



## **POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S PROPOSALS FOR REFRESH OF THE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN FOR 2015/ 2016**

The Police and Crime Commissioner's review of the Police and Crime Plan has considered the following

- a) New or emerging threats and risks to policing, partnership performance and community safety that should be reflected in the Plan
- b) The desire to maintain delivery against the pledges within the current Police and Crime Plan
- c) Progress and developments achieved to date against current objectives in the Plan
- d) Foreseeable national, regional and local finance and policy changes that should be accounted for
- e) The Police and Crime Commissioner's preferences and the findings from consultation activity conducted by the OPCC during 2014
- f) The capacity of the OPCC and Force to undertake a major change to the Plan or to manage a change in direction.

The review concluded that there should be an increased focus of the following areas within the current six priorities<sup>1</sup>.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

1. Failings by public bodies in other parts of the country to prevent CSE or to adequately investigate allegations have generated significant press/ media coverage and public attention in recent months.
2. The Police and Crime Commissioner holds the Chief Constable to account for the response of the police force in this area. To protect children the police service must work effectively with a range of local partners – to ensure that services are joined up and fit for purpose. It is vital that the 'whole system' works effectively and that both the police and partners play their respective parts.

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<sup>1</sup> In addition the text will be reviewed and refreshed and brought up to date to ensure the language and actions are appropriate for the next 12-18 months. Some formatting and style changes will also be made.

3. Whilst reporting of historic incidents does take place today, the PCC has recently pledged publically to support the Force to identify and support victims, protect potential victims and prosecute abusers. The OPCC wants to ensure there are more and varied opportunities for victims of historic sexual exploitation to come forward and report crimes committed against them and to provide support for these victims. The Commissioner also wishes to ensure that a suitable historic review has been undertaken where there is concern that previous investigations may have been deficient or new evidence comes to light.
4. Safeguarding and the protection of vulnerable people already features prominently within the Police and Crime Plan and will form the backbone of policing in the future. The current plan requires a specific focus on '*protecting the most vulnerable with a focus on domestic, family and sexual abuse and better awareness and response to so called hidden crimes*'. However, to support the additional work that we require in this area, CSE will be given a greater prominence in the refreshed Plan – providing a steer on activity that is expected of the Force and to acknowledge lessons learned from reviews and inspection reports.
5. The PCC's decision to provide greater prominence to CSE within the Police and Crime Plan for 2015/16 is in line with recommendations made by the Police and Crime Panel in October 2014.
6. It is critical that public authorities with responsibility for public protection commit to a more co-ordinated approach such as to preventing Child Sexual Exploitation.

### **Sexual Offences**

7. The PCC remains concerned about levels of sexual offences within the force area – reported and unreported. This is a highly complex area. It is understood that many victims do not wish to engage with the Criminal Justice System due to the nature of these crimes. Recent national high profile cases may have fuelled an increase in the reporting of historic incidents as people become more willing to speak out. Increased reporting is a positive thing but we cannot and must not assume that rises are solely the result of increased confidence – we need to understand these issues much better. In 2014, the PCC set a clear requirement on the Chief Constable to work to increase reporting of these offences and in light of this the PCC removed sexual offences and domestic violence offences from the police force total crime figures and gave them independent visibility. The PCC needs to see both clear evidence of how the force has been actively encouraging increased reporting and the tracking of underlying trends.



8. It is intended that both of these issues will be given greater prominence in the updated Police and Crime Plan. We recognise that there remain many victims who do not feel able to report but we need to understand more about why this is. The PCC will work with the Chief Constable to ensure the most effective use of surveys and research to understand the reasons for non-reporting so that appropriate action can be taken.

### **Cyber-crime<sup>2</sup>**

9. Cyber-crime is a growing area of demand and poses an increasing threat to the public. Digital technology is now part of most people's lives yet criminality goes largely unreported. HMIC reported earlier this year that cyber-crime was the newest national crime threat that required a national response. The Police and Crime Panel has also recommended that cyber-crime is given greater focus in the Plan.
10. In June 2014, HMIC reported that only three forces (Derbyshire, Lincolnshire and West Midlands) had developed comprehensive cyber-crime strategies or plans and only a third had considered cyber-crime threats in their Strategic Threat and Risk Assessments. Devon and Cornwall are conducting theirs currently.
11. HMIC went on to report: *"It is now essential that police officers have the capability to deal confidently with the cyber element of crimes as it is fast becoming a dominant method in the perpetration of crime."*
12. The current Police and Crime Plan is largely silent on cyber-crime, although it is of course integral to the obligations within the Strategic Policing Requirement and within Priority 1; Cutting crime, keeping Devon and Cornwall safe.
13. The PCC's intention is to give cyber-crime more prominence in Priority 1 along the lines of:-

