public spaces and crime prevention initiatives.

Significant progress has been made through this collaborative Stronger North Stonehouse partnership over the past three months despite the challenges to delivery which result from the continuing pandemic. The project, which is jointly managed by the OPCC and Plymouth City Council and overseen by the Commissioner and Councillor Sally Haydon as the relevant portfolio lead, has three core strands of activity:

- *Infrastructure*: investment in additional CCTV infrastructure and improved street lighting across North Stonehouse, including in Victoria Park and Patna Park
- *Crime Prevention*: a series of initiatives including: crime prevention training and toolkits, , the establishment of new Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) Schemes across the area, launch of a Feel Safe Scheme by NHW providing security and repairs for vulnerable residents and a programme of target hardening for properties which have been previously been subject to burglary.
- *Community Strength*: a series of small projects to assist the community in reclaiming its public spaces, including small grants for park improvements and community projects, a graffiti clean-up programme, the installation of way markers and establishing a new community board to support action on community safety.

The Project Team includes local community groups based in Stonehouse who are leading on the delivery of key aspects of the community work strand. This includes the Sparks Fund which is a £20,000 fund for community projects which is being managed by Nudge Community Builders and the graffiti clean-up and replacement project being led by Cliik. The Sparks Fund will provide 'small sparks' funding of up to £250 and 'big sparks' grants of up to £3,000.

The partnership's activities continue to evolve and adjust to deal with the changing environment and restrictions in the pandemic. This has included shifting training and workshops on crime prevention and virtual learning environments and the launch of a North Stonehouse Journal to ensure that local residents can be consulted and updated on the projects and initiatives being delivered through the programme. Further information about all of the projects which are being delivered under the Stronger North Stonehouse Project can be found at www.strongernorthstonehouse.co.uk

1.9 Virtual Remand Hearings

At the end of November 2020 Devon and Cornwall Police ceased to provide the additional staffing required to operate virtual remand courts directly from its custody centres within police stations.

As the Panel will recall at the start of the COVID 19 pandemic in March 2020 all police forces were asked to establish virtual remand court provision in their area to support the continued operation of justice. Due to the 2016/17 virtual court pilot carried out in Devon and Cornwall, local resources were able to mobilise quickly and Devon and Cornwall Police was the first police force 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.

The CVP enabled all court users to join hearings by video using Skype or Teams, either from their workplace or whilst working from home. As discussed previously with the Panel the use of police officers to staff virtual remand courts and manage detainees was not a sustainable solution requiring 6 police officers 5 days a week to be moved from other duties. This is a role that would, in a normal court environment, be carried out by the appointed court contractor. PCCs and Chief Constables had requested that government progress legislative changes which would enable appointed court contractors to carry out their role within custody centres but this has not been possible to achieve. Policing nationally has made the decision in autumn that the required level of police officer resource could not be sustained and all

police forces began to move to cessation of the service by the end of November 2020, with a number of police forces withdrawing earlier in 2020.

It should be noted that this does not mean that virtual remand courts cannot operate but that detainees will travel to court centres for the process to take place rather than remain at police stations.

Following the introduction of the new national lockdown policing nationally has responded to requests from the Lord Chief Justice to seek to reinstate the operation of Virtual Remand Hearings from custody centres in cases of confirmed or suspected COVID 19. Devon and Cornwall Police are taking this forward in Charles Cross, Newquay and Exeter custody centres.

1.10 Vision Zero South West Road Safety Partnership

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

Following the last meeting of the Vision Zero SW Partnership Board on the 13th of October 2020, the Devon and Cornwall Safety Camera Partnership has donated £250,000 to the Partnership to fund road safety interventions aimed at achieving the target to reduce the number of fatalities and seriously injured casualties by 50% by 2030.

Approximately £150k of this funding has now been agreed to be spent on a range of projects for 2021 which the Board had agreed earlier in the year. These funded initiatives include:-

- Business drivers: webinars and provision of drivers dashcams
- Younger drivers: development and delivery of Learn 2 Live, drug drive and speed Instagram films and urban speed events
- Motorcycles: 'RideFree' compulsory basic training, marketing & publicity campaigns to signpost/support Ridefree, IAM advanced training and Biker Down courses across Cornwall
- Cycling: innovative signing of junctions, promotion of camera use and Op Snap, Bikeability and behaviour change training

The meeting of the Vision Zero SW Board, chaired by the Commissioner, happened on the 22nd of January 2021. This meeting received an update on performance against the casualty reduction target and consider the launch of a 'Call for Ideas' aimed at encouraging people and communities in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly to become ambassadors for road safety and are engaged, consulted and 'part of the solution' in their neighbourhood.

