



Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel

25th November 2022

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 2022.

1. PEEL Inspection Report

On 14th October 2022 Devon and Cornwall Police was moved into an enhanced level of monitoring by the police inspectorate. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) continuously monitors the performance of all police forces in England and Wales.

The monitoring process consists of two stages: Scan and Engage. All police forces are in the Scan phase by default but may be escalated to Engage. The Engage process provides additional scrutiny and support.

The inspection report has not yet been provided to the Commissioner or Chief Constable, and therefore the detailed findings are not yet known. This report is expected in December 2022. Pending the detailed findings being published, His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary provided feedback which highlighted a number of strengths in the organisation alongside area of concern as published by HMIC.

The areas of strength were:

- the force has a good understanding of the needs and expectations of its communities
- the force identifies and engages with diverse groups
- the force focuses well on vulnerability with a good understanding of its nature and scale
- there is a good understanding of safeguarding needs by the workforce
- the force actively seeks opportunities to improve services through collaboration

The areas of concern were:

- the force's crime recording has deteriorated since the last inspection and does not always record crimes against vulnerable victims, particularly violent or behavioural crimes, and antisocial behaviour
- the force does not answer, or respond to, emergency or non-emergency calls within adequate timeframes, and too many calls are abandoned. Identification of repeat and vulnerable callers is missed, and callers are not always given the appropriate advice on preservation of evidence or crime prevention
- the force is unable to adequately manage registered sexual and violent offenders which means an increasing risk of further offending may not be identified



In response to the published areas of concern, the Temporary Chief Constable and his team are developing an action plan which will form the basis of further discussions between the Force, myself and the HMICFRS to take urgent corrective action.

I have set a series of minimum improvement requirements in advance of the first Policing Performance Oversight Group at the end of this month which is Chaired by Chief HMI Andy Cooke and both the Temporary Chief Constable and I will be attending this meeting in London. I will continue to update the panel on this process as more information becomes available following the Policing Performance Oversight Group and when the inspection report is published. I will also report to the Panel regularly on my oversight of the force's performance improvement activity.

2. Councillor Advocate seminar on Antisocial Behaviour

The third councillor advocate seminar of 2022, focusing on my Police and Crime Plan priority of antisocial behaviour, was attended by 39 councillors, and held in Plymouth's Guildhall in September. There were presentations by His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service on Community Payback, Devon and Cornwall Police's Antisocial Behaviour approach, a new mechanism for police retrieval of CCTV, the Community Trigger mechanism for reviewing antisocial behaviour cases and the new antisocial behaviour youth outreach service, which I have commissioned. Information given to councillors was designed to help them and their communities access these important services. Feedback has been extremely positive, and I would like to thank partner agencies including Plymouth City Council, His Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service and Devon Youth Services Ltd for giving their time to support this event. Seminars on my Police and Crime Plan priorities of reducing violence and drug misuse were held prior to this event and the fourth and final seminar of the year, on 7th December, will focus on road safety.

3. Commissioner's Community Grant Scheme – ASB Cornwall

The Community Grant Scheme, administered on behalf of the OPCC by Cornwall Community Foundation, has awarded a total of £49,565.22 to a broad range of sixteen community groups across Cornwall to help prevent and address antisocial behaviour, with grants ranging from £1,500 to £5,000.

I am delighted to have been able to make funding available to some fantastic organisations across Cornwall and am confident that the projects they will deliver will make a substantial difference to the communities they work with. Our community groups can do so much with relatively small sums of money and it is often residents of our towns, villages and cities who have the clearest idea of what makes a difference and where funding is most likely to give positive results. I very much look forward to finding out more about these projects and watching them develop.

Of particular note is the grant of £5,000 which was awarded to KSBK Performing Arts CIC, a community project based in Bodmin. KSBK aims to reach young people in one of the most deprived and under-resourced areas. The group have become an open and accessible space for children and families that come from financial and social deprivation. The grant will help to create a youth centre with an inclusive and supportive atmosphere to young people, enabling them to thrive and exceed socially in society. KSBK aims to keep young people off the streets and out of harm, helping to tackle antisocial behaviours across Cornwall.

