



Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel

17th September 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 July 2021.

1. Policy Developments

1.1 Safer Streets Fund

In July 2021, I updated the panel regarding the successful award of funding from the Safer Streets Fund Round 2 for Exeter, and the continuation of key elements of the Stronger North Stonehouse Project in Plymouth following the end of Home Office funding in June 2021. These projects, which all include a focus on infrastructure, crime prevention and community are continuing to move forward for completion in 2021/22.

I also informed the Panel that my office was working with local authorities to support and prepare bids for the Safer Streets Fund Round 3 which launched in June 2021. That funding opportunity specifically focused on the safety of people (particularly women and girls) in public spaces, with opportunities to bid for investments in infrastructure, education and behaviour change. The funding opportunity closed on 15th July and two bids were submitted by local authority partners which focused on two of our main university centres in Plymouth and Falmouth. These two bids have been developed in collaboration with community safety and education partners as well as organisations working specifically in the area of tackling violence against women and girls. The results of the bidding process are currently awaited from the Home Office. If successful these projects will need to be delivered by 31st March 2022.

1.2 Summer 2021

In July 2021, I updated the Panel on preparations for summer policing. This included funding of £350,000 to Community Safety Partnerships, which was made available to assist local areas in preventing youth related anti-social behaviour and to promote safety within busy night-time economies as the night-time economy reopened. Eighteen locations were awarded this funding for a range of activities and interventions including the funding of marshals, CCTV and street-based volunteer schemes. These interventions will conclude at the end of September and the OPCC will be carrying out an evaluation supported by reports from each of the participating CSPs, with further updates being brought to the panel following this analysis.



Alongside the funding I have provided for Community Safety Partnerships, I have also continued to provide additional support to the Chief Constable's summer policing plan through the provision of £400,000 of additional funding for summer pressures. This funding has been utilised in a number of ways, including the provision of additional staff within the 101 contact centre, the innovative BedWatch Programme to release police officer resources from waiting in hospitals and has provided extra resources to key teams like telephone statement takers. The funding has also supported the provision of extra out of hours support services for victims of domestic abuse and local policing ASB hotspot patrols in our busiest locations this summer.

1.3 Vision Zero South West Road Safety Partnership

Vision Zero's ambition is to cut road deaths and serious injuries to zero by 2040, and to reduce current numbers by 50% by 2030. While the region is one of the safest when it comes to road safety, I believe that any death or serious injury is too many.

Our new partnership approach to addressing road safety and achieving this vision is now being delivered, having been officially launched on 9th August 2021. A key element of this is a new memorandum of understanding across the Road Safety Camera Partnership and a new governance framework to target resources more effectively. This partnership will form a key delivery mechanism for the road safety priority set out in my draft Police and Crime Plan.

The structure of the new Vision Zero South West (VZSW) partnership arrangements are based on a **Governance Board, Strategic Group** and two formal sub-groups known as **Monitoring, Enforcement and Driver Education** (Activity A) and **Themes, Education and Training** (Activity B) with dedicated roles to support VZSW, funded through the partnership, each of which will be hosted by a specified partner as follows:

- Partnership Coordinator and Admin Support – Cornwall Council
- Analyst – Devon County Council
- Communications and Engagement Coordinator - OPCC
- Treasurer function – Devon and Cornwall OPCC & Police.

This week (13th – 17th September) is the Project EDWARD 2021 week of action. Project EDWARD (Every Day Without A Road Death) is an annual UK-wide road safety campaign backed by government, emergency services, highways agencies, road safety organisations and businesses. I was pleased to launch the week of action road trip for this important project at the Marsh Mills Retail Park in Plymouth on Monday. Following this launch the project visited a number of locations across the country to showcase road safety activity and share advice for safer road use.

1.4 South West Reducing Reoffending Board

I am very pleased to have been elected to serve as Chairman of the South West Reducing Reoffending Board. This regional collaboration of leaders across services to reduce reoffending includes all five Police & Crime Commissioners, the Director of Probation (South West Region), Health representatives, the Youth Justice Board and South West Councils (representing all local authorities). This partnership has a clear direction of travel for the South West and has prioritised actions targeted to reduce reoffending including female offenders, resettlement and rehabilitation for short term sentences, youth to adult transition and veterans in the criminal justice system.

