

AGENDA

KENT AND MEDWAY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Dear Panel Member

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the **KENT AND MEDWAY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL** will be held in the **Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone** on **Tuesday, 17th October, 2023, at 2.00 pm** when the following business will be transacted

Members of the public who require further information are asked to contact Anna Taylor on 03000 416478

Membership

Councillor Peter Feacey	Ashford Borough Council
Councillor Connie Nolan	Canterbury City Council
Councillor Richard Wells	Dartford Borough Council
Councillor Charlotte Zosseder	Dover District Council
Councillor Mike Blakemore	Folkestone and Hythe District Council
Councillor Shane Mochrie-Cox	Gravesham Borough Council
Mr Mike Hill	Kent County Council
Councillor Lauren Edwards	Medway Council
Councillor Perry Cole	Sevenoaks District Council
Councillor Richard Palmer	Swale Borough Council
Councillor Lottie Parfitt-Reid	Maidstone Borough Council
Councillor Pat Makinson	Thanet District Council
Councillor Des Keers	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Councillor Nancy Warne	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Councillor Tristan Osborne	Co-opted member – Medway Council
Mr Ian Chittenden	Co-opted member – Liberal Democrat Group
Councillor Mrs Jenny Hollingsbee	Co-opted member – Conservative Group
Mr Jordan Meade	Co-opted member – Conservative Group
Mrs Elaine Bolton	Independent Member
Mr Gurvinder Sandher	Independent Member

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

- 1 Introduction/Webcast Announcement
- 2 Apologies and Substitutes
- 3 Declarations of Interests by Members in Items on the Agenda for this Meeting
- 4 Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel held on 27 June 2023 (Pages 1 - 8)

B - Commissioner's reports requested by the Panel/offered by the Commissioner

- B1 Complaints Against the Commissioner - Annual Report 2022/23 (Pages 9 - 12)
- B2 Police and Crime Commissioner Annual Report (Pages 13 - 36)
- B3 Contacting Kent Police (Pages 37 - 42)

C - Commissioner's Decisions

- C1 Decision OPCC.D.034.23 - PFI North Kent Police Station (Pages 43 - 44)
- C2 Decision OPCC.D.033.23 - Sale of IP Addresses (Pages 45 - 46)

D - Questions to the Commissioner

- D1 Questions to the Commissioner (Pages 47 - 48)

E - Panel Matters

- E1 Future work programme (Pages 49 - 50)

F - For Information

- F1 Minutes of the Commissioner's Performance and Delivery Board meeting held on 7 June 2023 (Pages 51 - 58)

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)

Monday, 9 October 2023

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

KENT AND MEDWAY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 27 June 2023.

PRESENT: Mr P M Hill OBE (Chairman), Mr G Sandher MBE (Vice Chairman), Cllr M Blakemore, Mrs E Bolton, Cllr P Cole, Cllr P Feacey, Cllr Mrs J Hollingsbee, Cllr E Jayes (substitute for Cllr R Palmer), Mr J Meade, Cllr S Mochrie-Cox, Cllr C Nolan, Cllr T Osbourne, Cllr N Warne and Cllr R Wells

ALSO PRESENT: Mr M Scott (Kent Police and Crime Commissioner), Mr A Harper (PCC's Chief Executive), Mr R Phillips (PCC's Chief Finance Officer), and Mr N Wickens (PCC's Head of Policy Coordination and Research)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs A Taylor (Scrutiny Research Officer) and Ms L Tricker (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

89. Election of Chair

(Item 2)

1. The Scrutiny Research Officer asked for nominations for Chair of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel.
2. Cllr Hollingsbee proposed and Cllr Feacey seconded that Mr Hill be elected Chair of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel. No other nominations were received.

RESOLVED that Mr Hill be elected Chair of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel.

90. Election of Vice-Chair

(Item 3)

1. The Chair proposed and Cllr Wells seconded that Mr Sandher be elected Vice Chair of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel. No other nominations were received.

RESOLVED that Mr Sandher be elected Vice Chair of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel.

91. Membership

(Item 4)

1. The Scrutiny Research Officer outlined the following changes to the membership of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel:

- Cllr Connie Nolan has replaced Cllr Ashley Clark (Canterbury)
- Cllr Charlotte Zosseder has replaced Cllr Oliver Richardson (Dover)
- Cllr Mike Blakemore has replaced Cllr Jenny Hollingsbee (Folkestone and Hythe)
- Cllr Lauren Edwards has replaced Cllr Habib Tejan (Medway)
- Cllr Perry Cole has replaced Cllr Peter Fleming (Sevenoaks)
- Cllr Heather Keen has replaced Cllr George Kup (Thanet). Noted that Cllr Keen will be unable to take her seat so a replacement will be found.
- Cllr Tristan Osbourne has replaced Cllr John Burden (Medway co-optee)

RESOLVED that the Panel noted the changes in membership.

POST MEETING NOTE: Cllr Jenny Hollingsbee and Cllr Jordan Meade joined the Panel filling the Conservative vacancies.

92. Declarations of Interests by Members in Items on the Agenda for this Meeting (Item 6)

No declarations were made.

93. Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel held on 18 April 2023 (Item 7)

Mr Sandher stated that he had attended the meeting but had not been included on the official minutes. It was confirmed this amendment would be made.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 April 2023 were an accurate record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

94. Neighbourhood Policing Review (Item B1)

1. The Commissioner presented the report which outlined Kent Police's Neighbourhood Policing Review which had begun 15 months ago under the previous Chief Constable. He said he had received an assurance from the previous Chief Constable that the model would be good as, if not better than the previous one. Acknowledging the loss of PCSOs was regrettable and not a choice he would have made if the circumstances different, he added it was one where he thought communities would see benefits in having police officers instead. The proposed model and implementation would be structured around five main pillars: the Beat Team with ward-based police officers replacing PCSOs on an almost like-for-like basis; the Child-Centred Policing Team which would work with schools and youth centres had seen a small uplift in officers and the number of PCSOs retained; the Neighbourhood Task Force which continued to evolve the Task Force model, but for every district and where PCSOs would remain; the Rural Task Force which was previously considered a central team but was now part of the model and would help develop links with the ward-based Beat Officers; and the Prevention Hub which would focus on anti-social behaviour and licensing at a

county level to support Districts and Divisions. He explained that a number of PCSOs would regrettably be lost under the new model to reduce spend and use the council tax precept effectively, but some PCSOs would be replaced with police officers, and the force would continue to consider areas with the greatest need and the level of resourcing they received. Advising that every ward would have a named police officer, the Commissioner said there was a need to clearly define what the ward was and this would be communicated to councillors and members of the public as soon as possible. Some ward-based police officers had already begun their role, but implementation of the model would be phased until 2024. He affirmed that the ward-based police officers would be better ringfenced and Kent Police would work to ensure they remained in their areas as much as possible.

2. The Chair thanked the Commissioner for his assurance that wards would be clearly defined, and this would be communicated. He felt that it was important for the new ward-based police officers to build a connection with their communities, as PCSOs had previously done. He sought assurances that ward-based police officers could successfully tackle low-level crime and assist vulnerable people. He also asked how long the new police officers would remain in their posts, and if they would be communicating regularly with elected ward members. The Commissioner explained that it was very important to maintain a local beat. The new training programme for neighbourhood policing would also teach new officers the different skills they would need including problem solving and working with the community, and these officers would have more powers than PCSOs so would have increased intervention abilities. He agreed that continuity of police officers in the community was important, so Kent Police had tried to encourage officers to apply for new neighbourhood policing roles where they had previously expressed an interest in this field of work.
3. A Member shared their concern regarding the continuity of ward-based police officers and asked how long a police officer would remain, and if data regarding how often they were moved from their ward could be reported publicly. The Commissioner confirmed that a police officer could be moved if needed, but data regarding this issue could be shared at the Performance and Delivery Board once the model was embedded. He added that several of the new ward-based police officers were formerly PCSOs so already had longstanding links with their communities.
4. The Vice Chair sought reassurance that Kent would not be impacted by the long lead in for implementation of the full model, which was scheduled for September 2024. He also asked that the ward-based police officers link in with charities, business organisations and faith groups to better understand their communities. The Commissioner explained that September 2024 was a worst-case scenario, and the goal was to have an increasing percentage of roles filled at key dates up until early 2024, and this would be monitored closely. He added that ward-based police officers would be engaging with their communities through groups such as NextDoor and My Community Voice, as well as directly. The Vice Chair asked what would happen when the ward-based police officer was on annual leave or sick leave. The Commissioner agreed that it was important for residents, in the absence of their ward-based police officer, to be able to contact somebody. He agreed

an action to understand what would happen in the scenario of absence or illness of a ward-based police officer, and who residents could contact.

5. The Commissioner explained, following a question from a Member, that 101 received approximately 30,000 calls per month and used to be the predominant method of communication with the police, but it was now 999. The new Chief Constable was working with the Commissioner's office to improve accessibility to 101 and reduce call attrition to less than 10% using a flex resourcing model during peak times, which was successfully reducing wait times and providing residents with a better service. The Performance and Delivery Board was regularly monitoring 101 and it was important that members of the public knew that 101 was an option to report non-emergency enquiries.
6. A Member asked if implementation of the Neighbourhood Policing Model could be brought back to the Panel throughout the year. She also queried the morale in the neighbourhood policing model, and if some staff had already moved roles. The Commissioner confirmed that he was happy to bring regular updates to the Panel, as the implementation progressed. He also confirmed that the review had impacted morale amongst some officers and staff who had left for other roles such as with Border Force. The length of time from the announcement of the review to its implementation had meant some officers had chosen to leave, but there were no compulsory redundancies, although some staff had chosen voluntary redundancy. He acknowledged the challenge of improving morale, as this was the largest review since 2017, but many impacted staff had received their preferences and the role they sought.
7. A Member stressed the importance of communication when undertaking reviews, particularly communications with PCSOs. The Commissioner agreed that initial communications with PCSOs regarding the review had been poor, and the force had tried to retain as many PCSOs as possible or train them to become police officers. He agreed that there were communications lessons to be learnt from the review.
8. The Commissioner confirmed, following a question from a Member, that the Chief Constable was working to embed a culture change in neighbourhood policing through increased supervision, support and opportunities for officers. He explained that the force was also considering changes to ways of working through remote deployment, meaning police officers would not need to go back to their police station to do paperwork and could work from anywhere with a secure Wi-Fi connection, such as fire stations or parish council offices, as well as working from other police stations not in their ward.
9. The Chair confirmed that an update on neighbourhood policing would come back to the Panel, and it was agreed that a report would be presented at April's meeting, but verbal updates could come before then if necessary.

RESOLVED to note the report and agree to a further update at the April 2024 meeting.

95. Update on Fraud

(Item B2)

1. The Commissioner presented the report which highlighted the prevalence of fraud, as it equated to 40% of all crime reported. The outcomes of fraud in Kent were better than other comparable areas due to increased investment in the Serious Crime and Economic Crime Unit. He explained that Action Fraud remained the main reporting tool for fraud crime, but only 5% of reports made to Action Fraud were passed to the police for investigation, as many were filtered out due to high criteria for submission. The fraud teams within Kent Police worked closely with partner organisations such as local council's and trading standards teams, as well as with the police's prevention team to support businesses and raise public awareness of fraud. Victim support for fraud was co-ordinated at both a national and local level, and forces worked together to share best practice. The Commissioner confirmed that the national Fraud Strategy had been published in May which introduced a new Fraud Squad and increased international working, and an update had been received at the Performance and Delivery Board. He summarised and stated that there remained challenges with fraud as not enough cases were passed from Action Fraud to the police and confidence in Action Fraud amongst the public remained low.
2. The Chair echoed the importance of partnership working, and asked what work could be undertaken at a local level to improve confidence in the police's handling of fraud. The Commissioner agreed that local fraud detection was needed, but the National Fraud Strategy and improvements to Action Fraud should improve residents' confidence.

RESOLVED to note the report.

96. Violence Against Women and Girls Inquiry - update

(Item B3)

1. The Commissioner introduced the report highlighting that his office had undertaken an inquiry on the issue, including a large survey and a big data exercise. The results from the big data exercise had been reported in a previous paper to the Panel but had found key indicators for who was more likely to perpetrate violence against women and girls. A roundtable meeting had been held to scrutinise the proposals and recommendations from the inquiry before the outcomes were published last year which were now being implemented. The Commissioner highlighted some of the recommendations from the inquiry that were being delivered such as officer verification checks; the launch of the StreetSafe tool; and more comprehensive safeguards. He explained the Walk and Talk events and the launch of his Victim Voice initiative, as well as school intervention programmes and victim satisfaction surveys. He summarised and felt that there had been good progress implementing some of the recommendations, but there was a need to refocus efforts on others. He added that the national Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy currently included men and boys but felt that there needed to be a separate national strategy for men and boys and separate funding

streams.

2. Mr Meade declared an interest that he was the Chairman of the Gravesham Street Pastors Charity, which had been mentioned in the report.
3. A Member questioned what work was being undertaken to ensure the Walk and Talk events were reflective and representative of the local community, and what outreach could be done to include young people in these events. The Commissioner agreed that early Walk and Talk events had not been impactful as they had not been representative of the community, and this had been due to poor communication. He stated that the team were now using Twitter, Facebook, NextDoor and My Community Voice to promote these events and increase numbers of people attending. He added that the Walk and Talk events were also being more proactive and were directly engaging with members of the public, and being held in busier areas.
4. The Commissioner, in response to a question from a Member, stated that the team were now working to improve the follow-up to crimes and the investigation of crimes against women and girls, as these areas would improve residents' confidence in the police. The team worked closely with the Crown Prosecution Service to receive pre-charge advice, but the charge rate for rape and sexual assaults remained low. The Commissioner stated that Violence Against Women and Girls was a priority in his Police and Crime Plan which was a standing item at the Performance and Delivery Board, and that he met regularly with the Chief Constable to discuss the implementation of the recommendations from the inquiry.
5. A Member expressed concern that young people were not engaging with programmes for schools, and asked if the police were the right organisation to be running the Schools Intervention Programme. The Commissioner stated that this issue had been recognised amongst the force, and lockdowns during the pandemic had affected young men's behaviour, particularly an increase in misogyny and sexualisation of women on social media. He stated that the police worked in partnership with organisations such as the St Giles Trust to deliver programmes in schools and provide targeted responses to developing trends.
6. A Member highlighted the Kasey report and attitudes towards women amongst police officers and asked if Kent Police had undertaken any work regarding this. The Commissioner stated that Kent Police had responded to the Casey report by uplifting the central vetting and counter-corruption teams, as well as introducing an internal whistleblowing procedure. He stated that some officers in Kent Police had been disciplined or sacked following internal investigation in response to the Kasey report. Verification checks had been implemented immediately after the murder of Sarah Everard and this service had been used by members of the public.

RESOLVED to note the update.

97. Questions to the Commissioner
(Item D1)

Question 1

As per the Commissioners Police and Crime Plan can the Commissioner detail and explain how he is holding the Chief Constable to account for the perceived lack of Kent Police resourcing and focus in tackling the ongoing issue of ASB in our communities and our town centres with specific focus on motorbikes, mopeds, e-scooters, e-bikes and so call off road 'dirt' bikes which is perceived by residents to be of little or no priority to Kent Police with ongoing incidents and cases continuing for weeks, months and sometimes years.

(Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox, Gravesham Borough Council)

1. In response to the question, the Commissioner assured the Panel that he continued to hold the Chief Constable to account through the Performance and Delivery Board. He stated that as part of their Safer Summer campaign, the force would be prioritising anti-social behaviour (ASB), road safety and related issues, adding the Deputy Chief Constable had provided and assurance that a plan was also being put together around ASB caused by off-road motorbikes specifically. Noting that Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) were being sought in Medway and Dartford regarding this issue, he confirmed that it was a priority for the police moving forward. He stated that e-scooters were not road-safe or road legal, and this would be enforced through the police, adding his view was that they should be seized and crushed as he did not there to be a perception that they had effectively been decriminalised. Noting that enforcement powers around anti-social use of vehicles were the responsibility of the police, he said that a partnership approach was also often helpful to prevent activity such as the erection of gates and pursuit of PSPOs.

Question 2

Trust in the Police is very important to the public and recently Andy Cooke, Head of His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) said that 'trust in the police was hanging by a thread and forces are failing to act on recommendations'. Can the commissioner outline to us how he is holding the Chief Constable to account on addressing this and what results he has seen as a result of holding the Chief Constable to account on these?

(Mrs Elaine Bolton, Independent Member)

2. Following the question, the Commissioner confirmed that trust and confidence in the police was paramount. He stated that he was holding the Chief Constable to account through HMICFRS reports, which provided independent assessments and had seen areas of improvement. He felt there was more work to do, for example improvements in the force control room; timely investigations being completed; improved working with the Crown Prosecution Service.

RESOLVED to note the responses to questions.

98. Future work programme (Item E1)

RESOLVED to note the report.

99. Minutes of the Commissioner's Performance and Delivery Board meeting held on 15 March 2023
(Item F1)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Performance and Delivery Board held on 15 March 2023 be noted.

By: Anna Taylor, Panel Officer, Kent County Council
To: Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel – 17 October 2023
Subject: Complaints Against the Commissioner – Annual Report 2022/23

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Police and Crime Panel (PCP) receives an annual report in relation to complaints made against the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC).
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel with an overview of the work undertaken by the PCP's Complaints Sub-Committee over the period July 2022 – June 2023.

2. Complaints procedure

- 2.1 The powers of the PCP in respect of complaints are prescribed by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, and the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012.
- 2.2 The PCP is responsible for handling complaints made against the PCC and for informally resolving non-criminal complaints, as well as complaints or conduct matters that are referred back to the Panel by the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC).
- 2.3 The PCP is also required to forward any serious complaint it receives against the PCC to the IOPC. The definition of a serious complaint is 'a qualifying complaint made about conduct which constitutes or involves, or appears to constitute or involve, the commission of a criminal offence', as per paragraph 2(6) of Schedule 7 to the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.
- 2.4 When a potential complaint is received (either via the Panel or the OPCC) the Regulations provide for an initial decision to be made on whether to record the complaint and, if so, whether to disapply the Regulations. The criteria by which these decisions are made are set out in Regulations and in the Panel's policy. The Panel has delegated the initial complaint handling and recording decision-making to the PCC's Monitoring Officer (the OPCC Chief Executive). This delegation is in line with Home Office advice and is the approach adopted by most other Panels. The Explanatory Memorandum that accompanies the Regulations states: - "The Government takes the view that the task of the initial handling of complaints and conduct matters sits well with the role of the

monitoring officer. Further, allowing scope for these matters to be dealt with internally in the first instance will promote the early resolution of minor complaints without unnecessary bureaucracy”. To ensure appropriate monitoring and to allow for relevant information sharing, the initial complaint handling and recording decisions taken by the PCC’s Chief Executive is taken following consultation with Panel Officers.

- 2.5 A complaint against the Police and Crime Commissioner is an allegation or expression of concern that he has taken or not taken an action personally. General criticisms of a PCC or of PCCs in general, or complaints about operational policing do not come within the scope of the Regulations.
- 2.6 The current complaints Policy, as set by the Panel, [is published online](#) via KCC’s website.