4. Vision Zero South West Award

As Chair of the Vision Zero South West partnership, I am delighted to announce that Vision Zero South West has won the Chartered Institute of Public Relations' award for the best transport/automotive campaign of the year for its work promoting Operation Snap. This is a thoroughly deserved recognition of the excellent work the Vision Zero South West team are doing with the support of local authority and emergency service partners from across the peninsula. Operation Snap is the facility allowing members of the public to upload video footage of dangerous driving to the police for review and consideration for enforcement action. The number of submissions to Operation Snap has grown significantly over the last 12 months, thanks to raising awareness amongst the public and this award is in recognition of that. Actual videos submitted to Operation Snap are used in the promotional campaign which has been broadcast on regional TV news and radio as well as online and in-print via the numerous local and regional press outlets. Each monthly video reaches over 50,000 people through our own social media channels.

My particular thanks to Joel Cooper, the Vision Zero South West Communications and Engagement Co-ordinator for leading on this campaign.

5. Serious Violence

On 11th October the Serious Violence Prevention Programme held a national showcase event on the theme 'Devon & Cornwall's response to serious violence'. The event was held in conjunction with the criminal justice consultancy, Crest Advisory, and outlined the steps taken over the past two and half years under the programme to build a public health approach in violence prevention. The showcase is timely as the Home Office Serious Violence Duty guidance is soon to be finalised. The meeting aimed to provide central and local government, police forces and OPCCs with an update following requests for briefings on our approach. The event was attended by over 120 participants including representation from 18 police forces and 26 local authorities alongside a range of criminal justice colleagues, universities, OPCCs and the third sector. The event generated deep discussion around the role of policing in leading and shaping the Serious Violence Duty and provided delegates with in-depth detail on the steps and stages to developing a partnership model for violence prevention. Home Office officials, who spoke at the event, commended our approach.

The programme also presented at the global Evidence Based Policing Conference taking place in the U.K., New Zealand and Australia outlining how policing can be bold in delivering a public health programme. The event can be viewed [here](#).

6. Keyham Funding Update

The community recovery programme in Keyham, Plymouth, continues with the past two months focusing on engagement with young people. The Keyham Community Policing Team in conjunction with Plymouth City Council have been focused on engaging young people to understand how they feel about safety through youth groups and schools. Additionally, following a community recommendation, a dedicated Mini Police programme has launched to bring this successful model to home-schooled children, a first for Devon and Cornwall Police and, potentially, a first nationally. As updated at the last Panel meeting, my office has been successful in obtaining further Home Office funding to ensure the dedicated policing team can remain in Keyham until at least March 2023.

7. Operation Scorpion Phase 3

In October, I met with the Police and Crime Commissioners from Dorset, Avon and Somerset, Gloucestershire, and Wiltshire to prepare for the next phase of Operation Scorpion which is focusing on drug users and night-time economy. Our focus on this phase shifts on to drug users rather than dealers and is targeted at those who think that taking these party drugs is just a fun thing to do. The message is about making it clear that if you are engaging in illegal drug activity then you are helping support criminal networks that run county lines, which exploits vulnerable children by involving them in the storing and transportation of drugs.

Operation Scorpion activity in the region has, to date, resulted in 127 arrests and 465 disruptions to drugs lines. More than £180k, weapons and drugs have been seized. A total of 297 people have been safeguarded and offered support. Phase 3 of Operation Scorpion is due to commence later this month.

8. Visit to Turning Corners

In early November, I visited Turning Corners, a project designed to engage with young people on the streets of South Devon to steer them away from antisocial behaviour.

I helped secure £500k of Home Office money for Turning Corners phase 1 and due to its success, phase 2 has been commissioned by my office through the Serious Violence Prevention Programme, providing a further four years of funding worth £250k. It was an honour to be able to meet the team, some of the parents and young people that have been involved in the scheme and I am delighted to see that the programme is showing great results. To date, Turning Corners has helped a total of 727 young people, engaging with 91 families.

