



Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel

9th July 2021

COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE REPORT

This is a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Alison Hernandez, drawing 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 2021 and since her re-election for another three years in May 2021.

1. G7 Policing and Security

The recent security effort around the G7 Summit in Cornwall showed British policing at its best. The challenge of arranging security for a weekend that brought together heads of state, political leaders and their entourages would be immense at any time, even without the added complexity of a global pandemic.

Critical to the success or failure of the policing operation, under the leadership of Chief Constable Shaun Sawyer, was the style and tone of those uniformed officers who came face to face with the public. Around five thousand travelled from around the UK to provide a polite, friendly and reassuring presence that was an advertisement for a British mode of policing that we should be proud of.

Behind the scenes work was done to minimise the impact of the summit on the residents affected while ensuring we all received the high standard of policing which has helped secure some of the lowest recorded crime rates in the country.

This professional effort was underpinned and strengthened by the incredible contribution made by volunteers who gave their time to do everything from assuring custody was fit for purpose to patrolling neighbourhoods as Special Constables and to distributing surplus food to those most in need in Cornwall.

Feedback from our towns and villages has been overwhelmingly positive. For the most part residents, visitors and businesses put up with disruption caused by this once-in-a-lifetime event with a smile upon their faces and we received very positive feedback from local people.

At a time when police forces justifiably come under an incredible amount of scrutiny, and criticism if they are found wanting, it is only correct that we also celebrate when things go right. With the 20,000 uplift in police officer numbers presenting an opportunity to reshape policing it is worth reflecting on this style of policing and partnership which last weekend won admirers from around the globe.

As PCC my objectives were to:



- ensure that the public received a proportionate response to business as usual throughout the preparation and delivery of the international event;
- ensure that the Chief Constable was well supported;
- ensure that the Chief Constable worked in partnership to protect the public locally, regionally and nationally;
- ensure the organisational health of Devon & Cornwall Police, so that it not only responds to the international event effectively, but recovers and returns to normality as quickly as possible;
- ensure, on behalf of the public, that the police respond in ways that are necessary, sufficient, proportionate and ethical;
- promote Vision Zero for road safety to demonstrate the value of local partnership working to deliver a single objective.

The strong leadership demonstrated by the Chief Constable enabled me to achieve these objectives and see the delivery of a real success story for Devon & Cornwall Police.

Specifically, officers and volunteers from the OPCC were involved in supporting the overall policing leadership and partnership response to the event; undertaking ICVs to custody and triage centres; liaising with local areas regarding protest sites.

As PCC I liaised frequently with our regional MPs, met with the Home Secretary during a pre-event visit to Carbis Bay, supported the Chief Constable in a visible walk-about in Falmouth (the location of the media centre and policing accommodation); and visited St Ives and Cornish Councillor Advocates to seek their feedback on this historic event.

2. Policy Developments

2.1 New Funding for Victim Services

On the 1st of February 2021 the Ministry of Justice launched a £40m fund for organisations that support victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence. To find out more please visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/extra-40m-to-help-victims-during-pandemic-and-beyond>
 In our area we were allocated £305,403 in domestic abuse and sexual violence support uplift funding. To allocate this funding a panel of local commissioners with specialist knowledge and understanding of this area of need, alongside a lived experience advisor sat on the 16th of March 2021. The panel had a very difficult task in making awards because the demand for funding far outstripped the funding available. In total the panel had to make decisions on how to allocate £305,403 worth of funding, with £858,438 of applications. The panel used the assessment evidence template provided for each application, the eligibility criteria and an assessment of need to make a decision on a case by case basis in order to consider each award. I am delighted that the panel were able to award the full funding to twelve local organisations across Devon and Cornwall.

In addition to this funding, the commissioning team also applied for independent domestic abuse advisors (IDVAs) and independent sexual violence advisors (ISVAs) and were delighted to be awarded £1.14m for 15 posts across Devon and Cornwall. Many of these posts will be specifically skilled in supporting people with protected characteristics, young people and men and boys.

