

Strategic Investment Plan 2026/27

**How we spend money to
prevent crime, help victims
recover and support the
policing of our communities**



Police and Crime Commissioners

Strategic Investments for 2026/27

Introduction

This document outlines how the Police and Crime Commissioner will invest the funding available to her to support victims of crime and reduce offending behaviours to make communities safer. It supports the priorities in the Police and Crime Plan and covers a range of interventions across policing, crime, criminal justice and community safety. In previous years this type of investment has been detailed in a Commissioning Intentions Plan, and this document supersedes that approach, and focuses on the types of investment rather than the process by which it is achieved.

The Police and Crime Commissioner is responsible for the totality of policing across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and therefore the £461m annual police budget requirement, 42.5% of which is paid for by the communities of our two counties and islands through the council tax precept. Of this budget, the Commissioner is retaining 0.64% to fund the statutory duties of her office along with 0.84% for the Strategic Investments outlined in this plan. The remaining 98.52% is given to the Chief Constable for operational policing and the budget requirements of running the largest geographical police force in England.

In addition, the Commissioner is responsible for all the income generated by policing. This includes one off grants from the government, such as the funding which support Hot Spot Policing interventions, the Ministry of Justice Grant for Victims Services, income from some road traffic offences and fees and charges.

The Commissioner does not have a legal general power of competence and therefore we can only invest in interventions which directly contribute to our core purpose of policing and crime.

This document describes the intended approach to investment for the coming year. If there are deviations from this to identified needs, and whenever this occurs, a separate decision notice will be published on our website for transparency.

Where does our funding come from?

There are six main sources of funding:

1. Annual policing settlement from the government;
2. Council Tax precept;
3. Ministry of Justice Victim Support Grant;
4. A partial element of road traffic fines;
5. Fees and charges;
6. Police Property Act Funds.

1. Annual policing settlement from the government

This is the annual settlement received from the government. Further details on how this mechanism works are detailed annually in the reports to Police and Crime Panel when the council tax precept is set. This includes both core grant and one off grants received to cover a specific purpose. These are commonly known as “specific grants”.

2. Council Tax precept

The government sets the upper limit of the precept which the Commissioner can charge annually before a referendum is required. This year it is £15. The government assumes that Police and Crime Commissioner will set this at the maximum level when it agrees the funding settlement.

3. Ministry of Justice Victim Support Grant

For the first time the MoJ have confirmed their grant to Commissioners for 2026/27 and 2027/28 in advance. This is allocated based on a national formula and is effectively the distribution of the victims’ surcharge to local policing bodies.

In recent years the MoJ have also topped up this grant with specific funding, which has influenced the way in which the money is spent at a local level with very strict grant criteria. This has focused mainly on domestic abuse and sexual violence funding and therapeutic services in this space.

4. Partial element of the road safety fines

The Commissioner convenes and chairs a road safety partnership known as Vision Zero South West to work collaboratively with local councils, Highways England and a range of other partners to take steps to reduce road deaths and casualties on our roads. Devon and Cornwall have the largest road network in England, with the majority being rural roads. This Partnership overseeing how the income granted from speeding fines is allocated as it can only be used for

road safety. Vision Zero collectively decide the way in which road safety is delivered and how the funding mechanisms work. However, the level of fine and speeding thresholds that trigger a fine is a matter for the Chief Constable. The education course fee is determined locally.

5. Fees and charges

The fees and charges income is outlined in the MTFS. The main sources of income are the road safety fines outlined above, along with firearms certificates. Devon and Cornwall are an outlier for the number of firearms licences administered with over 30,000. The income generated covers approximately 43% of the cost of administration of the licencing process.

6. Police Property Act Funds

This funding is as a result of the disposal of seized or found items that cannot be returned to the owner due to either the owner not coming forward or unable to be found. A small element is donated to the Chief Constables Charity with the remainder being distributed by both the Devon Community Foundation and the Cornwall Community Foundation. Each year the Commissioner announces a theme for this grant and for 2026/27. The theme is in line with the top issue outlined in the budget survey, which is the reduction in antisocial behaviour.

Balancing competing priorities

The Commissioners own budget and short term grant funding from a variety of government funding streams is grouped into two main areas – the funding that is required to run the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the funding which provides services to victims and to deliver services required under the Police and Crime Plan.

