

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 **Thursday, 10th October, 2024, at 10.00 am** when the following business will be transacted

Members of the public who require further information are asked to contact Gaetano Romagnuolo on 03000 416624

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 Eddie Peake	Medway Council
Councillor Perry Cole	Sevenoaks District Council
Councillor Richard Palmer	Swale Borough Council
Councillor Stuart Jeffery	Maidstone Borough Council
Councillor Pat Makinson	Thanet District Council
Councillor Des Keers	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Councillor Astra Birch	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Councillor Teresa Murray	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)

A - Committee Business

- A1 Introduction/Webcast Announcement
- A2 Apologies and Substitutes
- A3 Declarations of Interest by Members in Items on the Agenda
- A4 Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel held on 16 July 2024
(Pages 1 - 10)
- A5 Kent Police and Crime Commissioner's Chief Executive -
Confirmation Hearing (Pages 11 - 30)

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

- B1 Complaints against the Commissioner - Annual Report 2023-24
(Pages 31 - 34)
- B2 Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report for 2023-24
(Pages 35 - 62)
- B3 HMICFRS PEEL 2023-25 Inspection - Update (Pages 63 - 68)

C - Questions to the Commissioner

- C1 Verbal Update from the Commissioner
- C2 Questions to the Commissioner

D - Panel Matters

- D1 Future Work Programme (Pages 69 - 70)

E - For Information

- E1 Minutes of the Commissioner's Governance Board meeting held
on 12 June 2024 (Pages 71 - 76)

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)

Benjamin Watts, General Counsel
03000 416814

Wednesday, 2 October 2024

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, 16 July 2024.

PRESENT: Mr. P M Hill OBE (Chairman), Mr. G Sandher MBE, Cllr M Blakemore, Mrs. E Bolton, Mr. I Chittenden, Cllr P Cole, Cllr P Feacey, Cllr Mrs. J Hollingsbee, Mr. J Meade, Cllr S Mochrie-Cox, Cllr R Palmer and Cllr R Wells.

ALSO PRESENT: Mr M Scott (Kent Police and Crime Commissioner), Mr A Harper (PCC's Chief Executive) and Mr R Phillips (PCC's Chief Finance Officer).

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs A Taylor (Scrutiny Research Officer) and Mr G Romagnuolo (Research Officer – Overview and Scrutiny).

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

109. Election of Chair

(Item A2)

1. The Scrutiny Research Officer asked for nominations for Chair of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel.

2. Mr Meade 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.

110. Election of Vice-Chair

(Item A3)

1. The Chair proposed, and Mrs Bolton 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.

111. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item A4)

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

- Cllr Eddie Peake had replaced Cllr Lauren Edwards as the representative of Medway Council.

- Cllr Astra Birch had replaced Cllr Nancy Warne as the representative of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

- Cllr Stuart Jeffery had replaced Cllr Parfitt-Read as the representative of Maidstone Borough Council.

- Cllr Pat Makinson no longer represented Thanet District Council. A replacement would be notified from Thanet District Council.

2. Apologies were received from:

- Cllr Connie Nolan

- Cllr Charlotte Zosseder

- Cllr Astra Birch

- Cllr Eddie Peake.

112. Declarations of Interests by Members in Items on the Agenda for this Meeting

(Item A5)

1. Mr Feacey declared that he was Chairman of Ashford Volunteer Centre.

113. Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel held on 6 February 2024

(Item A6)

1. The Chair informed the Panel that, following the letter that the Panel sent to the former Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire (The Rt Hon Chris Philp MP) about the need to review the funding formula for police forces across England and Wales, he had received a reply from the Minister confirming that the Government was working to introduce new funding arrangements.
2. The Chair proposed that a similar letter be sent to the current Home Secretary (The Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP) and the current Chancellor of the Exchequer (The Rt Hon Rachel Reeves MP) to reiterate the need to review the funding formula for police forces across England and Wales, and secure a continuing commitment from the new Government. Mr Palmer seconded the proposal.
3. A Member suggested that the draft letter be circulated to all the Members of the Panel so that they could provide feedback and comments before it was sent. The Panel agreed.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2024 were an accurate record. That a letter that reiterated the need to review the funding formula for police forces across England and Wales be sent from the Panel to the current Home Secretary and Chancellor of Exchequer.

114. Neighbourhood Policing Review - update report
(Item B1)

1. The Commissioner introduced the report and explained that the Review itself was first commissioned in February 2022 with the objective of improving the Force's neighbourhood policing while, at the same time, accruing savings. This would have an impact on over 30 roles, with about 500 people affected - including officers, staff as well as managers. There was extensive engagement within the Force in order to understand people's challenges, and research was carried out to analyse the neighbourhood models of other police forces. The Commissioner explained that he wanted to make sure that the offer to the public was as good as, if not better, than the previous arrangement.
2. The Commissioner referred to the model in the update report, which indicated the number of police officers and staff in this new structure. This included: 'Beat Officers' who had geographical personal ownership of Wards; the Child Centred Policing team and; Neighbourhood Taskforces. The rural policing team saw a very small uplift of 1 PS and 6.5 PCSOs. The work of the PCSOs focused particularly on engagement and crime prevention, which had been well received by the rural community.
3. In terms of implementation, the model was mostly on track, with 84% of Beat Officers, 80% of the Child Centred Policing team and 100% of the Neighbourhood Taskforce's in place. All but one of the Rural uplift posts were also delivered. It was anticipated that the model itself would be completed by September 2024, and recruitment of PCSOs was ongoing in order to support that.
4. The Commissioner was pleased to have received both written and anecdotal positive feedback from members of the community about the impact the individual officers were having in their communities. He also paid tribute to the Special Constabulary, as they had been very proactive in supporting the Neighbourhood Policing Model.
5. The Chairman commented that he had received very good feedback from the local residents of his Division. He asked how the Neighbourhood Taskforces fitted into the geographical and managerial structure.
 - a. The Commissioner replied that the Taskforces were based in each Kent District, and each District Chief Inspector would be responsible for the deployment of their own Taskforce. The approach was to focus on each issue and to engage with local residents and business in order to address it. This method had been piloted previously and had a positive impact.

6. In answer to a question about how to make sure that the model was not centralised and responded to local need, the Commissioner explained that the work of Beat Officers was focused on local problem solving and that they should not be moved around from teams outside of their district. They were not part of central Partnerships teams, which was where more centrally-based command and control would take place. The schools' teams and the Rural team were more centrally based because they were better able to coordinate their activity, nonetheless the emphasis was on local problem solving with local analysis - a demand-led model.
7. In response to a question about how he viewed the role of the Kent's Special Constabulary, the Commissioner said that one of the positive things about volunteering in Kent was that it was seen as complementary and not a replacement, and that they added significant value to the service delivered.
 - a. Kent's Special Constables were very highly regarded and were encouraged to develop professionally. They were offered courses, such as public order and advance driving courses, and were all equipped with Taser - which not many police forces were willing to do.
 - b. The Commissioner said that he was determined to help increase the number of Special Constables in Kent. He had a meeting with the Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire, the College of Policing and the NSPCC around making the national approach around the Special Constabulary more consistent in terms of rank structure, tasks and responsibilities.
8. In reply to a question about the importance of ensuring local officer presence in this policing model, the Commissioner explained that the extraction of Beat Officers would only be considered in exceptional circumstances.
9. A Member of the Panel asked how the Commissioner was going to hold the Chief Constable to account to ensure that the Neighbourhood Policing model worked across all of the Force's priorities, especially in areas such as violence against women and children, and county lines.
 - a. The Commissioner explained that he had been reassured by the Strategic Partnerships command that, while district-controlled Beat Officers would deal with local issues, they would also still implement the Force's priorities - including tackling violence against women and girls.
10. In response to a question about how representative the Neighbourhood Policing model was in terms of the communities that the police officers and staff were serving, the Commissioner said that he would gather this information and provide it to the Panel.
11. A Panel Member wondered whether the three-day training provided to officers and staff in the newly created posts of the Neighbourhood Policing model would be sufficient.
 - a. The Commissioner replied that all officers received a basic three-day training to be equipped with problem-solving skills. Other training was

available. For example, a number of the PCSOs had gained a formal Level 3 qualification in problem solving. There were also regular training sessions with partner organisations on other issues as well as regular refresher sessions.

12. In response to a question about whether the £1.5m funding for the Anti-social Behaviour Hotspot Response programme had been effective at tackling crime in town centres, the Commissioner said that there were 25 hotspot areas within the county which had been identified on that basis.

13. In order to assess the effects of this programme, 75,000 surveys had been delivered to those living in the hotspot areas to gather their feedback. Early responses could be available in October 2024.

RESOLVED: To **note** the report and **agree** to a further update at the December 2024 meeting.

115. Criminal Justice System - update report (Item B2)

1. The Commissioner paid tribute to all members of staff and officers who worked hard in the Criminal Justice System to support victims and witnesses. He clarified that the report and the concerns that it raised were not a negative reflection on them.
2. He also reported that he had received positive feedback on the effectiveness of the Kent Criminal Justice Board, that he chaired.
3. In terms of the reasons behind the significant backlog in court caseload, he explained that, as a result of the impact and disruptions caused by the Pandemic, the caseload had more than doubled since then.
4. In terms of staffing levels, there was a shortage of both judges and legal advisers. If more judges and legal advisers were recruited, then the total court caseload would decrease.
5. In terms of work entering the system, with an increase in police officer numbers, more people were being charged by Kent Police. This had resulted in more cases progressing to the Crown Prosecution Service and to the courts. In addition, there had recently been a number of cases involving protesters and small boat crossings, which added to the workload. In short, there was a triple challenge involving the work entering the system, courts' capacity and staffing levels.
6. The Commissioner said that he was going to write to the new Government to reiterate those challenges, and work in partnership with the Government in order to address some of them - as the impact on victims, witnesses, defendants and staff was significant.
7. In reply to a question about the possibility of using other venues to reduce the backlog, the Commissioner said that some work was already transferred elsewhere, for example the small boats' cases were heard in Sussex. The main

challenge was the shortage of staff; judges' careers had to be made more attractive in order to encourage more people to apply. Many Kent-based staff opted to work in London to receive the London Allowance. The PCC had recommended that a Southeast Allowance be paid in order to break the cycle of failed recruitment campaigns and staff shortages. However, with no funding available, this recommendation did not materialise.

8. A concern was raised about the increasing trend in the centralisation of courts. The Commissioner recognised that centralisation had the effect of disempowering teams locally. He added that, in order to increase the number of court cases heard, he believed that the use of the virtual video element was an effective solution. The South-East video enabled justice programme, which the Government funded and was coordinated by Kent and Sussex Police, showed positive outcomes and saved valuable police officers' time. However, the funding for that programme ended and the judiciary opposed its use.
9. In reply to a question about how Kent's backlog compared statistically with similar counties, Mr Harper said that this was a regional issue involving all the counties bordering London. He added that all the relevant agencies, including the judiciary, the courts, the police and the Probation Service were doing everything in their power to address the backlog issue.
10. A Panel Member asked whether there was anything that could be done differently. The Commissioner replied that some elements of the process could be made more efficient and effective for victims, witnesses and defendants. This included making sure that offenders were sanctioned - which was important - but also promoting rehabilitation or other kinds of support to deal with the underlying problems.
11. The Chairman proposed to receive more regular updates on this important issue, before the planned update in June 2025. It was agreed that the Commissioner would provide a verbal update on the Criminal Justice System at the Panel's meeting on 18 December 2024 prior to the report update in June 2025.

RESOLVED: To **note** the report and **agree** to a further verbal update at the December meeting, prior the planned update at the June 2025 meeting.

116. Shoplifting - update report (Item B3)

1. The Commissioner introduced the report and explained that shoplifting was an important issue and was one of the priorities in his Police and Crime Plan. Shoplifting had also become more prominent in the national agenda because it caused significant challenges.
2. The Commissioner said that he had met regularly with representatives of the Association of Convenience Stores, who estimated that there were 5.6 million incidents of shoplifting in the whole country every year. He stated that, in Kent, shoplifting accounted for more than the total amount of victim-based crime in the county. Also, the extent of this problem in Kent (15,137 recorded crimes between

April 2023 and March 2024) could be even greater as not all shoplifting crimes were reported.

3. Recent developments included the launch, in October 2023, of the Retail Crime Action Plan. The Plan provided greater assurance around attendance at the scene, investigation, dealing with prolific offenders and patrolling. In addition, with the 'Pegasus' initiative, which was launched in Sussex, retailers were funding analytical and operational work at national level to provide intelligence packages for policing on cross-border organised crime.
4. A key issue which was reported by local businesses to the Commissioner was around the online reporting of crime. While the online reporting system had improved, the mechanism was still too time consuming, as there was no option to set an account and pre-populate details; these had to be entered for every reported incident.
5. When discussing the Retail Crime Action Plan, the Commissioner reported that the Kent Police's Digital Asset Management System now enabled efficient, quick time uploading of CCTV from stores. If the image was suitable, this was uploaded to a localised internal system called "Caught on Camera" where officers could quickly identify suspects. In May 2024, 532 images sent to 'Caught on Camera' were for retail crime and had sufficient facial features to enable a retrospective facial recognition search. 186 (35%) of them enabled officers to identify a suspect.
6. With regard to hotspot patrolling, positive results had been shown in West Kent. Increased patrols in retail areas which were experiencing particular problems had resulted in a reduction by half in the number of reports of shoplifting from those locations.
7. In answer to a question about the location of these hotspot areas, the Commissioner said that these comprised mainly large retail areas, such as supermarkets and shopping centres. However, he cautioned that the identification of these hotspots was very much dependent on whether shoplifting crimes were reported.
8. In reply to a question about whether a permit was required in order to supplement Kent Police in tackling retail crime, the Commissioner clarified that investigations could only be conducted by warrant card-holding police officers. However, Kent Police did work in partnership with street marshals and security guards, and some of them were given dedicated training from the Force.

RESOLVED: To **note** the report.

117. Decision OPCC D.035.24 - Chief Executive's Notice of Intention to Retire (Item C1)

1. The Commissioner praised the PCC's Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer's professionalism, hard work and diligence. The Chief Executive, who had over 40 years of policing experience, was going to be a real loss to the Commissioner's

team. The Commissioner expressed gratitude to him for everything he had done for his team and the county.

2. The Chairman also expressed his gratitude to the PCC's Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, and advised that there would be a Confirmation Hearing for the recruitment of the new PCC's Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer in due course.

RESOLVED: To note the decision and that a Confirmation Hearing would take place later in the year.

115. Questions to the Commissioner

(Item D1)

Question 1

On your re-election (for which, congratulations) you promised that later this year you will introduce an immediate justice programme, designed to bring those responsible to justice more quickly. Could you tell us please how those committing antisocial behaviour will be made to provide payback to our neighbourhoods and what form that payback will take?

(Cllr Mike Blakemore, Folkestone and Hythe District Council)

1. The Commissioner stated that his Office (the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner) had been in contact with a number of organisations to scope their ability to deliver an immediate justice programme. The expectation was that referrals would be made within 48 hours. The form that payback would take had to be properly monitored from a safeguarding perspective. The Commissioner anticipated that the programme could include graffiti removal and litter-picking. There would also be an element of reform.

Question 2

Many areas in Kent face a woeful police presence and one such area is the Isle of Sheppey within the Borough of Swale. Sheppey faces unique issues with its poor road's infrastructure particularly the A249 and the New Sheppey bridge which frequently faces closure. Sheppey residents are concerned about the rise in crime, and they have real concerns about poor police response times. This is a common theme across Kent in many communities but owing to the unique nature of Sheppey it is far worse.