3. Complaints since July 2022

- 3.1 12 complaints were received in total against the PCC, Matthew Scott, for assessment against the regulations between July 2022 and June 2023. A summary of complaints activity can be found below:

Complaints Received for Assessment	2022 - 2023	2021 - 2022	2020 - 2021
Recorded complaints – disappplied	11	6	5
Recorded complaints – Sub-Committee convened	1	1	0
Complaint received and not recorded	0	3	0

- 3.2 In the 11 cases where the complaint was recorded, the Regulations were disappplied on the grounds that the complaints were “vexatious, oppressive, repetitious or an abuse of the complaints process” – these categories are defined in the Regulations. The reasons for disapplication and non-recording, were provided to and discussed with Panel officers at the time and officers are fully satisfied that the PCC’s Monitoring Officer made the correct decision in every case.
- 3.3 In one case the complaint was recorded and passed to the PCP for further action. The Complaints Sub-Panel was convened to discuss and resolve this complaint as set out in point 4 below.

3.4 The above data shows an increase in the number of recorded complaints made against the Commissioner. One complaint was considered by the Panel's Complaints Sub-Committee during this period, with the Sub-Committee not upholding the complaint. Officer contact with other Panels continues to suggest that the number of complaints (recorded or otherwise) against the Kent Commissioner remains low compared with other Commissioners.

4. Complaints Sub-Panel

4.1 The Membership of the Complaints Sub-Panel convened to consider this complaint was:

- Councillor Ashley Clark (Canterbury CC)
- Councillor Jenny Hollingsbee (substitute for Cllr P Fleming) (Folkestone and Hythe DC)
- Councillor Shane Mochrie-Cox (Chair) (Gravesham BC)
- Councillor Lottie Parfitt-Reid (Maidstone BC)
- Councillor Lesley Dyball (Sevenoaks DC)
- Councillor Richard Palmer (Swale BC)
- Mrs Elaine Bolton (Independent Member)

4.2 The Complaint Sub-Panel considered the complaint against the PCC on 19 January 2023, the agenda and minutes can be found here:
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=841>

4.3 The Panel resolved that the complaint not be upheld and no formal action should be taken against the Commissioner. The Panel asked that the Commissioner reflects on the manner and style of responses given, and this was communicated to the Commissioner.

5. Recommendation

5.1 That the Panel notes the contents of this report

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To: Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel

Subject: Annual Report 2022/23

Date: 17 October 2023

Introduction:

1. Attached at Appendix A is the Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report for 2022/23.
2. As per the requirements outlined in Section 12 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Annual Report documents progress made between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023 in meeting the objectives within the Police and Crime Plan.
3. In addition, the Dame Elish Angiolini chaired Independent Review of Deaths and Serious Incidents published its [report](#) in October 2017 making 110 recommendations. Recommendation 53 is 'PCCs should report annually on deaths and serious incidents in police custody in their jurisdictions'. Therefore, the Annual Report also includes information on the number of deaths and serious injuries in Kent Police custody suites.

Recommendation:

4. The Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel is asked to review and comment on the Annual Report.

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Making Kent Safer

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Annual Report 2022 -2023



Appendix A

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Commissioner's Introduction

Welcome to my Annual Report which looks back at the 2022/23 financial year, my sixth year in office.

In December I was delighted to appoint Tim Smith as Chief Constable. Tim was selected as my preferred candidate following a thorough selection process to replace his predecessor Alan Pughsley QPM. Tim has already made changes to how policing is delivered in the county, and I am determined to provide him with the resources he needs to make Kent safer by ensuring the force goes from strength to strength.

Thanks to your contributions via the council tax precept, and the Government's three-year uplift programme, there are now more police officers than ever before in Kent. At the end of March 2023, Kent Police had 4,203 officers; 1,021 more than when I came into office in spring 2016. The force did an amazing job recruiting in a tough job market and I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved.

The force has invested over 900 officers to work in areas specifically investigating offences related to violence against women and girls, such as domestic abuse and rape. It has also introduced Proactive Domestic Abuse Teams and a Domestic Abuse Hub which utilises video technology to virtually secure evidence and safeguard victims.

The role of Police and Crime Commissioner covers a wide range of duties across policing, crime, criminal justice and community safety, but none is more important than being the public's voice. I have continued to engage with residents and businesses, listening to what they have to say and holding the Chief Constable to account.

In this capacity, it became clear during the year that a large proportion of 101 calls were either not being answered or it was taking a long time. I raised this with the Chief Constable and am pleased to report the force took immediate action which led to significant improvements. I am reassured this performance has been maintained and there is now a longer-term plan around managing public contact in the future.

As Chair of the Kent Criminal Justice Board, one of the biggest challenges continues to be the backlog in cases. Despite efforts by criminal justice partners and engagement with Ministers, caseload numbers remain unacceptably high. Victims and witnesses should not have to wait months, or years, for their case to be heard in court.

With the support of my office, I was successful in securing additional funding for my commissioning budget of £3.5m. This enabled me to provide further support to victims of sexual violence and domestic abuse and to help organisations manage the increased demand due to delays in the justice system.

I am very conscious of the increases in cost of living and will always do my best to ensure that Kent taxpayers get value for money for the contributions they make. I have continued to work with both Kent Police and the Government to help mitigate the cost pressures that policing faces.

Finally, I would like to thank every Kent Police officer, Police Community Support Officer, member of staff and volunteer for their tireless efforts during 2022/23. My thanks also to the staff in my office for their hard work and support to me as your elected Police and Crime Commissioner.

Matthew Scott

Kent Police and Crime Commissioner

Making Kent Safer Plan

By law, Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) are required to publish a Police and Crime Plan that covers their term of office, and to keep the plan under constant review. PCCs also have a duty to consult with victims and the wider community on their plan priorities.

For me, consultation commenced in the lead up to the May 2021 PCC election as I developed the Manifesto commitments upon which I was re-elected. Having been re-elected though, with circa 1.9 million people living in the county, I was keen to encourage further feedback to inform my Police and Crime Plan. Therefore, in autumn 2021 I conducted a survey to reach out to as many Kent communities as possible.

A total of 2,848 responses were received and the following is a precis of the results:

<p>Q2. How safe do you feel where you live, on a scale of 1 to 10? (1 = very unsafe / 10 = very safe)</p> <p>➤ Respondents felt 7.0 / 10 safe where they live</p> <p>Q3. Have you been a victim of crime in Kent in the last year?</p> <p>➤ 16.8% indicated 'Yes'</p> <p>Q4. If so, how satisfied were you with the service from Kent Police? (1 = very unsatisfied / 10 = very satisfied)</p> <p>➤ On average victims rated the service 4.3 / 10</p> <p>Q7. Which of the following issues do you feel are the most important?</p> <p>➤ Respondents could select up to six issues from a pre-defined list of 22; the top five were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Sexual offences, incl. rape2. Serious violence, incl. gangs / weapon offences3. Child sexual exploitation4. Burglary / Robbery5. Anti-social behaviour <p>Q9. To what extent do you feel safe on the roads where you live?</p> <p>➤ 21.2% felt either unsafe or very unsafe</p> <p>Q11. To what extent do you agree that offences which occur on the roads require more enforcement?</p> <p>➤ 76.5% strongly agreed or agreed</p>
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This formed only one element of the consultation; it also took account of the results of other surveys, correspondence received by the Office of the PCC (OPCC), feedback from engagement events, emerging local threats and national guidance.

In light of my Manifesto commitments and personal views, feedback from surveys and the national and local context, I developed the 'Making Kent Safer Plan – April 2022 to March 2025'. Whilst committed to refreshing it each year, in principle it sets the priorities for Kent Police, partners and the OPCC, as well as the overall strategic direction of policing and community safety in the county for the next three years.

The Making Kent Safer Plan was considered and supported - with a couple of minor amends - by the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel at their meeting on 2 February 2022. It was published on 1 April 2022.

At its core is integrity and transparency. As an elected PCC, the public rightly expects the highest standards of behaviour from me, therefore strong ethics, integrity and transparency must be at the heart of all I do. From Chief Constables to police officers on the street, there is also a need to strengthen public trust and confidence, with the importance of integrity and transparency in policing never greater.

For the plan to be successful, underpinning the actions and decisions of the Chief Constable and myself are three overarching guiding principles, namely:

Crime is important no matter where it takes place – urban, rural or coastal communities: Kent Police must have the right resources in the right place so every crime can be investigated appropriately and proportionately, with the right outcome secured for the victim.

Victims and witnesses at the heart of everything we do: victims and witnesses must feel confident to report crime to Kent Police; when they do, they must be treated with care, respect and dignity and have confidence in the criminal justice system.

Ensure that vulnerable people and those suffering mental ill health get support from the right agency: through multi-agency working Kent Police and the OPCC will work to reduce demand on policing and ensure the vulnerable or those suffering mental ill health receive the right help from the right agency at the right time.

The plan then outlines the priorities I have set the Chief Constable and myself over the next three years:

My priorities for the Chief Constable:

- Work with residents, communities and businesses to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour
- Tackle violence against women and girls
- Protect people from exploitation and abuse
- Combat organised crime and county lines
- Be visible and responsive to the needs of communities
- Prevent road danger and support Vision Zero
- Protect young people and provide opportunities

My commitments as PCC:

- Hold all agencies to account for the delivery of an effective and efficient criminal justice system
- Work in partnership with the police and others to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour
- Be responsive to emerging issues and trends through innovation
- Secure the funding that Kent needs through specific grants and the funding formula review
- Support volunteering
- Commission services for victims that are needs-led

The plan also recognises that the priorities do not sit in isolation but must be delivered in the context of national expectations, and in particular:

- The Strategic Policing Requirement
- National Crime and Policing Measures
- Policing Vision 2025
- Legislation

My priorities for the Chief Constable to deliver

Considering the enormity and complexity of policing across the county, from numerous possible options, the following have been selected to illustrate how the Chief Constable has delivered on my priorities.

- **Work with residents, communities and businesses to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour**

Crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) are issues that residents, communities and local businesses care deeply about. Kent Police must ensure it has the right resources with the right skills to deliver effective long term solutions and where necessary, investigate and bring to justice those who harm individuals and businesses.

- Levels of recorded crime and ASB:

	April to March		% change	
	2021/22	2022/23		
Victim based crime	154,608	150,153	▼	-2.9
Violent crime	91,471	84,302	▼	-7.8
Sexual offences	6,886	6,583	▼	-4.4
ASB	32,640	27,617	▼	-15.4

- Formed in February 2019, the Chief Constables' Crime Squad is a dedicated team of officers which investigate serious acquisitive crime offences, including burglary and robbery. In 2022/23, the Crime Squad executed 171 warrants, made more than 260 arrests, laid in excess of 550 charges and secured 345 years in court sentences.

Example: *The Crime Squad investigated an aggravated burglary offence in Sevenoaks where the offenders entered a house by force, armed with firearms and weapons and caused injuries to those inside whilst stealing money and items of property. Within three weeks the officers identified, conducted warrants and secured charges against seven individuals who originated from different parts of London.*

- **Tackle violence against women and girls (VAWG)**

Women and girls are at a disproportionate risk of a wide range of crimes, predominantly perpetrated by men. Kent Police must maintain the trust and confidence of women and girls by listening to those directly affected by violence and abuse, and working with partners to ensure no woman or girl feels unsafe.

- Between October 2021 and March 2022, Kent Police held 15 district based public engagement events, with over 1,000 members of the public having the opportunity to see and hear how it was tackling VAWG. As a result, a new strategy to tackle VAWG was implemented with the force investing over 900 officers to work in areas specifically investigating offences related to VAWG,

such as domestic abuse (DA) and rape. Kent Police also introduced a new officer identity verification check process enabling members of the public, if concerned about an officer's identity, to request a check be made through the Force Control Room (FCR).

- The force has established specific Rape Investigation (Phoenix) Teams. It has also invested in Sexual Offence Liaison Officers (SOLOs) to ensure victims receive the highest standards of care and providing a single point of contact for any victim entering into the Criminal Justice System (CJS). The SOLOs attend reports of rape, secure and oversee initial evidence capture, provide key support, and safeguard victims all the way through the investigative process, culminating in attending and remaining with them through the duration of court hearings.

- **Protect people from exploitation and abuse**

The exploitation or abuse of anyone in Kent is unacceptable which is why the vulnerable must be protected. Kent Police must work with local partners to identify exploitation and abuse wherever it is occurring, pursue and bring offenders to justice, take action to safeguard victims and facilitate the provision of appropriate support to help them cope and recover.

- From May 2022 Kent Police introduced the following:

- **Proactive DA Teams** – focused on those posing the greatest harm by targeting DA offenders, working with partners to identify the best 'problem solving' approach to manage them, referring suitable individuals to the perpetrator programme and providing support to victims.

Example: *A DA offender, career criminal with links to gangs and drugs, assaulted his partner and damaged her vehicle. The Team gathered intelligence and arrested the suspect as he re-entered the UK. They recovered a large quantity of cash, expensive clothing and mobile phones. The suspect was charged with money laundering and subject to a confiscation order to recover seized assets. The DA victim was safeguarded through bail conditions.*

- **DA Hub** – focused on becoming a centre of excellence for DA, utilising video technology and telephony to virtually respond to non-immediate calls to secure evidence and conduct risk assessments and referring victims to the most appropriate support service.

Example: *A DA victim called the police to report harassment, stalking and public order offences. Within 4 hours, a full account was secured via video, safeguarding was completed, a statement taken and the suspect arrested. The suspect was charged and remanded for multiple offences.*

- Due to its geographical location, Kent acts as a gateway to and from the continent which organised criminals use for trafficking and exploitation. Kent Police is committed to working with partners to tackle this crime and through its Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Team and a myriad of training programmes, has provided officers with a better understanding and ability to identify victims and implement safeguarding. This has helped ensure more victims are referred through the National Referral Mechanism, generating more investigative opportunities and providing the vulnerable with effective support.

Example: A Vietnamese male called 999 reporting he had been kidnapped and bundled into the back of a lorry. The male's phone identified his location in Kent and patrols attended the area and located two Vietnamese males in the back of a HGV. As a result of enquiries, 4 males were arrested, charged and remanded for conspiracy to kidnap and conspiracy to commit the offence of kidnapping or false imprisonment with the intention of human trafficking.

- **Combat organised crime and county lines**

Organised crime can seem like a distant threat, but sadly it presents considerable challenges and its effects can be seen in local communities. Kent Police must continue to develop and share intelligence to build a local picture of threats, risk, harm and vulnerabilities to safeguard victims and enable the deployment of the right resources to prevent, disrupt and investigate offending to keep Kent safe.

- Kent has three divisional County Lines and Gangs Teams (CLGT) who provide a proactive and preventative capability to reduce the harm caused to Kent communities from county-line criminality and gang activity. In 2022/23, the CLGT achieved the following results:
 - 329 arrests
 - 244 warrants executed
 - 474 charges laid
 - 141 weapons seized
 - 397 years and 4 months in court sentences

Example: In October 2022 the CLGT took part in a national county lines intensification week, during which the team targeted 25 county lines, resulting in the arrest of 26 offenders and the securing of 30 charges. Kent Police also recovered more line handsets than any other force in the Eastern region.

- The Serious Organised Crime Team has continued to pursue those offenders that cause the most threat, harm and risk, targeting Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) that erode the economy and communities and are responsible for drug importation and supply, firearms offences, aggravated burglary, and theft of ATMs amongst other offences. OCGs ruthlessly target the most vulnerable, ruining lives.

Example: A known member of an OCG was arrested and subsequently sentenced at Maidstone Crown Court to life imprisonment to serve a minimum of 18 years for the violent attack, sexual assault, burglary and false imprisonment of an elderly victim in their own home.

- **Be visible and responsive to the needs of communities**

The relationship between the police and the people who live, work and visit the county is vital to building trust and confidence. Kent Police must listen to and understand the needs of communities and provide a visible, accessible and responsive service 24/7, 365 days a year which is timely, empathetic and professional.

- Kent Police continued to focus on improving the partnership response to people in mental health crisis and ensuring they receive a first-class service from the relevant agency at the point of contact. The force improved its collection and use of data, to deliver enhanced training, ensuring appropriate interventions were made when dealing with someone in crisis. This work resulted in better outcomes for vulnerable people through a significant reduction in the use of police powers of detention:

2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
1,775	2,050	1,745	1,136	835

- Each of the 13 Districts continued to be served by its own dedicated Local Policing Team and Community Safety Unit (CSU). CSUs focus on prevention, deterrence and community engagement, working in partnership to problem solve local issues, particularly where there is vulnerability and community-based crime and ASB. Supplementary to regular officers, Special Constables on average attended 60 events within their communities each month as well local policing duties. Such events included pro-active traffic enforcement, community safety duties, community events such as the force Open Day and the Kent County Show and working with cadets. In 2022/23, Community Policing Volunteers also volunteered over 3,000 hours to specialist policing teams.

- **Prevent road danger and support Vision Zero**

Despite the efforts of many, Kent's roads remain a concern for local communities. Kent Police must continue to crackdown on the main factors which contribute to people being killed and seriously injured and play its part in Vision Zero by working with partners to prevent road dangers, tackle inconsiderate behaviour and educate where appropriate.

- The Road Safety Unit worked in partnership with Ashford Community Policing Team, East Kent Special Constabulary, the Rural Task Force, DVSA and Ashford Borough Council Waste Enforcement Team. This was a proactive roads-based operation which incorporated a stop site on Henwood Industrial

estate as well as partner agencies crewing with officers in mobile patrols. Vehicles were searched, examined and offences investigated. 18 vehicles were stopped at the stop site and further vehicles stopped on the roads around Ashford resulting in one arrest, 9 vehicle seizures and 35 Traffic Offence Reports for various offences.

- On a daily basis the force continued to focus on those offences that have the most impact on road deaths, commonly known as the 'Fatal 4' (speed, not wearing seatbelts, drink / drug impaired driving and use of mobile phones). In 2022/23, the following were recorded:

Speed enforcement	Mobile phone enforcement	Seatbelt enforcement	Drink drive arrests	Drug drive arrests
78,828	2,094	2,289	2,426	1,091

- **Protect young people and provide opportunities**

Every interaction with a child or young person leaves a mark; it is an opportunity to build trust and to keep them safe. Kent Police must continue to provide positive engagement opportunities and whenever an officer or member of staff comes into contact with a child or young person, they must look beyond the immediate situation by asking questions and observing their behaviour and environment.

- Child centred policing is at the heart of the Force Control Strategy and in October 2021, Kent Police launched its Child Centred Policing Plan setting out the strategy to continue the journey of embedding a child centred policing culture, enabling staff and officers to effectively talk to children, safeguard them and identify vulnerabilities. Version 2 of the Plan launched in January 2023 with an updated focus on early help, prevention and identifying and managing hidden harm. The vision of child centred policing is to support trauma informed working across a range of professional settings and services to provide a consistent approach to trauma informed practice.

- The Cadet Programme seeks to create opportunities for young people to be involved in the policing family whilst strengthening safeguarding processes. Regardless of background or circumstances the force welcomes all young people and seeks to provide them with opportunities to thrive. As at 31 March 2023, there were 408 cadets located at 12 units across the county and in 2023, they completed over 15,000 hours of volunteering. In October, the first ever Kent Police Lord Lieutenant's Cadet was appointed.

Example: During summer 2022, cadets took part in various activities including a Football Tournament, two days at Bewl Water and a trip to the Ninja Warriors park. They also assisted with the training of probationary officers by taking part in role plays and assisted with summer fetes, Paws in the Park and Leaflet drops. Cadets also assisted with the PCC's Blue Light Job fair.