It is important to note that any investment from the Commissioners own budget is funding which is being diverted away from policing and there needs to be a strong justification for doing so. The Commissioner consults with the Chief Constable before making final decisions.

The Commissioner therefore invests funds into services from her own budget, to minimise the risk of volatility and to provide further local flexibility to deliver the Police and Crime Plan objectives.

To specifically support victims the approach is therefore based on an ecosystem of services which support victims at all stages across the CJ system.

In reaching any funding decisions the Commissioner is mindful of any convening powers that she has and allocates funding to support and maintain additional strategic partnership support. The Commissioner will prioritise her funding to further these objectives with allocations reflective of the level of integration and collaboration being achieved between the Commissioner and other partners wherever possible.

The Strategic Investment Plan aims to:

- Compliment investments in police improvement.
- set out the range of areas where the Commissioner will invest in services over the coming financial year aligned to the Police and Crime Plan priorities of tackling anti-social behaviour; drugs and alcohol; reducing serious violence and theft
- identify the range of mechanisms through which the Commissioner invests in improvements that focus on reducing repeat victims, repeat offenders and repeat locations of crime.
- achieve value for money from all support services ensuing that they are closely aligned to policing and criminal justice services.

The objectives to be achieved are:

- To achieve long term advantages in supporting victims and reducing repeat victims, offenders and locations to support delivery of the Police and Crime Plan and enhance productivity and efficiency of policing.

- To provide a framework for decision making for all financial intentions against the five priorities of: anti-social behaviour; drugs and alcohol; serious violence, theft and services for victims.
- Make best use of limited OPCC funding and capacity and ensure that it adds value to the delivery of policing services.

The mechanism by which funding is allocated

The way in which the Commissioner achieves the stated objectives needs to be flexible to meet the variety of circumstances across both counties and islands. The Commissioners funding is not for the exclusive use for commissioning services externally and may be used to spot purchase services or provide additional capacity into policing depending on circumstances. The mechanism used to allocate funding are broadly categorised as:

- Commissioning - only where market certainty is required and services are required across both counties and a contractual arrangement is required. Most of this activity is through pooled funding with partners and the OPCC will only act as lead commissioner where there is no viable alternative.
- Community Safety Grants – for specialist services, which will be for a maximum of two years, and based on identified needs. This limit is due to the uncertainty of the future of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner after 2028. Grant giving is not a strategy in and of itself. The OPCC will give grants where it furthers the ambitions of the police and crime plan and our statutory duties. However, we are not an organisation of sufficient size and scale to grant fund organisations indefinitely. We will generally give grants where:
 - There is a gap in the market, and we can stimulate a response with short term funding.
 - Where short term seed funding may facilitate a funding response from other interested parties.
 - Where there is a specialist provider within the Criminal Justice system which would have a consequential impact on policing if the service was not provided.
 - Where we are trying to build an evidence base and test a new approach.
 - Where the benefits of grant funding result in a reduction to requiring police to act.
- Spot purchases – to provide additional capacity into policing or the community and voluntary sector in response to specific needs.
- Pooled budgets – where the OPCC is not a big enough organisation to lead; only with organisations that have longevity i.e. other public sector bodies. We wish to seek stability in the provision of services in Devon and Cornwall and will wherever possible seek to pool budgets for contracted services wherever possible. However, we do not aim to be the lead commissioner of services as we are not best placed to do this. We will contribute expertise, data, funding and knowledge of the systems locally to support others to lead at scale.

Visibility of Services

One of the challenges of operating in pooled budget arrangements over such a complex geographical area with multiple partners is that the end recipient of a service funded in part of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner is not always obvious. For example, in 2025/26 the Commissioner invested £1.9m in services administered in localities by upper tier local authorities. The recognition of individual funding streams is not provided to the end service user or provided back to the Commissioner with a granular level of outcome for the investment. This makes funding decisions complex particularly when the Commissioner is only a small investor in such services. This is not a sustainable position for the OPCC given the challenging to policing budgets. This is partly what has led to a lack of understanding of the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner and its impact.

The OPCC will not financially invest in bodies outside of policing where those other bodies have the statutory duties and responsibilities to provide those services as it is not the Commissioners responsibility to do this.