2.2 Update on Victim Services recommissioning

Following a competitive tender, full evaluation and due diligence Victim Support were awarded a new, ambitious and innovative ten-year contract as my new strategic delivery partner for victim services on 1st April 2021. As the first PCC to issue such a long term contract for victim services, this new way of working will deliver sustainability of service provision, an ability to work together to implement services where we know there are gaps and will work with partners to improve access to victim services so that victims have a greater chance of coping and recovering after a crime has occurred. This new service will create a 'victim led' service provision that facilitates the evolution of the available victim care support services to be able to meet the ever changing needs of each and every victim, by matching the solution to their needs, rather than adapting their needs to fit solutions available.

Victim Support have nearly fifty years of experience in supporting victims of crime locally, regionally and nationally, therefore as strategic delivery partner they bring an in-depth knowledge and understanding of victims' needs, a wealth of wisdom from working with victims affected by trauma and harm and an exceptional reputation for service delivery. Of immediate note, I can report that the mobilisation period of this contract has been very successful and we are already starting to see the benefits for victims through the implementation of new support for victims of modern slavery, a protocol to support police and partners if there was a major incident of significant harm and the stabilisation of victim service delivery in our area.

2.3 Tri-service safety officers

The tri-service safety officer scheme which is a collaboration between Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service, Devon and Cornwall Police and South Western Ambulance Trust is expanding with the addition of three new locations and an increase in officers to a total of 14 across Cornwall. Three new locations (Helston, Callington and Torpoint) have been added for 2021/22 and the new officers are currently undergoing training and will be in place by September 2021.

The tri-service role was developed in 2013 and there are now 14 permanent posts across Cornwall. The tri-service officers are located in areas where the police, fire and ambulance services have a limited presence and where it is difficult to deploy a resource from a single agency. The posts have been joint funded by the three emergency services.

The tri-service officers are trained medically, to a co-responder standard, and receive firefighter training. They also have powers under the community safety accreditation scheme and have instant access to police, fire and ambulance IT systems. The 14 tri-service officers are based in Bude, Liskeard, Hayle, St Just, St Ives, Perranporth, Fowey/Polruan, Looe, Lostwithiel, St Dennis, Helston, Callington and Torpoint. I am pleased to continue to watch this service grow, and to have attended the latest passing out parade for officers last month.

2.4 Safer Streets Fund

In June we were successful in our bid for the government's second round of Safer Streets funding. The Safer Streets Fund is a Home Office initiative which provides support crime prevention measures and activities in areas with high levels of acquisitive crime. Following a partnership bid between my office and Exeter City Council, Exeter has been awarded £432,000 to tackle crime and make streets safer in the city centre and surrounding areas. Combined with match funding the total bid value is in excess of £550,000 and will support a series of investments and projects within

the city centre area.

Investments being made through the funding include additional CCTV, improvements to street lighting in some key locations, crime prevention training, the launch of new neighbourhood watch and student watch schemes, security measures for residential premises, improvements to Northernhay Park and work to tackle and prevent graffiti. Delivery of the project will be led by the Community Safety Partnership and involves a range of partners including Devon and Cornwall Community Watch Association, the University of Exeter and Exeter Businesses Against Crime and will be completed over the remainder of 2021/22.

I have previously updated the Panel have been on the progress of the Stronger North Stonehouse Project, which was funded by a £546,000 grant from the Home Office's first Safer Streets Fund. The project has successfully provided additional CCTV and street lighting, launched new neighbourhood watch schemes, improved dwelling security, provided crime prevention training and a programme of community projects, including new park facilities and the cleanup of graffiti and replacement with community artworks. The Home Office funding for this project will end on 30th June 2021 but I am providing additional funding alongside Plymouth City Council to enable the project to continue its work during 2021/22.

A third round of Safer Streets funding has recently been launched by the Home Office, focused on protecting people in public spaces, with a particular focus on the safety of women and girls. This funding round will close on 15th July 2021 and I am working with local authorities to prepare bids for submission to the fund.