*The Commissioner expects the Chief Constable to 'Develop the Force's understanding of the nature of the threat posed by cyber-crime and to establish a strategy to address this threat including enhancing the Force's capacity and capability to deal with volume cyber-crimes and by contributing to the national intelligence picture.'*

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<sup>2</sup> Cyber-crime is a generic term that covers offences that are dependent on ICT (such as on-line grooming, and computer hacking) or crimes enabled by the speed and reach offered by ICT (such as fraud, theft and buying/ selling scams)

### **Prevention bias**

14. The Force has a good record of preventing crime with historical volume crime figures well below national averages. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's PEEL<sup>3</sup> assessment rates Devon and Cornwall Police's crime prevention activity as 'Good' but recommends that steps are taken to embed learning across the organisation.
15. It goes without saying that preventing crime and therefore reducing the number of victims is preferable and better value for money than investigating crime that has occurred. This is particularly the case in times of financial squeeze. As budgets reduce we need to look at ways in which we can transform our service to make the best use of limited resources. The Force has a number of initiatives at different stages of development including trialling a new approach to safeguarding, updating its advice and guidance to the public on how to avoid becoming victims from new types of crime (for example cyber fraud) and is in the early stages of establishing a Prevention Directorate.
16. In order to endorse these developments and lock-in value-for-money approaches across all areas of the Force, the Plan will be adjusted to present a firmer emphasis on preventive work. Such a focus is essential if we are to transform our policing service to secure effective delivery in the face of significant and continuing budgetary cuts. This will be incorporated into Priorities 1, 4, 5 and 6 and be clearly established in the foreword as a key theme throughout the Plan.

### **A refinement of the Criminal Justice Priority**

17. Early work to build relationships with a wide range of partners, establish commissioning and reporting arrangements means the OPCC is well placed to build on this progress in the coming year. The PCC welcomes the commitment of partners to work together to seek improvements to the service provided to the public and victims of crime.
18. The current Plan contains a broad area of work listed under Priority 4: An improved criminal justice system. This covers rehabilitation, the Local Criminal Justice Board, restorative justice, mental health, prolific offenders, out of court disposals and others. Whilst the commitment to this priority remains, the PCC wishes to identify a small number of specific areas that will receive the most attention. In particular, this will include work on transforming summary justice, mental health, restorative justice, witness services and the use of out of court disposals.

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<sup>3</sup> iPEEL – Interim Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy programme Devon and Cornwall Police report available [here](#)



### **Local Priorities / Neighbourhood Engagement & Policing**

19. As resources are stretched and headcounts reduce, the importance of local activity that brings together partners to address anti-social behaviour, low level crime and community safety issues is becoming increasingly clear. If we are all to continue to enjoy the support and confidence of our communities, it is essential that we listen to their concerns and priorities and take account of them. For example, the PCC continues to receive public concerns regarding traffic violations and parking enforcement and while this may not score highly in terms of risk, threat and harm, it is an issue of significant importance to some communities.
  
20. The police and their partners must continue to work to understand the community safety matters that impact local neighbourhoods. The PCC will amend the police and Crime Plan to support and reiterate this. The PCC expects that priorities raised by the public affecting their local areas are properly captured by the police, local authorities, Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and other partners and are addressed appropriately. This will include input from health partners and the Health and Wellbeing Boards. The PCC also expects that proactive engagement should take place with the public to gather their views in more general terms – to actively seek views not just react to them.
  
21. As all public sector partners face continued funding cuts, it is vital that community safety remains a priority and that it is adequately resourced within local authorities. It is also essential that there is good visibility of community safety and other services and that they are clearly signposted to aid the public and to avoid the inappropriate diversion of demand to others. The refreshed Police and Crime Plan will reflect both these difficult issues. The PCC fully recognises the funding constraints faced by all parties and wants to work with partners to help explore and develop solutions and to press nationally and in other forums for action.
  
22. The pressure on neighbourhood policing is growing as priority is given to response and detection. HMIC has expressed concern of the erosion of neighbourhood policing. The PCC has asked the Chief Constable to define neighbourhood policing in terms of function and resourcing in order to better protect this foundation service to the public and source of intelligence.

### **Strategic Alliance**

23. The Devon and Cornwall OPCC and Devon and Cornwall Police have been working closely with counterparts in Dorset to develop proposals for the creation of a Strategic Alliance – a formal agreement to work closely together and share resources whilst retaining individual identities and local public accountability.
24. The 2015/16 Plan requires a greater focus on the Strategic Alliance which will become a more substantial programme of work in the year ahead. This area of the Plan (Priority 3) will be brought up to date to reflect progress and to reference the schedule of work to develop business cases for the Alliance.

**OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR DEVON,  
CORNWALL AND THE ISLES OF SCILLY  
JANUARY 2015**



**Tony Hogg  
Police and Crime Commissioner**