Sheppey doesn't have an operational police station and often police response must be dispatched from crews from the mainland such as from Sittingbourne, Medway or further afield. The lack of local police available on the Island at times is very concerning, how is the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) holding to account the Chief Constable to ensure the residents receive adequate local policing on Sheppey?

(Cllr Richard Palmer, Swale Borough Council)

1. The Commissioner explained that he had regular conversations with Kent Police about the Isle of Sheppey because he recognised its unique geography and the

challenges that its residents faced. The Island would be allocated an additional Neighbourhood Officer (from 4 to 5) as part of the Neighbourhood Policing Model. He advised the Island had an operational police station which Local Policing Team officers worked from, and support was also provided by the Rural Policing Team and the Roads Policing Team. He said Kent Police would always respond to emergencies, like anywhere else in the county. He added Sheerness was receiving hotspot patrols to target serious violence and anti-social behaviour, and the Island would also receive additional roads policing as part of an operation to tackle violent criminals. He reminded Members and the public to sign up to My Community Voice in order to receive regular updates from their local Beat Officer..

Question 3

The Police and Crime Commissioner is known to support that the police should have all the tools at their disposal to help combat crime, such as when tasers were supported, and this is welcomed. In light of this support for said tools and in line with holding the Chief Constable to account for direction of said resources, what can be done to ensure that said resources both human and technological can be dedicated and expanded so that every area has access and constant use of such regular preventative and detective methods, such as the drones used in Op Gurkha? While these are felt to be resource intensive, they deliver great results for local communities suffering from ASB such as bike crimes and have been proven to work by capturing evidence.

(Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox, Gravesham Borough Council)

1. The Commissioner explained that, as part of his rural Safer Streets programme, there would be a further investment in drone capability and training for officers, as well as more resource-intensive days of action to tackle offroad motorbikes. In addition, the targeting of anti-social behaviour in rural communities would be carried out more extensively. Actions to tackle anti-social behaviour, fly tipping, illegal offroad motorcycling and rural burglary would all be part of this programme.

RESOLVED: To **note** the responses to the questions.

116. Annual Report of the Police and Crime Panel (Item E1)

RESOLVED: to **consider** and **approve** the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel 2023/24 Annual Report.

117. Future Work Programme (Item E2)

RESOLVED to **note** the report.

118. Minutes of the Commissioner's Performance and Delivery Board meetings held on 13 September 2023, 29 November 2023 and 28 February 2024
(Item F1)

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Performance and Delivery Board meetings held on 13 September 2023, 29 November 2023 and 28 February 2024 **be noted**.

To: Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel
Subject: Chief Executive confirmation
Date: 10 October 2024

Background:

1. Under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, Police and Crime Commissioners are required to appoint 'a person to be the head of the commissioner's staff' (Schedule 1, 6 (1)(a)).
2. The Police and Crime Panel has a statutory duty under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act to hold a confirmation hearing for all senior appointments made by a Police and Crime Commissioner. Senior appointments are defined as the Commissioner's Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer, and where relevant, Deputy Commissioner.
3. Under Schedule 1 (9) of the Act, the Commissioner must notify the Police and Crime Panel of his proposed appointment, and include the following information in the notification:
 - The name of the nominated candidate.
 - The criteria used to assess the suitability of the candidate.
 - Why the candidate satisfies these criteria.
 - The terms and conditions upon which the candidate is to be appointed.
4. The purpose of the confirmation hearing is to enable the Police and Crime Panel to review the recruitment process and to make recommendations on the proposed appointment. Following the confirmation hearing, the Panel must make a report to the Commissioner, including a recommendation as to whether or not the candidate should be appointed. The Commissioner may accept or reject this recommendation.

Recruitment process:

5. This section provides information on the recruitment process for the Commissioner's Chief Executive. It details the nature of the role, the conditions upon which the successful candidate is to be appointed as well as the criteria used to assess the suitability of candidates.
6. The Commissioner wished to reach the broadest possible audience, and to that end decided to employ a recruitment agency. Three agencies were approached, and two decided to submit proposals. Of the two, Gatenby Sanderson provided the most comprehensive approach, at the lowest price.
7. A professional recruitment pack was compiled, and is attached at Appendix A. The role was advertised as 'Chief of Staff', but the Commissioner has decided that Chief Executive would allow for greater national consistency. Both a standard advertisement process (through traditional media) and a targeted one were employed, with Gatenby approaching a very wide range of potential candidates through professional channels. The PCC was updated on a weekly basis on how the search was progressing.
8. There were 28 applications for the role. Each candidate submitted their CV, a covering letter, and provided a short video on why they were seeking the role. Gatenby sifted the applications into A (for definite consideration), B (for possible consideration) and C (not suitable) to aid shortlisting. Gatenby also provided a breakdown of the candidates' profiles, in terms of protected characteristics. Following a review of all the applications, the Panel decided to only progress candidates in the "A" category, given their strength, in the shortlisting process.

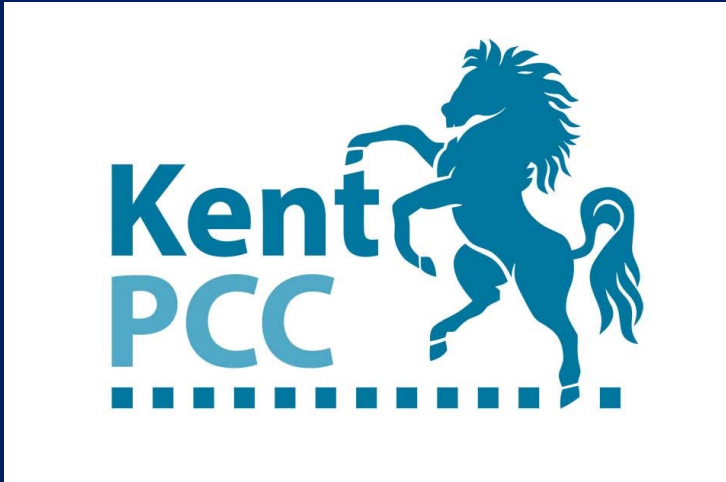
9. The PCC's panel met to consider the applications on the 9th July. The panel was comprised of PCC Katy Bourne; Cllr Matt Boughton (Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council); and the current Chief Executive, Mr Adrian Harper. Mr Peter Buffoni, of Gatenby Sanderson, also attended the meeting to provide professional advice. Four candidates were shortlisted.
10. The four candidates were invited to a briefing day on the 12th July. The aim of the briefing day was to provide both an overview of the Commissioner's work, and to ensure a level playing field. Candidates were provided with a briefing in advance; and on the day, briefings were provided by:
 - The PCC
 - The Chair of the Joint Audit Committee
 - An Independent Custody Visitor
 - Staff from within a Commissioned Service for victims
 - The manager of Victim SupportIn addition, candidates then had the opportunity to individually meet both with the above, and members of the PCC's Senior Management team.
11. Interviews were held on the 22nd July. In addition to the Panel members, there was an Independent Member, Ms Caroline Wells, present as well as a member of the PCC's senior management team. This was to ensure that the process was demonstrably fair and professional. Ms Wells has a long association with both the KPA (sitting on the Standards Committee) and with the PCC's Office, sitting on the panel that decides on pension forfeitures. She has an extensive background in dispute resolution and professional mediation in both the public and private sector.
12. Ms Wells has confirmed that in, her professional opinion, the process was open, fair, and transparent.
13. All candidates were given the first question to prepare in advance and assessed against the Competencies and Values Framework at Level 3 (the highest level). The scoring range was 1 to 5. The areas tested were:
 - Partnerships
 - Strategic change & leadership
 - Political awareness
 - Integrity
 - Delivery
14. Additionally, candidates underwent a psychometric test in advance of the interviews. Mr Buffoni, of Gatenby, and Susanna Gill, presented their assessment and findings at the beginning of the interview date.
15. Of the four candidates, three attended the interview. Of those three, the PCC is proposing to appoint Mr David Paul.

Proposed appointment:

16. The Commissioner is proposing to appoint Mr David Paul, who was unanimously supported by the Panel, on the following grounds:
 - His extensive experience in policing, including as Assistant Chief Officer for South East Forces, leading on technology enabled transformation; Assistant Chief Officer with the National Police Chiefs' Council on Pay and Workforce issues; and Programme Director with the Metropolitan Police;
 - His work with Central Government, across a range of Cabinet Office posts, including Chief of Staff for the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit;
 - His experience in working across the criminal justice system, and establishing effective relationships with a wide range of partners;
 - His track record in delivering savings: for example, a £32 million programme whilst Head of Strategy and Performance at Sussex Police;
 - His broad experience across HR, IT strategy and development, management consultancy (including with IBM, KPMG, and PA Consulting), and collaboration.
17. During the interview process, Mr Paul gained the highest score of all the candidates across each of the individual questions, including integrity and political awareness.

Recommendation:

18. The Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel is asked to support the appointment of Mr David Paul as the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner's Chief Executive.
19. Mr Paul's previous work within policing meant that vetting and other arrangements could be expedited. This allowed for a full and comprehensive induction to take place earlier than foreseen. This was viewed as especially important given that Mr Paul had no previous connection to Kent Police or the OPCC, and the on-going issues relating to North Kent Police Station. It was also a key time for planning the new Police and Crime Plan, and the inaugural meetings of the Commissioner's new Rural Crime and Retail Crime Boards. Mr Paul has therefore been working on a temporary basis in the OPCC since 9th September. The PCC is clear that this decision in no way usurps the role of the Police and Crime Panel in confirming the appointment, but felt it was in the best interests of his Office, and of ensuring business continuity, that Mr Paul was able to work with Mr Harper for four weeks prior to the Police and Crime Panel meeting on October 10.
20. Mr Paul would be appointed on the same pay, terms and conditions as the out-going Chief Executive, Mr Harper, as per the candidate pack.
21. The Panel is invited to consider the evidence provided; whether this meets the requirements as outlined in the legislation; and to confirm the appointment.



Candidate Pack
Chief of Staff to the Police and Crime Commissioner,
Kent

 **GatenbySanderson**

 **INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE | GOLD**

June 2024

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Message from Police and Crime Commissioner of Kent



Thank you for your interest in becoming the next Chief of Staff in the Kent Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Having been re-elected for my third term in 2024, I am looking for an individual who can drive my ambitious programme, continuing to make Kent safer. I have a strong track record delivering for Kent, overseeing:

- An increase in police officers to over 4 200
- A reduction in crime of 13% since 2019
- A doubling of funding for Victims' Services

As Chief of Staff, you will be the key individual responsible for delivering my manifesto and new Police and Crime Plan, ensuring that the relentless focus on driving down crime, making our streets safer, and providing services for victims is maintained.

You will also be someone who can work proactively with stakeholders and partners, across the Criminal Justice sector, and with third sector organisations, getting the best out of everyone. Critically, this includes my statutory duty to hold the Chief Constable to account for the performance of Kent Police.

As head of paid service, you will be responsible for a small team, but overseeing a budget of nearly £495 million. You will need to be a visible and inspirational leader, making sure your team have the right environment to deliver.

My joint vision, with the Chief Constable, is to make Kent a safe place for people to live, work and visit. If you think that you can deliver this, then I look forward to hearing from you.

Matthew Scott

Police and Crime Commissioner
Kent

About Police and Crime Commissioners and our work in Kent

The role of the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) was first created in 2012. Matthew was re-elected for his third term in 2024.

The role of the PCC is to be the voice of the people and to hold the Chief Constable to account. They are responsible for the totality of policing, with the aim to cut crime and deliver an effective and efficient police service within their police force area. They are elected by the public, ensuring the police are answerable to the communities they serve.

PCCs ensure community needs are met as effectively as possible, and improve local relationships through building confidence and restoring trust. They work in partnership across a range of agencies at local and national level to ensure there is a unified approach to preventing and reducing crime.

Under the terms of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, PCCs must:

- secure an efficient and effective police for their area;
- appoint the Chief Constable, hold them to account for running the force, and if necessary dismiss them;
- set the police and crime objectives for their area through a police and crime plan;
- set the force budget and determine the precept;
- contribute to the national and international policing capabilities set out by the Home Secretary; and
- bring together community safety and criminal justice partners, to make sure local priorities are joined up.

PCCs are expected to adhere to the Seven Principles of Public Life, as determined and published by the Nolan Committee - the '[Nolan Principles](#)'.

Kent Police and Crime Information

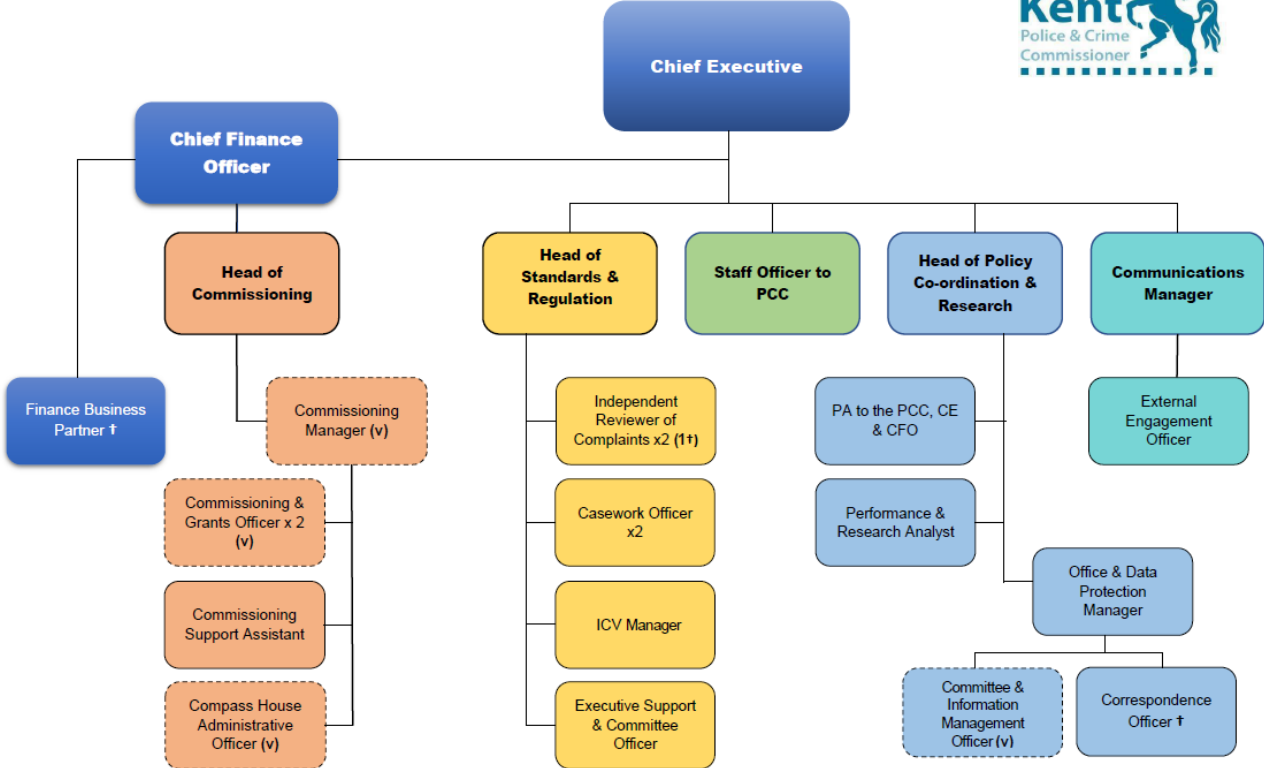
Further information relating to the Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent is available here:

<https://www.kent-pcc.gov.uk/>

OPCC organisation chart

The structure for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner includes

Office of the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner Organisational Structure



† Part-time post (v) Vacant (new role)

Rev: June 2024

Role profile

Job Title: Chief of Staff

Responsible To: The Police and Crime Commissioner

Direct Reports: From org chart

Grade and Salary: Up to £110,000

Hours: 37 hours per week

Due to the nature of the role, the post holder will be required to work flexibly in terms of hours worked each week in order to fulfil the role. The post holder may be required, at times, to work evenings or weekends, for which no additional remuneration is paid.

