



Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel

12th November 2021

COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE REPORT Safe, Resilient and Connected Communities

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 September 2021.

1. SAFE

New Police and Crime Plan 2021-2025

I am pleased to confirm that the new Police and Crime Plan 2021-25 will be published w/c 8th November 2021. The Plan will be made available on my website and copies will be provided to Panel on the day of meeting (12th November 2021).

The plan takes on board the comments from the Police and Crime Panel received after the last meeting and the feedback received from the extensive engagement activity undertaken. The public survey to gauge support for measures outlined in the draft 2021-25 Police and Crime Plan for Devon and Cornwall attracted a total of 2,212 respondents, and my team is also now preparing for qualitative and quantitative public engagement to inform decision making around the 2022-23 budget aligned to the Plan.

Op Uplift (Police Officer Recruitment)

The Government's Operation Uplift, which started in April 2020, has a national ambition of recruiting 20,000 additional officers in three years and figures released this week by the Office of National Statistics show that 11,053 of these new officers are already in post.

Devon and Cornwall police remain on course to deliver an additional 181 police officers this year, as detailed in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (40 officers paid for from council tax precept and 141 paid for from the national uplift).

Street Safe Online Tool

Last month the Home Office and National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) launched StreetSafe, an online mapping tool which allows all members of the public to flag areas where they do not feel safe and say why.



Primarily, but not exclusively, aimed at women and girls, the data collected from StreetSafe will allow police to understand specific concerns and use the information to make decisions on safety in the area. For more information visit: <https://www.police.uk/streetsafe>

Investment in improving safety on our streets

I continue to support investment in protecting communities and have secured an additional investment of over £1.5 million to improve safety on the streets of Devon and Cornwall through various rounds of the Government's Safer Street Fund.

Plymouth

In previous reports I have updated the panel regarding the successful award of funding and the continuation of key elements of the Stronger North Stonehouse Project in Plymouth (£546,000) following the end of Home Office funding in June 2021. These projects are continuing to progress with partners and will complete in March 2022.

Under Safer Streets Round 3 Plymouth has been awarded an additional £512,000 for a range of projects and activities focused on Stonehouse, the Hoe and Barbican, the city centre and the Mutley/North Hill areas of the city. The funding will support a number of infrastructure initiatives, including the provision of additional CCTV cameras and enhanced street lighting in key locations as well as providing direct public links to the city's CCTV control room. A significant focus of the bid is on behaviour change and prevention and the funding will be used to deliver numerous education and awareness schemes within the city including Bystander Awareness Training for people working in the night-time economy, education in schools and a Sex Worker Outreach project. The funding will also support graffiti clean-ups and murals in Mutley and Stonehouse to help reclaim public spaces and support the street pastor scheme within the city. This is focused particularly on women and girls but will reduce crime and help everyone feel safer in Plymouth.

Falmouth

Safer Street Round 4 has also awarded Falmouth just over £33,000 in funding. This will support the installation of six upgraded CCTV cameras for the town centre. It will also be used to support a student-led VAWG group to run awareness campaigns or projects, as well as bystander training for staff employed in the night-time economy.

Exeter

Exeter has been awarded £432,000 to tackle crime and make streets safer in the city centre and surrounding areas. The Government has awarded £432,000 to the scheme, which, taken together with local match funding, will see a total investment of over £550,000 over the next 10 months.

The money for Exeter will be used to make streets safer and comes from a fund focused on preventing neighbourhood crimes like burglary, vehicle theft and robbery. The investments being made will also help improve people's safety in public spaces during the daytime and at night and will help to prevent wider criminality and antisocial behaviour.

The funding will go towards measures proven to cut crime, including the installation of 17 new CCTV cameras, enhanced street lighting in problem areas as well as crime prevention training and property marking campaigns.

The funding will also support investment in community projects such as graffiti clean-up, park improvements and the set-up of new Neighbourhood Watch Schemes and security improvements for properties.