My commitments as PCC:

- **Hold all agencies to account for the delivery of an effective and efficient CJS**

Community engagement: As my role is to be the voice of the people, it is vitally important that I engage with, and listen to communities, residents, stakeholders and partners.

The OPCC and I continued to engage via the website which on average received 1,100 visits per month. The corporate @PCCKent Twitter account remained stable at 11,700 followers and the number of people following the OPCC on Instagram grew to 738. The Facebook page grew to 830 followers and posts on Nextdoor which has more than 300,000 members, were frequently viewed by up to 20,000 people. In addition the OPCC has a YouTube channel and continued to circulate a regular e-newsletter to more than 4,700 subscribers, 700 more than last year.

I have actively sought opportunities to engage face-to-face with residents by holding street stalls across the county, including in Gravesend, Larkfield, Northfleet, Paddock Wood, Aylesford and Dartford. I have also held walkabouts in Herne Bay, New Ash Green and Sevenoaks and attended various Parish Council, Women's Institute, Rotary Club and Public Meetings. In addition, I visited the Mosque in Tunbridge Wells and have spent time on patrol with various policing teams, including the Rural Task Force.

Visiting charities the OPCC supports is equally important and this year I met with representatives from a wide range, including Collaborate Digital, Dads Unlimited, Family Matters, Interventions Alliance, Rubicon Cares, Victim Support and Catch 22. A number were also invited to join the OPCC in our marquee at the Kent Police Open Days in July, which were attended by about 12,000 people. The OPCC also secured a stall at the Kent County Show, which boasts a turn-out of around 80,000 over 3 days. At both events, members of the public were invited to complete my Annual Policing Survey which included

questions on how safe they felt where they lived and whether they thought Kent Police performed well. It also coincided with the appointment of a new Chief Constable, so there were questions about the qualities people thought the individual should possess. The survey was promoted widely on social media and in total 2,964 people had their say.

In February 2023, I launched a pamphlet and presentation called Victim Voice, designed to help victims of crime find the support and help they may need. To raise awareness, I held a street stall in Maidstone and have delivered presentations to a range of meetings and groups. It has also been promoted widely via social media and the OPCC website, where further information is available.

Kent Police: One of my key duties is to secure an efficient and effective police force by holding the Chief Constable to account.

Accountability arrangements must be visible and accessible to build and maintain trust and confidence. My governance arrangements are outlined below:

Key Principles: dynamic & risk-based; takes account of, & has due regard for each parties distinct role	
Informal Interaction (Daily)	Spontaneous discussions between the OPCC & Kent Police.
Joint PCC & Chief Constable Briefing (Weekly)	A closed briefing which enables dialogue & discussion on a routine frequent basis.
Performance & Delivery Board (Quarterly)	Held in public & enables me to formally hold the Chief Constable to account for delivery of the priorities & related matters.
Joint Audit Committee (Quarterly)	Combined committee with Kent Police. Scrutinises internal processes, spending & risk management policies.

Kent & Essex Collaboration Oversight Meeting (6 monthly)	Co-chaired by myself & the Essex Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner. Keeps collaboration under review & holds both Chief Constables to account.
Complemented by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The OPCC conducting checks / audits • Feedback from Independent Custody Visitors • My completion of the Chief Constable's PDR • Regular meetings with public bodies & inspectorates • Objective assessments by HMICFRS 	

As my principle means of holding the Chief Constable to account, Performance and Delivery Board meetings were held on 8 June, 31 October, 30 November and 15 March 2023. Examples of topics discussed include:

Crime and ASB: Compared to the previous year, in 2022/23 the force recorded a 2.9% decrease in victim-based crime (4,455 fewer offences). This was predominantly driven by a decrease in violent crime of 7.8% (7,169 fewer offences).

In 2022/23, Kent Police recorded a 15.4% decrease in ASB incidents compared to the previous year, equating to over 5,000 less incidents across the county.

Call handling: During the year, Kent Police's 101 non-emergency call handling performance deteriorated, with an increase in unanswered calls and the time callers were waiting. Primarily the result of staff leaving the FCR and an increase in 999 emergency calls which will always be prioritised, I received regular updates and challenged the Chief Constable on how it was been addressed. Activity including the posting of police officers into the FCR was prioritised and as a result, 101 non-emergency call handling performance improved. Longer term, I am reassured there is a programme of strategic transformation underway that will build a FCR which delivers a first class service whilst meeting future public demand.

I have made it clear to the Chief Constable that I expect 999 and 101 call handling performance to be maintained and will continue to receive updates at my Performance and Delivery Board.

The number of 999 emergency calls received by Kent Police in 2022/23 was 382,689, an increase of 27,802 on the previous year. The number of 101 non-emergency calls received was 312,321, a reduction of 47,860. The percentage of 999 calls answered was 98.7% and the average answering time 18 seconds – compared to 98.6% and 16 seconds the previous year. For 101 calls, 66.6% were answered and the average answering time was 7 minutes 19 seconds – compared with 79.4% and 4 minutes in 2021/22.

The use of digital channels of communication continued to increase in 2022/23, with 70,523 Live Chats and 48,728 ‘Report a Crime’ submissions (up 61% and 23% respectively on the previous year).

Officer recruitment: Through the Government’s national uplift programme, Kent Police continued to recruit police officers in 2022/23.

Whilst some of those recruited replaced officers that left during the year, officer strength (i.e. actual number of officers) as at 31 March 2023 stood at 4,203 Full Time Equivalent (FTE)¹.

As a result of the national uplift programme and funding raised through the Council Tax precept, the force now has the highest number of officers in its history and 1,021 more full-time officers than when I came into office in spring 2016. This is a fantastic achievement and I would like to congratulate the Chief Constable and thank all the officers and staff involved for their dedication and hard work.

PEEL 2021/22: In holding the Chief Constable to account I do not judge progress on arbitrary targets; whilst cognisant of data, I consider independent assessments of performance equally as important. His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) independently

assesses and reports on the efficiency and effectiveness of police forces and fire & rescue services in the public interest. In April 2022, HMICFRS published the Kent PEEL 2021/22 inspection report – an overview of the graded judgements is below:

Outstanding	Recording data about crime	
Good	Preventing crime	Treatment of the public
	Developing a positive workplace	Good use of resources
Adequate	Protecting vulnerable people	
Requires improvement	Investigating crime	Responding to the public
	Managing offenders	
Inadequate		

While the force were to be commended on some elements such as its outstanding performance in the recording of crime, other findings were disappointing, particularly those in respect of DA and the investigation of crime.

In response, the force developed an Improvement Plan and I received regular updates on progress at each Performance and Delivery Board. In addition, the meeting on 31 October focused specifically on the force’s response to the report enabling me to robustly hold the Chief Constable to account.

I am pleased to report that over the course of the year, significant improvements were made by the force and I am reassured that all areas of concern identified by HMICFRS have now been addressed.

Further information about my [Performance and Delivery Board](#) can be found on the OPCC website.

Wider CJS: 2022/23 was my fifth year as chair of the Kent Criminal Justice Board (KCJB). The Board brings together chief officers from criminal justice agencies and wider partners and has responsibility for overseeing criminal justice across Kent and

Medway with the purpose of delivering effective, efficient and fair justice.

The CJS in Kent continued to see outstanding case numbers rise and delays in justice. The main issue remained a lack of resource across agencies with shortages in Judiciary, Magistrate Court Legal Advisors, Prosecution, Defence Counsel and Court Probation Officers all contributing to a lower than required number of courts sitting and case adjournments. Not as acute, but neighbouring counties including Sussex and Surrey faced the same issue. The Southeast remains an expensive place to live and as such, many much needed practitioners choose to work in London.

The delays impacted on the force’s Victim & Witness Care unit. The need for them to continue updating victims and witnesses whilst also seeing an increase in new cases created additional pressures. With Kent Police having the highest number of officers in its history, the number of prosecutions will continue to grow increasing the pressure on an already overburdened CJS.

Through the KCJB, work continued to deliver efficiency improvements including maximising the use of Out of Court Disposals where appropriate, delivering early guilty pleas, making sure cases entering the system needed to be there and that cases reaching court proceeded effectively. Work also focused on ensuring rehabilitation programmes and other work delivered positive outcomes to prevent further offending.

As PCC and Chair of the KCJB I continued to lobby and meet with senior government ministers and personnel within the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) to raise the recruitment issue here and across the Southeast including the need for a Southeast allowance. I am hopeful that national and local recruitment campaigns will see some success in the future.

However, unfortunately the reality is until the staffing shortages are addressed, the level of outstanding cases and therefore delays to victims and witnesses will not improve.

¹ [Police workforce, England and Wales: 31 March 2023](#)

Work in partnership with the police and others to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour

Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)

The countywide VRU was set-up after the OPCC secured funding from the HO in 2019. The introduction of VRU's in 18 local areas nationally is part of a focus on early intervention, as set out in the Government's Serious Violence Strategy.

The Kent and Medway VRU is a partnership between the police, local councils, health service providers and other key partners. It aims to tackle the root causes of violence using a multi-agency, public health based preventative approach.

Its mission is to make Kent's communities the safest they can be through a long term co-ordinated approach to preventing serious violence from occurring. It aims to achieve this by:

- Driving collaboration between services and ensuring the response is not inhibited by geographical, age or service boundaries.
- Building the capacity of communities to be involved in finding the solutions to violence and play an active part in how violence is prevented.
- Making best use of technology and evidence to improve everyone's understanding of why violence occurs, how it can be prevented and what works.

Violence is not something that just happens, nor is it normal or acceptable in society. Many of the key risk factors that make individuals, families or communities vulnerable to violence are changeable, including exposure to adverse experiences in childhood and subsequently the environments in which individuals live, learn and work throughout youth, adulthood and older age.

The public health approach adopted by VRUs is a science-based four step process:

- What's the problem? - gather data to reveal the who, what, why, where and when of the problem. This can be crime data but also information from hospitals, schools and a range of other sources.

- What are the causes? - look for evidence on the factors that put people at risk of experiencing, or perpetrating, violence as well as the factors that can protect them.
- What works and for whom? - using the data gathered design, implement and (crucially) evaluate interventions.
- Scale it up! - if an intervention works, then scale it up while evaluating how well it works and its cost-effectiveness.

The VRU commissions county-wide and locally designed services to deliver its prevention and intervention approach. In 2022/23, examples included:

- Charlton Athletic Community Trust (CACT) diversionary activity, including 1:1 mentoring for 36 weeks / 30 ball court sessions. Originally in the Dartford area following a fatal stabbing in April 2022, it moved around to areas most in need. CACT also provided Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) talks to schools in the Dartford area.
- Catch 22 delivered both preventative and protective interventions, supporting those up to the age of 25, who were at risk of CCE and county lines. Delivered by specialist caseworkers, the interventions took a holistic, trauma-informed approach appropriate to the age, risk and experiences of the young person.
- The use of Buddi Tags for those at risk of gang / criminal exploitation or identified as high harm offenders with a wish to be supported to lower their risk of being exploited or reoffending. Over 80 young people up to the age of 25 engaged in the programme which supported partnership working to divert individuals away from the risks associated with crime.

Serious Violence Duty (SVD)

The SVD was introduced through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, and came into effect on 31 January 2023.

The duty identifies a number of partners including local authorities, the police, youth offending teams,

Integrated Care System, probation, and the fire service. as specified authorities with a duty to reduce serious violence in their area. The duty places several requirements upon these authorities, including agreeing a local partnership arrangement to lead on the duty, a shared definition of serious violence, having consistent data sharing and analytical processes to develop a Strategic Needs Assessment, and production of a strategy to set out how the duty will be implemented locally.

Although not a specified authority, the PCC as the receiver of HO funding for the duty has associated oversight and reporting responsibilities. Therefore, in terms of local partnerships I have used my convening powers to support the development and implementation of the SVD with clear oversight on local delivery.

Through consultation with partners, it was agreed the Kent and Medway VRU would lead on co-ordinating a consistent approach across the county. A workshop held on 22 February 2023 with all specified authorities agreed a strategic board should be established for the purposes of monitoring and reporting against the SVD, but delivery itself should sit at local partnership level. The board was built on the existing VRU Oversight Board arrangements but with refreshed Terms of Reference and attendance. The workshop also agreed the following definition of serious violence: *'Specific types of crime such as homicide, knife crime, robbery and gun crime, and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent such as in DA, sexual offences, gangs, county lines and drug supply'*.

I am currently working with Crest Advisory to refresh the Terms of Reference for the new Serious Violence Prevention Partnership Board, to enable the strategy to be progressed.

Violence Reduction Fund (VRF)

One of the recommendations from my Violence Reduction Challenge in 2018 was to create a VRF. This was a 3-year fund open to statutory organisations, voluntary groups and charities to

deliver projects focused on preventing or reducing violence in the county.

The fund closed in September 2022, but the work has continued through the VRU.

The organisations funded were:

Organisation	Project Brief	Amount
Total Insight Theatre	My Choice Matters: A 60-minute drama performance about knife crime for young people aged 12-15.	£9,747
Crimestoppers	Fearless: Educating 11-16-year-olds by increasing their awareness of weapons, street crime and child sexual exploitation.	£35,000
Rising Sun	Guiding Lights: Support for girls aged 11-16 at risk of child sexual exploitation or being in coercive and controlling relationships.	£35,000
Forward Trust	Mentoring programme for clients accessing their East Kent Community Drug and Alcohol Services.	£15,000
Uprising Youth & Community	Knife crime awareness campaign in East Kent aimed at reducing violent crime through engagement with young people, parents and communities.	£32,000
Folkestone Youth Project	The Shed: Social, emotional and physical support for young people who had made unhealthy and negative life choices.	£7,850
Reform Restore Respect	I Didn't Know That: 90-minute workshops for Year 6 pupils on gang violence and knife crime.	£15,000
Kent Police	Mini-Cadets: Nine-week programme delivered in schools, concluding with a social act project.	£36,814

Outcomes

- *Total Insight, Crimestoppers, Uprising Youth & Community, Reform Restore Respect and Mini Cadets reached 9,386 young people in 153 settings on topics such as the consequences of carrying weapons, hate crime, bullying, cyber-crime, gangs, county lines, exploitation and insight into policing.*
- *Rising Sun, Forward Trust and Folkestone Youth Project reached 191 young people who were supported in building resilience and awareness of risky behaviours whilst engaging in positive activities.*

Gangs and county lines service

Violence, Vulnerability and Exploitation Service (£41,264)

Delivered by St Giles Trust to 30 June 2022.

This service consisted of three elements:

- Outreach support for young people on the periphery of criminality and committing low level ASB in West Kent.
- 1 to 1 casework and a Peer Mentor scheme for those involved in gangs and county lines.
- Crime prevention inputs in schools on gangs, county lines, knife crime and exploitation and mentoring for those identified as being at risk.

Outcomes

In the period 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2022:

- *The team managed a total caseload of 213, with 160 engaging in interventions.*
- *72 of those supported reported improved wellbeing, 63 increased self-esteem and 60 enhanced protective factors such as improved relationships with family and greater school attendance.*
- *53 schools received inputs and over 220 mentoring sessions were delivered.*

Gangs and county lines service (£103,716)

Delivered by Catch22 and commenced 1 July 2022.

In early 2022, in conjunction with the VRU, I released a tender for the delivery of an age-appropriate trauma informed, needs led service. It would provide long term support to children and young people (C&YP) and their close relatives or immediate support network to reduce risk and prevent serious youth violence, exploitation and gang and county line activity.

The service is divided into two elements,

- Preventative interventions for those C&YP up to the age of 25 at risk of serious youth violence, knife offences, drug supply, criminal exploitation, or gangs.
- Protective interventions for those C&YP up to the age of 25 involved in serious youth violence, knife offences, drug supply, criminal exploitation, or gangs.

The value of the 3-year contract is £350,000 which I part fund with the VRU.

Catch 22 were awarded the contract and currently deliver the service in Canterbury, Ashford, Maidstone, Medway, Swale and Thanet.

Outcomes

In the period 1 July 2022 to 31 March 2023:

- *The service received 209 referrals, with 95.1% being male and 43.8% having complex needs.*
- *87% of those supported showed progress in 1 positive outcome and 80% in 2 positive outcomes, with family and safety seeing the most positive progress.*
- *Feedback on the service has included:*
 - *“Your support has included me the parent and this is the first this has happened during this difficult time” (parent)*
 - *“...this has been a complex and difficult case, your caseworker has shown compassion, persistence, and professionalism throughout. The results we are seeing is due to them” (professional)*
 - *“...they have helped me understand my actions and consequences” (young person)*

Home Office Perpetrator Programme (£378,967)

In August 2021, I was successful in securing funding from the HO to implement DA and stalking perpetrator programmes in Kent and Medway. Delivery focused on developing a co-ordinated response to DA and stalking perpetrators, with a focus on managing risk and ensuring victims and their children were safeguarded.

During 2022/23 I was able to secure further funding to develop and embed perpetrator approaches. Delivery continued as a collaborative approach between Interventions Alliance, Kent Police and Look Ahead, alongside the following:

- Healthy Relationships (HR) Programme for DA Perpetrators - 1 to 1 and group work.
- Compulsive Obsessive Behavioural Interventions (COBI) - Stalking Perpetrator Programme 1 to 1.
- Dedicated support to victims and their children.

Outcomes

Since the programme commenced:

- 97 individuals have been referred to the HR programme, with 93 sessions delivered during Q4 2022/23. 8 were referred to COBI.
- All interventions have been completed on a 1:1 basis providing greater flexibility to respond to needs, vulnerabilities and risks.
- Of the 29 individuals analysed for re-offending, 16 saw an improvement in offending rates and 7 remained the same.
- This equates to a 79% success rate in terms of reported offences for the 6 months pre programme compared to 6 months post programme.
- Over 90 victims have been supported through the dedicated victims' resource.

Cookham Wood Project (£15,000)

Initially this was a tripartite project between the MoJ, the Mayor's Office for Police and Crime (MOPAC) and Kent to deliver a through the gate service for young offenders within Cookham Wood to address victimisation. During 2022/23 it became a joint project between MOPAC and Kent, focused on helping staff

identify victimisation and how to respond, as well as delivering a through the gate service and mentoring support to assist young people with recognising their needs and helping them move into the community.

Following a commissioning process managed by MOPAC, Open Road was awarded the through the gate service and mentoring support. The service went live in November 2021 and became fully operational in March 2022. The service aims for 90% of the young people supported to have increased engagement with services and family and to also have a better understanding of risk and victimisation. 11 of the 12 closures reported an improvement in this area, however, there remains a challenge with young people identifying themselves as victims.

During 2023/24 further work will be undertaken to understand the impact of the service on those young people from Kent supported.

Crime Reduction Grants

Each year I allocate a portion of my commissioning budget to the Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and other statutory partners or providers. The money must be spent on projects that support delivery of my Police and Crime Plan priorities.

Total allocated spend in 2022/23 across the 14 CSPs was £548,385, and £838,889 was allocated to other statutory partners or providers.

The projects delivered as a result of this funding generally aligned to the following themes:

- Preventative and diversionary activities for C&YP.
- DA projects.
- Community engagement and awareness raising activities.
- Crime prevention and reduction activities.
- Strengthening partnership approaches.

- **Be responsive to emerging issues and trends through innovation**

Providing information to C&YP

Amelix 'Is it worth it' School Tour (£50,000)

The School Tour started in 2009 and I took over its management in 2017. The contract ended on 30 September 2022.

It was delivered in collaboration with the music industry which provided match funding and performers. The Tour was a unique offer with messages delivered in an engaging format capturing the attention of young people. The content delivered in 2022/23 focused on cyber-crime and e-safety.