Location: The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner is based at the Kent Police Headquarters in Maidstone.

Security requirements: Given that this role will require security clearance, applicants must have at least five years' continuous residency in the UK at the date of application.

Applicants must be UK or EU citizens or have indefinite leave to remain in the UK. The post is subject to successful vetting and is politically restricted.

Terms and Conditions: The terms and conditions for this post are in line with those for police staff.

Equality Commitment: The Police and Crime Commissioner is committed to equality and welcomes applications from suitably qualified people from all sections of the community, in order to reflect the diversity of the community we serve.

As part of this commitment all applicants with a registered disability who meet the essential criteria will be invited to interview.

Description and core purpose of role

The Chief of Staff to the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) will support the elected Commissioner for Kent in making a real difference, supporting the delivery of a police service that reflects the needs of the community, putting victims and witnesses at the heart of the criminal justice system, and delivering tangible improvements in policing and relevant parts of the criminal justice sector that fall within the PCC's remit.

The remit is to provide effective leadership on behalf of the PCC, to enable them to successfully fulfil their statutory obligations. To guide and manage the delivery of the PCC's Police and Crime Plan, so that its objectives are fully achieved. To engage fully with Kent Police and local and national partners, and continue to identify new and innovative ways of working. To manage the Office of the PCC, and provide clear and effective leadership to OPCC staff. Supporting the PCC to ensure that the PCC's budget in excess of £495m is properly and effectively used by the Chief Constable in furtherance of his statutory duties and the priorities of the PCC. Direct responsibility for the management of the PCC's budget of £5.5m.

Main responsibilities

- Be the lead officer responsible for driving the delivery of the PCC's Police and Crime Plan, coordinating the workstreams of senior staff, ensuring that timescales are adhered to and objectives met, resolving and overcoming any obstructions, ensuring that the PCC can effectively demonstrate that the public's priorities are being met.
- Lead on all aspects of engagement with the public, internal and external stakeholders and partnership organisations, on behalf of the PCC, including press conferences, press releases, website management, launches of new initiatives, planning of community engagement itineraries, open meetings and publications/ documentation etc., ensuring that any information released into the public domain is high quality and accurate.
- Develop the short, medium and long term strategies required to successfully support the PCC and manage the OPCC, completing horizon scanning and anticipating future requirements whilst adapting existing strategies in response to evolving issues arising at a local or national level in the volatile policing and policing governance landscape.
- Manage and regularly review the support framework required by the PCC, providing options and recommendations, implementing any structural changes and maintaining an overview of activity, in order to adjust the structure and skills available, and maintain the provision of effective support services to the PCC at all times.
- Manage the staff of the OPCC providing inspirational and motivational leadership, especially during times of change, taking responsibility for all associated aspects of recruitment, selection, development, training, welfare, performance and disciplinary issues, in order to ensure that the OPCC is staffed with appropriately skilled and motivated people at all times.

- Manage, drive, review and develop all aspects of OPCC performance, updating strategies, working practices and protocols as required, in order to provide a high-quality responsive service to the PCC at all times.
- Undertake the statutory governance duties of the role Chief of Staff as directed by the PCC as detailed in the Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011, including ensuring financial propriety, providing advice and recommendations to the PCC to enable and assist the OPCC to fulfil all their statutory functions effectively and efficiently.
- Represent the OPCC at high level meetings both internally with Kent Police and partners, and externally with the Police and Crime Panel, MPs and local authorities, the Home Office, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary Fire and Rescue Services, Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, Local Government Association and other outside bodies at regional and national level as required, ensuring that the OPCC leads and contributes to the consideration of high level issues concerning policing and reducing crime.

Vetting level:

Security Check (SC)

Person specification

Necessary experience:

The post holder will be a graduate calibre professional with high levels of honesty and integrity combined with senior level management experience and a track record of successful delivery of business aims and objectives, and change management at that level. The ability to rapidly familiarise, assimilate and understand information about the police service, Kent Police and national and local issues that affect the policing of the county is vital, especially in a fluctuating landscape.

The post holder will be used to solving problems at the highest level, and have wide-ranging experience of planning, organising and implementing activities on a short, medium and long term basis at both strategic and operational levels. As an experienced leader, you will be accustomed to providing clear, objective, authoritative and impartial advice based on analysis and interpretation of complex information and situations. As an effective horizon scanner, you should be able to anticipate the needs of the PCC and present information before it is requested.

The post holder will have many years' experience of successfully managing individuals and teams at every level, to get the very best out of your staff to ensure they deliver key objectives, and possess excellent interpersonal skills that you can adapt to any situation.

Behaviours: (these are aligned with the College of Policing's Competency Values Framework)

Analyse Critically (Level 3)

I balance risks, costs and benefits associated with decisions, thinking about the wider impact and how actions are seen in that context. I think through 'what if' scenarios. I use discretion wisely in making decisions, knowing when the 'tried and tested' is not always the most appropriate and being willing to challenge the status quo when beneficial. I seek to identify the key reasons or incidents behind issues, even in ambiguous or unclear situations. I use my knowledge of the wider external environment and long-term situations to inform effective decision making. I acknowledge that some decisions may represent a significant change. I think about the best way to introduce such decisions and win support.

Collaborative (Level 3)

I am politically aware and I understand formal and informal politics at the national level and what this means for our partners. This allows me to create long-term links and work effectively within decision-making structures. I remove practical barriers to collaboration to enable others to take practical steps in building relationships outside the organisation and in other sectors (public, not for profit, and private). I take the lead in partnerships when appropriate and set the way in which partner organisations from all sectors interact with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. This allows the Police and Crime Commissioner to play a major role in the delivery of services to communities. I create an environment where partnership working flourishes and creates tangible benefits for all.

Deliver, Support and Inspire (Level 3)

I challenge myself and others to bear in mind the Police and Crime Commissioner's vision to provide the best possible service in every decision made. I communicate how the overall vision links to specific plans and objectives so that people are motivated and clearly understand our goals. I ensure that everyone understands their role in helping the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to achieve this vision. I anticipate and identify organisational barriers that stop the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner from meeting its goals, by putting in place contingencies or removing these. I monitor changes in the external environment, taking actions to influence where possible to ensure positive outcomes. I demonstrate long-term strategic thinking, going beyond personal goals and considering how the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner operates in the broader societal and economic environment. I ensure that my decisions balance the needs of my own organisation with those of the wider police service and external partners. I motivate and inspire others to deliver challenging goals.

Emotionally Aware (Level 3)

I seek to understand the longer-term reasons for organisational behaviour. This enables me to adapt and change organisational cultures when appropriate. I actively ensure a supportive organisational culture that recognises and values diversity and well-being and challenges intolerance. I understand internal and external politics and I am able to wield influence effectively, tailoring my actions to achieve the impact needed. I am able to see things from a variety of perspectives and I use this knowledge to challenge my own thinking, values and assumptions. I ensure that all perspectives inform decision making and communicate the reasons behind decisions in a way that is clear and compelling.

Innovative and Open-minded (Level 3)

I implement, test and communicate new and far-reaching ways of working that can radically change our organisational cultures, attitudes and performance. I provide space and encouragement to help others stand back from day-to-day activities, in order to review their direction, approach and how they fundamentally see their role in policing. This helps them to adopt fresh perspectives and identify improvements. I work to create an innovative learning culture, recognising and promoting innovative activities. I lead, test and implement new, complex and creative initiatives that involve multiple stakeholders, create significant impact and drive innovation outside of my immediate sphere. I carry accountability for ensuring that the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner remains up to date.

Take Ownership (Level 3)

I act as a role model, and enable the organisation to use instances when things go wrong as an opportunity to learn rather than blame. I foster a culture of personal responsibility, encouraging and supporting others to make their own decisions and take ownership of their activities. I define and enforce the standards and processes that will help this to happen. I put in place measures that will allow others to take responsibility effectively when I delegate decision making, and at the same time I help them to improve their performance. I create the circumstances (culture and process) that will enable people to undertake development opportunities and improve their performance. I take an organisation-wide view, acknowledging where improvements can be made and taking responsibility for making these happen.

Values:**Impartiality (Accredited)**

I take into account individual needs and requirements in all of my actions. I understand that treating everyone fairly does not mean everyone is treated the same. I always give people an equal opportunity to express their views. I communicate with everyone, making sure the most relevant message is provided to all. I value everyone's views and opinions by actively listening to understand their perspective. I make fair and objective decisions using the best available evidence. I enable everyone to have equal access to services and information, where appropriate.

Integrity (Accredited)

I always act in line with the values of the Code of Ethics for the benefit of the public. I demonstrate courage in doing the right thing, even in challenging situations. I enhance the reputation of my organisation through my actions and behaviours. I challenge colleagues whose behaviour, attitude and language falls below the public's and the service's expectations. I am open and responsive to challenge about my actions and words. I declare any conflicts of interest at the earliest opportunity. I am respectful of the authority and influence my position gives me. I use resources effectively and efficiently and not for personal benefit.

Public Service (Accredited)

I act in the interest of the public, first and foremost. I am motivated by serving the public, ensuring that I provide the best service possible at all times. I seek to understand the needs of others to act in their best interests. I adapt to address the needs and concerns of different communities. I tailor my communication to be appropriate and respectful to my audience. I take into consideration how others want to be treated when interacting with them. I treat people respectfully regardless of the circumstances. I share credit with everyone involved in delivering services.

Transparency (Accredited)

I ensure that my decision-making rationale is clear and considered so that it is easily understood by others. I am clear and comprehensive when communicating with others. I am open and honest about my areas for development and I strive to improve. I give an accurate representation of my actions and records. I recognise the value of feedback and act on it. I give constructive and accurate feedback. I represent the opinions of others accurately and consistently. I am consistent and truthful in my communications. I maintain confidentiality appropriately.

Technical skills:**Business Planning (Level 6)**

Demonstrates a consistently high level of business planning expertise. Able to provide direct input to the Police and Crime Plan and its communication. Maintains and develops information systems to provide timely and accurate business planning data. Provides expert advice and coaching on business planning techniques and methodology to employees of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. Designs templates and other documentation to assist employees of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner with business planning.

Community Partnerships (Level 7)

Ensure relevant and effective partnerships are identified, developed and maintained. Example: Develop a partnership strategy to complement the overall Police and Crime Plan. Ensure systems are in place to actively seek new partners and maintain existing relationships, ensuring that all partnership activity is undertaken in a corporate manner. In consultation with partners, establish and agree common objectives and terms of reference. Identify joint initiatives that are consistent with the achievement of both police and partners objectives. Ensure analysis is undertaken to identify and agree joint resourcing proposals in accordance with Best Value principles. Develop systems to monitor and review the ongoing delivery of partnership activity and identify areas for improvement and take appropriate remedial action as necessary.

Health & Safety (Level 5)

Has received training which enables the effective completion of risk assessments and Health and Safety inspections of premises. Identifies defects or hazards and takes action to resolve any apparent health and safety issues within an area or department. Fully accepts responsibility for the safety of members of staff, as well as visitors and contractors. Monitors the application of health and safety related procedures for the area or department. Possession of a certificate level qualification in Health and Safety is desirable.

Inspection (Level 7)

Utilises the results of Inspection findings to assist the PCC in holding the Chief Constable to account.

Internal Consultancy (Level 7)

Consistently delivers high level consultancy expertise to the Police and Crime Commissioner and meets or exceeds expectations by delivering solutions which maximise benefits for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and/or enhance its reputation. Has the presence, energy and credibility to gain the confidence of the Police and Crime Commissioner. Able to build effective and enduring relationships at all levels. Demonstrates strong influencing skills combined with sensitivity to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner internal culture and climate.

Interviewing - General (Level 5)

Is a highly experienced interviewer (having accredited skills in recruitment, selection, appraisal, return to work, exit, and / or other managerial type interviews). Has an awareness of non-verbal communication. Provides feedback to colleagues to assist them with the development of their interview techniques. Identifies key issues for examination and maintains effective interview skills even in difficult circumstances and / or complex cases. Has a thorough knowledge of available interview techniques and their applications. Trains and develops others in these techniques.

Journalism and Media (Level 7)

Successfully communicates the strategic messages the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner wishes to convey to the media both in writing and in face-to-face meetings, briefings and television interviews, regularly involving difficult or hostile circumstances. Delivers press briefings at major incidents relevant to the OPCC. Maintains a comprehensive overview of all national and local issues which may impact upon the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and proactively advises the Police and Crime Commissioner on all strategic media related matters.

Knowledge of Police Environment & Policy (Level 6)

Possesses a broad and wide-ranging knowledge of the police service, legislation and policy which is consistent with the demand for strategic influence in respect of particular areas of activity. Will have formed a reliable network of contacts, nationally and locally, which can be used to support and enhance developmental initiatives.

Management of Police Information (MOPI) (Level 7)

If nominated as an Information Asset Owner, or employee with comparable delegated authority, leads and fosters a culture with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner that values, protects and uses information for the public good, whether for a policing purpose or internal management processes. Identify and document the scope and importance of all owned information assets; thus supporting the management and maintenance of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner's information asset register and ensure all relevant entries are current and reviewed regularly. Foster a culture of continuous improvement encouraged and exemplified by supervised managers at all levels. Ensure that relevant policies and procedures are in place to allow the retention, review and destruction of physical and digital documents and records in accordance with APP for Information Management (incorporating MOPI guidance), Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) legislation and National Retention policies and is aware of the IAO responsibilities as specified in the NPCC Information Asset Owners Handbook.

Project Management (Level 7)

Proactively identifies the need for, initiates and defines strategic projects which impact across the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner's boundaries and/ or have national implications. Fully conversant with all best practice project management techniques and able to provide coaching in these techniques to team members and senior employees within the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. Successfully manages budgets for major projects.

Risk Management (Level 6)

Able to anticipate, accurately define and establish the relative level of risk arising from events likely to affect the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and its relationship with local communities. Responsible for addressing or accepting tactical vulnerabilities in the context of achieving local objectives; balancing multiple, potentially competing risks; and implement changes to policies, working practices and standard operating procedures as required. Identifies and challenges risks arising from collaborative and partnership arrangements. Has an appreciation that seizing opportunities also generates risks.

National Occupational Standards:

AA1 (Level Accredited)

Promote equality and value diversity.

AA2 (Level Accredited)

Develop a culture and systems that promote equality and value diversity.

Terms and conditions of appointment

Please note that, although completely independent from the Police Service, all staff working in the OPCC enjoy the same benefits as police staff.

Salary:

The salary on offer for this post is up to £110,000. In addition, there is membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme, as well as a generous annual leave allowance.