Vision Zero - Call for ideas

One of the four main pillars of my new Police and Crime Plan is road safety and through the Peninsula Partnership we have offered communities the chance to bid for funding to make improvements in their neighbourhoods. Applications closed on 1st November and we are in the process of evaluating the submissions for the community to receive a share of £100,000 for community road safety improvements

The 'Call For Ideas' sought projects that require relatively small amounts of money but offer 'big wins' when it comes to preventing death and serious injury on our roads. Driving down serious collisions is something we simply cannot do without the public's help.

Dashcam trial with Op Snap

In September I updated the panel on the Project EDWARD (Every Day Without A Road Death) week of action. I marked opened the week of action on 13th September by launching a road safety convoy as it left Plymouth and headed along the A38 to the Devon Air Ambulance base at Exeter Airport. The day also served as the launch of a new project between the Vision Zero South West Partnership and National Highways (formerly Highways England) in which up to 170 dashcams will be issued to commercial firms that regularly use our road network to allow them to feed into Devon and Cornwall Police's Op Snap. The dashcams have been issued to South West Water, Live West, Cormac, Cornwall Council and the RNLI with discussions continuing with two major firms to get another 30 cameras out for use. The Safe38 group (an organisation campaigning for increased safety standards on the A38 in Cornwall) are currently identifying local businesses and will have 10 cameras for use. Following the wide publicity of the launch of the trial, my office has received a number of requests for dashcams from members of the public. These requests are being managed by my team with a further six cameras being issued so far.

Since Op Snap was founded in 2019, Devon and Cornwall Police have issued almost 1,500 notices of Intended Prosecutions and more than 600 warnings to motorists across the two counties. In September, one third of submissions were from cyclists suggesting the scheme is receiving improved engagement from different road users. I am really pleased to be able highlight a submission from the horse-riding community this month. Dashcams are not the sole reserve of vehicle users – we can accept video footage from vulnerable road users including pedestrians, horse riders, cyclists and motorcyclists. Op Snap information and results are now available from the VZSW website <https://visionzerosouthwest.co.uk/> and regular updates will be posted via Facebook and Twitter @visionzerosw.

No Excuse Team performance

In the last 12 months the No Excuse Team has detected 1322 traffic offences and made 144 arrests, and are working alongside the Highway Authorities across Devon and Cornwall to prioritise routes informed by the data and evidence as posing the highest risk.

As part of the 2020/21 uplift of police officers, an additional Police Sergeant has been allocated alongside six Police Constables. This will create two full teams working from Bodmin and Exeter respectively to support local policing teams with taskings around road related harm. Through VZSW a tasking and co-ordination process has been established, where community concerns and data are blended to identify priorities and allocate resource to the biggest problems, in addition to developing a Road Safety Data and Analysis Hub to provide detailed intelligence and analysis of

problem routes. Greater use is being made of infographics to improve transparency including creating a portal on the Vision Zero website for individuals to feed in concerns around routes where driving standards are poor.

I am pleased to report the Force are currently recruiting additional Speed Detection Officers to be based at Barnstaple and Camborne, in addition to two mobile Speed Detection Officers using portable speed detection equipment on motorcycles. The mobile officers will be based at Exeter and Bodmin and will support the deployment of Community Speedwatch teams across Devon and Cornwall with the ability to capture offences and hold poor drivers to account.

2. Resilient

Plymouth Community Recovery

Since the tragedy and trauma of the events in Keyham, Plymouth on Thursday 12th August 2021, my office has been actively supporting the recovery efforts across Keyham and more broadly across Plymouth.

In the immediate aftermath of the shootings, partners from across all agencies have come together to provide immediate support to all affected and start the long-term work to rebuild confidence of the community and its capacity to recover from this tragedy. I am continuing to work with partners to support the local community and ensure that we can maximise services and opportunities for the Keyham community and assist victims' families to recover from the violence and tragedy.