1.5 New policing governance arrangements

In August 2021, the Chief Constable and I agreed new governance arrangements to support collaborative decision making and oversight activity. This includes introducing a new Policing and Crime Joint Executive (PCJE) which will replace former Joint Executive Board functions. The purpose of the PCJE is to act as a formal governance meeting to consult on significant strategic issues that jointly affect the shape of policing and crime within the Force area and to discuss issues which determine the strategic direction of the Force and OPCC. It is one of the mechanisms that I have available to hold the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan. The PCJE will guide the OPCC and the Force in the formulation of its corporate strategies, corporate plans, objectives and priorities, taking into account the social, environmental and economic needs of our communities, partners and the individual Corporations Sole.

1.6 Investment secured for domestic abuse perpetrator-focussed programmes

In late 2020, my office worked with senior officers at Cornwall Council, Devon County Council, Plymouth City Council and Torbay Council in a bid for Home Office funding to support the adoption of the domestic abuse perpetrator-focussed programmes. An award of £417,000 was received and co-ordinated through my office. We have now had confirmation of a further £417,000 which will be made available to extend the programme until 31 March 2022. Activities rolled out include Bystander training from Exeter University, behaviour change and offender management work and addressing child on parent abuse. A full evaluation of the programme is being undertaken and will be available after the programme ends (Summer 2022).

2. Estates

2.1 Looe Police Station Refurbishment

Looe Police Station has recently been refurbished including both the existing Police Station accommodation and the adjoining disused 'Police flat', now creating a tri-party work environment for three key emergency services located within Looe. Refurbishment has included:

- Installation of new windows and external doors
- Installation of new internal fire doors and fire stopping
- Installation of new kitchen
- Refurbishment of Police Office accommodation
- Refurbishment of Police Flat, kitchen, bathroom and circulation areas to create new lettable office accommodation for the NHS and Coastguard.

2.3 St Ives Police Station

The sale of the St Ives Police Station has been agreed, with the exchange of contracts taking place and completion set for the end of October. The operational policing team will be relocated into a temporary provision within the town centre pending the development of a new Bluelight collaboration office within the existing St Ives Fire Station.

2.4 Sports Hall at Police Headquarters, Middlemoor

The demolition of the existing structurally unsound HQ Sports Hall commenced in March 2021 and

is due to complete at the end of August. A contractor to deliver a replacement has been procured and we are awaiting planning approval. Construction is expected to commence in the autumn 2021 and should be ready for occupation in early 2023.

3. National Developments

3.1 Policing, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill

The Policing, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill completed its passage through the House of Commons in June 2021 and was introduced into the House of Lords on 2nd July. The House of Lords will continue its consideration of the Bill when it returns from summer recess and we await a date for second reading.

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill 2021 includes, amongst a range of other policy considerations, the introduction of a new criminal offence in relation to unauthorised encampments and associated new powers to the police.

Earlier this year (March 2021) the Government published their response the consultation 'Strengthening police powers to tackle unauthorised encampments'. The consultation was launched on 5 November 2019 and closed on 5 March 2020. It followed the 2018 consultation 'Powers for Dealing with Unauthorised Development and Encampments' where 52% responded in favour of criminalising unauthorised encampments.

Following analysis of the feedback the Home Office announced the introduction of a criminal offence where a person resides or intends to reside on land without consent of the occupier, they have at least one vehicle on the land, cause or are likely to cause significant damage, disruption or distress and fail to leave following a request to do so. This legislation is be supported by a proposed accompanying power for the police to seize property (including vehicles) where individuals reside or intend to reside on land with a vehicle.

In May this year I presented evidence at the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill committee hearing where I confirmed my support for this legislation. I continue to support the government in taking steps to address anti-social behaviour of all types, including responding to unauthorised encampments. I will continue to update the panel on the implications of this proposed legislation as it progresses through the Parliamentary process.”

3.2 Government Publications and Announcements

A number of key government publications have been issued since the last PCC Update Report was provided which I wish to highlight to the Panel.