Annual Leave:

28 days rising to 33 after 5 years, plus bank holidays.

Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS):

An important and valuable part of your package, the scheme is one of the best ways to plan for retirement with an excellent range of benefits that include a tiered ill health retirement package, early payment of benefits, the right to retire voluntarily, flexible retirement, secure benefits, employer's contributions, life cover and family cover - find out more here.

The employee contribution of 9.90% is currently exceeded by the employer's contribution of 16.40%.

Security vetting:

Given the nature of the role and the access you will have to some restricted information, this post is subject to security vetting and Disclosure and Barring Service checks. Should you be successful at interview and not possess the relevant vetting, you will be contacted by Kent Police to progress this.

Political restrictions:

This is a politically restricted post as defined in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. This means that you cannot be an active member of any political party.

Sickness:

The Entitlements to sick pay for Police Staff are set out in Police Regulations and the Police Staff Council conditions of service which are available upon request.

The Sick Pay scheme is intended to supplement Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) or the Employment and Support Allowance if you are ill. This includes any increase for adult and child dependents, or State Insurance Benefits, so as to maintain pay. The period of sick pay payable is governed by length of continuous years of service.

Timetable of appointment

Closing date for applications (23:59 hours)	28th June (Friday)
Shortlist meeting (for information only)	9th July
Familiarisation day at Maidstone	12th July
Final panel interview with the PCC	22 nd July
Confirmation Hearing with the Police and Crime Panel	TBC (within 21 days of appointment)

How to apply

How to apply	<p>We are seeking to appoint based on a combination of your written application, video submission, and interviews. To apply, please visit our recruitment partner's website at: www.gatenbysanderson.com/job/GSe112307 or by using the 'search for jobs' function at www.gatenbysanderson.com and entering Kent Police and Crime Commissioner, or the reference number 112307. Register on the GS site and then submit the following no later than 23:59hrs on the closing date.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A tailored CV (maximum 2 pages), setting out your work history (paid or voluntary), responsibilities and achievements as they relate to the role. 2. A targeted cover letter (maximum 2 pages) setting out your experience against the person specification. 3. We want you to be able to meaningfully portray your passion and vision for this role, and we are therefore inviting all applicants to record a video message (of no more than 2 minutes in length) to accompany and strengthen their application. The video is your opportunity to portray yourself beyond the formality of the written word. <p>In that video, you will be asked to answer the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why you are interested in working for the Police and Crime Commissioner in Kent, and what will be different about the organisation having served three years in post?
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	<p>4. If successful at the shortlisting stage, you will be asked to provide the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The names and contact details of two referees. Please note that referees will only be contacted if you are selected for interview. • Relevant identification (i.e. Passport/driving licence). <p>During your online registration process, you will be asked to submit diversity monitoring information. This is very important and will be kept entirely separate from the application process. You will also be asked if you are applying for a guaranteed interview through the Disability Confident Scheme.</p> <p>Should you encounter any issues with your online application please contact mary.dempsey@gatenbysanderson.com quoting the job title/reference number.</p>
<p>Arrangements for interview</p>	<p>If successful with at the initial application stage , you will be called for a face-to-face final panel interview with the PCC and other relevant stakeholders at Kent Police Headquarters in Maidstone on the day shown.</p> <p>Expenses incurred by candidates during the recruitment process will not be reimbursed, except in exceptional circumstances and only when agreed in advance.</p> <p>As an inclusive employer, if you are called for interview and you require any reasonable adjustments or particular arrangements to be made, please do let Mary Dempsey know when you are called for interview.</p> <p>Please let us know as soon as possible if you are unable to meet the proposed interview dates. It may be possible to arrange an alternative date, but this cannot be guaranteed.</p>
<p>Further Information</p>	<p>If you have any questions about the role itself or would like to discuss the post and your fit within the organisation, please contact Sandra Jones on 07826 404091 or Peter Buffoni on 07964 877 654 at GatenbySanderson.</p>
<p>Complaints</p>	<p>If you feel your application has not been treated in accordance with the recruitment principles, or you wish to make a complaint, in the first instance, please raise it with Peter Buffoni, Partner and Head of the Community Protection Practice at peter.buffoni@gatenbysanderson.com.</p>

Advertisement

Chief of Staff to the Police and Crime Commissioner

Kent

Salary up to £110,000pa

The role of the Police and Crime Commissioner in Kent is to set out his ambitions for policing and community safety in the region. To help make those ambitions a reality, he is seeking a highly motivated Chief of Staff who shares those ambitions to join and lead his team.

As well as leading a team of 20, and overseeing the Office and commissioning budget of just over £5.5m, the Chief of Staff will relish working closely with the Chief Constable and his team, partners, local authorities, charities and the third sector across the region.

This is a vital role, helping the PCC to hold the Chief Constable and the Police Service to account for the use of its c. £495 m budget.

To succeed, you will need to be politically astute, and someone who can establish and build strong relationships, and team spirit, within the Office of the PCC and beyond. Someone who will nurture team members, allowing them to maximise their potential. Someone who will also deliver on the implementation of the Police and Crime Plan.

You will have significant experience operating at a comparable leadership level, with high levels of integrity. The role offers an opportunity to make a real difference to the lives of all those who live, work or visit Kent, providing a uniquely stimulating professional challenge.

The role is both subject to security vetting, and is politically restricted. Further information about the role, the required experience and how to apply, can be found at our recruitment partner's site at: www.gatenbysanderson.com/job/GSe112307

For an informal, confidential discussion, please ring GatenbySanderson and speak to Sandra Jones on **07826 404091** or Peter Buffoni on **07964 877 654** at GatenbySanderson.

The closing date for applications is 23:59 on Friday 28th June.

Candidates selected for final panel interview will be invited to attend the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner at Kent Police Headquarters in Maidstone on Monday 22nd July.

By: Gaetano Romagnuolo, Panel Officer, Kent County Council
To: Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel – 10 October 2024
Subject: Complaints Against the Commissioner – Annual Report 2023-24

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).

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/she 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 from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024

- 3.1 7 complaints were received in total against the PCC, Matthew Scott, for assessment against the regulations between 1 July 2023 and 30 June 2024. A summary of complaints activity can be found below:

Complaints Received for Assessment	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
Recorded complaints – disappled	5	11	6	5
Recorded complaints – Sub-Committee convened	0	1	1	0
Complaint received and not recorded	1	0	3	0
Recorded - Ongoing	1			

- 3.2 In the 5 cases where the complaint was recorded, the Regulations were disappled 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 this period the Complaints Sub-Committee was not convened to consider and resolve any complaints as no complaint was recorded and passed to the PCP for further action.

3.4 The above data shows **a decrease** in the number of recorded complaints made against the Commissioner, albeit to a similar number to that in 2021-2022. Information from other Panels suggests that the number of complaints (recorded or otherwise) against the Kent Commissioner is in an average range when compared with other Commissioners.

4. Recommendation

4.1 That the Panel notes the contents of this report.

5. Contact Details

Gaetano Romagnuolo
Research Officer - Overview and Scrutiny
Governance, Law and Democracy, Chief Executive's Department
03000 416624
gaetano.romagnuolo@kent.gov.uk

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To: Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel

Subject: Annual Report 2023/24

Date: 10 October 2024

Introduction:

1. Attached at Appendix A is the Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report for 2023/24.
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 2023 and 31 March 2024 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 2023 - 2024



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Commissioner's Introduction

As your Police and Crime Commissioner, it is my privilege to present the Annual Report for 2023/24, my eighth year in office.

The role of Police and Crime Commissioner covers a wide range of duties across policing, criminal justice and community safety, but the cornerstone is public engagement informing effective scrutiny. Through a comprehensive programme of visits and events I engaged with residents and businesses, listening to what they had to say, and holding the Chief Constable to account.

In this capacity I am delighted to report that Kent Police continued to improve its public call handling performance, with its national ranking for 999 calls answered in under 10 seconds improving from 28th in April 2023, to 2nd in March 2024. Importantly, this means the public are now receiving the service they expect and deserve. The Force also worked incredibly hard to address the areas for improvement identified in HMICFRS' most recent PEEL inspection, such as how it stores problem-solving plans and shares good practice. With some already discharged, I am confident progress will continue serving only to strengthen Kent Police's capabilities.

In 2023/24 Kent Police introduced a new Neighbourhood Policing Model. At its heart is early intervention and effective engagement with every Ward having a named police officer. Whilst it has taken time to fully resource, feedback has been positive, and I am confident that it will deliver a better policing service to the communities of Kent and Medway.

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, and I will continue to press for action that makes a difference locally and nationally.

With the support of my office, I was successful in securing additional funding of £3.2m for my commissioning budget. This enabled me to: provide support to victims of sexual violence and domestic abuse; help organisations to manage increased demand due to delays in the justice system; and to deliver services for young people at risk of youth violence and criminal exploitation. I also issued grants to the Community Safety Partnerships so they could support the priorities in my [Making Kent Safer](#) plan.

Kent is a high performing force, but I know they could achieve more with extra funding. Every penny is precious, and I will ensure Kent taxpayers get value for money. I also give you an assurance that I will continue to press for a funding formula that is fit for purpose to secure the funding and resources necessary to protect local communities – now and in the future.

Finally, I would like to thank every Kent Police officer, Police Community Support Officer, member of staff and volunteer for their tireless efforts during 2023/24. 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 keep it under constant review. PCCs also have a duty to consult victims and the wider community on their priorities.

On 1 April 2022, I published '[Making Kent Safer – April 2022 to March 2025](#)'. It sets the priorities for Kent Police, partners and my Office, as well as the overall strategic direction of policing and community safety in the county to March 2025.

I have taken the decision to formally refresh my plan annually and am committed to encouraging feedback from as many of the 1.9 million people living in the county.

As a result, my Annual Policing Survey ran from July to November 2022. I received a total of 2,964 responses, and opposite is a precis of the results.

I would like to thank all those who took the time to have their say on policing and crime in the county.

However, the survey was only one element of the consultation; it also took account of correspondence received by my Office, feedback from engagement events, emerging local threats and national guidance.

As a refresh, the plan was updated where necessary but not fundamentally altered. The consultation found strong support for the priorities (Q3) and the issues respondents felt were most important were consistent with the previous year (Q16).

My refreshed plan was considered and supported by the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel. The plan was published on 1 April 2023.

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 trust and confidence.

Q3. Do you agree with the priorities set for Kent Police?	
	% strongly agree or agree
Prevent crime & ASB	92.7
Tackle violence against women & girls	85.7
Protect people from exploitation & abuse	86.1
Combat organised crime & county lines	90.2
Be visible & responsive to needs of communities	90.4
Prevent road danger & support Vision Zero	74.2
Protect young people & provide opportunities	77.2

Q4. How safe do you feel where you live? (1 = very unsafe / 10 = very safe)

- Respondents felt 7.2 / 10 safe where they live

Q5. Have you been a victim of crime in Kent in the last year?

- 17.9% indicated 'Yes'

Q9. If you reported the crime, how satisfied were you with Kent Police?

- 21.6% very satisfied or satisfied
- 29.0% neutral
- 49.4% dissatisfied or very dissatisfied

Q16. Which of the following issues do you feel are the most important?

- Respondents could select up to six issues from a pre-defined list; the top five were:

1. Serious violence, incl. gangs / weapon offences
2. Sexual offences, incl. rape
3. Anti-social behaviour
4. Child sexual exploitation
5. Burglary / Robbery

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 my Office 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:

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.

- Tackling nuisance vehicles is a priority for the force and joint enforcement activity was planned throughout its 'Safer Summer' campaign. During 'days of action' it used a mixture of high-profile patrols, technological tactics such as drones and static cameras to bear down on repeat offenders and locations that regularly suffered from the problem. Kent Police was also the first force to use the Athena Problem-Solving Platform, allowing it to link data much more effectively and share it quickly with partners to achieve better outcomes.

Delivering results: *In August 2023, the force conducted a planned response to the anti-social use of vehicles in Medway. This resulted in:*

- 6 Section 59 warning notices being issued
- 2 vehicle seizures
- 1 person being reported for having no insurance
- 1 arrest for a racially aggravated public order offence
- 2 drug searches and 2 seizures
- 1 Community Protection Warning being issued
- 12 Intelligence reports being submitted

- From 16 October 2023, led by the National Business Crime Centre, Kent Police participated in 'Safer Business Action Week'. Examples of the impact include:
 - Proactive joint patrolling across the county with Local Council Enforcement teams such as Trading Standards as well as British Transport Police.
 - Over 75 premises visited in Maidstone alone; provided crime prevention advice and proactive interventions targeted at more vulnerable locations.
 - Over £3,000 worth of items recovered from proactive overt and covert patrolling with shoplifters detained in the act.
 - License visits conducted across the county and targeted operations such as that in Dartford, which advised local stores on selling alcohol to street drinkers due to concerns about ASB.

• 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.

- Kent Police engaged with over 7,000 women and girls to understand what it is like to live, work and socialise in the county. Events included: 40 Walk & Talks allowing officers to walk with women and girls to see the local area through their eyes; VAWG engagement events where members of the public and wider stakeholders could engage directly with the force; and engagement through sporting events, a Taylor Swift cinema event and Alice in Wonderland themed afternoon tea party.
- Kent Police adopted Project Vigilant, a nationally recognised tactic to identify predatory behaviour in the night-time economy - the aim being to prevent sexual offending by challenging individuals observed as being a potential risk. Officers and staff were trained and deployed throughout the year. Information obtained during the deployments was collated, and where the force could evidence a pattern of behaviour, it sought to secure civil orders that would prohibit individuals from behaving in ways that could cause harassment and distress to women and girls.

Delivering results: *Plain clothed officers observed a male in Canterbury acting suspiciously. He was seen to approach two women outside a restaurant. Following a brief interaction, he walked away. Uniformed officers spoke to the women. One of the females informed officers that the male had made lewd comments towards her. Based on the report, the male was arrested.*

• 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.

- Due to its geographical location, Kent acts as a gateway to and from the continent which organised criminals use for trafficking and exploitation. The Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking (MSHT) Team are part of the collaborated Serious Crime Directorate (SCD). They focus on developing intelligence and proactively targeting those criminals and Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) involved in the exploitation of vulnerable people, specifically with regards to MSHT and organised immigration offences.

Delivering results: A father (originally from Syria) kidnapped his four children from social services care in Austria. The children were brought across the Channel in a small boat and intercepted by Border Force who alerted Kent Police to a potential kidnap reported by the Austrian authorities. The defendant was charged and subsequently pleaded guilty to 1 x entering the country illegally and 4 x facilitation offences relating to the children.

- Fraud remains the most commonly experienced crime and accounts for over 40% of all crime in England and Wales. From forgery to misuse of funds or credit card scams, fraud perpetrators are increasingly finding new ways to trick people out of their money. In 2023/24, Kent Police continued to investigate offences of fraud, money laundering, economic crime, and cyber-crime.

Delivering results: SCD officers took part in an operation with warrants executed across the Southeast. This led to numerous arrests for suspected fraud, including:

- a 60-year-old man in the Maidstone area in connection with misuse of company funds;
- a 74-year-old man in East Sussex for allegedly forging a signature on legal papers relating to a house sale in Sevenoaks; and
- a 33-year-old man for alleged credit card offences, including a chargeback fraud around 28 tickets to a Kent tourist attraction; and

● **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. They investigate the county line activity which carries the greatest threat risk and harm and target those who supply controlled drugs.