The 'Call for Ideas' is aimed at supporting practical, community-scale, deliverable projects within 12 months that will make a tangible difference to road safety either through preventative activity or through improving post-crash response and care. This is being finalised with partners.

The Board also received a presentation from the Safer Essex Roads Partnership, which is regarded as one of the highest performing road safety partnerships in the UK, with a proven track record of casualty reduction. Vision Zero SW are keen to learn from the Essex

experience and to consider adopting and adapting their approach for the benefit of people and communities in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles Scilly with a view to moving toward formally constituting the Vision Zero SW partnership through an agreed memorandum of understanding.

2. National Developments

Government consultations and announcements

2.1 Call for Evidence – Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy

In January 2021 the Government announced a call for evidence to support the development of its next Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy. The Call for Evidence is seeking views from those with lived experience and those with expertise in working with survivors as well as those engaged in prevention activity and the provision of services. The Call for Evidence will close on 19th February 2021. The OPCC is intending to make a submission to the government's consultation and is engaging with partners to support that submission.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/violence-against-women-and-girls-vawg-call-for-evidence>

2.2 Home Office National Review of Police and Crime Commissioners

Part one of the national policing review was completed in November 2020 with a variety of stakeholders, including PCCs and Police and Crime Panels asked to submit their views to the Home Office. Part two of this review will be scheduled for after the PCC elections in May 2021. The results of the part one were expected to be announced at the end of 2020 but are still awaited from the Home Office.

2.3 Additional Funding available 2021/22

• Launch of £20 Million Safer Streets Fund 2021/22

In December 2020 the Government confirmed that £20 Million will be made available in 2021/22 for a second round of Safer Streets Fund Projects. The Commissioner was successful in bidding for £546,000 in funding in 2020/21 under the first round of the scheme for a project to tackle acquisitive crime in North Stonehouse in Plymouth. This funding opportunity will launch at the end of January 2021 with award of funding expected in May 2021 and the OPCC has already started to engage with local partners across Devon and Cornwall to make them aware of this. We foresee that there will be some changes to the bidding criteria from the first round which will need to be understood to identify potential opportunities across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly for the funding. It is anticipated that there will be a limit of three bids allowed for each policing area.

• Expansion of Serious Violence fund (£50m)

The Commissioner has written to the Policing Minister to request that Devon & Cornwall be included in accessing this funding. The Minister has responded, stating that the entry criteria requires us to have a certain level of wounding by a bladed instrument within a hospital setting. At this time, our next step is to work with other PCCs who have not been recipients

of this funding to encourage a broader approach to serious violence funding from the government.

Parliamentary matters

2.4 Domestic Abuse Bill

The Domestic Abuse Bill had its second reading in the House of Lords on 5th January 2021 following its successful passage through the House of Commons in 2020 and will move to Committee stage. Subject to process of the Bill it is still anticipated that many of the provisions of the Bill, including the new duty on local authorities in England to provide support for victims and their children within safe accommodation will come into effect in April 2021. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government consulted on the allocation method to distribute the new burdens funding associated with the duty in November 2020 and the outcome of that consultation is awaited. Initial debate within the House of Lords on 5th January saw the raising of a number of key issues, including around potential statutory requirements for the provision of community based support services for victims. The Committee stage will commence in week commencing 25th January 2021.

2.5 Victims Code of Practice

In November 2020 the Ministry of Justice published the updated Victim Code of Practice following its second round of consultation on the code in March 2020.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/936239/victims-code-2020.pdf The new code was laid before Parliament on 19th November 2020 and will come into effect from 1st April 2021. The revised Victims Code of Practice sets out 12 rights that victims can expect to receive. The key principles underpinning the revised Code are that victims should:

- receive the information and support they need, when they need it;
- not be re-traumatised by their experience of the criminal justice process; and
- whatever the outcome, be satisfied with the treatment they received from the criminal justice system.

Preparations for the introduction of the new Victim Code of Practice are taking place within the OPCC and Devon and Cornwall Police in expectation of practitioner guidance which is due to be issued early in 2021.

2.6 Home Affairs Select Committee Inquiry into Violence and Abuse Against Retail Workers

The Home Affairs Select Committee announced in December 2020 that it was carrying out an inquiry into violence and abuse against retail workers. The inquiry – which closed on 22nd January 2021 is examining

- The police response to incidents of abuse and violence towards retail workers;
- Barriers to justice for victims of retail abuse and violence;
- Whether a new aggravated offence is required;
- The adequacy of the Government's response to its call for evidence.

The Commissioner is intending to submit a response to the Committee's inquiry.