2.5 ICV Scheme

The Independent Custody Visiting scheme has resumed its physical visits, and played an invaluable role in G7 activity. Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) helped to review the arrangements at custody triage sites during the preparation phase for G7, and visited the triage and custody centres to check on the treatment and welfare of detainees. The ICVs provided both me as the Commissioner and colleagues in the Force managing G7 with assurance on provision in the sites and ensure that everyone, both detainees and staff managing the sites, were well treated and remained safe throughout the G7 period.

2.6 Specified Information

All PCCs have new requirements under the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) (Amendment) Order 2021. The amended order took effect on 31 May 2021 and requires that information relating to the force's performance against the Government's national priorities for policing, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) performance reports on the force, and complaint handling must be published in a prominent place on the PCCs website.

My office is working closely with colleagues in the force to review the requirements and ensure that all publications are delivered on time, in line with the new guidelines. My office already upholds high transparency standards, and has achieved the CoPaCC for the last five years running.

2.7 Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill

In March 2021 the government introduced the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill into the House of Commons. The Bill contains a wide range of measures which includes strengthening

sentences for a number of offences, new police powers on tackling unauthorised encampments and for the management of protests, a doubling of the sentence for assaulting an emergency worker, reform of police bail arrangements and the establishment of the new statutory serious violence duty and new powers such as serious violence prevention orders.

The Bill is currently in the Committee Stage in the House of Commons and will return to the main chamber before summer recess. In May 2021 I was invited to address the Committee and gave evidence on behalf of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners to support Committee members in their consideration of the Bill. I provided specific examples and evidence on the impact of unauthorised encampments on our communities and highlighted to the Committee the local appetite for greater investment in Road Safety, as supported by feedback from our recent surveys. Further information about the Bill and its passage can be found on the parliament website at <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2839>.

2.8 Summer 2021 Preparations

In March 2021 I announced partnership funding of up to £350,000 to support Community Safety Partnerships to keep people safe over summer 2021 and in the latter stages of unlock from the COVID-19 restrictions. This funding has been made available to assist local areas in preventing youth related anti-social behaviour and to promote safety within busy night-time economies as we return to the reopening of bars and nightclubs. I have allocated £100,000 between the four upper tier community safety partnerships and we have worked with the police and local authorities to identify 20 Evening and Night Time Economy (ENTE) hotspots which were invited to apply for up to £10,000 of funding from the PCC for initiatives including ENTE marshals, safe drinking schemes and additional CCTV monitoring, provided that 100% match funding could be provided locally.

Twenty locations have been offered ENTE funding and eighteen locations have sought, and been awarded, funding. A range of initiatives are being supported including the appointment of ENTE marshals, additional CCTV monitoring hours, extra CCTV cameras and the launch of new street-based volunteer support schemes.

Dedicated funding has been provided to enable CSPs to put in place additional interventions and activities to prevent anti-social behaviour by young people in public spaces during COVID 19 unlock and summer 2021. The Fund has allocated £100,000 across the four upper tier local authority CSPs based upon the formula for Community Safety Grant allocations which can be used for new initiatives or to expand capacity and coverage for existing activities or initiatives.

The eighteen locations are: Bude; Falmouth; Liskeard; Newquay Town; Penzance; St Austell; and Truro Centre/Lemon Quay; three locations in the city of Plymouth; Barnstaple; Bideford; Exeter Quay/City Centre; Ilfracombe; and Tiverton; Newton Abbott; Paignton Town Centre; and Torquay Town Centre/Harbour.

2.9 PCC's National Portfolios

Following the elections in May 2021 I will be leading nationally for all Police and Crime Commissioners on two areas of priority, both of which reflect significant proprieties for our communities within Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

Local Policing and Partnerships: This includes anti-social behaviour, the enhancement of neighbourhood policing, public contact, collaborative working with community safety partnerships and other partners as well as neighbourhood acquisitive crime. These are important issues for our communities locally and are areas where we are seeing an increased recognition from government of the need for an enhanced response for our communities.

Roads Policing and Road Safety: I am continuing in my national leadership role over this term of office for roads policing and road safety. Over the past few months we have seen considerable

progress in better understanding the needs of victims of road traffic collisions to determine how we can enhance the quality and consistency of support provided to victims, and in a national leadership role I will continue to champion this important work.