9. South West Reducing Reoffending Partnership

As you are aware, I chair the South West Reducing Reoffending Partnership (SWRRP), which is a cross-agency partnership of leaders from across the region, including the five Police and Crime Commissioners from the region. I am pleased to provide you with an update on our collaborative work under this Partnership.

Prisoners Building Homes for Local Communities Programme

At July's Panel meeting I updated you on this terrific programme in which prisoners are helping to tackle the housing by building environmentally-friendly 'eco-pod' homes. This is a pioneering new project supported by all five South West Police and Crime Commissioners, which illustrates how Devon and Cornwall is at the forefront of innovative work to reduce reoffending. The scheme is summarised in [this short video](#).

I submitted this scheme for discussion at the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) and National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) summit on 10th November, which gives leaders the opportunity to showcase innovative and exciting practice to delegates. There were a wealth of submissions from Forces and PCCs across the country and following discussion by a panel of experts the scheme was awarded second place at the summit. My congratulations to everyone involved.

Addressing the harm caused by substance misuse

The SWRRP are driving work to address the harm caused by substance misuse (disrupting supply; providing effective treatment and support; and reducing demand through early intervention and prevention work). On 3rd November the Partnership held a very successful substance misuse event, attended by 178 people from across the region and from all criminal justice agencies, health colleagues, commissioners, service providers and people with lived experience. We heard why children and adults turn to substance misuse and what we can do to intervene early to address the underlying causes linked to trauma.

Guest speakers from Devon and Cornwall featured heavily at this event, which showcased best practice and truly excellent collaborative working. The Partnerships will be holding another event in 6 months' time to explore some of the recurring themes that emerged.

Tackling the supply of illegal drugs coming into our prisons; understanding the treatment and support provided for people with a substance misuse need in our prisons

On 20th October the partnership met at HMP Bristol, where we heard from guest speakers from the Prison Service and Police about the challenges our prisons face with illegal drugs coming into our prisons. We also heard about some excellent work to effectively support prisoners to access suitable treatment and support both in the prison and on release. There is much more we can do to support our colleagues with this work, and we shall be exploring this as a partnership. We also heard about initiatives introduced with funding from the government to implement ADDER – piloting work across Addiction, Diversion, Disruption, Enforcement, and Recovery, which highlighted some excellent work we would wish to replicate across the region.

10. Commissioning Update

Service for people affected by a fatality or serious injury on the roads

In September, the Vision Zero South West Board agreed the funding to establish a new support service for people affected by a fatality or serious injury on the road in Devon and Cornwall. This new service, with an allocation of £100k a year, will support the emotional and practical needs of those affected and will be their advocate through criminal justice processes. The support will be holistic and focused on individual need. The service will also establish a peer support offer, trauma resilience courses and be able to work with specific individual needs. I anticipate that the new service will be available in the spring of 2023 once the procurement processes have been conducted. The work to establish the service was heavily influenced and informed by our partners and people with lived experience who all acknowledged the need for the service to be established. I am grateful for the time that people gave to help make this new service possible.

Additional investments in Domestic Abuse and Serious Violence Support

The Ministry of Justice recently awarded additional funding for Domestic Abuse/Serious Violence support. The total amount allocated to Devon and Cornwall was £617k a year for three years. My team divided this into five lots, prioritising support for children and young people affected by sexual abuse and exploitation.