The way funding is allocated is a mixture of:

- **Commissioned Services and Pooled Budgets**

In order to secure stability of funding for victims service these will tend to be services which have long term contracts associated with them. These will generally be services which are sourced in partnership with other public sector bodies including the NHS and local authorities as a mechanism to pool resources and are based on a needs assessment.

- **Community Safety Grants**

Community Safety grants can be issued by the commissioner to any organisation to further the priorities in the police and crime plan and will vary from year to year.

- **Investments into policing (over an above the budget set)**

The Commissioner may provide additional funding to policing throughout the year from her own budget to assist in the delivery of specific programmes of work which further the delivery of the efficient and effective policing.

- **Support for national policing infrastructure**

There are a number of national agreements which the all the Commissioners are signatory which receive regular funding against a formula.

- **Levering in new funding into policing from national sources**

There are a variety of opportunities which present themselves nationally either from central government or other funders within a budget year which the Police and Crime Commissioner may secure for specific areas of work.

- **Decommissioning Services**

From time to time, services will be decommissioned where there is no longer an unidentified need, or alternative funding streams available to continue with the service, or best practice required a change in service direction.

Evaluation of the Services Provided

Service User Voices and the Publics Voice

One of the roles of the Police and Crime Commissioner is to seek the views of the public and amplify these voices into improving services for those who come into contact with policing and criminal justice services. The voices of the public including lived experience and expertise of communities are heard through a wide variety of OPCC engagement activity and are core to this investment plan. There is no single approach to hearing to and responding to this voice but there are a wide variety of mechanisms through which these voices are heard both directly to the OPCC but also within policing.

Examples of this type of activity are detailed in the Police and Crime Commissioners Annual Report and on the OPCC website.

Monitoring of effectiveness

The OPCC will require all those who are recipients of funding to be accountable for the way in which they spend the allocated funds, regardless of whether this is a contractual arrangement or under a grant agreement. The level of accountability will be proportionate to the funding allocated on a risk based approach. Generally, the OPCC will act with the principles of a “thin client” with the expectation of service accountability on the recipient of the funding through pre-determined performance indicators.

Risk appetite

As a small organisation the OPCC can rarely be the lead commissioner for complex services and multi-year contracts but will use its convening powers to bring partners together to join up services and reduce inconsistencies in service provision across its geographic area wherever possible. Where services are purchased which directly interface with the operation of policing services, the OPCC will ensure that all services meet the operational needs of the Chief Constable and there are clear pathways for referral to services.