Alongside these roles I have been appointed as an Executive Board member of the National Rural Crime Network where I will be working with Police and Crime Commissioners from across England and Wales and with key stakeholders to ensure that the voice of rural communities is heard in policy debates and investment decisions for policing.

3. Estates

3.1 Estates Overview

Work continues on the estate despite some delay due to the support provided to the G7 event. The ongoing items to note are:-

- The final moves have now taken place in Barnstaple with the custody provision in place at the Seven Brethren site. The need for a new station came about after safety concerns were identified with the roof of the North Walk station which were not financially viable to repair.
- Refurbishment has now commenced on Camborne Police Station.
- Further demolition work has commenced at the Middlemoor HQ. This work will include the demolition of the swimming pool and sports hall that were identified to have the same roof defects as Barnstaple Police Station. The work to replace the Sport Hall will start once the site is cleared.

As well as the work identified above the sale of St Ives Police Station has been approved. A police presence will remain in St Ives as it is planned to co-locate with Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service. New planning legislation was outlined in the Queen's Speech. The Building & Estates team through National Police Estates Group (supported by the NPCC and APCC along with fire and ambulance colleagues) have been intrinsically involved in lobbying Government to introduce changes in that legislation, making it obligatory for local authorities to consider the impact of development schemes on police infrastructure when determining planning applications for development. The Estates team are engaged in working with a number of local authorities to include references to police infrastructure in their upcoming CIL and Local Plans.

3.2 Public Enquiry Offices

Plans are be developed to pilot the commitment to expand the number of Public Enquiry Offices in the autumn.

3.3 G7 Estates

As part of the support to the G7 Summit over 40 additional sites were used to accommodate a variety of functions including triage centres for custody, welfare facilities and operational services.

4. Scrutiny

4.1 Community Speed Watch Scrutiny

I recently chaired a scrutiny review of Community Speed Watch (CSW) in Devon and Cornwall. The review considered what is currently working well, the challenges facing the scheme and the force's plans for further investment in the area. The panel took information and testimony from a range of sources, including focus groups with Councillor Advocates and CSW volunteers, and I would like to thank all those who gave their time and shared their views. The panel's findings and recommendations are published in a report on the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner's website at <https://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 me setting out his intended actions to progress the recommendations. This includes producing a revised CSW Policy, holding a conference for CSW volunteers, and taking forward the force's plans to invest further in CSW co-ordination support, additional speed detection officers and additional roads safety vehicles and portable cameras.

I again extends my thanks to Dorset Police who continue to provide ongoing support to Devon and Cornwall Police's CSW function through the Strategic Alliance, and who were also valuable contributors to this scrutiny review.

5. 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.

5.1 Disproportionate use of police powers - A spotlight on stop and search and the use of force

This report is based on various sources of information including the findings of HMICFRS 2018/19 Integrated PEEL (Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy) Assessments. Of the 43 forces inspected, 19 were inspected on how well they treated the public and assessed combatting unconscious bias and using communication skills to prevent interactions escalating into conflict. For stop and search and use of force, HMICFRS considered training, monitoring use, understanding disproportionality and taking action, and external scrutiny. The report was published on 26th February and is available here:

<https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/disproportionate-use-of-police-powers-a-spotlight-on-stop-and-search-and-the-use-of-force/>

My response to the report is published here:

<https://www.devonandcornwall-pcc.gov.uk/information-hub/response-to-hmic-consultations/hmic-responses-may-2016-onwards/>

5.2 Getting the balance right? An inspection of how effectively the police deal with protests

This was a thematic inspection examining intelligence, planning and preparation, collaboration, decision-making and current legislation around how the police manage protests. Ten police forces were visited during the Autumn/Winter of 2020, including Devon and Cornwall Police. The report was published on 11th March and is available here:

<https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/getting-the-balance-right-an->

[inspection-of-how-effectively-the-police-deal-with-protests/](#)

My response to the report is published here:

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5.3 Policing in the pandemic - The police response to the coronavirus pandemic during 2020