Outcomes

Delivery in 2022/23:

- 31 schools received 87 sessions reaching over 16,500 children aged 11-14 years.
- 83% enjoyed the Tour and reported they had more awareness of online bullying and a greater understanding of what they were sharing online.

Re-commissioning of C&YP messaging

During 2022 I undertook engagement with young people, parents / carers, and schools to understand:

- what crime / safety and ASB issues were impacting on C&YP;
- what works when engaging with C&YP;
- at what age and when safety messages should be delivered; and
- what support should be provided to parents / carers and professionals.

Almost 70% of responses were from parents / carers, 10% from young people and 8% from teachers.

Key findings were the need to engage with C&YP earlier (e.g. within primary schools) and ensuring parents / carers, teachers, and other professionals understood the messages to enable continued support. The work also identified key topics of concern and what works when engaging with C&YP.

My team used these findings to support the commissioning process for a new Young Persons

Prevention Service. The new contract was awarded to Collaborate Digital on 1 October 2022 for an initial 3-year period.

The service aims to provide age-appropriate messages for C&YP to support them in making better, informed choices by highlighting risk factors which can increase the likelihood of a negative outcome. It also supports C&YP by showing how they can de-escalate situations to help keep themselves and others safe.

The service covers the following topics for C&YP aged 9 to 14 years:

- Healthy relationships (attitudes, behaviours and safety), online harms, cyber safety and cyber bullying.
- Gangs, county lines, violence, knife crime and criminal exploitation.

Women in Justice (£27,164)

In October 2022, Kent Police and I submitted a collaborative bid to the MoJ to develop a Whole System Approach for improving the outcomes of women in, or at risk of contact with the CJS.

Kent was one of a small number of areas to secure funding until 30 March 2025; in total £208,954 for 2022/23 to 2024/25 (£27,164 for 2022/23). The funding will be used to support the development of a Kent Women's Justice Strategy focused on reducing reoffending, early intervention to prevent women entering the CJS and capturing linked children for early support. It will also enable the design of a Women's Justice multi-agency panel process to develop an evidence base of interventions with the aim of reducing re-offending and supporting early intervention.

Safer Streets Fund 4 – Protecting Public Spaces

The HO launched the fourth round of the Safer Streets Fund in March 2022, with a focus on targeting: neighbourhood crimes (domestic burglary, robbery, theft from person, vehicle crime); ASB; VAWG in public places; and improving feelings of safety from VAWG or ASB.

Funding had to be targeted within defined geographic areas where evidence demonstrated a disproportionate impact from the defined crime types. Following an extensive data review, four districts were identified and evidence-based bids developed. I was successful in securing funding for all four bids, totaling £1.4 million over the period 1 July 2022 to 30 September 2024.

The delivery areas are as follows:

<p>Canterbury (£589,042) Dane John Gardens, City centre and main routes into town</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Extension of the Safe Zone App ○ 34 x additional CCTV cameras in Parkwood area of the university and City centre ○ Introducing a Safe Haven in Whitefriars open during night-time economy (NTE) and creating a safe space for women and girls ○ Increasing Best Bar None within the NTE ○ Safe Night Out activities to support university students, including provision of Stop Topps, non-alcohol events and Walking Taxis ○ Support to increase number of Street Pastors to provide further patrols in the NTE ○ VAWG survey to understand needs ○ Additional police operations, particularly during refresher days
<p>Gravesham (£74,942) Area around town centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Installation of eight new CCTV cameras ○ Street lighting improvements in the town centre ○ G-Safe free trial and upgraded radio link to support engagement of new businesses ○ Overgrown vegetation and rubbish cleared at the Overcliffe ○ Thames Way footpath and floodlighting installation ○ NTE Safe Space Scheme with some retailers having later opening hours ○ Active Bystander training

<p>Maidstone (£565,877) Town centre and Brenchley Gardens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conversion of disused toilet block into outreach hub and associated equipment ○ Summer Warden for Brenchley Gardens ○ Active Bystander Training ○ Shop front wraps installed at key locations ○ Youth Outreach Officers for town centre ○ Best Bar None (Safer Socialising scheme) ○ Safer Streets education / awareness campaign ○ Street Pastor and Urban Blue Bus recruitment ○ Hollie Guard App and Krav Maga self defence classes ○ Two additional CCTV cameras in High Street ○ Extending Mailsafe radios and body worn cameras for NTE support staff
<p>Medway (£203,230) Targeted areas within Chatham, Rochester and Luton</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Youth diversionary work in Chatham and Rochester town centre's, including Medway Night Lights Event - interactive family activity for distribution of crime prevention / safety products and to understand feelings of safety ○ Kick & Connect - Sport on your doorstep, delivering weekly sessions for young people ○ Improvements to Luton Millennium Green including new tarmac area and provision of sports equipment ○ Private Sector Housing Intelligence Database to support identification of risk factors ○ Additional CCTV cameras in Rochester multi story car park ○ Refurbishment of Ball Cage in Ship Wrights Avenue ○ Illicit Tobacco Post to undertake pro-active operations ○ Active Bystander Training ○ Target Hardening through provision of safety and crime prevention equipment ○ Street Scene Improvements, including removal of fly tipping, graffiti and other environmental issues

Victim Voice

At the beginning of 2023 I launched the Victim Voice scheme to highlight the help and support available to victims of crime in Kent and Medway.

Victim Voice provides information on the Victims' Code, navigating the CJS and how to access independent advice and support. It also explains how to contact the police, what to expect from the various CJS agencies and what to do if the service received falls short of expectations.

Victims have repeatedly told me they feel their voice is not heard and that reporting a crime often does not lead to appropriate action. Victim satisfaction levels in my Annual Policing Survey showed almost half of those who experienced a crime and reported it to police, were dissatisfied with the service they received; my VAWG survey also found only 37% of victims reported the crime.

I want people to feel confident that when they report crime, they get the information and support they deserve, and are legally entitled to. And to make people aware they can access help, even if they haven't reported the incident.

[Victim Voice](#) can be accessed via the OPCC website, or as a pamphlet which can also be downloaded.

More than 1,000 copies of the pamphlet have been distributed, the online version has been viewed nearly two thousand times and the [Victim Voice presentation](#) on the OPCC YouTube channel has been watched over 500 times. I have also delivered Victim Voice presentations to groups and at meetings all over the county.

Providing accessible information for victims of crime was one of the recommendations from my VAWG Inquiry.

Secure the funding that Kent needs through specific grants and the funding formula review

As PCC, I can commission or grant fund services to support the delivery of my Police and Crime Plan priorities. These services can range from community-based organisations that provide diversionary activities to multi-year contracts that provide support to victims regardless of when the crime took place or if it was reported to the police.

Within the OPCC I have a Commissioning Team who are responsible for commissioning services, issuing grants and managing contracts. They are also responsible for attracting additional funding through successful bid writing.

During 2022/2023 several additional funding streams were offered by the Government and my team worked hard to ensure Kent got its fair share to enable new and existing services to be delivered.

Overall, I and my team were successful in securing additional funding of:

- £1.7m for victim services;
- £1.4m for Safer Streets;
- £378,967 for Perpetrator Programmes; and
- £27,164 for local integration of women's services.

This brought the total additional funding for my commissioning budget in 2022/2023 to £3.5m.

The Government has also previously announced plans to review the Police Funding Formula – this determines the amount of funding each PCC receives.

In May 2022, my Chief Finance Officer (CFO) and I travelled to the HO for a meeting with the Director of Strategy, Capabilities and Resources to discuss Kent's specific needs. I also wrote to the Chancellor ahead of the Funding settlement announced in December and have actively taken part in discussions with colleagues through the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC).

My Chief Executive and CFO have also fed into regional discussions and national mechanisms via

the Association of Policing and Crime Chief Executives (APACE), the Police and Crime Commissioners Treasurers' Society (PACCTS) and APCC. In addition, my CFO and the force's CFO have held meetings with HO officials working on the Funding Formula to set out the unique challenges associated with policing the county.

Whilst a slow process, work on the funding formula will continue throughout 2023/24. Senior OPCC staff and I will continue to engage with Ministers and officials to set out the case for Kent in an effort to ensure the county receives a fair share of national police funding.

• Support volunteering

I consider it important to provide people with opportunities to get involved in activities which support community policing and to learn about responsible citizenship.

The Cadet scheme is open to young people aged 13 to 17, who live in Kent irrespective of background or financial circumstances, including those vulnerable to crime or social exclusion. As at 31 March 2023, there were 408 cadets located at 12 units across the county. In 2022/23, the cadets completed over 15,000 hours of volunteering.

The Mini Cadet scheme is a nine-week programme for children aged 8-11 delivered in schools. It is designed to teach about good citizenship and concentrates on building self-esteem as well as breaking down barriers with the police. They are taught about online safety, take part in drills and produce a Social Action Project. Funded by the OPCC, the scheme launched in April 2021 and since then, over 50 schools have enrolled and more than 500 children taken part.

I'm very supportive and appreciative of the work of Special Constables; unpaid volunteers who wear a uniform, have the same powers as regular officers and put themselves in harm's way like their paid colleagues - but all because they just want to give something back to their communities. As at 31 March 2023, there were 204 Special Constables who provided over 95,000 hours of policing in 2022/23.

Introduced in 2018/19 Community Police Volunteers (CPVs) continued to be a popular strand of volunteering. As at 31 March 2023, there were 78 trained CPVs providing support to specialist policing teams; in 2022/23, they volunteered over 3,000 hours.

As at 31 March 2023, Kent Police had 187 Police Support Volunteers in roles conducive to their skills. Examples include within the FCR, Recruitment and Local Policing Teams.

More information on [volunteering opportunities](#) can be found on the Kent Police website.

Office of the Kent Police & Crime Commissioner

I have also continued to provide grant funding to charities and organisations who rely on volunteers within local communities to deliver their services.

I'd like to thank the Special Constabulary, Community Police Volunteers, Volunteer Police Cadets and all other volunteers who do not wear a police logo, such as South East 4x4 Response and Kent Search and Rescue, for their time and for all their hard work in helping keep the county safe.

Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs)

I am responsible for the ICV Scheme which sees volunteers making unannounced visits to police custody suites to check on the welfare of detained persons (DPs), ensuring they have received their rights and are held in satisfactory conditions.

In 2022/23, ICVs conducted 224 visits to custody suites and engaged with 737 DPs.

Areas of good practice identified by ICVS included:

- Distraction items – reading books, word searches, sudoku puzzles and colouring books being available to DPs based on a risk assessment. Also footballs and tennis balls for use in the exercise yard and 'fidget popper' toys to help calm neurodivergent DPs.
- Care of females – female DPs being assigned a female member of staff as a 'carer', helping them to feel more comfortable discussing sensitive matters. Also, feminine hygiene packs being offered to female DPs as standard practice.
- Arrows to Mecca – only some cells had arrows pointing to Mecca, aiding Muslim detainees in prayer. Under the annual maintenance programme, all cells apart from those at North Kent and Medway had a dot painted in them to indicate East for Mecca. North Kent has a green line at the custody desk and most prayer mats now also have a compass built in.

Areas requiring improvement identified included:

- Inspector Reviews – reviews not taking place on time and custody records stating 'no review officer readily available'. Custody management

worked hard during the year to address the issue and improve the quality of reviews; as a result, ICVs noted a decrease in frequency.

- Stock of food – food orders being received with missing or substituted items and food being near, or past its use by date upon delivery. The most popular item, the All-Day Breakfast, was often low on stock. Over the course of the year, food stocks improved.
- General infrastructure - various issues with the condition of suites, including peeling paint, electrical faults, water leaks and broken locks. Custody staff were generally aware of the faults and had already logged them, with some rectified in a timely manner and others being addressed as part of the annual maintenance cycle.

Overall, ICVs found the care to be excellent, with staff focused on the dignity and wellbeing of DPs. Most concerns related to the facilities themselves and this will continue to be monitored with any serious issues escalated as appropriate. It is evident that custody management take on board ICVs' concerns and make every effort to rectify issues.

ICVs frequently reported how helpful and supportive the custody staff were on their visits and would like to thank them for being so accommodating and transparent.

The Dogs Trust asked all OPCCs to join the Animal Welfare Scheme, to ensure police forces are treating their police dogs well and in line with the Animal Welfare Act. Having asked ICVs to take part and provide independent oversight, during the year I am pleased that significant progress was made towards formally launching the Kent scheme in 2023.

I would like to extend my thanks to the ICVs for their support and the excellent work they carry out. Further information on [ICVs](#) can be found on the OPCC website.

Commission services for victims that are needs-led

It is my responsibility to commission support services for victims of crime across the county, whether they report to the police or not. I am committed to providing services that are needs-led so victims and witnesses are treated as individuals, and services are tailored accordingly.

I also have a dedicated Victims hub in Ashford - Compass House - which houses a number of services enabling closer working and a more joined up approach to delivering services to victims.

My 2022/23 commissioning budget consisted of a core grant of £2.3m from the MoJ to deliver services to support victims. The Government made further funding available for victim services and the OPCC was successful in securing an additional £1.7m.

1. Victim Services

1.1 Victims Specialist Services (VSS)

I set aside £213,940 to fund organisations that provide specialist support to victims of crime, these ranged from trauma counselling to therapeutic support for families. These services were complementary to other victim services that I funded and ensured enhanced support was available for specific groups or those with a specialist need.

The organisations funded were:

- Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse (AAFDA) (£22,200) - 1 to 1 advocacy and peer support for those bereaved by suicide or unexplained death linked to DA and Domestic Homicide Reviews.
- Choices Support (£34,398) - Jigsaw Hate Crime Project, provided intensive support to victims with learning disability, mental health and autism.
- Dads Unlimited (£35,000) - 1 to 1 Mentoring Service, supported men to rebuild their lives following domestic / emotional / financial abuse.
- Dandelion Time (£35,000) - A therapeutic service for children and families affected by DA and sexual abuse (SA).

- DA Volunteer Support Services (DAVSS) (£25,000) - Support to Court Project, supported DA victims through civil and criminal court processes.
- East Kent Rape Crisis Centre (EKRCC) (£30,200) - 1 to 1 therapy and family counselling for victims of SA.
- Rubicon Cares (£32,142) - 1 to 1 trauma counselling for victims of crime.

Outcomes

- *AAFDA supported 6 families impacted by domestic homicide, all of whom reported being better able to cope and build resilience moving forwards with daily life.*
- *Choices Support supported 30 individuals, with two feeling able to report the crime to police after receiving support. 100% reported improved health and wellbeing and better able to cope with aspects of everyday life.*
- *Dads Unlimited received 138 new referrals, with 63 engaged with other support services, 5 feeling able to report the crime to police after receiving support and 45 reporting they were better able to cope and build resilience moving forwards with daily life. Also saw increased complexity of cases, including high levels of suicide ideation.*
- *Dandelion Time supported 32 children and their families, with 28 reporting they were better able to cope and build resilience moving forwards with daily life.*
- *DAVSS received 429 referrals, with 173 referred to other support services following the identification of additional needs. The service provided support with legal advice including obtaining non molestation orders, prohibitive steps orders and child arrangement orders, pro bono solicitor appointments and provision of Mackenzie friends.*
- *EKRCC received 100 referrals, with 98 clients reporting they were better able to cope and build resilience moving forwards with daily life.*

○ *Rubicon Cares received 41 referrals, with 15 referred to other support services following the identification of additional needs.*

1.2 DA / SV Ringfenced Funding

In March 2022, the MoJ announced an additional £15.7m funding for PCCs nationally to provide tailored support to female and male victims who had experienced DA, rape, or SA at any point in their life. The funding was for both adults and C&YP.

My team submitted a detailed Needs Assessment setting out the demand for services and were successful in securing £664,540.39 per annum for three years (2022/23 to 2024/25).

The organisations and projects funded are:

- Dad's Unlimited (£96,512) - 1 x Mentor, 1 x Court Support Worker and 1 x DA Caseworker to support men rebuild their lives following DA.
- Daisy Chain (£45,000) - Pro-bono legal advice for DA and SA victims not eligible for legal aid.
- Dandelion Time (£31,841) - 1 x Caseworker to support delivery of the family support programme for children and families affected by DA and SA.
- DAVSS (£24,922) - 2 x Support Workers to provide advocacy and legal support to DA victims in West Kent.
- Family Matters (£28,460) - 1 x Therapist to support SA victims and reduce waiting times.
- Health Action (£27,282) - Support for African males suffering DA in North Kent.
- Innovating Minds (£40,000) - Delivery of the Healing Together Programme in schools to support C&YP impacted by DA.
- Kent Integrated DA Service (KIDAS) (£49,000) - 2 x Outreach Workers to increase capacity within the countywide DA service.
- Mary Dolly Foundation (£31,830) - Online therapeutic support for DA and SA victims, both C&YP and adults.
- Restorative Solutions (£45,000) – Adolescent to Parent Violence Conflict (APVC) Service across Kent.

- Rising Sun (£63,683) - 1 x C&YP Trauma Informed Worker and 1 x Young Women's Trauma Informed Mentor to support those impacted by DA.
- Rubicon Cares (£40,360) - Increased DA and SV 1:1 trauma counselling capacity.
- Salus (£34,240) - Provision of earlier intervention for C&YP impacted by DA within safe settings through a 1 x C&YP Support Officer.
- SATEDA (£55,797) - Increased capacity in Support to Court, Therapeutic Support and Outreach Services.
- The Bloomers Trust (£8,800) - Provision of vital needs for DA victims on low incomes or in financial difficulties not fully covered by emergency grants.
- Victim Support (£41,810) - Increased capacity within Stalking Advocacy Service through 1 x Stalking Officer and provision of Independent Stalking Advocacy Caseworker (ISAC) training.

Example outcomes

- Case study 1 - *'My child and myself were victims of DA and my child was really struggling with their confidence as well as depression and anger issues. The way Dandelion Time deals with childhood trauma via outdoor activities brings a sense of peace and allows children's confidence to shine through. They focus solely on the benefits that the activities bring to the child without talking about the trauma. This place saved my child, saved my family, and ultimately restored happiness in our lives and for that I will be eternally grateful.'*
- Case study 2 - *B had witnessed violence and abuse and arrived at Dandelion Time with their adoptive parent. Guided by the therapists, the family began to build a connection, gradually working to bring down the barriers. At the end of their support B had taken huge steps forward, was more engaged at home and school and began to trust those around them. The relationship with the parent had strengthened and B now provides hugs for the first time.*

Across all the services funded, 6,464 victims of DA and SV were referred, with 5,537 supported. Of those, 3,780 reported to the police prior to engagement and 262 felt able to report during or following engagement with the service.

1.3 Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) and Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) Baseline Funding (£821,750) and ISVA / IDVA Additional Funding (£186,123)

The Baseline Funding was a continuation of the grant award received in 2021/22; in addition, a further opportunity was made available to PCCs in 2022/23 to secure 100 additional IDVAs and ISVAs nationally. This funding was in recognition of the increased demand for SA and DA support and issues with the CJS resulting in victims requiring greater and longer-term support.