- Beating Crime Plan

On 27th July the government published its new Beating Crime Plan:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/beating-crime-plan>.

The Plan sets out the government's plan to deliver change to achieve less crime, fewer victims and a safer country. The Plan introduces new measures to drive down crime including:

- Reconnecting the police with the public.
- Improving the responsiveness of local police to 101 and 999 calls
- Intervening early to keep young people safe and away from violence

- Investing in specialist teams in both mainstream schools and Alternative Provision in serious violence hotspots
- Expanding the use of electronic monitoring for serious acquisitive
- Trialling the use of alcohol tags
- Encouraging prison leavers to turn their backs on crime by securing employment.
- Empowering the police to take more knives off the streets and to prevent serious violence
- Expanding the role for Police and Crime Commissioners

I have reflected the aims and ambitions of the Beating Crime Plan in my draft Police and Crime Plan which sets out my plan to create safe, resilient and connected communities for everyone in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

- Review of Police Funding Formula

The government has recently announced that it will be formally launching a review of the police funding formula which will commence in autumn 2021. The funding formula is of considerable importance to our communities as the current formula does not reflect some of the significant challenges that policing an area like ours entails through its failure to consider the challenges posed by tourism, rurality and isolation.

I will be working closely with the National Rural Crime Network, other Commissioners, as well as the Chief Constable, our local MPs and council leaders to seek to ensure that any new formula properly reflects the challenges faced by policing in Devon and Cornwall. This work is expected to take place over the next 12 months and I will keep the Panel informed throughout. I would welcome the Panel's involvement and engagement in helping us to make the strongest possible case for a funding formula that is fair to areas like ours.

3.3 National Influence

In July 2021, I updated the Panel on my national portfolio roles which include my position as the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) Lead for Local Policing and Partnerships and Road Safety, as well as my position as an elected member of the National Rural Crime Network Executive Board. These portfolios cover a wide range of issues which are of considerable importance to our communities in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

In addition to these responsibilities, in July 2021 I was elected as a member of the APCC Board for the next two years by Police and Crime Commissioners from across England and Wales and was subsequently elected to hold the position of Vice Chair of the APCC Board, again for a two year term.

3.4 Ministerial Portfolios

On 13th August the Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP was appointed by the Prime Minister as the new Minister of State for Security within the Home Office. The Minister's portfolio includes a number of policing policy areas including serious and organised crime; cybercrime and economic crime as well as responsibility for counter terrorism.

4. Recent HMICFRS 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. I publish [my response to these reports on my website](#).

4.1 Review of policing domestic abuse during the pandemic - 2021

This HMICFRS thematic inspection [report published on 23rd June](#) gathered evidence through self-assessment from all 43 police forces in England and Wales and conducted more detailed inspections of 19 forces. The report highlighted two particular areas of good practice in Devon and Cornwall:

- Provision of an unmarked car used by a trained specialist domestic abuse officer and an IDVA (independent domestic violence advisor) at times of highest demand for domestic abuse incidents. The IDVA supported victims, allowing officers to gather evidence and do a thorough risk assessment
- The force and CPS developed a retraction statement, to help improve the quality of information to support evidence-led prosecutions to continue (when a victim declines to continue to support the prosecution).

4.2 Interim report: Inspection into how effectively the police engage with women and girls

In March 2021, the Home Secretary commissioned HMICFRS to inspect the effectiveness of police engagement with women and girls. The final report is expected in September 2021. The [interim report published on 7th July](#) sets out findings and recommendations from one part of this inspection, which focuses on how effectively the police respond to violence against women and girls (VAWG) offences. These are violent and high-harm crimes that disproportionately affect women and girls, such as domestic abuse, sexual violence, stalking, and female genital mutilation (FGM).

4.3 Neurodiversity in the criminal justice system: A review of evidence

This was a Joint Criminal Justice Inspection reviewing neurodiversity in the criminal justice system (CJS). [The report was published on 15th July](#). The review focused on four main themes:

- screening to identify neurodivergence in CJS service users;
- adjustments that have been made to existing provision to support those with neurodivergent needs;
- programmes and interventions which have been specifically designed or adapted for neurodivergent needs; and
- training and support available to staff to help them support people with neurodivergent needs.