Since the last panel, my office has been leading partnership discussions with the Home Office and Ministry of Justice to secure funding for recovery support. This work has been informed by evidence and learning from the response to similar events in the UK and internationally. At time of writing activity is expected to be delivered under three separate grant arrangements working to deliver:

- 1) Community Policing (£514,092)
- 2) Safer Places (£308,360)
- 3) Support to victims and witnesses (£182,721)

Together, these workstreams represent an additional investment of £1,005,173 to support recovery in Keyham.

Street Games

I have commissioned Street Games, a national organisation to work specifically with young people in Plymouth to divert them from violence, crime or anti-social behaviour. This started in November 2020 and will run as a pilot for at least 18 months. This pilot is being delivered as part of the prevention of serious violence programme and is overseen by representatives from the police, youth offending, Plymouth City council and Street Games nationally. I joined those responsible for its delivery to discuss progress, learning and next steps at an event in Plymouth in October.

Of the 99 referrals up to mid-October, 69 were boys and 30 girls, the majority (41) being in the 10-13 age group. They come from over 40 different areas of Plymouth and are given the opportunity, often for the first time, to take part in football, surfing, free running, street dance/arts, skateboarding, mountain biking, trampolining and boxing.

That number is expected to rise to 279 by next April and 423 12 months later, which will bring the total number of officers to 3,610 – significantly higher than the 3,556 officers in 2010 pre-austerity.

Small Grants Scheme

This year I have committed a total of £90,000 through my Small Grants Scheme to enable communities to build resilience and work with me to achieve safer communities. I have made £60,000 available for Devon, Torbay and Plymouth and £30,000 in Cornwall, with grants of between £1,000 and £5,000 being made available to projects.

This year the funds have been administered by the relevant Community Foundations for Devon and Cornwall and I would like to thank both organisations for their support in helping these important projects come to fruition. The awarded funds will support community groups undertaking activities that connect the public to its police force, prevent and deter crime, protect people at risk of abuse and those who are vulnerable, or help victims or witnesses to get justice.

I have been able to fund 19 projects in full (6 in Cornwall and 13 in Devon). In addition, 3 projects in Cornwall have been part funded by my office. Details of this year's successful awards are available from my office, but examples include CCTV in community playing fields in Newton Popleford, support programmes for victims of domestic abuse in both Cornwall and Devon, training and workshops around sexual violence in Devon schools and colleges, funding to run a youth club in Cornwall, support for a youth justice coordinator in Cornwall to work with young people and group sessions in Cornwall for young men at risk of offending.

Support for victims

The Victim Care Unit is commissioned and funded by my office but it is a police based unit and service model managed by the Police. It was established to provide immediate support and, with consent, onward referrals to service providers on the Victim Care Network.

In quarter 2 of 2021/22, 5,639 victims were supported by the VCU. This was a decrease of 34.8% on quarter 2 last year and a 22.6% decrease on quarter 1. 4,048 victims were given supportive advice by the VCU team and 806 victims (14.3%) were referred on to a service on the Victim Care Network. 24% of these referrals were related to a domestic abuse crime.

Increasing trends this quarter have been seen in the numbers of victims of harassment, violence without injury as a result of neighbourhood disputes, criminal damage and stalking.

Following the multiple shooting in Keyham, members of the VCU accompanied some OPCC staff and Victim Support to offer immediate support to the community. The OPCC engagement van was present in Keyham all of the first week after the incident to facilitate this offer of support.

In terms of Victims funding in 2021/22, Devon and Cornwall OPCC have been successful in bids attracting an additional £1,155,266 of funding for Victims Services, including £182,721 for the Keyham community.

Community Speedwatch

Community Speedwatch (CSW) continues to develop and enhance its offer in line with the improvement plan that was put in place following the scrutiny session that I chaired in May 2021.

The number of active CSW groups and sites across Devon and Cornwall has doubled since the spring with the number of volunteers increasing by 130 over the same period. In excess of 10,000 letters have been issued to motorists in the same period. The number of Community Speedwatch teams across Devon and Cornwall has increased to 135 and these teams are performing around 200 sessions per month.