The Committee also published a survey for retail workers to seek views on their personal experiences which closed on 22nd January. <https://committees.parliament.uk/call-for-evidence/357/violence-and-abuse-towards-retail-workers/>

The Panel may also be aware that a petition calling for the introduction of an aggravated assault offence for assaults against retail workers has reached over 100,000 signatures and will be put forward for debate in the House of Commons. A Private Members Bill is also currently in Parliament seeking an aggravated assault offence in these circumstances. The Bill is currently awaiting a date for its second reading in the House of Commons.

3. Considerations of Panel recommendations

At its last meeting on 20th November 2020, the Police and Crime Panel made the following recommendations to the Police and Crime Commissioner, both formally submitted to the OPCC on 24th December 2020.

- 3.1 Panel Recommendation: In light of the serious nature of the County Lines challenge to policing and crime prevention, the Panel recommends: That the PCC publishes a clear strategy highlighting the principal objectives in addressing County Lines, to include key indicators to be reported to the Panel as necessary. These indicators are to be aimed at allowing Panel members to assess critical emerging trends such as rising weapon related crime and gang violence.

The Commissioner's response is as follows:

"County Lines is a particularly ruthless tactic employed by criminals designed to exploit our most vulnerable and brings fear to local communities. County Lines is essentially criminals adjusting their tactics to optimise gain and reduce their risk through exploitation, violence and coercion. However, it is important to not look at this in isolation but consider the wider factors, such as modern day slavery and weapons offences, which often go hand in hand with this activity. The Police work alongside other organisations to address drug crime, exploitation and violence as a whole. Multi-agency partnership forums supported by the Community Safety Partnerships have been set up across the force to address the response and preventative measures. This includes providing support to frontline practitioners to spot the signs of vulnerability - including through training which my office has funded and to encourage reporting, anonymously if necessary through Crimestoppers, which my office has funded for the past 4 years. It is important that this partnership approach continues to analyse the changing nature of the problem so they can respond collectively.

Addressing County Lines is very important not only because it causes serious harm to victims but also because gang activity can often play out in public creating fear in communities. I support the Chief Constable's approach to deter and disrupt County Lines and continue to support the proactive approach the Force is taking by deploying proactive teams and by redesigning its operating model, including the creation of a new Vulnerability Command. The Force approach is closely aligned to the national effort by working closely with the National Crime Agency and Regional Organised Crime Units to disrupt activity which we part-fund and support. The Force also benefits from additional Government funding provided in recognition of the national scale of the challenge.

The Panel will recall as part of the budget for 2020/21 the Chief Constable and I agreed to

implement a new programme of work to address the prevention of serious violence. This introduced a £1 million additional investment into tackling violent crime for at least the next four years. The rationale for the programme was a direct response recognising the need for a step change to tackle our inherent violence within our community by providing joint leadership and investment. Although there were areas of best practice already within the police, a more coordinated partnership approach was necessary to turn the tide on this inherent community wide issue.

Holding the Chief to account for the performance is part of our strategy plus focussing on protecting the most vulnerable to exploitation through our funding of partnerships and governance around safeguarding boards.

I have carefully considered the Panel's recommendation for a County Lines strategy. As I stated in my answers to members' questions and report to the Panel on 20th November 2020, it is important to remember that county lines does not operate in isolation. It is a morphing of tactics by criminal gangs over recent years to increase profits and evade detection. Given the nature of the partnership activity to address County Lines and the existence of clear local strategies through the Community Safety Partnerships in which my office is fully engaged as well as the establishment of the Preventing Serious Violence Programme I am not convinced for the need for a separate PCC strategy for County Lines at this stage. I do not believe this is necessary and to add an additional level of strategic direction would only serve to complicate what is already a complex multi-agency response.

I recognise the Panel's role to scrutinise my decisions and actions in this area and I wish to provide the Panel with the information it needs to fulfil its role. This includes information on crime trends in areas such as weapons, drug trafficking and wider organised criminality and serious violence. In addition to the crime profiles already provided to the Panel I believe the best way of doing this would be for me to report regularly on the work of the Serious Violence Programme. As reported to the Panel in November last year, despite the pressures from the pandemic response this programme has already a number of streams of work underway. The arrival of the Programme Director will help accelerate this work during 2021.

I would welcome the opportunity to provide regular updates on the work of this programme including indicators and analytics to keep the Panel updated on progress."

- 3.2 Panel Recommendation: In light of the dissatisfaction of Panel members over the accuracy and utility of the Police and Crime Plan performance measures and their grading, the Panel recommends that the future Police and Crime Plan takes a new approach to performance criteria and associated grading to ensure that they are useful to Panel members and the public, by providing meaningful feedback on key performance criteria as they change over time.