Delivering results: In October 2023, investigators learned Ricardo Cain was travelling from Penge to Swanley to supply class A drugs. Officers found the 24-year-old used a specific phone number to send texts offering the drugs to local users. When officers raided his home, he was found inside with £250 in cash; he also threw heroin and wraps of crack cocaine out of a window, which were recovered. Cain, who was already on licence for a drug-dealing offence, was arrested. The drugs were estimated to have a street value of between £500 and £1,120. Cain was charged with being concerned in the supply of crack cocaine and heroin and pleaded guilty at Maidstone Crown Court. He was sentenced to 4 years in prison.

- The Serious Organised Crime Team has continued to pursue those offenders that cause the most threat, harm and risk, targeting 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. Such crimes have a significant impact on the public; OCGs ruthlessly target the most vulnerable, ruining lives.

Delivering results: In July 2023, an operation was launched to target a drugs supply network in the east of the county. A range of tactics were deployed, leading to the identification and targeting of David Allen, a 54yr old man from Marden. The investigation identified a container near Allen's home address which proved crucial in uncovering his criminality. On 27 July, officers arrested Allen before executing warrants which led to the recovery of 64kg of amphetamine, 1.2kg of cocaine, 33,000 diazepam tablets, £73,000 in cash, a large quantity of syringes, 2 firearms, various high-value watches, and other items. Allen was charged with a number of indictable offences and pleaded guilty at the earliest opportunity; he was sentenced to 6yrs imprisonment.

● **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.

- The new Neighbourhood Policing Model was launched in June 2023 and consists of Beat Officers, Neighbourhood Taskforces, Child Centred Policing Teams, the Rural Taskforce, and a Prevention Hub. A phased uplift in resources was planned to September 2024, with the first four phases of resourcing delivered by 31 March 2024. Whilst the model saw a reduction in PCSO posts, every Ward will have a named police officer and a higher proportion of resources will be owned at District level.

Delivering results: A report was received of a male wearing a balaclava, on an e-bike causing significant ASB in a town centre and a danger to road users. It was suspected the male was also using the e-bike to supply drugs. The Neighbourhood Taskforce conducted research and identified the male and his address. They conducted several operations to target and disrupt his activity and executed a warrant at his address, recovering the e-bike, drugs, cash, a Taser, and other weapons. The offender was charged and remanded with the Beat Officer providing reassurance patrols and engaging with those affected.

- 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. Investment from the Integrated Care Board has also improved provision including the launch of the crisis line 111 option 2, Safe Havens across Kent including two co-located within A&E departments and a new crisis house to avoid formal admissions. Whilst work continues, it has resulted in better outcomes for vulnerable people through a significant reduction in the use of police s.136 powers of detention:

2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
2,050	1,745	1,136	835	781

• **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.

- Kent Police is committed to supporting Vision Zero, the partnership road safety strategy that seeks to eliminate road deaths. The Vision Zero approach is incorporated into the daily business of the following teams: Roads Policing Unit, Roads Safety Unit, Serious Collision Investigations Unit, Safety Camera Team, Special Constabulary Roads Policing Unit and Community Speedwatch.

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Delivering results: A multi-agency enforcement operation with the Roads Policing Unit, DVSA, HMRC and local authority Licensing Officers resulted in:

- 4 arrests for drug driving, offensive weapon plus other traffic offences
- 13 immediate vehicle prohibitions
- 13 delayed vehicle prohibitions
- 4 untaxed vehicles
- 4 mobile phone penalties
- 2 driver hour offences
- 12 seatbelt penalties
- 6 no insurance/MOT
- 1 overweight vehicle and 3 vehicle seizures

- On a daily basis the force continued to focus on those offences that have the most impact on road deaths. The following table summarises prosecutions by officers and the Kent & Medway Safety Camera Vans during 2023/24 compared to the previous year.

	Speed	Distraction	Seatbelt	Impairment
2022/23	22,004	1,493	1,172	3,521
2023/24	26,627	1,595	1,436	3,656
Difference	+4,623	+102	+264	+135

• **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.

- In 2023/24, an innovative, trauma informed child sexual exploitation joint training pilot project between the University of Kent and Kent Police was developed and delivered to investigators. The package followed the story of two young girls, Robyn and Molly, with officers interactively moving through the incident and investigation whilst trainers introduced topics such as childhood trauma, push and pull factors, the AWARE principles, victim blaming language and CPS advice. Around 100 officers across Missing Child & Exploitation Teams and Vulnerable Investigation Teams attended, with the course being well received by attendees and attracting national interest.
- The force increased the number of officers and staff working in the Paedophile Online Investigation Team (POLIT) to combat online child abuse. The new staff went through a comprehensive training programme and have access to enhanced welfare arrangements designed to support staff in roles where they are routinely exposed to trauma. In POLIT this is particularly acute due to the amount of indecent material they must view and the depravity of offenders they deal with.

Delivering results: A suspect repeatedly sent indecent images to two children. Despite receiving several replies, clearly stating their ages and that they were at school, he continued to bombard them with messages, urging them to engage in sexual activity and requested they send him indecent images. He also made efforts to meet one of them in Sevenoaks, where he planned to carry out abuse on a train. At Maidstone Crown Court, he admitted two counts of attempting to engage in sexual communication with a child and three counts of attempting to cause a child to engage in sexual activity and was found guilty despite a denial of a further charge of attempting to arrange or facilitate the commission of a child sex offence. He was jailed for seven years and upon release will be subject to an indefinite sexual harm prevention order. He was also added to the sex offender register for life.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) supports me in discharging my statutory responsibilities and delivering my manifesto, as set out in the Police and Crime Plan.

The staff do not change with the election of a new PCC and are politically restricted. This means they are not allowed to support me, as the incumbent PCC, or any other candidate to stand for election or become involved in party political work on my behalf.

The OPCC is a separate organisation to Kent Police, and therefore staff also have no operational policing responsibilities.

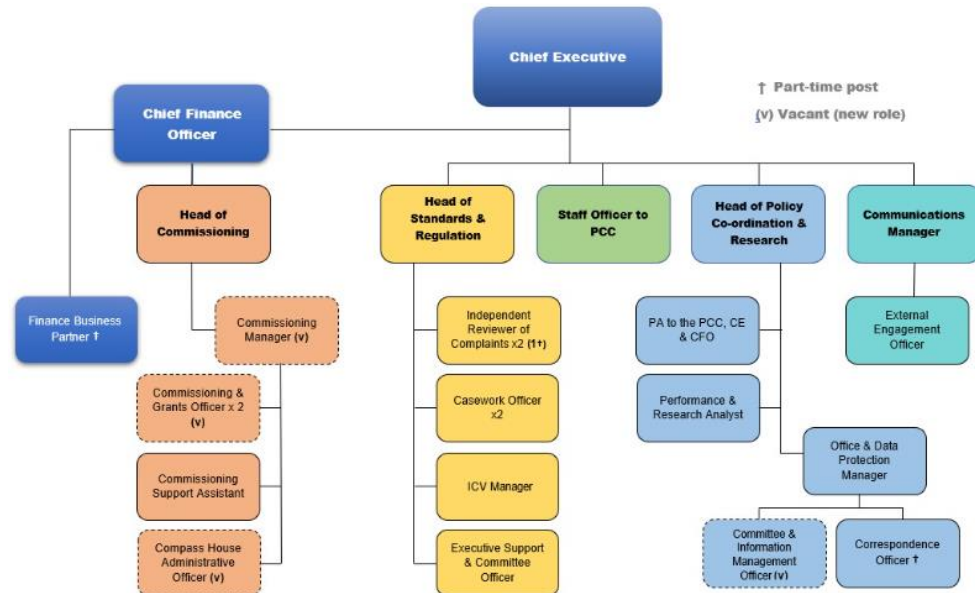
There are two statutory roles within the OPCC:

- the Chief Executive who leads the office and is responsible for all the staff; and
- the Chief Finance Officer who is responsible for the financial strategy and ensuring good value for money.

In addition, the OPCC senior leadership team consists of the following:

- Head of Standards and Regulations;
- Head of Commissioning;
- Head of Policy Coordination and Research;
- Staff Officer to the PCC; and
- Communications Manager.

The structure of the OPCC is shown below:



With 25 established posts, the OPCC is smaller than many offices around the country. However, its contribution in terms of holding Kent Police to account on behalf of the public, supporting victims of crime and improving community safety should not be underestimated. For example, in 2023/24, my Commissioning Team was successful in securing a total of £3,172,439 in additional funding from central government to ensure new and existing services could be supported across Kent and Medway.

In supporting me, the team operates under the 'seven principles of public life'. These principles were set out by Lord Nolan in 1995 and apply to anyone who works as a public-office holder. The seven principles are:

- Accountability
- Honesty
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Selflessness
- Openness
- Leadership

The OPCC is committed to providing value for money. In 2023/24 there was no increase in the cost of running the office, with the budget being maintained at £1.5m – the same level as in 2017. This was just under 0.4% of Kent's total, annual policing budget.

In 2023/24, the OPCC received:

- Over **5,000** pieces of correspondence via email, online through the website or in hard copy. This included requests for information, invitations to meetings/events, members of the public wishing to complain about Kent Police and promotional/sales material.
- Of which, **3,300** were casework requiring a response from my Casework Officers. A high proportion were members of the public wishing to make a complaint about Kent Police and therefore referred to the Kent Police Professional Standards Department (PSD). Examples of other issues raised include: the processing of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks; the processing of firearms licensing applications/renewals; the use of e-scooters/e-bikes on roads and pavements; and the XL-Bully dog legislation.
- **230** requests from members of the public for an independent review into how their complaint against Kent Police was handled by PSD.
- **70** Freedom of Information Act requests and **20** Subject Access Requests.

My commitments as PCC:

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 corporate [@PCCKent](#) X account (formerly Twitter) had 11,500 followers, and interactions on the platform averaged at about 1,000 views per post. The number of people following the OPCC on [Instagram](#) grew to 855, and the [Facebook page](#) increased its reach to 911 followers. Videos were posted on the OPCC [YouTube](#) channel with the most popular content, including clips from my quarterly Performance and Delivery Board meeting, being viewed up to 1000 times. My office also utilised [Nextdoor](#) which has more than 350,000 members, with posts viewed regularly by in excess of 20,000 people. The OPCC and I also continued to engage via the website and a regular [e-newsletter](#) was circulated to more than 5,000 subscribers, almost 450 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 Tunbridge Wells, Maidstone, Bluewater and on the Isle of Sheppey. I have also attended various Parish Council, Women's Institute, Rotary Club and Public Meetings. In addition, I joined students at the Medway Freshers Fair and visited the Gravesend Gurdwara, Thanet Synagogue and Margate Mosque.

Visiting charities the OPCC supports is equally important and this year I met with representatives from a wide range, including: SATEDA and DAVVS, both charities supporting victims of domestic abuse (DA); Choices Support, a charity that supports autistic people, people with learning disabilities and/or mental health needs; Dandelion Time, a charity that supports children who have suffered traumatic experiences; and SignHealth, a service that supports deaf people to lead independent, safe and healthy lives.

A number of the charities were also invited to join the OPCC in our marquee at the Kent Police Open Days in July 2023, which was attended by over 15,000 people.

Following the launch in February 2023 of my Victim Voice pamphlet which is designed to help victims of crime find the support and help they may need, I have continued to raise awareness and delivered presentations to a range of groups. It has also been promoted widely via social media and the OPCC website, where [further information](#) is available.

Hold all agencies to account for delivery of an effective and efficient criminal justice system

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

As my principle means of holding the Chief Constable to account, Performance and Delivery Board meetings were held on 7 June, 13 September, 29 November and 28 February 2024. Examples of topics discussed include:

Neighbourhood Policing Review: In light of the financial challenges and changes to the policing landscape and core neighbourhood policing (NHP) guidelines, the Chief Constable determined it was the right time to remodel NHP in Kent.

The force conducted extensive consultation and engagement with officers and staff, and the Business Case was one of the largest and most impactful on the

workforce for many years. The new model saw an uplift in police officer numbers and a reduction in police staff posts.

The new model consists of the following: Beat Officers, Neighbourhood Taskforces, Child Centred Policing Teams, the Rural Taskforce, and a Prevention Hub. At its heart is early intervention and effective engagement with every Ward having a named police officer.

The force formally moved to the new model on 7 June 2023, and to avoid impacting on other functions aims to be up to establishment by September 2024.

Throughout the review I took a particular interest in the welfare of those officers and staff affected, and since implementation have received regular updates on progress. This will continue in 2024/25 as the force moves to a fully resourced model.

Call handling: In 2022/23, Kent Police's 101 non-emergency call handling performance deteriorated, with an increase in unanswered calls and the time callers were waiting. The force took immediate action to address this, and also developed a longer term programme of strategic transformation. Whilst by March 2023 performance had improved, I made it clear to the Chief Constable that I expected 999 and 101 call handling performance to be maintained and would continue to receive updates at my Performance and Delivery Board.

In 2023/24, the average abandonment rate for 999 calls was 0.35%, a marked improvement compared to the previous year's 1.29%. The average time taken to answer also steadily improved over the course of the year and for the month of March 2024 was 2 seconds. As a result, Kent Police's ranking nationally also improved: in April 2023, it was 28th for average answer time and calls answered and in March 2024 it was 1st and 2nd respectively.

Similarly, 101 performance improved significantly with 91.25% of calls answered compared to 66.61% in 2022/23. The average time to answer also improved, reducing to 1 minute 6 seconds from 7 minutes 19 seconds the previous financial year.

I would like to congratulate Kent Police for making a real step change in performance and thank all the officers and staff involved for their hard work .

PEEL 2023-25: In holding the Chief Constable to account I am not solely reliant on data, but also consider other feedback, including independent assessments of performance.

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 November 2023, HMICFRS published the [Kent PEEL 2023-25 inspection report](#) – this is an overview of the graded judgements:

Outstanding		
Good	Preventing crime	Police powers & public treatment
	Protecting vulnerable people	Disrupting serious organised crime
	Developing a positive workplace	Leadership & force management
Adequate	Managing offenders	Tackling workforce corruption
Requires improvement	Investigating crime	Responding to the public
Inadequate		

I was pleased HMICFRS found that solved rates were increasing, and whilst Responding to the public was graded 'Requires improvement', it was evident at the time of the inspection that 999 and 101 call handling performance was already improving.

HMICFRS also agreed that 14 of the 19 Areas for Improvement (AFIs) issued in the previous PEEL inspection could be closed, with the remainder being superseded.

Overall it showed a more positive outlook for Kent Police, but two areas being graded 'Requires improvement' was disappointing and the force clearly needed to do more to improve outcomes for victims.

In response to the 14 AFIs issued by HMICFRS, the force developed an Improvement Plan and I received regular updates on progress at each Performance and Delivery Board.

Over the course of the year the Force made good progress in addressing the AFIs, self-assessing a number as discharged. Moving into 2024/25, this work continues.

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

Police Complaint Reviews

Following changes to the police complaint system in February 2020, the OPCC is one of two 'review' bodies (along with the Independent Office for Police Conduct) to which members of the public may appeal after they have complained to Kent Police and had a response from the PSD.

Subject to the nature of the complaint, it is the role of the OPCC to determine whether the handling of the complaint was reasonable and proportionate; and if not, to make recommendations to Kent Police to redress any concerns. This may

be that Kent Police apologises to the member of the public, through to the identification of process failures that need to be addressed. It is not a reinvestigation of the complaint itself though, as this is not within the PCC's remit.