4.4 A joint thematic inspection of the police and Crown Prosecution Service's response to rape - Phase one: From report to police or CPS decision to take no further action

Another Joint Criminal Justice Inspection, [this report published on 16th July](#) is the first of two inspection reports that will consider the response, decision-making and effectiveness of the police and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) at every stage of a rape case – from first report through to

finalisation of the case. This report focuses on those cases where either the police or the CPS made the decision to take no further action (that is, not to proceed with the case). The second report, considering cases from charge to disposal, is expected in winter 2021.

4.5 State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2020

This is Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary's report to the Secretary of State under section 54(4A) of the Police Act 1996. [Published on 21st July](#), it contains his assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of policing in England and Wales based on the inspections we carried out between March 2020 and March 2021.

4.6 A shared confidence: A summary of how law enforcement agencies use sensitive intelligence

This inspection examined how effectively and efficiently UK law enforcement uses sensitive intelligence in the fight against serious and organised crime (SOC). Due to the sensitive nature of the review, [a summary of the findings was published on 29th July](#). The inspection focussed on:

- policies, structures and processes;
- technology;
- training, learning and culture; and
- effective use and evaluation of sensitive intelligence.

4.7 A review of 'Fraud: Time to choose'

This report revisits the recommendations and areas for improvement identified in HMICFRS' previous 2018/19 inspection 'Fraud: Time to choose – An inspection of the police response to fraud'. The [report was published on 5th August](#).

4.8 A duty to protect: Police use of protective measures in cases involving violence against women and girls

This [report published on 21st August](#) is a response to a super-complaint from the Centre for Women's Justice which raised concerns that the police are failing to use the protective measures available to them in cases involving violence against women and girls. It addresses in detail four legal powers available to the police and explores the extent to which they are being used. These powers are:

- pre-charge bail conditions;
- non-molestation orders;
- domestic violence protection notices and orders; and
- restraining orders.

5. **Communications and Engagement**

5.1 Face to face engagement

Opportunities for face-to-face public engagement continued to be curtailed by the Covid-19 pandemic until this summer. Throughout this period my team continued to engage with the public

in Covid-safe ways, and since restrictions have been lifted we have been doing even more to engage with our communities. Over the summer the Communications and Engagement team attended events to promote victim care services, crime prevention initiatives and the survey into the emerging 2021-25 Police and Crime Plan. Events attended included:

- Stronger North Stonehouse community weekend (Plymouth)
- Devon County Show (Exeter)
- Vision Zero SW road safety roadshow (Exeter)
- The Mid Devon Show (Tiverton)
- Crediton Diversity Festival
- Honiton Show
- Plymouth Pride
- Black Voices Cornwall.

5.2 Councillor Advocates

Councillor Advocates are members of local authorities in Devon, Cornwall or the Isles of Scilly who agree to receive updates on OPCC and police activity and are entitled to regular meetings with their neighbourhood policing teams to engender a greater understanding of local priorities and a collaborative approach to problem solving.

I am pleased to update the panel on continued growth in the number of Councillor Advocates. Significant developments in the three months to September 2021 include:

- Scheme growth from 339 members (27 May 2021) to 361 (1 September 2021)
- Engaging Plymouth Councillor Advocates with the recovery in Keyham following the mass shooting
- Assisting in the scrutiny of Community SpeedWatch schemes in Devon and Cornwall
- Planning for a volunteer showcase event in November.

5.3 Social Media

Social media platforms provide an efficient and effective way of engaging and informing communities and seeking the views of the public on OPCC strategy and policy. The four main accounts operated by the OPCC Communications and Engagement team saw significant growth in the three months to 1 September.

Top performing posts related to the Police and Crime Plan Survey and the support offered to the community at Keyham, Plymouth, following the mass shooting.

Social media platform growth for the period is as follows:

Platform	Followers 1 June 2021	Followers 1 Sept 2021
Facebook	2,737	3,024
Twitter	10,357	10,604
Instagram	891	929
LinkedIn	406	426

My thanks to everyone who has been working with us at this difficult time and to Panel members for their continued support.



Alison Hernandez

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

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