I am pleased to report that the peninsula-wide contracts have been awarded and mobilisation is underway. The contracts are as follows:

Lot	Description	£ per annum	Successful Bidder	Partner Organisations
1	Child Sexual Exploitation Service Intensive support with young people who have experienced or are at significant risk of exploitation. Includes work with partners, schools, local authorities.	£200k	Barnardo's	N/A
2	Child and Young Person Therapeutic Support Range of therapeutic interventions for young people who have experienced sexual abuse. Where appropriate, this includes family interventions.	£200K	Children's Society	First Light Devon Rape Crisis CLEAR Women's Centre Cornwall
3	Peer Support (Men)	£50k	First Light	MoMENTum Operation Emotion
4	Peer Support (Women)	£50k	Women's Centre Cornwall	Trevi Devon Rape Crisis
5	Adult Therapeutic Support Range of therapeutic interventions for adults who have experienced sexual abuse/violence (acute and historic).	£100k	CLEAR	Devon Rape Crisis First Light SAND Women's Centre Cornwall

11. Economic Overview

The international and national economic climate is the subject of daily debate in the media. The volatility around inflation and the Bank of England base rate has been widely discussed. The current inflation rate is 11.1% (9.1% higher than the government target of 2%) and the base rate is 3% (up from 0.1%). The overall budget for Devon and Cornwall has been affected with higher than anticipated pay awards and energy prices set to increase significantly in 2023/24.

The Autumn Statement is due to be announced on 17th November. Due to the date for publishing of this report, a verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

12. Liveable Exeter Place Board

I am pleased to have been invited to join the Liveable Exeter Place Board, overseeing the delivery of Exeter's Vision 2040. In broad terms, Exeter's Vision 2040 is categorised as achieving the following for the city:

- Innovative and analytical city
- Healthy and inclusive
- The most active city in the UK
- Accessible world-class education
- Liveable and connected
- A leading sustainable city
- A city of culture

The Board comprises a diverse range of leaders from across education, business, council, the faith community, politics, health, sport, transport, and the arts.

The most recent meeting of the Board in October discussed the city's new draft Exeter Plan which sets out the blueprint for the development of the city for the next twenty years. The plan is currently out for public consultation.

Policing and community safety is a fundamental importance to the city's plans for the future and I was happy to share with the Board the investments made recently and for the future. These include the uplift in police officer numbers, investment into the city's CCTV provision, bringing in Safer Streets money to increase public safety and proposals to develop the former Heavitree Road police station site.

13. Reopening of Police Enquiry Offices

My programme to reopen police station enquiry desks that were closed in 2014 has made significant progress. Tiverton's reopened two days a week on 10th October - extending to six days a week from 21st November. The programme has attracted significant publicity, with a BBC feature on the work of a Police Enquiry Officer broadcast in September and bespoke communications plans drawn up for the individual stations. The programme has resulted in the creation of 26 part time roles in police contact, and these will help to reduce waiting times for the 101 non-emergency service because they can respond to email contact while not dealing directly with members of the public. Further publicity is planned to ensure the public understand the full range of services available at these offices. The provisional reopening timetable is as follows:

Station	Initial opening date and times	Full opening date
Tiverton	10 October. Mon/Tue 10am to 3pm.	21 November. Mon – Sat 10am to 3pm.
Truro	21 November. Mon/Tue/Wed 10am to 3pm	January 2023
Falmouth	TBC	February 2023
Bude	TBC	February 2023
Newton Abbot	21 November. Mon/Tue 10am to 3pm.	January 2023
Penzance	21 November. Mon/Tue/Wed/Thur/Fri 10am to 3pm.	January 2023

14. Cornwall All Member Briefing

I welcomed the opportunity to brief members of Cornwall Council on the wide range of activity my team and I are progressing to deliver the Police and Crime Plan. The briefing on 21st October included updates on the four Plan priorities of antisocial behaviour, drugs, serious violence and road safety, as well as important recent developments including the appointment of Will Kerr as our new Chief Constable, and headline actions since the HMICFRS inspection.

The briefing also gave me time to expand on matters with a particular focus on Cornwall and its residents and the opportunity to take questions on new advances, for example the Youth ASB Outreach, police officer uplift and front desk re-openings.