Organisations supported through Baseline Funding were:

- Dads Unlimited (£73,698) - 1 x IDVA and 1 x IDVA Manager to deliver the only dedicated male IDVA service in Kent known as DA Victim Empowerment (DAVE) Service.
- EKRCC (£125,880) - 1 x Hybrid IDVA / ISVA, 1 x C&YP Mental Health ISVA and 1 x Student ISVA working with schools, colleges, and universities.
- Family Matters (£103,322) - 1 x ISVA Manager supporting victims of SA aged 5 and over and a Gangs ISVA working with those impacted by SA in Gangs and County lines.
- Kent & Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust (KMPT) (£34,107) - 1 x Health IDVA (HIDVA) / Sexual IDVA (SIDVA) to support those accessing secondary mental health services.
- KIDAS (£160,000) - 4 x IDVAs to increase countywide DA service capacity, particularly tailored support (e.g. diverse communities, older and male victims, honour-based violence, the traveller community, complex DA cases including APVC and Eastern European communities).

- New Leaf Support (£34,560) - 1.5 x IDVAs to deliver outreach and family support to those impacted by DA within Swale.
- Oasis (£42,525) - 1 x IDVA to increase capacity within the Medway Integrated DA Service (MIDAS).
- Rising Sun (£114,846) - 1 x IDVA Manager and 2 x IDVAs to support those experiencing DA and SA, who were at risk of homelessness or homeless and had multiple needs.
- SATEDA (£63,738) - 1 x IDVA Co-ordinator, providing dedicated family provision, including specialist outreach for families impacted by DA. 1 x C&YP IDVA providing dedicated support to those accessing family DA support provision, including outreach. 1 x IDVA providing dedicated support to adults accessing family DA support provision including outreach in Swale.
- Sign Health (£69,073) - 1 x IDVA to support Deaf victims of DA through BSL or other communication methods and 1 x Young Persons Violence Advocate (YPVA) to provide support for Deaf victims of DA aged 8 to 18 years.

Organisations supported through ISVA / IDVA Additional Funding were:

- Dads Unlimited (£30,639) - 1 x IDVA to increase capacity in the DAVE Service.
- EKRCC (£24,715) - 1 x specialist Adolescent ISVA to respond to increased referrals involving peer-on-peer SA. Also provided support to the LGBTQ+ Community.
- Family Matters (£38,578) - 1 x Child ISVA (CISVA) to support victims of SA aged under 18.
- Hourglass (£32,298) - 1 x IDVA to provide support to older victims of DA and SA.
- KIDAS (£28,000) - 1 x IDVA in East Kent to provide additional capacity to manage increase in young people impacted by DA.
- Oasis (£31,893) - 1 x IDVA to increase capacity in MIDAS.

Outcomes

- A total of 3,063 referrals were received across all IDVA and ISVA services, resulting in 2,272 individuals receiving needs-led support.
- Of those cases supported and closed 1,731 reported they were better able to cope and build resilience moving forwards with daily life.
- On average ISVA clients were supported for 424 days, with ISVAs having an average caseload of 42 clients.
- IDVA clients engaged with support for 119 days on average, with IDVAs having an average caseload of 33 clients.

1.4 MoJ Core Uplift Funding

In June 2022, the MoJ confirmed an additional £6m for PCCs nationally to uplift their 'core' funding to commission local victim support services. This funding was allocated across the 42 PCC areas using a population-based formula, resulting in Kent receiving an additional £187,696 (also provisionally confirmed for 2023/24 and 2024/25).

The funding was proportionately allocated across existing service providers as follows:

- AAFDA (£1,221) - To continue supporting families bereaved by DA, suicide or unexplained death.
- Brake (£825) - To continue supporting family members of those killed and seriously injured in road traffic collisions in Kent.
- Choices Support (£1,891) - To continue providing intensive support to victims with learning disabilities, poor mental health and autism.
- Dads Unlimited (£11,286) - To increase the DA team capacity x 2 and a small contribution towards rent costs until March 2023.
- Daisy Chain (£2,475) - To continue providing pro-bono legal advice to DA victims.
- Dandelion Time (£3,676) - To extend the Therapeutic Support Programme for children & families impacted by DA by providing 3 additional intensive placements (in addition to 32 part-funded placements).

- DAVSS (£2,745) - To cover deficit in MARAC / High Needs Co-ordinator's salary; role responsible for co-ordinating high risk cases, including preparation of paperwork, advocating for clients and ensuring actions completed.
- EKRCC (£8,584) - To increase counselling capacity at their main office in Canterbury.
- Family Matters (£31,998) - To increase service capacity including provision of counselling.
- Health Action (£1,500) - To continue support for African male victims of DA through the Hidden Truth Support Group.
- Hourglass (£1,776) - To provide awareness materials, community engagement events and support operational costs for older victims of DA.
- Innovating Minds (£2,200) - To train 2 x Healing Together Facilitators and a third facilitator for frontline services.
- KMPT (£1,875) - To fund overtime for the HIDVA to increase training and to support access to the Phoenix Programme.
- KIDAS (£8,800) - To increase capacity within the countywide DA service.
- Mary Dolly (£1,750) - To increase online tailored counselling capacity for DA and SA victims.
- New Leaf (£1,900) - To continue providing support to DA victims in Swale.
- Oasis (£2,338) - To increase capacity within the MIDAS service.
- Restorative Solutions (£16,335) - To support APVC staff overtime / travel costs and upgrade technology to meet cyber essential requirements.
- Rising Sun (£10,781) – To help fund a full-time qualified C&YP counsellor to increase capacity.
- Rubicon Cares (£3,987) - To support core costs impacted by cost-of-living increase (e.g. staffing, ad hoc room hire and travel fares).
- Salus (£1,883) - To provide support for a further 2 x C&YP Support Officers.
- SATEDA (£6,574) - To support overtime to increase capacity and cover an uplift in salaries and core costs.

- Sign Health (£3,405) - To support increased staff (YPVA and IDVA) salaries.
- The Bloomers Trust (£484) - To provide additional care packages to victims of DA and SA and fund general awareness raising of service.
- Victim Support (£49,446) - To support salary uplift and purchase of security items.

Overview

This funding was used predominately to enhance and increase capacity within existing commissioned services.

All services reported increased pressures during 2022/23, with the cost-of-living increase significantly impacting on operating costs and retention of staff. The impact was also felt by those accessing services, particularly for DA, and being able to secure funds to flee or end abusive relationships. Services also reported a significant increase in complex cases that required crisis intervention and immediate tailored safety plans.

Services reported improvements in monitoring client needs resulting in adaptations to the hours of counselling services to better meet demand, alongside reviewing external meeting venues to minimise the carbon footprint and maximise outreach appointments. Some victim support services expanded their provision of family work due to an increase in demand, recruited additional therapeutic counsellors and opened additional family centres.

I and my team promote collaborative working across commissioned services. This enables greater wrap around support for individuals so they do not have to repeat information multiple times. It also increases interagency signposting to improve the journey for clients, for example: joint home visits with a HIDVA, mental health and social care services; the development of hate crime awareness sessions to unpaid carers of learning-disabled clients; delivery of deaf community DA awareness raising sessions; and raising awareness of DA with older people.

1.5 MoJ Male Rape Support Fund

In June 2021, the MoJ made funding available to provide specialist support to men and boys who had experienced rape or SA at any point in their lives.

Nationally, £1.4m was made available and I worked collaboratively with EKRCC and Family Matters to develop an evidence-based bid. As a result, Kent was awarded £31,504 with delivery focused on awareness raising, improving confidence to report and increasing capacity.

This funding was extended into 2022/23 and £31,504 was divided equally between EKRCC and Family Matters to continue delivering the service provided during 2021/22. It was estimated that 40 men and 20 boys would be supported because of the additional funding, with the extra capacity also reducing the waiting list which stood at 28 men and 14 boys.

In addition, direct engagement with males was undertaken to understand the barriers to reporting / seeking support. Key findings from this work highlighted the need to make literature and websites accessible for male victims, training for first contact staff in engaging males with support and in the terminology and practices used to ensure the support offer was relevant to their circumstances.

In total the funding enabled 46 males to receive bespoke support, with 100% reporting feeling better able to cope.

1.6 Victim Services Contracts

I have several contracts with providers for essential victims' services. The contracts were commissioned at different times and are subject to performance and contract management by my team.

• Kent Victims' Engagement and Support Service (£1.1m)

Delivered by Victim Support (commissioned 2015).

Provides the main referral, triage, and support service for all victims of crime regardless of whether they have reported the crime or not.

The service provides emotional and practical support, safety planning, safeguarding, advice and

signposting. Referrals are received automatically from the police but can also be made by other professionals or directly from individuals requiring support.

The service also provides a dedicated Stalking Advocacy Service and Hate Crime Advocacy Service for Kent and Medway. Additionally, I have a collaborative commissioning arrangement with Kent County Council (KCC) whereby Victim Support provide the initial triage and referral service for all DA victims as part of KIDAS.

2022/23 was the final extension year for the contract and significant work was undertaken to recommission the service. The new Kent Victim's Advocacy and Support Service commenced on 1 April 2023.

Outcomes

- Support provided ranged from practical needs, immediate emotional support, management of safeguarding concerns, referral to specialist support services and advocacy support.
- A total of 103,650 referrals were received with 80,614 contacted and offered support.
- 90% of those who received support would recommend the service to someone else impacted by crime.
- 89% said the service had helped them cope and recover more quickly from the impact of crime.
- 91% were highly satisfied or satisfied with the service.

• Restorative Justice (£207,000)

Delivered by Restorative Solutions (commissioned 2017).

Provides victim focused RJ across Kent and Medway and is available to victims of all crime types with specific risk assessments in place for harm related cases such as DA and SA.

The service aims to reduce the harm caused to individuals and communities by preventing further harm being caused, supporting victims long term recovery and supporting offenders to understand the impact of their actions.

The service has been impacted by the challenges in the CJS which has resulted in many victims feeling disillusioned and failing to engage with support services. The service is also holding cases for longer due to the difficulty in progressing to a court outcome.

Outcomes

- 182 referrals received relating to offences ranging from murder to common assault.
- Of the 287 victim cases closed, 129 resulted in a restorative conversation, 7 in-direct RJ (either shuttle or letter) and 10 in a direct RJ conference.

It also offers a dedicated APVC Service to address growing demand. This exceeded expectations with 139 referrals, leading to a positive conversion rate of 27% for direct and indirect conferences as well as over 90% engagement by service users.

Case study

A blended family were referred to the service with all having suffered past trauma including some historic DA.

A child in the family would become verbally and physically aggressive if challenged or chastised, arguing a lot with a sibling which often escalated resulting in the child lashing out at the parent.

The facilitator held detailed individual discussions with all family members to understand their perspectives and concerns, which then led to a family meeting.

The child explained how they got frustrated and lashed out because they didn't feel listened to at times, with the parent explaining they could always come and talk to them.

Facilitated discussions continued and they became more confident in stating how they felt and being honest with each other. The family members then agreed actions as individuals and as a family to help them move forward, including spending more time talking so issues could be aired when they were calm.

- **Independent Sexual Violence Advisor Service (ISVA) and Sexual Violence Support Services (£450,000)**

Delivered by Family Matters (commissioned 2018).

Provides support to victims of rape and SA across Kent and Medway regardless of when the crime took place or if reported to the police.

The service supports both adults and C&YP, including their immediate family members if needed. It provides dedicated ISVAs who offer independent support, advocacy and impartial advice and information. This might include information on reporting to the police, accessing Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) services, or other services such as health. The service also provides specialist counselling for those who have experienced rape and SA, which can be accessed with or without ISVA support. Most of the referrals into the service are from Kent Police and the SARC, but individuals can also self-refer for support.

Demand for therapeutic support continued to grow significantly and unfortunately this has led to extended wait times. It is a growing area of risk and one that will continue to be reviewed during 2023/24.

Outcomes

- 694 ISVA and 497 counselling referrals received.
- For those engaging with ISVAs, emotional support, communication with the police, legal / court information and keeping safe were the main areas of need.
- For C&YP, support for families and their wider support network were high areas of need, alongside emotional support.
- A high number of victims supported reported improved health and wellbeing, being better able to cope with managing aspects of everyday life and better informed and empowered to act.

- **Family Welfare Service**

Delivered by Victim Support (commissioned 2021).

This service was commissioned to provide tailored support and specialist interventions for close relatives

impacted by Operation Sandpiper (the investigation into offences committed in hospitals by David Fuller). It provided a 24/7 support line in the initial stages of notification and support at significant points during the criminal justice process. It continues to provide case worker led support and access to specialist therapeutic services.

The service has and continues to provide much needed and valuable support to the families impacted; it has been extended to 30 April 2024.

- **Appropriate Adult Service (£222,522)**

Delivered by The Appropriate Adult Service (TAAS) (commissioned 2022).

In January 2022, KCC advised it would no longer provide Appropriate Adults (AA) for vulnerable adults in Kent Police Custody Suites as their statutory duty related to juveniles only.

Following discussions, I undertook a commissioning process to provide AAs for vulnerable adults within the KCC area and out of hours support for both vulnerable adults and juveniles when required across the county.

The service commenced in October 2022 and ensures the rights, entitlements and welfare of those detained or attending a voluntary interview in custody or non-custody setting, are effectively safeguarded.

Outcomes

- October 2022 to March 2023, TAAS provided AAs to 1,237 individuals eligible to receive the service.
- Vulnerabilities of those supported include mental health, anxiety, learning disabilities, depression, self-harm and unable to read or write.
- Whilst due to the nature of the service it is not always appropriate to request feedback, it has been overwhelmingly positive with 52% of adults and 44% of juveniles stating the support was excellent.

National expectations:

The strategic Policing Requirement

The Strategic Policing requirement (SPR) sets out those threats which, in the Home Secretary's view, are the biggest threat to public safety and must be given due regard by PCCs when issuing or varying Police and Crime Plans. It supports PCCs as well as Chief Constables to plan, prepare and respond to these threats by clearly linking the local response to the national, highlighting the capabilities and partnerships that policing needs to ensure it can fulfil its national responsibilities.

A revised version of the SPR was published in February 2023 which provided strengthened detail around the action required from policing at the local and regional level to the critical national threats. The 2023 SPR sets out seven identified national threats. These are as follows:

- Serious and Organised Crime
- Terrorism
- Cyber
- Child Sexual Abuse
- Public Disorder
- Civil Emergencies

These remain from the 2015 version, but the 2023 SPR saw the addition of VAWG, reflecting the threat it presents to public safety and confidence.

Given this Annual Report is for the year April 2022 to March 2023, it will not respond in detail to the revised SPR due to the timing of its publication. However, as PCC, I am confident I have given due regard to the seven threat areas identified in the 2023 SPR in my Police and Crime Plan and in my role holding the Chief Constable to account.

An assurance statement outlining how I have had regard to the SPR and it has influenced the strategic direction and objectives set for the force will be included in future Annual Reports.

National Crime and Policing Measures

The Government is clear that PCCs must achieve significant reductions in crime and restore the public's confidence in the CJS.

The [Beating Crime Plan](#) is the Government's strategy to do this; it makes clear, evidenced-based and targeted interventions, underpinned by common sense policing lay at the heart of reducing crimes such as burglary and robbery. The Home Secretary has also made it clear to Chief Constables and PCCs that they must get the basics right and improve forces' performance across the country.

To support the Beating Crime Plan, the HO introduced a number of measures to focus effort on key national priorities and allow performance to be measured. They were introduced in early 2021 and many use year ending June 2019 as a baseline.

Below is an overview of Kent Police's performance against the measures:

Reduce murder and other homicides

In 2022/23, there were 15 murders and other homicides; an increase of 7.1% (or 1) on the previous year.

Reduce serious violence

• Firearms offences

In 2022/23, there were 156 offences classified as Gun crime; a decrease of 27.8% (or 60) on the previous year.

• Knife related offences

- Data from NHS regarding u25 admissions for assault with a sharp object is not available; Kent Police use proxy measures based on recorded offences.
- In 2022/23, tier one and two knife related offences decreased by 6.6% (or 62) compared to the previous year.
- The VRU monitors knife enabled Serious Violent Crime for under 25s. In 2022/23, there was a 15.6% increase compared to the previous year.

• Violence with injury

In 2022/23, there were 18,059 offences; a decrease of 1.3% (or 232) on the previous year. Compared to year ending June 2019 baseline, a decrease of 10.8% (or 2,182).

• Robbery

In 2022/23, there were 1,261 offences; an increase of 5.8% (or 69) on the previous year. Compared to year ending June 2019 baseline, a decrease of 36.4% (or 721).

Disrupt drugs supply and county lines

In 2022/23, there were 4,826 drug offences; an increase of 16.2% (or 674) on the previous year. Compared to year ending June 2019 baseline, an increase of 52.2% (or 1,656).

[N.B. This type of offence is influenced by proactive policing; levels and trends should not be considered a measure of criminal activity in relation to drugs]

- Trafficking in controlled drugs increased by 85.3% (or 964) on the previous year; and increased by 111.3% (or 1,103) on the June 2019 baseline.
- Possession of drugs (excl. Cannabis) increased by 9.7% (or 64) on the previous year; and increased by 37.9% (or 199) on the June 2019 baseline.
- Possession of Cannabis reduced by 15.2% (or 358) on the previous year; and increased by 20.7% (or 342) on the June 2019 baseline.

Reduce neighbourhood crime (NHC)

[N.B. Relates to four crime types, namely Personal Robbery, Theft from the Person, Vehicle Crime and Residential Burglary]

In 2022/23, there were 15,332 NHC offences in total; an increase of 4.2% (or 614) on the previous year. Compared to the year ending June 2019 baseline, a decrease of 33.5% (or 7,730).

- Personal robbery increased by 15% (or 161) on the previous year; and decreased by 32.1% (or 584) on the June 2019 baseline.
- Theft from the person increased by 4.8% (or 48) on the previous year; and decreased by 18.6% (or 237) on the June 2019 baseline.
- Vehicle crime increased by 7.2% (or 562) on the previous year; and decreased by 27.5% (or 3,151) on the June 2019 baseline.
- Residential burglary decreased by 1.3% (or 63) on the previous year; and decreased by 43.8% (or 3,714) on the June 2019 baseline.

Tackle cyber-crime

[N.B. There is no local or national data available relating to confidence in the Police response to cyber-crime. A proxy measure of the number of recorded online / cyber-crimes where the victim was an organisation has been used]

In 2022/23, there were 114 online related offences where the victim was an organisation; a decrease of 29.2% (or 47) on the previous year.

Improve satisfaction among victims, with a focus on victims of DA

Kent Police conducts three satisfaction surveys:

- DA - in 2022/23, overall victim satisfaction was 88.4%; a small reduction on 89.2% in the 12 months to March 2022.
- Hate Crime - in 2022/23, overall victim satisfaction was 82.7%; a reduction on 87.5% in the 12 months to March 2022.
- Rape - there are two key elements based upon whether a) the victim felt they were treated with dignity and respect, and b) they felt they were treated fairly throughout the case.
 - In 2022/23, 93.6% of victims felt that officers treated them with dignity and respect; a reduction on 96.2% in the 12 months to March 2022.
 - In 2022/23, 89.1% of victims felt they had been treated fairly throughout the case; a reduction on 90.9% in the 12 months to March 2022.

Policing Vision 2025

First published in 2016 by the APCC and the National Police Chiefs' Council, [Policing Vision 2025](#) set out a decade-long plan for policing to shape decisions about how police forces use their resources to keep people safe.

It set out what a police service should look like in 2025:

- Local policing tailored to society's complex and diverse needs.
- Specialist capabilities better prepared to respond to existing and emerging crime types.
- A workforce of confident professionals able to operate with a high degree of autonomy and accountability.
- Digital policing will make it easier for the public to make contact with the police.
- Joined up business delivery of policing support services and community safety.
- Clear accountability arrangements.