In 2023/24, the OPCC received 230 requests for an independent review into how a complaint had been handled by Kent Police. Of those:

- 35 were upheld;
- 76 were not upheld, with a further 62 not upheld but points fed back to PSD;
- 15 were out-of-time (the Act places a 28-day limit on complainants to request a review unless there are special circumstances to justify an extension);
- 26 did not have sufficient information to enable a review;
- 13 were passed to the IOPC as the correct review body;
- 2 were withdrawn by the complainant; and
- 1 request was held in abeyance awaiting the grounds for the review.

Custody Detention Scrutiny Panel

In 2023/24, the Association of PCCs, and National Police Chiefs' Council (with Home Office, Ministry of Justice and Independent Custody Visitors Association support), contacted all PCCs and Chief Constables, with an expectation that all areas create and implement Custody Detention Scrutiny Panels (CDSPs).

It was recognised that scrutiny of custody was limited to either infrequent, large scale inspections - such as by HMICFRS - or regular, more limited review by Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs). Therefore CDSPs were to provide a more frequent, in depth review of custody and the practices within suites by:

- assessing and reporting on detention and custody processes;
- reviewing and advising on matters of disproportionality; and
- assisting in generating a transparent product suitable for public consideration at the end of each annual Panel cycle.

In Kent, the meeting is co-chaired by the OPCC Chief Executive, and one of the ICV Panel Coordinators. It includes representation from Kent Police, the Independent Advisory Group, both Appropriate Adult organisations, ICVs as well as OPCC staff. The meeting scrutinises data from custody, looking at the numbers detained, broken down by sex, ethnicity, age and vulnerability; complaint outcomes; and ICV quarterly reports.

The Panel has received updates on Kent Police's response to Inquest outcomes, and information on key issues such as staffing and training. It also recently produced a report on the treatment of detainees with mental health issues.

Wider criminal justice system (CJS): 2023/24 was my sixth year as chair of the Kent Criminal Justice Board (KCJB). The Board brings together chief officers from criminal justice (CJ) agencies and wider partners and has responsibility for overseeing CJ across Kent and Medway with the purpose of delivering effective, efficient and fair justice.

Over the last year the Board has focused on doing all it could to limit the increase in outstanding caseloads in both Magistrates and Crown Courts, which continued to rise resulting in ever longer delays to justice. With the increase in police officer numbers, work entering the system is simply greater than the wider CJS can manage. Kent also remains short of key resources including Judiciary, Magistrate Court Legal Advisors, Prosecution, Defence Counsel and Court Probation Officers, contributing to a lower than required number of courts sitting.

With Kent a national priority for Judicial cover and new recruits across agencies coming on board, there is some optimism that the increase in caseload numbers will slow and perhaps fall slightly going forward. However, the fact remains that Kent is nowhere near being in a position to enter a period of sustained recovery.

Maidstone Crown Court remains a critical issue; it is accepted the court does not have the physical capacity to manage the volume of work. This is a priority for HMCTS, and findings are awaited from a review into whether extra courtrooms can be added within the confines of the current site.

Increased case numbers and delays to justice have dramatically impacted the force's Victim and Witness Care Unit. Despite an increase in staff numbers the team remains under immense pressure to manage the volume of work required to update victims and witnesses along with increased anger, upset and levels of attrition from victims.

Through the KCJB, work continued on delivering efficiency improvements including maximising the use of Out of Court Disposals which increased significantly, along with delivering early guilty pleas and reducing avoidable adjournments. 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 Ministry of Justice (MoJ) personnel to raise the recruitment issue in Kent and across the Southeast, including the need for a Southeast allowance. Unfortunately, until the staffing shortages are addressed, delays to justice will not improve.

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 Home Office (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. The aim of the VRU is to develop a public health, preventative approach to serious violence across the county. Its work is carried out in line with the HO's 'All Systems Approach', and the elements that underpin it are:

- Driving and coordinating a multi-agency response to serious violence.
- Sophisticated data sharing.
- Involving young people and communities.
- Commissioning and delivering evidence-based activities and evaluating those activities where an evidence base does not yet exist.

The VRU identifies what is driving violent crime through the sharing of data. Using this model, it is better able to understand which partners are best able to support with a prevent or protect response.

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 the VRU is an evidence-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.

In 2023/24, the VRU has worked with young people and used their feedback to address issues in places where they felt most at risk. The young people have also provided support by designing resources for campaigns. This work used a place-based approach to drive a contextual safeguarding response to harm, and focused on building strengths in individuals, families, communities, and spaces.

The VRU commissions county-wide and locally designed services to deliver its prevention and intervention approach. In some cases, this is supported through my Commissioning budget. In 2023/24, examples included:

- Sports Connect, who to date have engaged with over 2,000 young people aged between 11 and 24 across eight districts. The programme creates bespoke sessions based on the needs of the area and the young people in attendance. It offers 1:1 mentoring and coaching sessions and delivers the Level 1 Sports Activator in Multi Skills course to increase social value and improve employment opportunities. Boxing sessions have also been rolled out and seen fantastic engagement.
- Catch 22, co-commissioned with my own Commissioning budget this delivered both preventative and protective interventions, supporting those up to the age of 25 at risk of exploitation 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. These responsibilities, coordinated through the OPCC, enable me to use my convening powers to chair the Board meetings which support its development, implementation, and the sharing of best practice.

The VRU was chosen as the lead to create and agree a Strategic Needs Assessment and Strategy which were both finalised and published in January 2024. The three main strands of the Strategy are:

- Serious Youth Violence – A 0-25 Approach (Board lead – KCC)
- Sexual Violence (SV) and DA (Board lead – Kent Police)
- Violence linked to Drugs and Alcohol (Board lead – Medway Public Health)

The Board leads have developed detailed plans for these strands to establish the actions required by the specified authorities in 2024/25.

Young Peoples Prevention Service (£75,000)

This was commissioned during 2022/23, with the service commencing on 1 October 2022. It is a 3-year contract to September 2025 with the option to extend.

The service provides age-appropriate messages to children and young people (C&YP) to support them make better, informed choices by highlighting risk factors which can increase the likelihood of a negative outcome. This approach also supports C&YP by showing them how they can de-escalate situations to help keep themselves and others safe.

Targeting C&YP aged 9 to 14 years, the service is delivered by two separate providers who cover the following topics:

- Collaborate Digital: Healthy Relationships (attitudes, behaviours, and safety), Online Harms and Cyber Safety and Cyber Bullying.
- St Giles Trust: Gangs, County Lines, Violence, Knife Crime and Criminal Exploitation.

Outcomes

Between September 2023 and January 2024, Collaborate Digital:

- *Delivered interactive assemblies and media workshops in 33 schools across North Kent – 18 primary and 15 secondary schools. To complete work commissioned earlier in the year, they also delivered to a further 3 primary and 5 secondary schools.*
- *The assemblies covered the most relevant and up-to-date information on online harms and the impact on young people. They highlighted Kent case studies to emphasise the message and described potential consequence. In the workshops, students were guided through a creative writing process in which they researched and produced scripts for short podcasts as a way of ensuring their understanding of the material.*
- *Of 629 surveys completed by students, the majority strongly agreed or agreed they had enjoyed the workshop, learnt new information and were more aware of issues around online harms.*

- *Positive feedback was also received from teachers stating the young people found the assemblies and workshops to not only be highly relevant, but an easy, enjoyable way to engage with the topic.*

Between September 2023 and July 2024, St Giles Trust:

- *Delivered 46 workshops across North Kent, reaching 5,276 young people.*
- *Delivered 5 workshops in professional settings, with another 4 scheduled for the end of July 2024.*
- *Feedback from school staff reflected a strong overall satisfaction with the student sessions.*
- *After attending workshops, teachers reported feeling more empowered to support their students with exploitation issues. They also felt better equipped to identify the signs and indicators of young people involved with gangs and county lines.*

Gangs and County Lines Preventative and Protective Interventions (£350,000)

This was commissioned in 2021, with the service commencing on 1 July 2022. It is a 3-year contract to 30 June 2025 with the option to extend.

The service is funded through the VRU funding I am allocated and my commissioning budget.

It provides age-appropriate, trauma informed, needs led support to 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.

During 2023/24, Catch22 extended provision to Maidstone whilst continuing to cover West Kent, Medway, Thanet, Swale, Canterbury and Ashford.

Outcomes

In 2023/24:

- *The service received 168 referrals, with 59.8% of the C&YP having complex needs.*
- *17 out of the 168 referrals were female – an increase of 10.1% on the previous year.*
- *18 C&YP successfully re-entered an education setting and 3 were referred to Catch22's Maidstone Skills Centre.*
- *100% felt more confident in their ability to make positive changes in their life and 90% felt safer because of the support provided by Catch22.*

Home Office Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Interventions Programme (£801,367)

In August 2021, my Commissioning team and I were successful in securing funding from the HO to implement DA and stalking perpetrator programmes in Kent. Delivery was focused on developing a coordinated response to DA and stalking perpetrators, with a focus on managing risk and ensuring the wellbeing and safeguarding of victims and their children. We were successful in securing funding for a further two years enabling the programme to continue until 31 March 2025.

Delivery is a collaborative approach between Interventions Alliance, Kent Police, Look Ahead and Victim Support. It provides the following:

- Intensive multi-agency case management to coordinate and sequence interventions for perpetrators, their victims, and their children.
- Early Response to provide targeted motivational, denial and minimisation work to increase engagement with programmes. This is supported by the Challenging Unhealthy Relationships Beliefs and Behaviours Programme (CURBB).
- Two 1:1 behaviour change interventions; Healthy Relationships (HR) and Compulsive Obsessive Behaviour Interventions (COBI). HR is based on cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) and COBI is based on dialectical behaviour therapy (DBT).
- Victim Protection and support delivered by a Victim Link Worker (Qualified IDVA) in line with Safelives Standards, a Step-Down Worker, and the Stalking Advocacy Service.

Outcomes

In 2023/24, the programme:

- Received 51 referrals and conducted 25 assessments.
- 17 individuals completed the programme and 3 partially completed it. The reasons for non-completion were assessed resulting in additional training for staff.
- A total of 147 victims (plus children) were supported.
- The Step-Down Worker provided extended support to victims whose ex-partner/partner withdrew support, and to those who required further assistance with housing, benefits, and budgeting, even after completing the service. As a result, the time spent in service increased from the standard 180 days to an average of 300 days.
- Referrals were also made to counselling/therapy sessions and there was positive engagement with the 10-week Phoenix Programme resulting in improvements in self-care and DA awareness.
- The Project Mirabel questionnaire indicated a 61% reduction in perpetrator risk for those completing Healthy Relationships and a 44% increase in awareness of attitude and behaviours.

Cookham Wood – Haven 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. It concluded in 2023/24 when a safe exit was managed for those being supported.

Delivery of the project highlighted the challenge of young people being able to identify as victims. Alongside this, they were reluctant to engage in victim support on release, mainly because they had a lot of licence conditions they had to adhere to, so adding more requirements was a barrier.

Outcomes

In 2023/24, of the Kent individuals supported:

- 40% reported an increase in their wellbeing score, with 60% remaining the same.
- 80% reported a reduction in violent behaviour.

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 funding is provided to support them deliver against the priorities set out in my Making Kent Safer plan.

Total allocated spend for 2023/24 across the 14 CSPs was £558,385, and £828,889 was allocated to other statutory partners or providers such as Kent Youth justice Team, the Kent and Medway Drug and Alcohol Partnerships and Crimestoppers.

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.

Examples of the types of projects delivered include:

- Gravesham CSP - 'Aloud to laugh' delivered by The Gr@nd Project
There were 4 'Aloud to laugh' music/entertainment events held in 2023/24 with 1,540 young people engaged.

The events were held at Blakes Nightclub in Gravesend with music provided by Capital Xtra 'DJ Teeshow'. Whilst billed as a 'social event', the events provided a useful opportunity to engage with young people about a range of personal safety issues, including hate crime, DA and VAWG. As well as raising awareness, the events helped to build confidence and trust in young people so they feel empowered to report and seek help should they experience issues.

- Maidstone CSP 'Safety in Action' delivered by Project Salus CIC
Safety in Action' (SIA) is an interactive multi agency event to which Year 6 children are invited to learn about some of the dangers they may face as they become more independent and prepare for transition to secondary school. The event covers a number of scenarios and aims to support the pupils to become responsible young adults, free from peer pressure and capable of making the right decisions to keep themselves, family, and friends safe.
In 2023-24, SIA was delivered to over 5,000 pupils, with 1,551 year 6 pupils attending the event from Maidstone.
- Thanet CSP 'Knife Crime Programme
This is part of Thanet CSP's school offer, including Pupil Referral Units, and is run with small groups through to large assemblies. Run in schools throughout Thanet, it aims to increase understanding on the dangers of carrying a knife, the impact of knife crime and build confidence and knowledge as well as empathy and positive decision making.
In 2023/24, 9 schools received the input with over 900 pupils engaged.

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Be responsive to emerging issues and trends through innovation

Operation Voice

Kent Police focuses on the offences that are most likely to contribute to death and serious injury on our roads, including speed, the use of mobile phones, seatbelts and impairment through alcohol or drugs. They also deal with drivers for other offences including no tax and insurance.

Tackling road danger is also a priority for me which is why I was pleased to secure £100,000 funding from the Department of Transport to run a pilot initiative involving officers from the Roads Policing Unit stopping drivers who had a history of violence towards women and girls.

The activity took place in December and focused on drivers in Ashford, Chatham, Gillingham, Margate, Ramsgate and Dover.

A number of drivers stopped had a history of prior offending, including for violence against women and girls and drug driving. As this initiative proves, roads policing also has other applications and can be used to target a multitude of offenders to make the county's roads and neighbourhoods safer.

The initiative has continued into 2024/25 at various locations around Kent.

Outcomes

83 stops conducted resulting in:

- *55 Traffic Offence Reports or Graduated Fixed Penalty Notices.*
- *Ten drivers arrested for being impaired.*
- *Three vehicles seized.*

MoJ Local Integration of Women Services (£118,197)

In October 2022, Kent Police and the OPCC submitted a collaborative bid to the MoJ to develop a Whole System Approach to 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; in total £208,954 for 2022/23 to 2024/25.

As a result of the funding Kent Police have recruited a temporary Women's Justice post to lead on the creation of a Women's Justice Strategy for Kent, with a focus on proportionality in CJ outcomes and understanding root causes of offending. Through the established Women's Forum in Kent and Medway, links have been made with a number of providers and agencies to map the current support offer for women across a range of topics including homelessness, debt, education, recruitment, DA, and mental health.

Outreach has initially been focused on the custody environment, speaking to women, and understanding the range of needs they require support with. An

advocacy offer has been developed with a provider who will deliver the single point of contact for all women (aged 18+) who have additional support needs identified or have been issued with a police caution.

Safer Streets Fund 5 – Protecting Public Spaces

The HO launched the fifth round of the Safer Streets Fund in July 2023, with a focus on: tackling neighbourhood crime (domestic burglary, robbery, theft from person, vehicle crime); ASB; VAWG in public places, including inside night-time economy (NTE) venues; 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, three districts were identified and evidence-based bids developed. I was successful in securing funding for all three bids, totaling £1.4 million over the period 1 July 2023 to 30 September 2024.