15. Road Safety – Mobile Phone and Seatbelt Enforcement

Vision Zero South West has acquired, for a trial period, a ground-breaking camera system which uses artificial intelligence to catch drivers using mobile phones behind the wheel. The technology, which can also detect whether drivers are wearing a seatbelt, is being rolled out on select routes across the two counties over the next two months. The trial, funded by Vision Zero South West and overseen by Devon and Cornwall Police, is part of wider efforts to deter drivers from distractions which can result in serious and fatal collisions.

Images captured by the cameras are processed using artificial intelligence to determine if motorists were using a handheld mobile phone or if drivers and passengers were without a seat belt. It can also determine the speed at which a vehicle was travelling at the time. Any images in which a potential offence is detected are then reviewed by a human. If an offence has been correctly identified, the driver will either be sent a warning letter or a notice of intended prosecution, depending on the severity.

In the first two sessions, the camera detected 140 seatbelt offences and 18 people on mobile phones. Devon and Cornwall is the first area of the country to use this technology for enforcement purposes and is being trialled for a number of weeks to test its effectiveness for increasing compliance with the law and detecting offences.

The trial also responds to the concerns of the public who write to me regularly about road laws being flouted. In 2020 a national road safety survey commissioned by my office found that over half of the 66,000 people who responded said they witnessed road traffic offences such as using a mobile phone or not wearing a seatbelt daily.

16. The West Country Women Awards – ‘Combatting Violence Against Women and Girls’ category sponsored by the PCC

This summer I sponsored the award for the category of ‘Combatting Violence Against Women and Girls’ at this year’s West Country Women Awards 2022. Award events give a fantastic platform to highlight and congratulate the work that is being carried out across the region in an area that falls under my policing priority of serious violence prevention. My office received approximately 20 applications and it was a difficult task to select six semi- finalists which were announced at a publicised award ceremony in September. Three finalists who were shortlisted at a event in

Powderham Castle in October at which I was represented by my Criminal Justice, Partnership and Commissioning Manager.

My three finalists are: Andie Clift who works with First Light (a domestic abuse and sexual violence recovery service), WAVES (domestic abuse) counselling and her own accessible and affordable private counselling service, Hannah Shead CEO of Trevi (a children's charity based in South West England which provides a safe space for women in recovery) and finally, Collette Eaton-Harris who leads in a role which is one of a kind in the country for NHS Devon as Interpersonal Trauma and Violence for the safeguarding team. The winner will be announced at the Grand Finals at the Crowne Plaza in Plymouth on 1st December.

17. Association of the Police and Crime Commissioners/National Police Chiefs' Council Partnership Summit 2022

On 9th and 10th November 2022, I joined policing leaders from across the country at the Association of the Police and Crime Commissioners/National Police Chiefs' Council Partnership Summit 2022. The focus of this year's summit were two key issues which face policing currently: cutting crime and building public confidence. The summit included several important discussions on issues such as increasing charging and prosecution rates, tackling racism, improving police culture, and enhancing the policing response to violence against women and girls. The summit was an opportunity for policing leaders to come together and alongside the discussion around these issues, attendees at the summit also had the opportunity to learn more about two key programmes operating within Devon and Cornwall: modern slavery and the Prisoners Building Homes Programme. The programme for the summit can be viewed [here](#).

18. HMICFRS inspection of vetting, misconduct, and misogyny in the police service

At the beginning of November, HMICFRS released a report examining the vetting and counter-corruption practices in policing across England and Wales. This included looking at the ability to detect and deal with misogynistic and predatory behaviour within policing. Devon and Cornwall Police were one of the police forces included as part of this thematic review. The report is available [here](#).

The inspectorate concluded that *"a culture of misogyny, sexism and predatory behaviour towards female police officers and staff and members of the public still exists and is even prevalent in many forces"*. It is important to note that HMICFRS inspectors recognised the outstanding work to understand and influence police force culture led by our Temporary Chief Constable Jim Colwell. Indeed, one of the report's recommendations is that other forces learn from this work. I will publish my formal response to the report and that of the Chief Constable in due course.



Alison Hernandez

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