This was a thematic inspection which gathered evidence from all 43 police forces in England and Wales and from national policing organisations, carrying out more detailed inspections of 19 forces, including Devon and Cornwall Police. The inspection focussed on preparation for the pandemic, overall leadership, working with other organisations, policing (workforce wellbeing, protecting people who are vulnerable, requests for service, investigating crime, enforcing coronavirus legislation) and arrangements for keeping people in custody. The report was published on 20th April and is available here:

<https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/the-police-response-to-the-coronavirus-pandemic-during-2020/>

My response to the report is published here:

<https://www.devonandcornwall-pcc.gov.uk/information-hub/response-to-hmic-consultations/hmic-responses-may-2016-onwards/>

5.4 Custody services in a COVID-19 environment

This thematic inspection report gathered evidence from all 43 police forces in England and Wales and carried out fieldwork in five forces (Devon and Cornwall Police were not one of these five). The inspection assessed how policing understood and prepared for the potential and actual impact of the pandemic, how forces responded initially, and continue to respond to the pandemic, and how the police are evaluating their response to the pandemic. The report was published on 20th April and is available here: <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/custody-services-in-a-covid-19-environment/>

My response to the report is published here:

<https://www.devonandcornwall-pcc.gov.uk/information-hub/response-to-hmic-consultations/hmic-responses-may-2016-onwards/>

6. Organisational Changes

6.1 OPCC

Felicity Ridgway joined the OPCC as Director of Operations in April 2021, as part of the Executive Management Team.

6.2 Devon and Cornwall Police

ACC Jim Colwell was appointed to the role of Deputy Chief Constable in March 2021 following a highly competitive process. He will take up his new post on July 12.

7. Communications and Engagement

7.1 Election

The Communications and Engagement team worked to promote public understanding of the police and crime commissioner election and the period of heightened sensitivity in the weeks before polling day.

This included producing a video guide for OPCC staff to ensure they were aware of the conventions around the period of heightened sensitivity and assisting Devon and Cornwall Police's corporate communications department with its advice to police officers and police staff.

The team worked with Exeter City Council so that the results of the election were communicated accurately and in a timely fashion to journalists and the public. This included:

- Facebook live broadcasts of the declaration of results
- Regular social media updates on when results were expected
- The issuing of a press release to announce results

The election represented a significant opportunity to engage the public in the work of the office. Attending the count were journalists from ITV, the BBC, the Local Democracy Reporting Service and Bauer Media (local radio).

Visits to the OPCC website for quarter four of the 2020-21 financial year were 37% up on the same quarter 12 months earlier and we can surmise that the elections were partially responsible for this increase.

7.2 Social media

The Communications and Engagement team regards social media as a vital tool to engage communities that are hard to reach using traditional media. In the six months to June the OPCC saw growth across all platforms (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram).

During the Covid-19 pandemic the OPCC has been using its social media platforms to disseminate Government advice on staying safe and changes to regulations. The top performing social media post of 2021 related to lockdown rule changes on May 5, reaching in excess of 34,500 Facebook users.

7.3 Neighbourhood Alert

Neighbourhood Alert is an email distribution scheme that the communications and engagement team uses to inform and communicate with registered users. Despite a six-week period of pre-election heightened sensitivity the user base has continued to grow. As at April 30, 2021 there were 32,286 total users, with approximately 190 new users per month, and this has increased even more since the G7 event in June following a push on advertising.

7.4 Councillor Advocates

Councillor advocates are members of local authorities in Devon, Cornwall or the Isles of Scilly who agree to receive regular updates from the OPCC and are entitled to regular meetings with their neighbourhood policing teams.

OPCC Cllr Advocate numbers continued to grow in the year to June 2021. A total of 330 councillors had signed up to the scheme in January 2021. In April 2021 this had increased to 348. Numbers declined after the May elections but have increased since then. As at June 25 there were 343 scheme members.

I encourage all members of this Panel to join the Councillor Advocate scheme and encourage their colleagues to do so and visit <https://www.devonandcornwall-pcc.gov.uk/take-part/councillor-advocate-scheme/>.



Alison Hernandez

Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

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