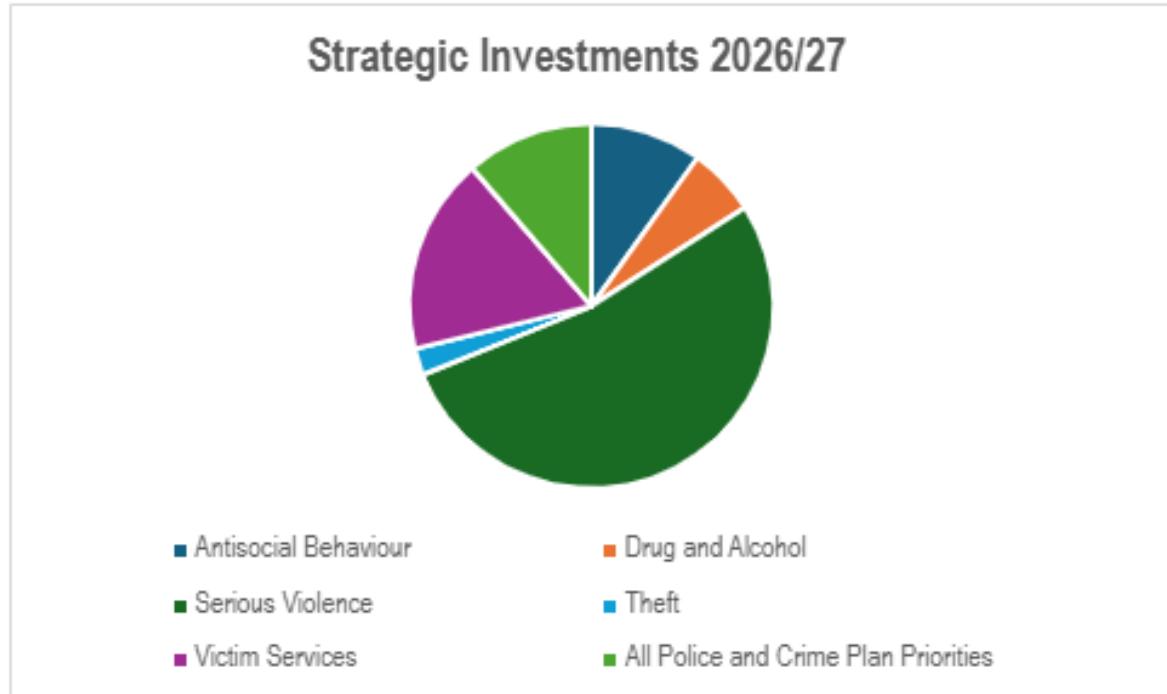
Summary of Current Provision

Currently the OPCC spend £7.9m on services for victims and offenders. The majority of this investment is for victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence, in line with the volume crime profile across our two counties and islands.

Where appropriate spend has been transferred to the force. In 2026/27 there are three areas where the spend in 2025/26 was embedded within the force. Further areas identified will be considered and transferred to the force if appropriate

- The Victim Care Unit 585k – this service is provided in the force. We will provide scrutiny on this areas part of holding the Chief Constable to account.
- ASB Lawyers £113.3k – this pilot was started by the Commissioner in 2024/25. This has been extremely successful so has transferred to the force as business as usual.
- The Police Museum Grant £160k – this was transferred to the Commissioner in 2024/25 but with the abolition of the Commissioner role in 2028 it is appropriate for this to now be managed by the force.

The pie chart below shows the spending by category:



The detailed list of spend is shown below:

	2026/27
	£
Antisocial Behaviour	
ASB Youth Outreach	187,500
Safe Buses	20,000
Night Buses	100,000
Street Focus/Marshalls	360,000
ASB Mediation	15,000
Premier League Police Partnership Pilot	<u>100,000</u>
	782,500
Drug and Alcohol	
Funding for drug treatment services for CJ Cohort	340,000
Complex Needs Service for Young Adults	48,000
Drug and Alcohol intelligence	<u>90,000</u>
	478,000
Serious Violence	
Specialist Domestic Abuse Services for victims	909,265
Specialist Sexual Violence Services for victims	1,020,000
Independent Sexual Violence Advisor Service	348,886
SARC Services	354,479
Additional MoJ funding for Domestic Abuse/Sexual Violence	1,094,410
Reduce reoffending - Sexual Violence and Domestic Abuse	160,584
Disruptive approach Violence Against Women and Girls	<u>300,000</u>
	4,187,624
Theft	
Crimestoppers Capacity	22,000
Neighbourhood Watch Capacity	40,000
Theft and business crime	124,000
National Rural Crime Network	<u>2,500</u>
	188,500
Victim Services	
Victim Services (multi crime)	442,499
Restorative Justice Service	306,745
Children and Young Person/Family Victims Services	326,692
Child Exploitation Service	204,000
Support for Third Party victims of crime	20,000
Protected Characteristics Grants for victims of crime	<u>80,000</u>
	1,379,936

All Police and Crime Plan Priorities	
National Police Services	3,724
Youth Justice Services	525,735
Support for Offenders whilst attending court	60,000
Crimestoppers anti-corruption line	8,692
Emerging Priorities	300,000
	898,151
	<u>7,914,711</u>

Value for Money

We undertake an annual value for money review of all of the services we invest in. This review includes (but is not limited to): service need, number of referrals, cost per referrals, number of police referrals to services, transparency of services to the public and how public money is being spent, partners transparency on how our funding will be used.

All spend covered by the MoJ grant is rigorously audited each year including the performance data.

Regular review and in year changes

Value for Money reviews often change our approach. For example, in 2025/26 we brought one of our victims' contracts back in house and saved £230k per annum.

Our scrutiny of how the police refer into our services has also identified that these referrals are inconsistent, and work is underway with the Chief Constable to improve this approach. Funding may change to reflect this, as we cannot underwrite service indefinitely and new glide paths to service improvement need to be put in place.