In Falmouth, our CSW volunteers have worked tirelessly with partners, Perranarworthal Parish Council, Devon and Cornwall Roads Policing, Cornwall Council and CORMAC in recent years and have been successful in securing the provision of an average speedwatch camera in the Foundry area – the last fatal incident in this area was in 2019. My thanks go once again to our volunteers who have enabled this to happen.

With the support of the Vision Zero partnership additional capacity is being delivered by recruiting an additional CSW Co-ordinator based in Exeter and two Administrators. The Force also intends to hold events in February 2022 to bring CSW volunteers together with specialist policing colleagues to learn more around how they work as part of a larger team to achieve our ambitions around casualty reduction.

3. Connected

New Tri-Service Safety Officers in Cornwall

Seven new Tri-Service Safety Officers are now on duty in Cornish towns and villages to respond to emergency incidents. The Tri-Service Safety Officer (TSSO) role is unique to Cornwall. First piloted with just one officer in 2014, the innovative model has proven a huge success. With the addition of the seven recruits, there will now be 13 TSSOs working in communities across the Duchy.

The officers, who wear grey uniforms while on duty, respond to 999 emergency calls as a firefighter on behalf of Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS), and a Community 1st Responder on behalf of the South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SWASFT). They also deal with non-immediate Devon and Cornwall Police community safety matters and work alongside Cornwall Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Team to manage issues within the communities they serve. TSSOs are jointly funded by CFRS, SWASFT and Devon and Cornwall Police.

For the first time, TSSOs will be based in Helston, Callington and Torpoint. The remaining officers are stationed in Bude, Liskeard, Looe/Polruan, Lostwithiel, Fowey, St Dennis, Perranporth, Hayle, St Ives and St Just.

I was delighted to attend these passing out parades along with the Chief Constable, Cornwall's Chief Fire Officer, the Cornwall County Commander from South Western Ambulance Service and the Leader of Cornwall Council.

Councillor Advocate Update

Our OPCC 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.

I am pleased to report that the number of councillors subscribed to the scheme has increased by

approximately 30 since the July meeting of the Police and Crime Panel and now stands at 364 members.

A number of our Councillor Advocates have expressed a desire to develop their understanding of Devon and Cornwall Police 101 and 999 contact centre operations. As such my office is working with the force to arrange tours of the Exeter contact centre during November 2021.

Celebrating the voices and experience of the community

Last year we all had to work differently, and although I and my team continued our engagement activities in covid-safe ways such as online events, I was not able to bring my Councillor Advocates and Volunteers together for face-to-face events and seminars as we had in previous years. This year I have been pleased to be able to deliver an in person event to celebrate the contribution of the wonderful volunteers on November 8, 2021.

I attended this event with my team and the Deputy Chief Constable, as an opportunity to thank councillor advocates, scrutiny board members and independent custody visitors for their contribution towards building safer communities through the pandemic. There were also stands and representatives from organisations including Community Speedwatch, Vision Zero South West and the Devon and Cornwall Police Cyber Protect team to improve volunteers' knowledge of available services.

4. National Updates

Budget Announcement

On the 27th October the Chancellor announced his budget. The headlines for policing nationally are:

- £4.2bn additional spending for Home Office over the parliament.
- Police and Crime Commissioners to get a £10 precept flexibility over the spending review period.
- An additional £42m will be given to the police for new programmes that reduce crime and drugs misuse
- An additional sum of £540m will be given to the police to complete the recruitment of the final 8,000 officers

It is too early to assess the implications of the totality of the budget announcements yet, and more information will be provided to the Police and Crime Panel at its February meeting.

Home Office's PCC Review

The Panel received a report at its September 2021 meeting on Part 2 of the Government's Review of the role of Police and Crime Commissioners.

The Home Office is now considering the responses to the review and it is anticipated that they will report to government in November 2021. As Vice Chair of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners I am a member of the Home Office's PCC Review Advisory Board which will be assisting the Home Office in preparing its final recommendations on the review.

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 Bill moved to Committee Stage in the House of Lords on 20th October 2021. It is currently expected that the Bill will receive Royal Assent in early 2022.

Implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021

In April 2021 the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent and passed into law following its consideration by Parliament. The Home Office has published a commencement schedule for the provisions of the Act which are regularly updated [Domestic Abuse Act 2021 commencement schedule - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/978227/domestic-abuse-act-2021-commencement-schedule.pdf). Whilst some provisions came into effect immediately upon Royal Assent the majority of provisions will be implemented over a longer time period. Policing, local authorities and criminal justice agencies are currently working locally and nationally to prepare for the full implementation of the legislation.

Some of the key provisions of the Bill are already in effect or will come into effect on 1st November, including:

- New statutory definitions of ‘domestic abuse’ and ‘personal connection’ (however the extension to include children is not expected to come into force until January 2022)
- The Statutory Office of the Domestic Abuse Commissioner
- Requirement on local authorities to provide support services for all victims of domestic abuse within safe accommodation
- Establishment by local authorities of local Domestic Abuse Partnership Boards and the creation of a local Domestic Abuse Strategy
- Requirement for local authority policies on homelessness to assign victims of domestic abuse a priority status
- New criminal offence relating to threats to disclose sexual photos or films to cause distress
- Clarification that consent to serious harm for sexual gratification is not a defence.

Other provisions that are expected to come into force in the first half of 2022 include:

- New criminal offences of:
 - controlling or coercive behaviour in an intimate or family relationship
 - strangulation or suffocation
- Application of special measures within the court for victims of domestic abuse (like the measures currently available to victims of sexual offences)
- Prohibition on cross examination in civil and family proceedings

There are some measures within the Act which will take considerably longer to come into effect, for example the new Domestic Abuse Protection Notices and Domestic Abuse Prevention Orders which will replace the existing Domestic Violence Prevention Orders are not expected to come into effect until early 2023.

Firearms Licensing

The National Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC), of which I am the Vice-Chair, has undertaken a public survey looking at potential changes to the licensing of firearms and shotguns in England and Wales. I have worked closely with other Police and Crime Commissioners around the UK to make sure the public’s voice is heard and to hear all from sides including people who are, or have previously been, a registered firearms licence or shotgun certificate holder. The

survey closed on 20th October and the results are currently being analysed, but there is a good participation rate from Devon and Cornwall.

The Home Office has also currently reviewed arrangements for the licensing of guns and introduced new guidance from 1st November to be followed by all police forces.

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:

[Police response to violence against women and girls: Final inspection report](#)

As part of the response to the murder of Sarah Everard, the Home Secretary commissioned HMICFRS to inspect how effectively the police respond to violence against women and girls (VAWG) offences. These are violent high-harm crimes that disproportionately affect women and girls, such as domestic abuse, sexual violence, stalking and female genital mutilation. This final report sets out findings and recommendations from this inspection and builds on the findings from the interim report published on 7th July 2021 which was highlighted to the Panel in September. The findings included:

- HMICFRS have found that the police had made vast improvements in the response to VAWG over the last decade, including better identification of repeat victims and improved safeguarding measures.
- HMICFRS also found several areas where the police need to improve, including grave concerns about the number of VAWG cases closed without charge, and major gaps in the data recorded on VAWG offences.
- HMICFRS are extremely concerned that a large proportion of VAWG offences are closed by the police as requiring no further action, with either outcome 15 (evidential difficulties) or outcome 16 (victim does not support further action).
- HMICFRS have made several recommendations for immediate improvements to police practices and has concluded that the police cannot tackle VAWG alone and that the whole system including policing, criminal justice, local authorities, health, and education must take a fundamentally new approach.
- HMICFRS have said that the Government should consider legislating to create a new statutory duty for all partner agencies to work together to protect women and girls, similar to the existing framework for child protection.

The report made a number of overarching recommendations for police forces a specific recommendation to Chief Constables to review and ensure that there are consistently high standards in their forces' responses to violence against women and girls and should be supported in doing so by national standards and data.

I will be publishing my formal response to this report and recommendations on the OPCC website within the required deadline by mid November 2021.



Alison Hernandez

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