As evidenced through this report, I am satisfied that Kent Police is either delivering, or on the path to delivering the Policing Vision 2025.

Whilst funding nationally remains difficult, the force has the highest number of officers in its history, has continued to increase its accessibility and visibility with local neighbourhood policing forming the bedrock of its service, and delivered appropriate specialist capability to tackle all forms of criminality. Accountability arrangements are also clear and transparent with opportunities for the public to observe them in practice.

[Policing Vision 2030](#) has now been published and builds on the successes of Vision 2025.

Legislation

New or amended legislation represent real opportunities to make Kent safer.

During 2022/23, I am satisfied that Kent Police embraced new legislation such as the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act which received Royal Assent on 28 April 2022 to keep local communities safe.

Having received updates at my Performance and Delivery Board meetings, I am also reassured the force provides training for officers and staff, empowers them to take appropriate action and puts in place the right resources to address relevant provisions.

Independent Review of Deaths and Serious Incidents in Police Custody

Police custody may only be used where it is both necessary and proportionate to the investigation of an offence. Detainees in police custody are often among the most vulnerable in society and there is a significant duty of care on the police.

As Home Secretary, Theresa May commissioned the independent review of deaths and serious incidents in police custody, and appointed Dame Elish Angiolini as independent chair. The review published its [report](#) on 30 October 2017, making 110 recommendations for improvement. The [Government's response](#) was published on the same date.

In recognition of PCCs being accountable to the public, and responsible for holding police forces to account, the report included the following recommendation: 'Recommendation 53 - PCCs should report annually on deaths and serious incidents in police custody in their jurisdictions'.²

The IOPC requires forces to submit a mandatory referral when there is a death or serious injury (DSI) in custody. The IOPC defines a DSI as *'Any circumstances in, or as a result of which, a person has died or sustained serious injury who at the time had been arrested by a person serving with the police and not released, or was detained in the custody of a person serving with the police. A serious injury is a fracture, deep cut, deep laceration or injury causing damage to an internal organ or the impairment of any bodily function. Any loss of consciousness resulting from a medical episode would constitute a DSI'*.

In 2022/23, a total of 24,473 people were processed through Kent custody suites. I can report the force recorded no deaths in police custody and 28 serious injuries. The majority involved no lasting injury and they predominantly related to self-harm and collapses caused by prior consumption of drugs or alcohol.

Among the most important safeguards available to those in police custody are Appropriate Adults, who ensure that both children and vulnerable adults understand custody processes, and that their rights and entitlements are respected. ICVs managed by the OPCC also have a key role to play in safeguarding people detained in police custody.

Whilst I acknowledge that due to the nature of policing it is impossible to entirely eradicate deaths and serious injuries in police custody, I am reassured that Kent Police takes all reasonable steps to minimise the risks as far as possible, and that when such incidents do occur, they have procedures in place that are efficient, effective and humane.

² The report does not include a definition of 'serious incident' and it is not a term that the IOPC or forces use.

As your Police and Crime Commissioner, I'm happy to help or answer your questions.

Please get in touch with me:

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Instagram: [@pcc_kent](https://www.instagram.com/pcc_kent)

Facebook: [KentPCC](https://www.facebook.com/KentPCC)

Nextdoor: Kent PCC

To: Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel

Subject: Contacting Kent Police

Date: 17 October 2023

Introduction:

1. Further to the report that was presented at February's meeting, this paper provides an update on Kent Police's performance in terms of managing public demand within the Force Control Room (FCR).
2. Whilst performance in terms of managing 101 non-emergency calls deteriorated as a result of staff leaving the FCR and an increase in emergency 999 calls, I am pleased to report performance has now improved significantly.
3. Following an intense recruitment and training programme, the FCR is now exceeding its staffing establishment and utilising an officer surge capacity to support the management of peaks in demand.
4. The Commissioner is grateful to Kent Police for its assistance with this paper.

Background:

5. The public rightly has an expectation that they will be able to contact Kent Police when they need to in a variety of ways that work for them, whether that be to report an emergency, report a crime, seek advice, offer information, or express an opinion. When they do make that contact, they expect to receive a timely and appropriate response.
6. The Force encourages individuals and communities to engage and make contact with confidence; it aims to make services accessible, appropriate, easy to use and safe.
7. In addition to handling 999 and 101 calls, it also maintains other methods of contact, such as online and through personal interaction, to ensure it is open to all and can respond to user needs and situations.
8. Communication is key and the Force recognises the importance of adapting, being flexible and developing modes of communication to suit all.
9. All contacts are triaged using a risk assessment tool called THRIVE:
 - THRIVE is a mnemonic for Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation, Vulnerability and Engagement.
 - It guides call handlers in collecting, analysing, and prioritising information and intelligence they receive.
 - It offers flexibility, but also organisational structure and therefore consistency; additionally, it acts as an aide memoire when dealing with time critical incidents.
 - Vulnerability (overt and hidden) is a critical element to ensure victims receive the best service and advice.
 - Every incident created (except for immediate calls where there is an obvious threat) has a clear THRIVE rationale recorded.
 - New information or a change in the incident response results in a new THRIVE assessment.

Structure of the FCR:

10. A Chief Superintendent heads up the FCR and the senior leadership team consists of both officers and police staff.

11. The operational structure consists of five teams. Positions include:
- Single-skilled contact handlers
 - Single-skilled dispatchers
 - Dual-skilled operators (handler and dispatcher)
 - Other non-call handling functions
 - Crime Investigators and Administrators
 - Duty Inspectors (who also perform the role of Force Incident Manager and Initial Tactical Firearms Commander)
12. Kent is split into three policing divisions with each having a Team Leader supervising staff on their dispatch pod and overseeing all incidents on that division.
13. All new joiners are given introductory briefings and overviews of Kent and Kent Police, as well as opportunities to interact with both local policing and specialist teams. In addition, attachments within and outside the FCR are encouraged to enhance an operator's knowledge.
14. This is an overview of the staff establishment and strength within the FCR as at 28/08/2023 (and compared with the strength as at 05/01/2023 reported in the previous paper):

Role	Establishment	Current strength	Vacancies	Strength (as at 05/01/2023)
Contact handler	162.16	167.81	-	125.29
Dispatcher	25.81	7.78	18.03	9.57
Dual-skilled	98.93	88.29	10.64	92.27
Team Leaders	30.00	31.71	-	31.40
Team Managers	5.00	5.00	-	6.00
Trainees (not currently operational)	0.00	25.00	-	33.00
Total	321.90	325.59	-	297.53
PC Uplift (6-month posting)	35	27	8	32

*101 trained only and not all 24/7

15. As Members will note, the FCR now has no vacancies (compared to almost 25 as at 05/01/23) and is working on increasing the number of staff trained in the Dispatcher role.
16. Over the spring and summer period, there was a successful recruitment campaign with the three most recent courses yielding 32 (May), 23 (June) and 25 (July) new contact handlers. A further course scheduled for September 2023 had capacity for 20 students. In addition, the number of staff leaving the FCR has decreased.
17. Chief Officers allocated 35 police officers to be posted into the FCR to assist with 101 calls – they became effective from mid-November 2022. Officers within other Commands who have FCR skills are also currently being used as part of a planned strategic reserve to assist in managing demand peaks.
18. Under the FCR Transformation Project, retention options continue to be explored and developed to achieve long term workforce stability, maintain skills and experience and provide a high-quality service to the public. Workstreams include:
- A review of leaver exit interviews to identify common themes and address any action necessary.
 - A review of role profiles to ensure they are appropriate.
 - Review of shift patterns (with consideration of alignment to wider Force pattern balanced with demand and staff welfare).
 - Review of supervisor to staff ratios.
19. To canvas staff views on recruitment, retention, impact, and environment, the FCR conducts a Pulse survey every six months.

Emergency 999 contact:

20. The table below shows 999 data for the period April to August over the last four years.

	April to August			
	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total received	139,947	150,355	168,138	173,955
Total answered	138,950	147,476	165,983	173,111
% answered	99.29%	98.09%	98.72%	99.51%
Total not answered	997	2,879	2,155	844
% not answered	0.71%	1.91%	1.28%	0.49%
Average queuing time	00:00:09	00:00:16	00:00:19	00:00:13

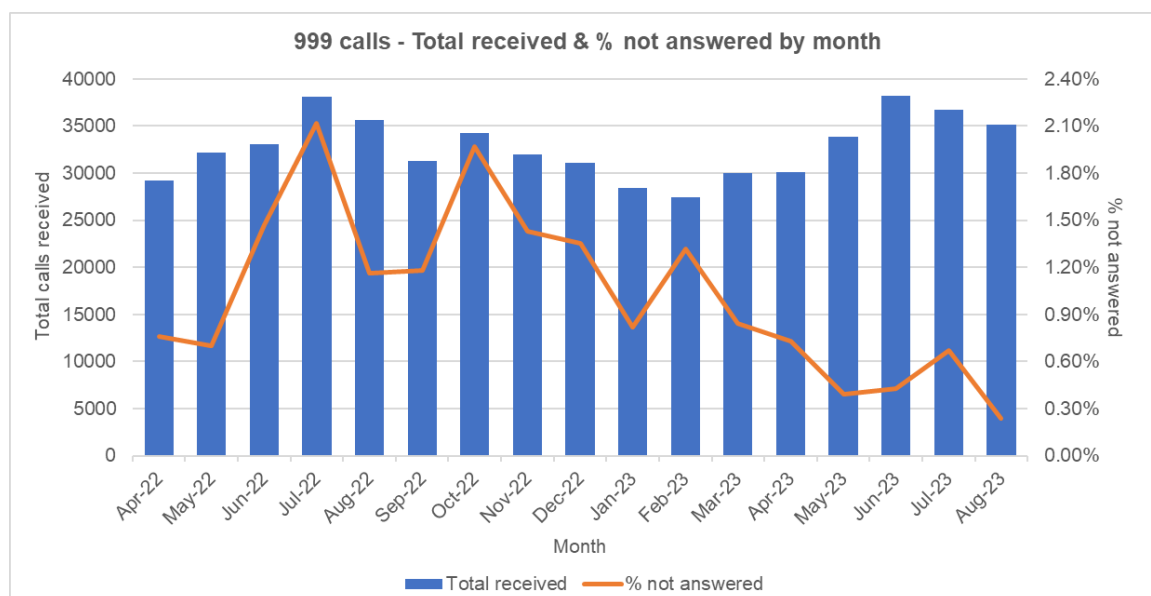
Please note: this is internal Kent Police data that includes emergency calls from the Ambulance Service and other partner agencies. This data will differ from that published by BT as explained [here](#).

21. April to August 2023, the number of calls received increased by 3% compared to 2022, 16% compared to 2021 and 24% compared to 2020 (pandemic).

22. The number of calls not answered (or call attrition) was 0.49% for April to August 2023, within the aspirational national benchmark of 2%. Where a 999 call is unanswered, the caller will subsequently receive a call back as soon as a member of FCR staff is available.

23. Despite the increase in 999 calls, public satisfaction has not been impacted and there has been no increase in dissatisfaction complaints.

24. The graph below shows 999 call volume and the % not answered by month since April 2022.



Data in tabular format	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23
Total received	29,188	32,193	33,054	38,069	35,634	31,316	34,280	32,013	31,080	28,439	27,446	29,977	30,060	33,819	38,237	36,698	35,141
% not answered	0.76%	0.70%	1.47%	2.12%	1.16%	1.18%	1.97%	1.43%	1.35%	0.82%	1.32%	0.84%	0.73%	0.39%	0.43%	0.67%	0.24%

25. In line with all forces nationally, 999 calls in Kent continue to increase. This is recognised by the National Police Chief's Council lead and by BT who are similarly challenged with meeting public demand, particularly at peak periods.

26. Emergency 999 call handling will remain the priority in Kent, recognising the threat, harm and risk that sits within these call types.

Non-emergency 101 contact:

27. When someone calls 101 they will initially hear an Interactive Voice Response (IVR). The purpose of the messaging is to assist in sign posting to the most appropriate service, contact method or relevant agency, similar to other businesses and services. The information is designed to manage expectations, empower, and better direct service users, and assist Kent Police with demand prioritisation, management and response (and therefore effective use of resources).

28. The current messaging includes direction and advice on self-service options to save the service user time (e.g. online crime reporting) and the IVR has been further refined to allow it to be phased in response to demand. When there are significant increases in 999 demand the Force Incident Manager can authorise messaging for a time limited period that directs non-emergency calls to digital where possible. This supports the strategic aim and responsibility of protecting the Force’s ability to answer emergency 999 calls while providing an effective service to the public.

29. The table below shows 101 data for the period April to August over the last four years.

	April to August			
	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total received	169,231	158,590	146,201	126,919
Total answered	161,719	137,611	94,238	111,205
% answered	95.56%	86.77%	64.46%	87.62%
Total not answered	7,512	20,979	51,963	15,714
% not answered	4.44%	13.23%	35.54%	12.38%
Average queuing time	00:00:44	00:02:09	00:08:05	00:01:38

30. April to August 2023, the number of calls received decreased by 13% compared to 2022, by 20% compared to 2021 and 25% compared to 2020 (pandemic).

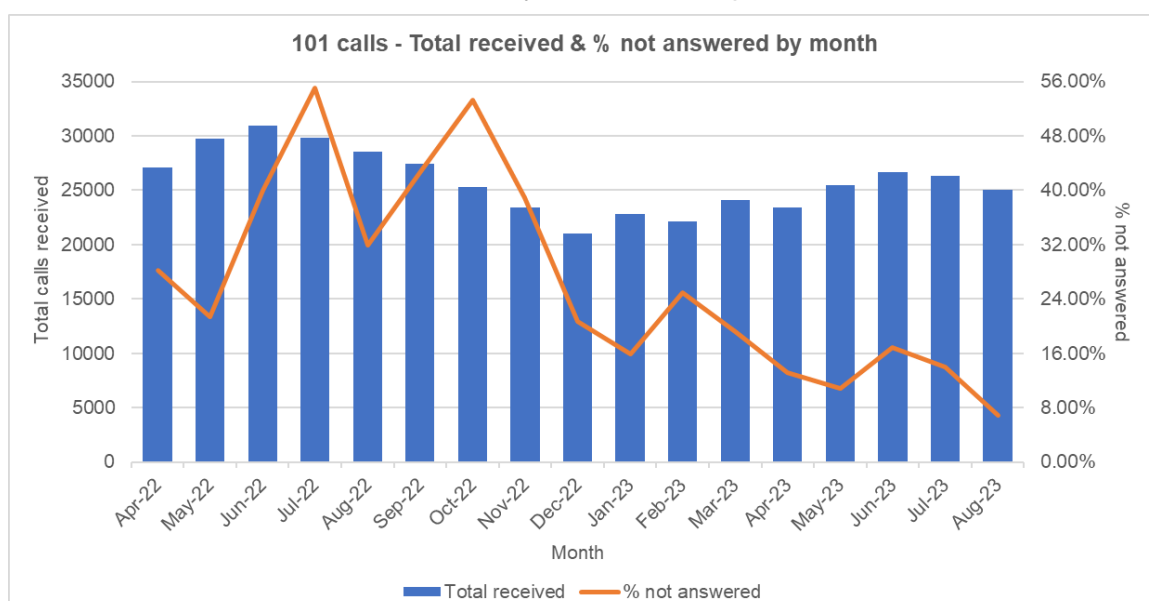
31. Nationally, there is also a downwards trajectory in calls received, but it is not clear yet whether this is because of a channel shift to 999 and/or digital services, both of which have experienced increases.

32. The number of calls not answered (or call attrition) was 12.38% for April to August 2023. Where a call is unanswered, the caller will be directed to a pre-recorded message that provides alternative self-service options.

33. Whilst the volume of 101 calls received saw a continuation of year-on-year decreases, the totality of non-emergency contact demand remained stable when digital contact was taken into account.

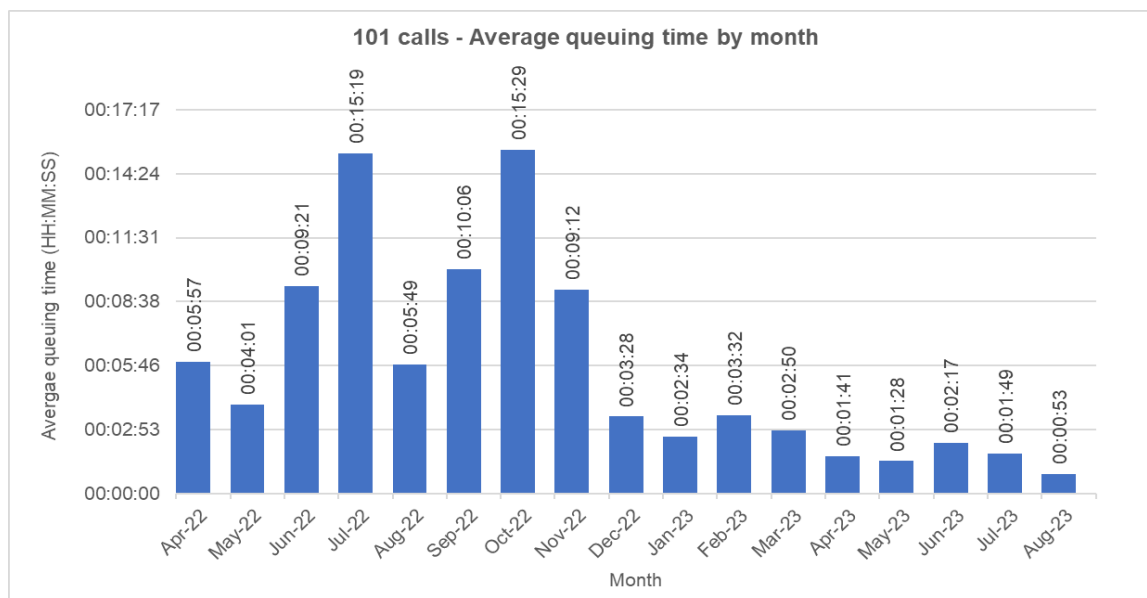
34. The following graphs show:

- 101 call volume and the % not answered by month since April 2022



Data in tabular format	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23
Total received	27,123	29,759	30,979	29,816	28,524	27,418	25,277	23,397	21,020	22,798	22,102	24,108	23,433	25,480	26,660	26,314	25,032
% not answered	28.2%	21.4%	40.0%	55.1%	32.0%	42.6%	53.3%	38.9%	20.7%	15.9%	24.9%	19.2%	13.1%	10.9%	16.8%	14.0%	6.8%

- Average queuing time by month since April 2022



35. Importantly they show a significant downward trend in both the percentage of calls not answered, and the average queuing time. This is the result of a dedicated workstream of the FCR Transformation Project which has included:

- Prioritised recruitment and training for FCR staff, and review of retention interventions.
- Posting of police officers to FCR establishment.
- Prioritised work stream on demand reduction based on internal systems and processes.
- Internal and external engagement strategy to inform users of full range of services including self-service, digital services, and appropriate use of 999 and 101 services.
- Cultural and transformation work to assist with staff morale and retention.

Digital contact:

36. Overall, digital demand into the FCR continues to increase significantly. This is positive as it offers an enhanced service to the public given their ability to select and self-serve via a channel of their choice 24 hours a day providing an effective and customer-focussed service.