"I agree that the approach to reporting performance should be reviewed so that it remains meaningful to the public and allows the Panel to fulfil its role. However the appropriate time to do this is in the development of the next Police and Crime Plan.

The current indicators were put in place in discussion with the Panel as part of the development of the Police and Crime Plan in 2017. Following feedback from the Panel in

2019 regarding the indicators it was agreed that the OPCC would supply a crime profile to each Panel meeting detailing crime rates, key trends and comparators with national crime rates. This was made in recognition of the fact that the existing indicators were linked to the Police and Crime Plan and would therefore remain in place for its duration but also a shared view between myself and the Panel that information on crime levels at the Panel would be beneficial to the Panel's work.

Following the planned elections in May 2021 it will be for the elected Police and Crime Commissioner to present their draft Police and Crime Plan to the Panel for scrutiny prior to publication. The Panel will have the opportunity to review and comment upon the new performance framework as part of this process."

4. Recent HMICRS Inspection Reports

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has published the following reports since the last Police and Crime Panel meeting.

4.1 Pre-charge bail and released under investigation: Striking a balance

This was a joint thematic inspection led HMICFRS and supported by HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate. The inspection assessed the way in which police forces have responded to changes to bail, and in particular the introduction of the presumption of release without bail (RUI), as introduced by the Policing and Crime Act 2017.

The report was published on 8th December 2020 and is available here: <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/pre-charge-bail-and-released-under-investigation-striking-a-balance-1.pdf>.

The Commissioner's response is in preparation.

4.2 Safe to share? Liberty and Southall Black Sisters' super-complaint on policing and immigration status

This super-complaint is a joint investigation by HMICFRS, the College of Policing and the Independent Office for Police Conduct. Super-complaints provide a voice for designated bodies to raise concerns on behalf of the public about patterns or trends in policing that are, or appear to be, significantly harming the interests of the public. Liberty and Southall Black Sisters put forward this super-complaint about the treatment of victims of crime and witnesses with insecure immigration status. It focuses on how information about them is passed to the Home Office for immigration enforcement.

The full report can be viewed here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/945314/safe-to-share-liberty-southall-black-sisters-super-complaint-policing-immigration-status.pdf

The Commissioner's response is in preparation.

5. Organisational Changes

5.1 OPCC

Three new members of staff joined the OPCC on 4th January to fill two vacant posts.

Vicky Church - Scrutiny and Performance Officer. Vicky joins us from Devon County Council where she worked in roles across Democratic Services, Information Governance and most recently as a Scrutiny Officer. Vicky will help develop the OPCC's scrutiny function and performance framework.

Becki Parsons - Criminal Justice Strategy, Policy and Performance Officer. Becki brings with her experience of working in both the Warwickshire OPCC and West Midlands Police leading on policy, governance and performance. Becki's role involves supporting the work of the PCC in the area of criminal justice portfolio and establishing effective working links with criminal justice partner agencies.

Becky Skellett - Serious Violence Programme Manager. Becky has more than a decade's experience working to advance the role of local government in the prevention of violence. From 2016 – 2021, she served as the founding Head of the Strong Cities Network which launched at the United Nations General Assembly in 2015 to mount a city-led response against hate, polarisation and extremism in all its forms. Rebecca has also worked across several London Boroughs delivering the UK Prevent Strategy and serves as an expert advisor to the Department for Education and the European Commission's Radicalisation Awareness Network.

5.2 Devon and Cornwall Police

In November 2020 the Deputy Chief Constable Paul Netherton commenced an operational secondment to the Home Office to directly support the department and Ministers on COVID 19 response and Brexit. In his absence Assistant Chief Constable Jim Nye has been appointed as Temporary Deputy Chief Constable for Devon and Cornwall Police and Chief Superintendent Steve Parker has been appointed Temporary Assistant Chief Constable for Contact and Innovation to cover for ACC Nye's temporary promotion.

In November 2020 Assistant Chief Constable Julie Fielding joined Devon and Cornwall from Dorset Police as the ACC for Local Policing and Partnerships. Following this appointment Chief Superintendent Jim Pearce has returned to his post as Cornwall Commander.

5.3 Local Criminal Justice Board

From December 2020, Hannah Hart the Local Criminal Justice Board Manager for Devon and Cornwall commenced a secondment to the National Police Chiefs' Council as Strategy and Performance Lead. Mark Waldron has taken up a temporary position as the Local Criminal Justice Board Manager from January 2021 to support Board and its members.