Below are examples of activity delivered in each area:

Folkestone & Hythe – Folkestone Central Ward (£149,440)

- Provision of 24/7 monitoring of Folkestone Town Council CCTV network through a collaborative agreement with Swale Borough Council.
- Active Bystander Training, with 77% of participants stating they were 'very likely' to recommend to a friend or colleague.
- VAWG Training and Contextual Safeguarding Training, with most attendees strongly agreeing or agreeing they now had a better understanding of VAWG, where to get help and how to provide support.
- Engagement with 839 C&YP in more than 10 locations through youth outreach. Issues identified included drugs, alcohol, violence and sexual activity.
- Removal of graffiti and litter every week supported by the Town Sprucers.
- Development of a Safe Routes Scheme, now known as Folkestone Connected, to be delivered during 2024/25. Includes a Safe Taxi Scheme and improvements to the taxi ranks.
- Purchase and distribution of 50 Hollie Guard Apps to vulnerable women and girls.

Swale – Sittingbourne & Sheerness Town Centres (£154,686)

- Active Bystander Training, with 77% of participants stating they were 'very likely' to recommend to a friend or colleague.
- In Partnership with TMS Protection, Street Marshals patrolling Sheerness and Sittingbourne High Streets and surrounding areas during school holidays.
- Purchase and installation of a booster aerial for Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP).
- Target hardening of empty premises attracting ASB, including permanent shuttering and fences.

- Purchase of 17 CCTV cameras - 6 re-deployable and 11 to be installed across the Borough.
- Youth outreach to challenge behaviour and perceptions of young people regarding ASB and VAWG. Two youth centre sessions each week and outreach at The Skate Park in Sittingbourne. Sessions also after school to promote the Vibe Youth Club, with attendance increasing by 61%.
- Additional lighting and environmental improvements in parks.

Medway – Chatham Town Centre (£118,006)

- New CCTV cameras installed to the rear of the High Street.
- Training planned for door and security staff in VAWG, drink spiking and welfare / vulnerability. Will commence in 2024/25.
- Youth Outreach including in Chatham and Luton and gaming sessions to support young people explore their consequential decision making. Positive feedback received on these activities.
- Environmental improvements, including removal of graffiti and fly-tipped rubbish. 875 total jobs for the period October 2023 to March 2024, with 16.2 tonnes of rubbish removed. 163 pieces of evidence also recovered to support future fly tipping investigations.
- Community outreach to raise awareness around VAWG particularly. Talks provided by Kent Police and KFRS on VAWG and safety in the NTE. Provision of promotional materials and safety items such as purse tags, card and key protectors, high-visibility key chains and waist bags, as well as information on the Hollie Guard App and how to be safe online.

Youth Survey

In April 2023 I launched an online survey to understand the online and offline experiences of young people.

The survey link was circulated to all schools and colleges in Kent by email, as well as youth groups and police cadet units.

All information was provided anonymously to encourage honesty and to protect the privacy of those taking part.

In total 4,400 responses were received revealing:

- 29.1% had been bullied online (up from 18% five years ago).
- Of those bullied online, 53.7% had told a parent /guardian, 44.1% a friend, but 22.1% told no-one.
- 90.5% of those bullied online still used the App on which the abuse took place and 56.9% knew the culprit.
- 11.5% had bullied someone online.
- 26.2% had been bullied, picked on or harassed on their way to or from school/college.

The results showed how important it is to educate young people about online safety and what constitutes a healthy relationship and appropriate behaviour. Young

people's lives are dominated by Apps and social media and so it is important to arm them with the tools they need to protect themselves.

As a result of the survey, and because of their ability to open the door to honest conversations with young people, the Collaborate Digital schools' programme was extended.

The [Survey Report](#) can be found on the OPCC website.

Victim Voice

I continued to promote my Victim Voice scheme which highlights 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. 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 have not reported the incident.

[Victim Voice](#) was updated in 2023/24 to ensure it remained accurate and current and can be accessed via the OPCC website. I also delivered Victim Voice presentations to groups and at meetings all over the county.

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

As PCC, all funding for policing in Kent and Medway comes through my office including that which I give to the Chief Constable to deliver policing. I have always argued that the funding formula is out of date and inherently unfair on some PCC areas; Kent is one of those areas.

There was no clearer representation of this than the distribution of government funding for the 2023/24 pay award. As funding was allocated based on the existing funding formula and not on actual police officer numbers, one area with 900 fewer officers than Kent Police received approximately £12.0m more in funding.

I sent a letter to the then Chancellor, Jeremy Hunt for consideration ahead of the Autumn Statement 2023 requesting; the implementation of a new formula to be brought forward; for PCCs to receive a power of competency to enable revenue generating opportunities; and continued funding for BlueLight Commercial to explore further possibilities to save revenue across policing nationally.

Throughout the year, I have actively raised this issue at national forums and meetings including through the Association of PCCs (APCC). My Chief Executive (CEX) and Chief Finance Officer (CFO) have also fed into regional discussions and national mechanisms via the Association of Policing and Crime Chief Executives (APACE) and the Police and Crime Commissioners Treasurers' Society (PACCTS). In addition, my CFO and CEX, along with the force's CFO have held regular meetings with HO officials to discuss funding issues and the unique challenges of policing the county. I am also grateful for the support of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel who wrote to the Government to highlight the inequity in the funding formula.

The previous Government's plans to review the Police Funding Formula were effectively 'timed' out' due to the General Election in July 2024. The new Government has launched a Comprehensive Spending Review to be announced in Spring 2025, so work on the funding formula is still on hold. However, my senior OPCC staff and I will continue to engage with Ministers and officials to set out the case for Kent to ensure the review is not forgotten and the county receives a fair share of national police funding.

Notwithstanding the issues with core government funding, funding opportunities do arise during the year, and I have been successful in bidding for additional funding.

My Commissioning team are tasked with identifying and applying for funding opportunities and attracted £3,172,439 of additional funding to my Commissioning budget for 2023/24 to deliver victim services, Safer Streets, and DA perpetrator interventions.

The services I commission, and grant fund range from community-based organisations that provide diversionary activities through to multi-year contracts that provide support to victims regardless of when the crime took place or if it was reported to the police. The additional funding was for specific service delivery during the year and meant the Commissioning budget was 93% greater than in 2015/16.

The force also continues to attract funding outside of government, although these funds tend to be time limited or specialist posts which means recruitment can be difficult. I have challenged the Chief Constable to maximise the use of external funding, and I monitor and scrutinise this on a regular basis.

Support volunteering

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

The purpose of the Cadets is not to recruit police officers of the future, but to encourage the spirit of adventure and good citizenship.

- The Senior Cadet programme is for young people aged 13 to 18 years and provides opportunities to develop life skills and prepare for future careers both within the police and other professions. As at 31 March 2024, there were 390 Senior Cadets located at 12 units across Kent and Medway.
- Whilst not every force has a Junior Cadet programme, it offers those aged 11 to 13 years an opportunity to learn about the police and get involved in supporting the local community. As at 31 March 2024, there were 39 Junior cadets located at units in Maidstone and Dover.
- The Mini Cadet programme is open to those aged 8 to 11 years and is run through primary schools. It is designed to teach about good citizenship and concentrates on building self-esteem as well as breaking down barriers with the police. With funding from the OPCC, since its launch in April 2021, over 80 schools have enrolled and more than 800 children taken part.

I am 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 2024, there were 182 Special Constables who volunteered over 70,000 hours of policing in 2023/24.

Introduced in 2018/19, Community Police Volunteers (CPVs) provide direct support to specialist policing teams and help maintain a police presence in local communities. As at 31 March 2024, there were 62 trained CPVs who volunteered over 6,000 hours in 2023/24.

As at 31 March 2024, Kent Police also had 84 Police Support Volunteers in roles which made good use of their skills. Examples of work undertaken include provision of administrative support in various departments, vehicle maintenance and role-playing for student officer training.

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

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

I would 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

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 2023/24, ICVs conducted 196 visits to custody suites and engaged with 630 DPs.

Areas of good practice identified by ICVs included:

- Distraction items – the range available including headphones and inner ear protectors for those with sensory issues, chalk boards on the walls and books in a number of different languages for different reading levels. North Kent's vulnerability room has comfortable chairs, books and multiple distraction items for those who need a break from their cell.
- Inclusivity items – the creation of picture cards for those DPs who may be non-verbal, unable to speak English, or with other challenges such as learning disabilities or autism to help them indicate their needs, concerns or general mood. Provision of the Rights and Entitlements in braille for those with sight loss, alongside an Easy Read version already available. The use of double handled 'Sippy' cups for those who may struggle to hold a normal cup due to health issues or shaking from being under the influence.

Areas requiring improvement identified included:

- Staffing – on several occasions ICVs noted that suites were running at minimal staffing levels, with no resilience. The Kent Police custody team submitted a report to the Chief Constable requesting more staff and included the ICVs concerns. An uplift in custody staff has been agreed and the force has a plan; the ICVs will continue to monitor staffing levels as it is implemented.
- Inspector reviews – ICVs found several instances where Inspector reviews were late, often with no reason given as required under PACE. Additionally, they found occasions where the DP was sleeping at the time of the review and there was no evidence in the custody record to suggest the detainee was informed of the outcome.

Overall, ICVs found the care to be excellent, with staff focused on the dignity and wellbeing of DPs.

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 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 2023/24 core commissioning budget consisted of a grant of £2,237,093 from the MoJ to deliver services to support victims. However, my Commissioning team worked hard to secure additional funding from central government and were successful in securing £1,830,742 to increase the provision of DA and SV victim support services.

All services and projects funded, regardless of whether they are contracts or grants are subject to oversight and governance by my Commissioning Team. This is to ensure they operate to an appropriate set of standards and the impact of delivery can be fully recognised.

Governance is proportionate to the level of funding provided but it is important that any service or project operates effectively and to the benefit of those accessing it. In addition, my commissioning processes and governance are subject to independent audit which enables learning and improvements to be identified.

My Commissioning Team also respond to any complaints raised about funded services or projects, with a recent example resulting in funding being withdrawn.

Victims Funding

I received several different funding streams from the MoJ for the delivery of services that support victims of crime. They consisted of the following:

- Victim Services Core Grant
- DA/SV Funding
- Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) /Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) Baseline Funding (700)
- ISVA/IDVA Additional Funding (200)
- ISVA/IDVA Additional Funding 23/24 (50)
- Male Rape Support Service Fund. (MRSSF)

The above funding streams were allocated through application processes which assessed the evidenced need, reach, delivery approach, impact, and cost of each proposal.

The following are examples of the organisations and services funded in 2023/24:

- Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse (AAFDA) (£23,421) - 1 to 1 advocacy and peer support for those bereaved by suicide or unexplained death linked to DA and Domestic Homicide Reviews.

Supported 8 families with 100% reporting they were better able to cope and build resilience to move forward with daily life.

- DA Volunteer Support Services (DAVSS) (£52,668) - to deliver the Support to Court Project for DA victims in West Kent engaged in civil and criminal court processes. Also the provision of advocacy support and a High Needs Coordinator.

- Brake (£40,325) – support for family members of those killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions.

My team worked with Brake and Kent Police to change the referral mechanism to an opt-out process which resulted in a greater number of road victims and their families being able to access support. In one case Brake was supporting several different members of a family following a road death. All the family members were referred by Kent Police’s Family Liaison Officers.

○ Received 124 referrals, of which 21 were onward referred for additional mental health support.

○ Of those supported, 87% reported they were better able to cope and build resilience to move forward with daily life.

- East Kent Rape Crisis Centre (EKRCC) (£219,075) - 1 to 1 therapy and family counselling for victims of sexual abuse (SA). Provision of an Adolescent ISVA, a combined ISVA / IDVA, a Student ISVA and a Child ISVA specialising in complex mental health issues. Collaboration with Family Matters to increase support capacity for men and boys who had experienced rape or SA at any point in their lives.

- Choices Support (£36,289) - delivery of the Jigsaw Hate Crime Project to support hate crime victims with learning disabilities, mental ill health and autism.

○ Supported 59 victims, with 4 feeling empowered to report the crime to police during or following engagement with the service.

○ Compared to 2022/23, referrals and engagement increased by 65%.

○ Of those supported, 100% reported they were better able to cope and build resilience to move forward with daily life.

- Kent Integrated DA Service (KIDAS) (£259,800) - provision of 4 IDVAs, 2 Outreach Workers and an IDVA in East Kent to support young people impacted by DA.

- Rising Sun DV & Abuse Service (£189,311) - to provide 1 C&YP Trauma Informed Worker and 1 Young Women’s Trauma Informed Mentor to support those impacted by DA, 1 IDVA Manager and 2 IDVAs to support those experiencing DA and SA living in unstable accommodation, at risk of homelessness or homeless and with multiple needs. Funding for a women’s counselling project in Canterbury, Ashford, Folkestone, and Hythe.

Of 133 individuals supported, 26 felt empowered to report the crime to police during or following engagement with the service.

- Oasis DA Service (£129,912) - provision of 2 IDVAs to increase capacity within the Medway Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (MIDAS) and to pilot a Connections IDVA focused on engaging with the Asian community in Medway.

- Daisy Chain (£47,475) - provision of a pro-bono legal advice service for DA victims not eligible for legal aid. Support with documentation related to special measures in court, non-molestation orders and child related orders.

Supported 601 victims, of which 103 needed additional support and were onward referred to appropriate services.

- Rubicon Cares (£76,489) - provision of 1 to 1 trauma counselling for victims of all crime, regardless of whether the crime was reported to the police.

- Dandelion Time (£70,517) - a nature-based charity providing therapeutic services and support to children and families impacted by the trauma of DA and SA.

To support increased demand, introduced weekend sessions and offered telephone assessments rather than face to face where suitable. Also piloted an engagement programme with schools’ pastoral staff.

53 individuals reported they were better able to cope and build resilience to move forward with daily life.

- SATEDA (£132,113) - to increase capacity in the following services: Support to Court, Therapeutic Support, Outreach and IDVA provision, including for C&YP.

- Sign Health (£72,447) - provision of 1 IDVA to support Deaf victims of DA through BSL or other communication methods and 1 Young Persons Violence Advocate (YPVA) to support Deaf victims of DA aged 8 to 18 years.

- The Mary Dolly Foundation (33,580) - provision of online therapeutic support for adult and C&YP victims of DA and SA.

Key outcomes against all victim services funded in 2023/24 include:

- 102,736 victim referrals, with 102,479 supported. A 4.3% increase in the number of victims referred and a 2.2% increase in the number supported. All services reported increased complexity in cases, with cost of living adding to this, alongside long wait times for specialist support such as trauma specific therapy and delays within the CJ system.
- 4,420 DA victims, both adults and C&YP were supported by 16 specialist DA services.
- 2,965 SV victims were supported, both adults and C&YP across 2 specialist SV support services. Additional funding increased the number of ISVAs resulting in 318 more victims being supported and 72 feeling able to report to the police after engaging with support services.
- Of those supported, 87,833 had reported the crime to the police prior to engagement with a service and 891 felt empowered to do so following engagement. Overall, this was a 1.3% decrease in the number of victims reporting to the police across the victim services from 2022/23.
- The main reasons for not reporting included: fear it would make the situation worse; existing distrust of police; lack of confidence in the police and CJS; fear of not being believed; fear of repercussion; previous experience of lack of contact / updates from the police; and fear of being judged.
- 6,966 victims reported they were better able to cope and build resilience to move forward with daily life following engagement with a service.