	April to August			
	2020	2021	2022	2023
Online Crime Reports	13,548	14,283	19,197	20,612
Live Chats	24,849	19,332	27,796	30,909
'Contact Us' forms	4,271	4,896	5,120	7,042
Total	42,668	38,511	52,113	58,563

37. Live Chat is now well embedded as a contact choice and continues to grow in terms of demand. It allows a flexibility of service by enabling the effective use of any home workers in addition to those in the FCR building.

38. Given that operators manage up to 6 Live Chats at the same time, there are obvious efficiencies, whilst providing an effective and customer-focussed quality service to the public at a time of their choosing through their preferred channel.

Holding to account:

39. One of the principal ways the Commissioner holds the Chief Constable to account is through the quarterly Performance and Delivery Board.
40. The meeting is chaired by the Commissioner and papers are submitted by the Force in advance and published [here](#). The Chief Constable is required to attend the meeting in order to present and discuss the papers and answer questions about delivery of the [Making Kent Safer](#) Plan and policing generally in the county.
41. The Force has and will continue to include FCR performance data and associated commentary within the 'Making Kent Safer: Delivery and Performance' paper.
42. The Commissioner also has and will continue to hold the Chief Constable to account via their regular one-to-one meetings and briefings.
43. The Commissioner regularly visits the FCR and this will continue in the future. Not only does this enable him to observe activity and listen to calls, but also to speak with the Senior Leadership Team and most importantly the officers and staff.
44. It is clear the Chief Constable has taken action to address the performance issues in the FCR, with the recruitment of new staff, posting of officers and reduction in leavers having a positive impact on 101 call handling. Whilst the Commissioner has made it clear that he expects the performance gains to be maintained, he also recognises the FCR has consistently managed 999 calls and the significant digital contact demand effectively.
45. Importantly, the Commissioner is reassured the Chief Constable has implemented a programme of longer-term strategic transformation. Already underway, it will see a move to Coldharbour as part of the Zenith programme and create an FCR that provides a first-class service to the public whilst effectively managing the demands and multi-channel requirements of the future.
46. The Commissioner would like to thank the officers and staff who work in the FCR for their hard work and resilience. The level and nature of the demand, as well as the often challenging and difficult decisions made every day in terms of managing risk, should never be underestimated.

Recommendation:

47. The Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel is asked to note this report.

Matthew Scott
Kent Police and Crime Commissioner

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The Office of the Kent
Police and Crime
Commissioner
Sutton Road
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Kent
ME15 9BZ



Record of Decision

ORIGINATOR: Chief Executive	REFERENCE: OPCC.D.034.23
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TITLE: PFI North Kent Police Station

OPEN <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONFIDENTIAL <input type="checkbox"/>	Reason if Confidential:
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Throughout the UK during the 1990's and 2000's, a significant number of public sector buildings such as hospitals and police stations were built under what is termed a Private Finance Initiative (PFI). Kent Police had two such stations built, North Kent and Medway.

The buildings were built through private finance investment, then contractually over a 30 year period the properties are managed and annual charges (known as unitary charge) are paid by the public body for the duration of the contract, thereby paying back the investment and profit over the term of the contract. At the conclusion of the contract the property passes back into the possession of the public sector body.

Throughout the life of the contract there are obligations on the contractors to maintain the building to certain contractual standards. It was intended that, by reference to the contract any disagreements on maintenance and repairs could be remedied between the parties.

North Kent Police Station has developed numerous faults, the most significant are the roof and the ground source heating system. Despite extensive engagement with the contracting company, Kent Police were not able to achieve any meaningful repairs to the building, which subsequently led to Kent Police withholding payments of the unitary charge as allowed for within the contract.

The contracting company Justice Support Services (JSS) were placed into administration on the 6 December 2022 and Administrators were appointed. Despite extensive engagement between Kent Police and the Administrators, it was not possible for both parties to come to an agreed outcome.

Contracts for PFI's are extremely complex, the PCC, Chief Constable and their statutory officers have been guided throughout by legal advisors. The position that can be publicly shared at this time is that the contract terminated for 'Contractor Default' on the 31 August 2023 and North Kent Police Station passed back into the ownership of the Kent PCC and the control of Kent Police on that date.

The parties remain in dispute and due to ongoing legal proceedings, it is not possible to share further detail publicly at this time. However the PCC wished for the Panel to be made aware of this significant development.

RECOMMENDATION

The PCC is recommended to terminate the North Kent Police Station PFI Contract.

DECISION

To terminate the PFI contract at North Kent Police Station.

Chief Finance Officer:

Comments:

Signature: **Date:**

Chief Executive:

Comments: Having had legal advice throughout the course of this process, I am assured that this course of action is the most appropriate in all the circumstances. This is as much information as can be shared publicly at this time due to ongoing legal proceedings.

Signature:  **Date:** 9 October 2023

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR KENT

Comments:

This is a significant development; I have been fully briefed throughout and am satisfied that this is the appropriate course of action.

Signature:  **Date:** 9 October 2023

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Held by Kent Police.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

Police and Crime Plan
*(please indicate which objectives
decision/recommendation supports)*

Supports delivery of the Commissioner's priorities by ensuring the operational policing estate is fit for purpose and securing value for money on behalf of Kent taxpayers.

Has an Equality Impact
Assessment been completed?

Yes No *(If yes, please include within background documents)*

Will the decision have a
differential/adverse impact on
any particular diversity strand?
*(e.g. age, disability, gender
reassignment, race, religion/belief, sex,
sexual orientation, marriage/civil
partnership, pregnancy/maternity)*

Yes No
The decision is administrative in nature. Therefore, it does not have a differential/adverse impact on any particular strand of diversity.

Record of Decision

ORIGINATOR: Chief Finance Officer	REFERENCE: OPCC.D.033.23
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TITLE: Sale of IP Addresses

OPEN <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONFIDENTIAL <input type="checkbox"/>	Reason if Confidential:
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – Retrospective Decision Notice for information of the PCP

All devices are connected to the internet using an Internet Protocol, of which Version 4 (IPv4) is currently the most widely used. Devices can exchange data with each other because they have an assigned IP address which allows them to be identified and located.

IPv4 addresses were originally distributed free of charge by Regional Internet Registries and Kent Police own the rights to the 151.129/16 address range (a total of 65,536 IP addresses). Through the work undertaken to date by the Data Centre Programme and supplementary work by the application remediation programme, the need for externally routed 151. addresses has been removed and a significant number of internal 151. services are in the process of being decommissioned.

As a result, Kent Police want to sell the 151/129/16 address range as there are no public facing addresses in use and the new Data Centre has been designed to not use the 151.129/16 address range in the future.

Kent Police have suggested selling the addresses to a preferred buyer at a cost of circa £36 per address, raising approximately £2.4m.

However, whilst a substantial sum, the PCC's Chief Executive and CFO have determined it would be difficult to demonstrate best value for money by selling to a preferred buyer. Therefore, they recommend the most appropriate method to demonstrate best value to the Kent taxpayer is to sell via a public auction, even if there is a risk the initial offer price will not be met.

[Update: Kent Police were directed to sell the addresses at a public auction. The auction took place in early 2023 and the final price received per IP address was circa £42.5, raising £2.8m - an additional £0.4m on the original estimate.]

RECOMMENDATION

The PCC is recommended to sell the IP addresses through a public auction to demonstrate best value for money.

DECISION

To sell the IP addresses at public auction and not through a preferred buyer.

Chief Finance Officer:

Comments: This reflects great value for money for the Kent taxpayer. The most appropriate route for disposing of the IP addresses has yielded a significant sum which will help support policing services in the coming year.

Signature: 

Date: 6 October 2023

Chief Executive:

Comments: Commissioner, the ability to sell the IP addresses was an opportunity to receive a significant capital receipt. Notwithstanding the potential value of the 'preferred buyer offer', both the CFO and I did not believe we could demonstrate best value. Having personally briefed you, we agreed the only suitable process was that of open market auction. On your authority I gave this direction to the force. The outcome as described was an additional 0.4m on the original estimate.

Signature: 

Date: 6 October 2023

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR KENT

Comments: After discussion with my Chief Executive and CFO, I directed the sale of the IP addresses via open public auction. This achieved best value for the public purse.

Signature: 

Date: 6 October 2023

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Held by Kent Police.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

Police and Crime Plan
(please indicate which objectives decision/recommendation supports)

Supports delivery of the Commissioner's priorities by securing value for money on behalf of the Kent taxpayer and providing additional income to support policing in the county.

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been completed?

Yes No *(If yes, please include within background documents)*

Will the decision have a differential/adverse impact on any particular diversity strand?
(e.g. age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion/belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity)

Yes No
The decision is administrative in nature. Therefore, it does not have a differential/adverse impact on any particular strand of diversity.

Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel – 17 October 2023

Questions to the Commissioner from Panel Members

1. *An officer in Folkestone told me recently that while the force locally is carrying out more recruitment than it has in years, the real issue is retention. Does the Commissioner recognise this as a particular challenge and, if so, what plans or measures are in place to address the problem of losing officers and the experience they take with them?*

Cllr Mike Blakemore, Folkestone and Hythe District Council

2. *In his role in holding the Chief Constable to account and following the statements by the Home Secretary recently which said police should 'follow every reasonable line of inquiry' can the Commissioner reassure the Panel that where in areas where CCTV services are provided by local authorities (or indeed by private holders) where crime or suspected crime is committed, the information, images and data captured are fully and 100% utilised as part of the investigative process by Kent Police for each and every report of a crime or incident as part of the commitment and requirement to investigate each and every crime and indeed there is proactive engagement between Kent Police and CCTV systems provided by local authorities to ensure that crimes are proactively investigated and action taken by Kent Police.*

Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox, Gravesham Borough Council

3. *Can the Commissioner explain how he is holding the Chief Constable to account for the priority 'protecting people from exploitation and abuse' and the safeguarding of domestic abuse victims in particular?*

Cllr Richard Palmer, Swale Borough Council

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Police and Crime Panel - Future Work Programme – October 2023

February 2024

PEEL Update	Requested by the Panel/Offered by the Commissioner	PCC
Commissioning Report	Requested by the Panel/Offered by the Commissioner	PCC
Draft Budget and Precept Paper	Requested by the Panel/Offered by the Commissioner	PCC

April 2024

Neighbourhood Policing Review	Requested by the Panel/Offered by the Commissioner	PCC

Standard item at each meeting

Questions to the Commissioner

Items to note at each meeting

Commissioner’s decisions

Performance and Delivery Board minutes (if available)

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Matthew Scott
Kent Police and Crime Commissioner

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The Office of the Kent
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Meeting Notes

- Title:** Performance and Delivery Board
- Date & time:** Wednesday 7 June 2023
- Venue:** County Room, Sutton Road, Maidstone (also broadcast via Microsoft Teams Live)
- Attendees:**
- Office of the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner:**
- Matthew Scott - Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
 - Adrian Harper - Chief Executive (CE)
 - Rob Phillips - Chief Finance Officer (CFO)
- Kent Police:**
- Tim Smith - Chief Constable (CC)
 - Peter Ayling - Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)
 - Ian Drysdale - Deputy Chief Officer (DCO)

1. Welcome & Introduction

- Welcoming the CC and his team, the PCC expressed his thanks for the meeting papers.
- The PCC also welcomed any members of the public watching the meeting live online.

2. Notes of Previous Meeting – 15 March 2023

- The notes were agreed as a true and accurate record and the following two actions discharged:
 - Provide a detailed and bespoke presentation on the work of the Prevent & Protect Team - visit to Prevent & Protect Team added to PCC's October schedule of Force visits.
 - Provide a specific briefing around combatting serious violence and the work of the VRU - visit to VRU added to PCC's October schedule of Force visits.

3. Public contact

- The PCC advised there would be a slightly different running order, with the focus to begin with on public contact in its widest sense. He thanked the CC for the specific paper and said it showed progress on a number of fronts.
 - Introducing the paper, the CC said the metrics and data underlined the significant demands on the Force particularly in relation to the FCR, but also showed some sustained improvement which was pleasing to see.
- Force Crime and Incident Response
- The DCC stated public contact was an area of business under significant pressure across the country. He said regionally and nationally partners were reporting a similar phenomenon in terms of increased public contact, particularly through digital channels and the 999 system. He added forces were experiencing seasonal peaks which were becoming increasingly unpredictable and putting additional pressure on the system.
 - Noting a high number of 999 calls and stable performance, the DCC advised it was a priority that was closely monitored. He said the aspiration was to have no more than 2% attrition (i.e. calls unanswered), and in 2022/23 the figure was 1.28%, a slight increase on the previous year.
 - The DCC reported the additional resource and focus put into the FCR since October had stabilised some indicators, but the prioritisation of 999 calls had also put pressure on other parts of the system.
 - Nationally, he said performance was monitored by the Beating Crime Plan with a set benchmark for answering 999 calls within 10 seconds. In the last six months, he reported a sustained step change which had seen the Force improve from answering 68% to over 75% of 999 calls within 10 seconds.
 - In terms of 101 non-emergency calls, the DCC again highlighted the considerable pressure on the system with a high number of contacts and increased attrition over the summer months. Reporting a marked improvement, he said the Force had re-stabilised at around 10% attrition over the last couple of months. He said it was about getting the staffing levels right, the flexibility of the resourcing model to be able to match demand and process issues, such as using the automated voice recording to direct enquiries appropriately.

- Noting digital contact was the real growth area, he said the data showed how well used the channels had become. Advising it was nice to see, he stated the Force needed to ensure the online experience and service was as good as that provided by an operator.
- In terms of online crime reporting, he stated they were triaged for threat, risk and harm by the Investigation Management Unit and so it was as robust and swift as when somebody phoned in.
- Noting Covid was the catalyst for investment in Live Chat, he said people were increasingly using it to seek advice and for routing to the appropriate channel as it was available 24/7. Based on feedback, he reported 90% of users indicated they would be willing to use the service again and 94% had found the service helpful.
- The DCC advised the IMU was a seasonal area of business. Reporting a decrease in recorded crime over the last financial year, he noted this was largely a consequence of work around the recording of coercive and controlling behaviour and stalking and harassment. He said whilst the Force still responded from a safeguarding perspective, it had been found that reports did not always reach the threshold necessary for a crime to be recorded.
- Looking to the future, he stated the improvements in 999 and 101 call handling needed to be consolidated through a new operating model and that work was ongoing. He reported the 35 police officers posted into the FCR had played a huge role in stabilising performance; recruitment had increased in a challenging employment market; and the most recent quarter had seen much reduced attrition and staff turnover. Noting the Force was training a pool of officers to provide flexible capacity to respond to future demand peaks, he said whilst that work was ongoing he anticipated the future operating model would incorporate police officers.
- Recognising they remained a channel of choice for some individuals, the DCC reported the recruitment of new Public Enquiry Officers to increase the opening hours and services provided through front counters.
- In terms of the capacity and capability of frontline response teams, he reported that in April 2022 the Force had 808 officers in dedicated response roles and there were now over 1,100. He explained that through the Resourcing Panel the Force monitored where there was high turnover or could be future issues and re-directed both new and more experienced resources to ensure resilience. He said it was about both numbers and skills so they could complement and protect the new NH Policing Model which went live today. He added the Force was not expecting neighbourhood officers to be extracted from their core role to pick up response activity which was an experience of the past.
- Whilst the Force still needed to sign up more members to My Community Voice, the DCC stated it was a good resource to both identify local priorities and respond to them.
- With regards to crime data integrity, he said audit processes ensured a resilient approach, adding it had always been important to the Force that when a victim made contact, they were believed and received an effective response. He said based on the Force having the highest level of crime data integrity currently recorded, it had a strong voice in the Productivity Review and development of the Home Office Counting Rules. He added it would pay dividends, not just for Kent but more widely as standards of recording reached greater levels of consistency.
- The CC stated the Force had to find better ways of dealing with public contact demand through technology and resourcing. Referring to the PCC's scrutiny of 101 performance, he stated the Force was now in a good place; he said it was important to keep attrition below 10% and whilst he would like zero, he had to accept there were peaks in demand that could not be anticipated. Acknowledging police officers in the FCR was an area of contention, he said it had worked in the past and there was also a need to cater for officers requiring adjustments.
- Noting performance in the last six months had been excellent, the PCC welcomed the efforts made to reduce 101 waiting times and paid tribute to all the officers and staff in the FCR. Welcoming the increase in Response Officers, he said it was a significant investment in a crucial function that had not been seen for some time.
- In terms of FCR performance, the PCC said he was keen to understand how the Force planned to hold on to the gains achieved in the longer term. The DCC said key aspects were:
 - recruitment and staffing - he explained that for a period the challenging employment market meant the Force was falling well short of its recruitment ambitions, but the last few intakes had been at capacity.
 - understanding and addressing demand – he said the Force was looking at new technology, including exploring the future of Rapid Video Response and how it might respond virtually.
 - workload and staff support – he reported that being up to establishment within the FCR had transformed the working environment with staff turnover now consistently lower. He said this indicated staff were choosing to stay, creating a performance dividend and making workloads easier to manage.
 - sustainable operating model – he stated benefits from the recovery work would be consolidated into a new operating model being developed by the Change Team. This included work around Right Care Right person, but also new technology, management of demand and routing people to the appropriate agency. Noting officers could play an important role within the FCR, he added that within six months he anticipated the FCR would move to a new location with a more sustainable new operating model.
- The CC said both 101 performance and FCR recruitment were subject to weekly reporting and this would continue until he was satisfied there was stability. Stating the Force took its eye off recruitment and it took a while to recover, he added he was determined not to be in that position again.
- With regards to the NH Policing Model, the PCC acknowledged there were some good examples of officers communicating with the public around their appointment as Beat Officers but said he was keen to understand how the Force planned to communicate with headteachers, particularly around the Child Centred Policing Team. The DCC advised there was a communication plan at both Force and Divisional/District level. He said a letter had been sent to headteachers describing how the Force would work with schools which had been followed up with direct engagement

through relevant forums. He said with Beat Officers, supported by Problem Solving Taskforces, underpinned by prevention and early intervention through officers and PCSOs, it was a good opportunity to work closely with schools. The PCC noted it would be a transition and not big bang implementation and the DCC agreed.

Freedom of Information Requests

- Noting it continued to be a growth industry, the DCC reported 1,623 requests were received last financial year with a compliance rate of 75%. He advised there were a number of reasons the Force might not be able to respond, but typically it was because the request was not clear enough or could not be managed within a reasonable timescale - 18 hours being the ceiling. He added it was good performance and the Force benchmarked well nationally.

Subject Access Requests

- The DCC reported a significant increase in requests over the last four years advising a recovery plan was in place which had seen additional staff placed in the unit, resulting in a reduction in the backlog. Noting the backlog had reduced by 32%, he stated there was still high demand and pressure on the team as the redaction process was very labour intensive; as a result, he said the Force was looking at opportunities new technology might present.

Complaints

- The DCC advised the data showed a steady picture in terms of complaints received and nature, with the average time to finalisation being 91 working days compared to a national average of 130 days and a Most Similar Force average of 118 days. He stated the Force was pleased with performance.

Vetting

- The DCC stated there was huge pressure on the vetting environment, as well as a great deal of public interest and scrutiny. He reported that in 2022/23, it took the Force an average of 98 days to process an application, adding the requirements around the Police Uplift Programme (PUP) had created additional pressures.
- Advising the Force had put more people into the team which had started to reduce processing times, he stated there was still a lot of pressure. Looking to the future, he explained new draft Codes of Practice would require a further review of local processes and staffing to ensure they were fit for purpose.