6. **Communications and Engagement**

6.1 Special Constable allowance

As part of the Covid-19 response Devon and Cornwall Police has made enhanced allowance payments available to all Special Constables who committed to providing eight, eight-hour shifts in an eight-week period over winter. Although one other force had given one-off allowances to Special Constables this extension of the scheme was a UK first.

The OPCC Communications and Engagement team was charged with co-ordinating partners to promote the scheme, which was funded by additional Home Office monies designed to help police forces cope with their Covid-19 response.

A number of national and regional media outlets covered the story, which received favourable reception for its ability to provide a more flexible and resilient police force.

6.2 Keeping Christmas Kind

The Commissioner was among those supporting the #KeepingChristmasKind campaign to raise awareness of a rise in assaults on shop workers during the pandemic, when shop staff are attempting to advise social distancing, queues are longer and face masks should be worn by most customers. The campaign was designed to urge reporting of crime and to direct victims towards sources of help and support. Working with representatives of the Co-Operative stores and the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers (USADAW), the communications and engagement team supported a social media campaign and media interviews.

Social media engagement for the project were as follows:

Twitter:

- Approximately 11,302 impressions
- Approximately 292 total engagements
- Videos received approximately 1,258 views

Facebook

- Estimated reach of 95,900
- Approximately post engagement of 1,949
- Approximately 4,826 1-minute video views

6.3 Direct intervention to change lives: Torbay Modular Housing Project

The Panel has been updated previously on the innovative modular housing project being sponsored by the Commissioner in partnership with Torbay Council, a modular housing provider (AGILE) and HMPPS Leyhill to provide a single dwelling in Torbay, made and assembled by prisoners and assembled with the help of a prisoner, released on temporary licence (ROTL) from HMP Channings Wood. It will be occupied by young mothers, who would otherwise be in unsuitable accommodation and are in need of support to develop life skills for independent living.

The OPCC's Communications and Engagement team is leading communications for the South West Reoffending Board pilot project to build an affordable home using prison inmates from HMP Leyhill, HMP Channings Wood and expertise from the private sector. Inmates participating in the pilot project receive skills training and some payments which are set aside to help with their own housing costs on release.

Initial communications in the project generated a high level of interest and the scheme was reported in several national, regional and trade publications. The scheme was praised for its

innovation in a favourable write-up in The Times leader column. The team is now involved in stage two of the project - the final assembly, by prisoners on day release, of an affordable housing unit on land owned by Torbay Council.

This is being overseen as a proof of concept project by the South West Reducing Reoffending Board with the aim of expanding it across the region. The Commissioner is the Vice Chairman for this Board.

6.4 The Councillor Advocate Network

The councillor advocate scheme, which is designed to link councillors with their neighbourhood inspectors, has continued to grow, with a total of 330 members of the scheme on January 1, 2021.

The Covid-19 pandemic means councillor advocate seminars, which enable members to gain a better understanding of strategic and operational policing matters, have been unable to take place physically so as an alternative councillors have been given the opportunity to put questions to senior officers, a multi-media package of video and audio (podcast) is then compiled and distributed.

Recent participants in these 'virtual seminars' have included question and answer sessions with Cornwall Commander Chief Superintendent Jim Pearce on December 2 and South Devon Commander Chief Superintendent Nikki Leaper (this is scheduled for January 21). Levels of engagement and correspondence with councillor advocates has been higher than usual because of the Covid-19 pandemic, with the majority of councillors making inquiries about regulations.

Councillor advocates also helped provide a community voice in the scrutiny of non-emergency service contact.

6.5 Exeter Police Station virtual tour and OxeHealth cameras

Virtual tour

An immersive virtual tour of the new Exeter Police Station was commissioned by the OPCC to add to transparency of the project and aid familiarisation for new police recruits, transferee officers and staff and members of the public who are anxious about visiting (particularly those with hidden disabilities).

Ocean3D, the company appointed to create the tour, was the first business in the world without physical premises to be awarded the National Autistic Society 'Autism Friendly' award.

Between its launch on December 7, 2020 and January 13, 2021 the virtual tour, which is annotated and enables people to 'see' parts of the station that are usually off-limits to the public, has been taken 1,248 times by a total of 940 users.

New custody cameras

Devon and Cornwall Police has become the first force in the world to install high-tech cameras in custody cells that monitor a detainee's movement, pulse and breathing. The technology, known as Oxevision, has been developed by a company called OxeHealth, a spin-off company formed from a partnership between Oxford University's Institute of Biomedical Engineering and Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust.

The OPCC communications and engagement team is working in partnership with these organisations to promote the potentially life-saving advantages of this technology.

Contact for further information:

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