Firearms Licensing

- The DCC stated Kent was responsible for approximately 26,000 certificate holders, accounting for 72,000 firearms. He said it had been a challenging year as the Force adjusted to new legislation and new draft Authorised Professional Practice, much of which emanated from the Plymouth Enquiry and the Coroner's Regulation 28 Notice.
- In terms of performance, he said regardless of the additional demands it was a positive picture with renewals taking on average 44 days. Advising the biggest challenge was new applications where the waiting time was 42 weeks, he said it was below the national average with many forces taking over a year. He noted the internal Inspectorate were due to conduct an audit to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Regulation 28 Notice.
- The DCC said the issuing of temporary permits was normal practice as it provided a buffer enabling the Force to conduct necessary checks whilst ensuring people were not holding firearms with expired certificates.
- In summary, the DCC said whilst it had been a challenging year with high demand across all contact areas, it was a stable picture due to ongoing vigilance and investment in areas that would continue to be monitored.
- Noting the increased focus on standards and discipline within policing, the PCC sought an assurance that PSD had the appropriate resources to effectively manage complaint investigations. Confirming it did, the DCC advised there were currently 79 officers and staff with a huge amount of credibility and experience. However, he noted there was pressure on the team with a 35% increase in live conduct investigations in the last 12 months, leading to almost a 100% increase in misconduct meetings and hearings. He also commented that the Counter Corruption Unit was seeing increased reporting which whilst important, would result in more work. Noting the Force had just advertised for additional PSD officers, he said more substantive work was being led by the Change Team looking at the team structure, new practices and new technology.
- With regards to firearms licensing, the PCC asked if the requirement around GP reporting had impacted on renewals (i.e. led to a decrease in applications), and when an individual did not renew their application, what steps were taken to ensure they no longer had access to a firearm. Advising the GP requirement had not resulted in a reduction, the DCC said it had been a requirement for some time but occasionally lead to delay. He explained there was a well rehearsed process where notification was sent to licence holders three months and a month in advance to remind them ahead of the expiry date, adding the Force also had the ability to issue a temporary licence for up to 28 days. He said there were also robust processes in place to ensure people were not in possession of firearms unlawfully.
- Thanking the DCC for the paper, the PCC said he was pleased with the progress being made on multiple fronts in what was a challenging area of business and expressed his thanks to those officers and staff servicing public demand.

4. Making Kent Safer Plan: Delivery & Performance

- In light of the previous item, the CC said he would not go in to as much detail as normal to manage the time.
Work with residents, communities and businesses to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour
- In terms of victim based crime and ASB, the CC said the decreasing trend seen in previous periods had continued. Noting the only ASB bucking the trend was motor vehicle nuisance on a road, he advised it was an area the Force needed to think about more and questioned whether the strategy required a refresh.
- He reported that burglary offences, violent crime and robbery continued to show reductions. Referring to the work of the Violence Reduction Unit, he said there were reductions in serious violent crime of up to 13% in hotspot areas.
- The CC reported that across all categories the charge rate and solve rate had increased.

Tackle violence against women and girls

- Highlighting the pilot looking at intelligence and the risk factors around DA – Intelligence Lead Assessment Service – the CC said the Force was working closely with Essex and offered to provide the results to the PCC in due course.
- In terms of rape offences, he advised there had been an increase in the 3 month period but said it was being prioritised. Noting it was an extremely challenging area for many reasons, he said the charge rate remained stubbornly low and had his personal attention; he added it was a focus for the Force with work underway including Op Soteria.
- With regards to the Force Control Strategy for 2023/24, the PCC asked if any changes had been made which the CC wished to highlight. Whilst satisfied it reflected the risks and demands faced by the Force and prioritised business in the right areas, the CC reported that rural crime had been added as historically it had been a challenge and there were obvious intelligence gaps. He said adding rural crime would bring with it the focus of all staff increasing intelligence and it would also enable identification of unique and impactful crimes, such as attacks on businesses and theft of GPS systems. As for the response, he reported an increase in officers working specifically in rural areas and highlighted the fact that the NH Policing Model was ward based, so effectively there were now Rural Beat Officers.
- Thanking the CC and welcoming the inclusion of rural crime, the PCC said stakeholders would appreciate the focus.
- With regards to the Shopkind week of action, the PCC requested an update on local activity. Noting it was an area the Force could not neglect and needed to have a response to, the CC agreed to provide an update outside the meeting, adding that whilst successful the real challenge was how to mainstream into daily business.
- Noting the outlier in terms of ASB was motor vehicle nuisance which was an issue across the county, the PCC asked if the Force was able to make it a focus in the months ahead. The DCC advised there were a host of tactics that could be employed but it needed to be addressed in partnership. He stated the PCC could expect it to be a priority, with the Force looking at recurring frequent locations from an enforcement perspective and having high expectations of partners in terms of target hardening. He said in his experience the best remedy was to take enforcement action and quickly follow it up with target hardening, including making access more difficult, and ensuring monitoring and vigilance to prevent and respond to future events. He advised it was a problem solving opportunity where the Force could use new techniques and technology.
- Welcoming the Force's response, the PCC also highlighted the Community Trigger and ASB Case Review.
- Noting how important it was for VAWG to be in the Control Strategy, the PCC asked for an update on action being taken by partner agencies to help improve the response to rape, and their contribution to better victim support. The CC advised the Force was part of the Kent and Medway DA and Sexual Abuse Executive Group whose new strategy had a focus on women and girls. Noting a Needs Assessment was underway, he said he hoped it would give the Force a good picture of where the gaps were. He stated support for victims of both DA and SA was increasingly becoming a partnership endeavour, and that embedding a proper trauma informed approach with shared risk assessments was vital to identifying the most vulnerable. Thanking the CC, the PCC said he would also pursue matters through the KCJB.

Protect people from exploitation and abuse

- Highlighting DA and VAP performance the CC said they continued to decrease with both also seeing increased charged and solved rates.
- Noting there were a couple of specific incidents at paragraph 5.4 that evidenced good work around safeguarding individuals, the CC advised he would not pick out anything further from the paper.
- Highlighting the plan to create an Organised Immigration Team, the PCC asked how the Force would collaborate with those agencies who usually lead on immigration matters. The CC stated the Force would continue to build on the existing strong partnerships. Noting two SCD Intelligence Officers were embedded within the Multi-Agency Hub located in Folkestone, he said putting practitioners and leaders together worked well. He added once the Team was established, they would be based alongside the Multi Agency Hub with intelligence predominantly coming via the Hub.
- The PCC noted the Force did not receive a contribution towards officer costs from Op Barham despite recovering significant amounts of outstanding civil penalties from hauliers known to be involved in illegal migration. The CC stated there was currently no agreement in place around the proceeds of the fines being disseminated directly to policing. Advising that since the inception of Op Barham £1.1m of fines had been issued, he said nationally the lead for modern slavery and organised immigration crime had engaged with Government but the PCC's support would be helpful. The PCC said he would be happy to raise with Government again, adding if calculated on the same basis as POCA it would have generated circa £190k for local policing.
- Referring to changes in crime recording, notably the non-recording of minor public order offences where no victim was identified or when the police turn up, there was nothing to see – the PCC said the previous Victims Commissioner had raised concerns around incidents linked to DA and Stalking potentially not being recorded and asked about the safeguards put in place to ensure pre-cursor events were recorded. The CC stated S5 of the Public Order Act had been de-notified as a crime, but police still had the same powers. He advised the Force had analysed S5 offences in 2022/23, and out of 1,300 three were DA, so it was a small proportion. He added if reported today, they would be captured as DA non-crime incidents and identifiable in terms of offending behaviour.

Combat organised crime and county lines

- In brief, the CC said it was an improving performance picture around the number of disruptions, as well as the reduction in harm scores.
- Similarly, in terms of the County Lines and Gangs Team, he reported a reducing number of county lines and scores which whilst the Force was not complacent about, clearly meant less harm to the public. He said there were examples

in the paper of not just offenders and line holders being arrested, charged for serious offences and sent to prison, but also of young and vulnerable people being rescued and protected.

- Noting the number of active county lines fluctuated each month, the PCC commended the work and said it was good to see it consistently below half the number a few years ago. He also acknowledged the Organised Crime Teams efforts to secure justice, adding it was disappointing to see a court giving someone a community service order for possession of an offensive weapon.

Be visible and responsive to the needs of communities

- The CC advised the paper included a detailed brief on unauthorised encampments, adding the Force recognised the impact they could have on local communities. He stated the response was a balance with local authorities, and referred to changes in legislation which were now incorporated into Force policy. Importantly, he said it was an area where he was clear the law was there for police use, but it had to be used appropriately. Noting the guidance made clear local authorities had the lead role with police taking action in certain circumstances, he advised District colleagues were working closely with local authorities to respond to such incidents.
- Noting the presence of unlawful encampments was a concern for local communities and the Force, the PCC asked if there was any consistent national guidance from the NPCC so communities were aware of the policing blueprint. Confirming there was, the CC advised on 1 June 2022 the Force updated its policy for officers on how to deal with incidents in accordance with NPCC guidance but the legislation had now changed.
- Noting that where the Force was using the new powers communication was key, the PCC asked how it would ensure messaging with communities was consistent so there was a clear understanding of when the powers could/could not be used and who the lead agency was. Confirming the Force was already trying to do this, the CC said he also recognised it was a complex area of law which often needed discussion with partners. Advising officers and staff knew their powers and when to use them, he commented that communication with the public was more challenging. He added most incidents could be resolved by working in partnership with the local authority and individuals concerned.
- Advising he was glad it was being communicated so there was consistency in its application, the PCC said it would be good later in the year to get an update on the impact and application of the changes. Agreeing to the request, the CC said the legislation seemed to be very static for long periods of time before going through lots of changes very quickly, so the Force had to be fleet of foot with the training of staff.
- Noting the end of Volunteers Week was approaching, the PCC expressed his thanks to the Special Constabulary, Neighbourhood Watch, Community Policing Volunteers, and Community Speedwatch.

Prevent road danger and support Vision Zero

- Commenting that people often thought about policing as being about crime and investigation, the CC said this was an area that had a hugely damaging impact on individuals and their families/friends and so would always have a strong Force focus.
- Reporting a 50% reduction in road deaths February to April 2023 compared to the same period in 2022, he said whilst a reduction, as per Vision Zero the Force would strive to make it zero if it could.

Protect young people and provide opportunities

- Noting it was an important area of work, the CC stated the Cadet programme continued to go from strength to strength.
- Expressing his thanks to the Collision Investigation Unit, the PCC said it was a difficult area of business, one where the Force placed a lot of emphasis on welfare and support due to its traumatic nature and he wished to pay tribute to those doing their absolute best to secure appropriate justice.
- The PCC also welcomed the Force's efforts to support Vision Zero and referred to feedback from other agencies on how proactive it was being which he said was good to hear.
- Noting he had missed Police Cadets when referring to Volunteers Week, the PCC thanked those involved including the officers and staff who volunteered their time to run and support the programme. He added it was good to see the Child Centred Policing team taking on the work of the Mini-Cadet programme going forwards.

Actions

- **Force: Provide the ILAS DA risk identification pilot results to the PCC in due course.**
- **Force: Following the Shopkind week of action, provide a summary of local activity outside the meeting.**
- **Force: With regards to unauthorised encampments and the new legislation, provide an update on the impact and application of the changes later in the year.**

5. Inspections, Audits & Reviews

- In terms of activity, the DCC advised there had been two publications by HMICFRS:
 - An inspection of how well the police tackle serious youth violence – Kent was not one of those inspected, but resulted in four recommendations, two of which were for CCs; being progressed by the Head of Partnerships Command with oversight by the Force Investment and Development Board.
 - An inspection of how well the police and National Crime Agency tackle the online sexual abuse and exploitation of children – the findings mirrored the Force's Management Statement, highlighting potential growth in the area and likely system pressure in the future. There were 17 recommendations, 10 for CCs; being progressed by the Head of Protecting Vulnerable People with a focus also on the work of POLIT which was currently recruiting a cohort of officers to increase capacity as well as investing in new technology.

- Noting the Force had reached the end of the reporting period for its last PEEL inspection, the DCC advised that the CC had held an extraordinary Oversight Board where the majority of the AFIs had been fully signed off. He said there were a few still in progress, but they had now been incorporated into HMICFRS' most recent period of assessment.
- The DCC stated the Force was informed in December that its assessment period for PEEL 2022/23 had commenced. He advised HMICFRS delivered its strategic briefing on Monday which showed good progress against the AFIs, adding that most pleasing was the results from the Victims Service Assessment which showed clear improvements on the last inspection, particularly in the standard of investigations, standard of supervision and support provided to vulnerable victims. He added there was no complacency as there was more work to do as the Force responded to increasing demand and the model adapted to having brilliant people, with a high level of inexperience on the frontline.
- The DCO stated some internal audits were delayed last year and so continued to be worked on this financial year.
- Of the 13 audits this year, he advised five reports had been issued and a further four were still in draft; he said some were for good reasons, but others just needed to be pushed on and converted to final reports. He added a further two were in fieldwork and another two in planning.
- To date, the Force had received one high recommendation, 5 medium and 14 low. The one high related to health and safety and the DCO gave an assurance it had been addressed.
- With regards to governance of internal audit, the DCO advised it was via the PCC and CC CFOs, the Force Management Board and the Joint Audit Committee (JAC).
- In terms of external audit, the DCO reported there were no adjustments to either the CC or Group Accounts and they were published ahead of time. He added that despite anticipating some scheduling issues in the 2023/24 process, the accounts would still be published in a reasonable timescale.
- Whilst accepting it was probably not the case in Kent, the PCC noted HMICFRS had raised concerns around Forces not being helpful with some of their data returns and sought an assurance that everything was being provided in a proportionate and timely manner. Confirming it was, the CC advised the Force had double checked its reporting mechanisms through the Force Liaison Lead and was completely compliant with everything required by HMICFRS.

6. People

- Noting this was the first meeting following the conclusion of the Government's three year PUP, the DCO reported that Kent's allocation of 489 officers had been exceeded, taking the establishment to 4,144.90. He said 1,292 officers joined between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2023, with 584 joining in 2022/23. With an average of 36 new joiners every month, he said it had been intense for those teams servicing the requirement.
- He advised the 1,292 new officers represented 40% of the Force's entire PC establishment, adding with that level of experience it had been important to phase the introduction of the NH Policing Model accordingly.
- The Force's actual strength at 31 March 2023 was 4,148.59 with a headcount of 4,261 - taking into account part-time officers, those on secondment and so on - 43 over the PUP allocation of 4,218.
- The DCO reported the headcount requirement for 2023/24 was plus five or 4,223 which would be subject to audit in September 2023 and March 2024 to ensure the Force retained sufficient numbers to draw down Grant funding.
- He said the Force was currently aiming to recruit 290 officers in 2022/23, but that was subject to ongoing monitoring of attrition which was currently quite variable. He advised there were four planned intakes, with the first in July.
- There was a strong recruitment pipeline through the different entry routes - PEQF, IDLP, Returners, Re-joiners and Transferees – as well as the new educational Level 5 route being developed by the College of Policing. He noted the IDLP package would disappear in March 2024, subject to any changes outside the Force's control.
- The DCO reported the current ethnic representation of the Force was 3.8% (160) and female 35.6% (1,456). He added officer applications from ethnic minorities increased from 8.78% in 2019/20 to 12.97% in 2022/23 and female applications from 33.1% to 39.4%.
- In terms of absence, the DCO reported that at the end of 2022/23 officers was stable compared to the previous year, staff decreased and PCSO's understandably increased during what was a difficult year.
- The DCO advised that at the briefing on Monday HMICRS commented how pleased they were to see 11% of the Force's Management Statement dedicated to wellbeing.
- The DCO stated the final version of the Police Race Action Plan had been delayed until the end of the year. Commenting that it did not make a great deal of difference to the Force, he advised the four workstreams with 41 actions were already being addressed, with 33 actions progressing significantly and 8 requiring national support. He added the Force was getting on with the actions and doing everything possible to advance them at pace.
- Noting a CC chaired forum had been created for the 10 support group chairs to help understand their ambitions, the DCO advised it would complement a similar new group for Culture Board chairs to engage with the CC.
- Noting there appeared to be a gap between the percentage of ethnic minority applications (12.97%) and the number who joined (5.14%) last year, the PCC asked about work to understand the disparity and the common stages at which applicants dropped out the process. The DCO confirmed work was ongoing but noted 83% of stages in the recruitment process were externally owned and mandated, including the interview questions which were set by the College of Policing. He stated the Force's efforts were directed at the 17% that was in its control as the national elements, including sift, medical and vetting where most candidates were lost. However, he said the Force worked hard in terms of positive action to support those candidates who were unsuccessful so they understood why and how the Force could help them in the future. Thanking the DCO, the PCC said once the work had been completed it would be good to understand in its totality.

7. Finance

- The DCO reported the capital budget for last year was £39.9m with a spend of £26.8m. He said it was not unusual for the budget to be underspent and the Force considered it more of an ongoing budget rather than discrete for each year. He advised the underspend was not down to poor management, but due to delayed expenditure where the work or goods had not been received in time and the money was being withheld.
- He said some scheduling of works, for instance around cars, building materials and labour was currently quite awkward in terms of guaranteeing they would run to time. Giving an assurance capital programme initiatives were continuing, he said if they transcended from one year to the next it was not necessarily a bad thing as paying quickly for services not received or to the expected standard was not the right solution. Noting the money was not lost as it rolled over, he said the Force would ensure it was spent for the purposes that it was allocated.
- The DCO reported a marginal underspend of £3.3m in last year's revenue budget of £373.2m, representing 0.9% of the total budget. Advising most would go into Reserves, he said some could be used to offset an increased pay award, explaining the Force had budgeted 2.5% but beyond that there was no provision other than through savings.
- In terms of challenges going forwards, the DCO highlighted the pay award, inflation, major unforeseen operational events and unavoidable growth throughout the course of the year. He said there was a savings plan in place to counter some of the risks and threats to the financial position.
- The DCO reported that 38 officers left the Force in April, 21 in May, 17 in June and 29 in July, adding it was fluctuating and not the balanced profile seen in previous years. He said attrition was an important factor for HR and financially as the difference between the salary of an individual leaving and a new starter enabled the Force to offset some saving's pressures. Whilst it was not something that could be relied on as in previous years, he noted it had no material disadvantage to the Force and financially was beneficial.
- He said this year the Force would be audited in September and March to ensure it was within a certain percentage of the PUP figure, therefore the opportunity to make any non-damaging savings was reduced.
- The PCC expressed his thanks to the Finance Team for their work in closing last year's Accounts and the progress made in drafting the 2022/23 Accounts. He also thanked the JAC for its support.

8. Topical Issues & Update on Significant Operational Matters

- Noting the PCC had been well briefed on the NH Policing Model and would be kept updated following its launch, the CC advised he had no other matters he wished to raise.

In closing, the PCC thanked the CC and his team for their presentations and for answering questions. He also thanked his team for their support with the technology and those who had joined the meeting online, advising that details of the next meeting would be published on the OPCC website.

	Status	Owner	Due date
Provide the ILAS DA risk identification pilot results to the PCC	Open	Force	13/09/2023
Following the Shopkind week of action, provide a summary of local activity	Open	Force	13/09/2023
With regards to unauthorised encampments and the new legislation, provide an update on the impact and application of the changes	Open	Force	29/11/2023

Date of next Performance and Delivery Board: 13 September 2023

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