Victims Contracts

In addition to the examples outlined in the previous section, I have several contracts that have been commissioned to provide the core offer of support to victims across Kent and Medway.

- **Kent Advocacy and Support Service** (£1.1m)

This was commissioned during 2022/23 and the service commenced on 1 April 2023. It is a 4-year contract to 31 March 2027 with the option to extend.

It is delivered by Victim Support and provides a trauma informed, needs and risk led approach. The service is available to all victims of recorded crime resident in Kent and Medway, including C&YP regardless of when the crime took place or if it was reported to the police.

Support is also available to close relatives (spouse, partner, relatives in direct line, siblings, and dependants of the victim) particularly those aged 18 years and under.

Specific delivery requirements for the service are:

- The provision of initial referral and triage for all victims accessing support, this includes supporting the Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) and Medway Integrated Domestic Service (MIDAS) by providing referral and triage for DA victims.

- Provision of short and long-term support to victims in the immediate aftermath of crime, or when support is accessed to help them move forward with their lives.
- Advocacy support for specific groups (e.g. Stalking and Hate Crime).
- Short or long-term support to standard and medium risk DA victims should they choose to remain with the service.
- Direct support for C&YP.

Outcomes

In 2023/24

- A total of 91,222 referrals were received – an average of 22,805 per month – with 73,245 contacted and offered support.
- Support provided included practical (e.g. provision of security items), emotional, safety planning and safeguarding. It also included information on the CJS, the rights of those with protected characteristics, restorative justice, and advocacy with statutory and non-statutory agencies.
- Improvements were seen in all outcomes measured by the distance travelled survey for victims engaged in the service. The survey tracks their position at the start and end of support against the following six outcomes: ability to cope; experience of the CJS; feeling informed; perception of safety; reintegration; and wellbeing.

- **Kent Restorative Justice (RJ) and Mediation Service** (£267,700)

This was commissioned during 2022/23 with the service commencing on 1 October 2023. It is a 4-year contract to 30 September with the option to extend.

It is delivered by Restorative Solutions and provides a trauma informed, needs and risk led approach. The service is accessible to all victims of recorded crime resident in Kent and Medway, regardless of when the crime(s) took place. Provision was extended from the previous contract to include mediation and Adolescent to Parent Violence and Conflict (APVC) interventions. This followed learning and feedback which identified the need for consistent provision in these areas.

The service delivers in the interest of all individuals involved, but is victim led, which at no time should lead to increased risk. Specific risk assessments are conducted for harm related cases such as DA and SA to ensure the risk to the victim is not increased, and delivery is by staff with enhanced training.

The service consists of the following elements:

- Direct, indirect, and informal RJ interventions.
- APVC interventions.
- Mediation processes for repeat and persistent neighbour and community based ASB and crime issues.

The service has experienced some challenges engaging with HM Prisons; in 3 out of 4 cases referred between January and March 2024, they were unable to obtain

permission to progress the case with the offender. This can negatively impact on victims as it is a barrier to delivering a direct RJ outcome.

Outcomes

From 1 October 2023 to 31 March 2024:

- 180 referrals received – 67 for RJ, 50 APVC and 10 Mediation.
- 70% of all referrals were closed with an RJ outcome, which equates to 114 interventions being facilitated.
- The conversion rate for APVC was 100%.
- Of feedback surveys completed, 4 reported satisfaction with the RJ process, 3 reported an improvement in being able to cope with aspects of everyday life and 7 parents reported satisfaction with the APVC intervention.

Case study

Referral to the RJ service by the Youth Justice Team, following an incident where an object was thrown and caused damage. The victim was vulnerable due to several factors and was extremely shaken. The harmer was identified as a young person who may not have considered the impact of their behaviour.

RJ provided a platform for the victim to speak with the harmer and for their wider family to be aware of the incident. Restorative Solutions held a meeting with the harmer via their Early Help worker. It was established that they had already started working on a letter of apology, but RJ provided an opportunity to help them learn from the victim about the impact of their actions. The harmer expressed regret and remorse, considering how their own family may have felt if in the same situation.

The victim felt that it had been useful to talk about what happened and felt well supported through the process.

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

This service was commissioned during 2017/18 and commenced on 1 April 2019. It was a 3-year contract to 31 March 2022 with the option to extend. The service was due to be re-commissioned in 2023/24, but due to funding uncertainty the contract has been extended for 12 months from 1 April 2025. Re-commissioning will now commence in 2025.

The service is delivered by Family Matters and provides support to victims of rape and SA across Kent and Medway regardless of when the crime took place or if it has been reported to the police. The service supports both adults and C&YP, including their close family members if needed. It provides dedicated ISVAs who deliver independent support, advocacy and impartial advice and information. The service also provides specialist counselling for those that have experienced rape and SA, which can be accessed with or without ISVA support. Most referrals are received from Kent Police and the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (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 be further impacted by funding uncertainty beyond 31 March 2025. To support the management of demand, Family Matters extended their helpline service to include support sessions for those clients on the waiting list and for family members needing additional specialist support.

Outcomes

In 2023/24:

- 716 ISVA, 255 Child ISVA and 831 therapy referrals received – a 29% increase on 2022/23.
- 27% of clients seen by the ISVA service were 17 years or under and 44% aged between 19 and 35.
- 9% of ISVA clients had not reported the crime to the police at the time of engagement but requested support to do so.
- Only 14% of ISVA and CISVA cases ended up going to trial.
- Feedback from client satisfaction surveys indicated the support improved overall health and wellbeing, the ability to manage close relationships and connections with loved ones, and the capacity to cope.

Quotes from clients

- *Every week has gotten easier, and things are now better with her help. She has given me the strength to believe that things will be ok. I owe her a lot.*
- *I feel I'm much better at speaking with my friends and family and everyone else. I used to run away from people. It has been great for me.*
- *I feel a lot better. I feel a lot calmer and settled with a lot of things, and just a lot more able to cope with emotions and communicate them.*
- *I feel a lot better; my ISVA was my point of contact for everyone, which was really helpful.*
- *My ISVA stayed with me from start to finish, the continuity was brilliant. My ISVA is very good at what she does and is very down to earth, It made it so much easier for us knowing she was there, especially at court.*

- Family Welfare Service

This was commissioned in 2021 and is delivered by Victim Support.

It is a bespoke offer, providing tailored support and specialist interventions for close relatives impacted by the offending of David Fuller. It provided a 24/7 support line in the initial stages of notification to the families impacted and at significant points during the CJ process.

During 2023/24 the service continued to provide case worker led support and access to specialist therapeutic services. It has provided much needed and valuable support to the families impacted and has therefore been extended to 31 October 2024.

- Appropriate Adult Service (£250,000)

This service was commissioned in 2022 and commenced on 1 October 2022. Initially a 2-year pilot, the contract has been extended until 31 March 2025.

The service is delivered by The Appropriate Adult Service (TAAS).

Appropriate Adults (AAs) were introduced under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) to safeguard and reduce the risk of miscarriages of justice.

AAs must support all juveniles (aged under 18) and vulnerable adults, as defined by PACE Code C who are detained in police custody or attend voluntary interviews as a suspect, and they must be independent from policing. The service ensures the rights, entitlements, welfare, and participation of those detained or attending a voluntary interview, in custody or a non-custody setting, are effectively safeguarded.

Outcomes

- *October 2022 to September 2023, TAAS provided AAs to 2,705 individuals eligible to receive the service (2,379 vulnerable adults and 326 juveniles).*
- *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 56% of adults and 41% of juveniles stating the support was excellent.*

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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 the national policing capabilities needed to counter them. 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. With the addition of VAWG to reflect the threat presented to public safety and confidence, the 2023 SPR sets out seven national threats. They are as follows:

- Violence Against Women and Girls
- Serious and Organised Crime
- Terrorism
- Cyber
- Child Sexual Abuse
- Public Disorder
- Civil Emergencies

In April 2022, prior the revised SPR, I published my Making Kent Safer plan which included VAWG as a priority for the Chief Constable. My office also ensured that consideration was given to the other threats when developing the plan, and it also forms part of the annual refresh process.

The Chief Constable is responsible for having due regard to both the Police and Crime Plan and the SPR when exercising their functions, and I hold the Chief Constable accountable for doing so through my governance arrangements.

VAWG is a strategic priority for Kent Police with a strong governance and reporting structure in place and clear alignment to the national delivery framework. Best practice developed for rape and serious sexual offences – through Operation Soteria – has been implemented and the force overachieved on the national requirement to train staff to the rape investigation improvement standard. It engaged with over 7,000 women and girls, including through 'walk and talk' events that allowed officers to experience the local area through their eyes.

Kent Police adopts the 4P approach to tackling Serious and Organised Crime and it was another productive and successful year. The collaborated SCD's Serious and Organised Crime Unit made 111 arrests, executed 60 warrants, laid 49

charges and saw offenders receive a total of 3,103 months in court sentences. A strong relationship also exists with the Eastern Region Special Operations Unit (ERSOU) to build intelligence, identify organised crime groups and provide a cohesive response to the highest threats.

Strong national and regional collaboration via ERSOU and other blue light services exists to respond to the threat of terrorism with a real focus on prevention and preparedness, as well as regular assurance activity. This includes Armed Response Vehicle training, and exercises to test the command and control function as well as plans for responding to a Marauding Terrorist Attack.

Kent Police has a dedicated Cyber-crime Unit that investigates cyber dependent and cyber enabled crime, and works closely with digital forensics. Cyber Protect and Prevent officers engage with victims of cyber-crime and carry out proactive work with individuals, groups and organisations. The force has also developed expertise in cryptocurrency to support investigations and assist asset recovery, and continually seeks to keep up with the latest digital and technological advances.

Child Centred Policing is at the heart of the force's Control Strategy and it has clear allocation policies which ensure child SA and exploitation cases are allocated for investigation by specialist officers. Paedophile online investigation teams (POLIT) manage the force response to online child sexual exploitation and in 2023/24, the force increased the number of officers to further enhance its investigative capability. The OPCC also commissions a number of services to support child victims.

Kent Police has an experienced Public Order capability to respond to spontaneous and planned events, with appropriate and relevant training provided throughout 2023/24. It also has effective methods of community engagement and tension monitoring through local policing teams and the capacity and capability to respond to mutual aid requests received via the National Police Coordination Centre.

The response to Civil Emergencies is coordinated through the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) formed under the 'Civil Contingencies Act 2004'. The LRF is a multi-agency partnership made up of representatives from local public services, including the emergency services, local authorities, the NHS, the Environment Agency, and others. Throughout 2023/24, the force worked closely with the LRF to prepare for emergencies and participated in a programme of joint exercises and training.

I am confident I have given due regard to the seven threat areas in my role of holding the Chief Constable to account. I am equally assured that Kent Police has sufficient capacity and capability to meet the responsibilities outlined in relation to the national threats.

National Crime and Policing Measures

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

The [Beating Crime Plan](#) was the Government's strategy to do this; it made 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 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 used year ending December 2019 as a baseline.

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

Reduce murder and other homicides

In 2023/24, there were 18 murders and other homicides; an increase of 20% (or 3) on the previous year.

Reduce serious violence

Firearms offences (excluding 'Air Weapons')

In 2023/24, there were 113 offences classified as Gun crime; an increase of 2.7% (or 3) on the previous year.

Knife related offences

- Data from the NHS regarding u25 admissions for assault with a sharp object is not available.
- The VRU monitors knife enabled Serious Violent Crime for under 25s. In 2023/24, there was a 20% decrease compared to the previous year.

Violence with injury

In 2023/24, there were 17,227 offences; a decrease of 4.6% (or 832) on the previous year. Compared to the December 2019 baseline of 19,768 offences, a decrease of 12.8% (or 2,541).

Robbery

In 2023/24, there were 1,084 offences; a decrease of 14.0% (or 177) on the previous year. Compared to the December 2019 baseline of 1,949 offences, a decrease of 44.4% (or 865).

Disrupt drugs supply and county lines

In 2023/24, there were 5,141 drug offences; an increase of 6.5% (or 315) on the previous year. Compared to the December 2019 baseline of 3,552 offences, an increase of 44.7% (or 1,589).

[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 decreased by 0.7% (or 14) on the previous year; and increased by 88.6% (or 977) on the December 2019 baseline.
- Possession of drugs (excl. Cannabis) increased by 29.3% (or 212) on the previous year; and increased by 59.5% (or 349) on the December 2019 baseline.
- Possession of Cannabis increased by 6.1% (or 122) on the previous year; and increased by 14.2% (or 263) on the December 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 2023/24, there were 15,967 NHC offences in total; a decrease of 4.1% (or 675) on the previous year. Compared to the December 2019 baseline, a decrease of 35.9% (or 8,947).

- Personal robbery decreased by 13.9% (or 166) on the previous year; a decrease of 42.6% (or 759) on the December 2019 baseline.
- Theft from the person decreased by 3.9% (or 41) on the previous year; a decrease of 27.3% (or 375) on the December 2019 baseline.
- Vehicle crime decreased by 1.6% (or 153) on the previous year; a decrease of 31.5% (or 4,359) on the December 2019 baseline.
- Residential burglary decreased by 6.6% (or 315) on the previous year; a decrease of 43.6% (or 3,454) on the December 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 2023/24, there were 70 online related offences where the victim was an organisation; a decrease of 38.6% (or 44) on the previous year.

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

Kent Police conducts three satisfaction surveys:

- DA - in 2023/24, overall victim satisfaction was 90.9%; an increase of 2.5 percentage points on the 12 months to March 2023 (88.4%).
- Hate Crime - in 2023/24, overall victim satisfaction was 87.5%; an increase of 4.8 percentage points on the 12 months to March 2023 (82.7%).
- 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 2023/24, 98.4% of victims felt that officers treated them with dignity and respect; an increase of 4.8 percentage points on the previous 12 months.
 - In 2023/24, 93.3% of victims felt they had been treated fairly throughout the case; an increase of 4.2 percentage points on the previous 12 months.

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 either delivered, or is on the path to delivering the Policing Vision 2025.

Whilst funding nationally remains difficult, the force has continued to increase its accessibility and visibility with the introduction of a new Neighbourhood Policing Model that forms 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 2023/24, I am satisfied that Kent Police embraced new legislation such as the Investigatory Powers (Amendment) Act 2024 for the benefit of protecting local communities and keeping the county 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'.¹

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 2023/24, a total of 26,941 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.

¹ 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.

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Nextdoor: Kent PCC

To: Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel

Subject: HMICFRS PEEL 2023-25 – update

Date: 10 October 2024

Introduction:

1. One of the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC's) key duties is to be democratically accountable for the provision of an efficient and effective police force by holding the Chief Constable to account.
2. However, the PCC does not judge progress based on targets as he recognises that they can skew behaviour and that often, despite Kent Police's best efforts, it is not always possible to protect the public or bring offenders to justice. The PCC does though consider other feedback, including His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) reports, other independent publications, anecdotal examples of frontline service delivery and feedback from staff and local communities.
3. Further to the report that was submitted to the 6 February 2024 Panel meeting, this paper provides an update on Kent Police's progress in addressing the findings from HMICFRS' PEEL 2023-25 Inspection and how the PCC continues to hold the Chief Constable to account.

Background:

4. HMICFRS independently assesses and reports on the efficiency and effectiveness of police forces and fire & rescue services – in the public interest. HMICFRS asks the questions that it believes the public wish to have answered, and publishes the answers in an accessible form, using expertise to interpret the evidence and make recommendations for improvement.
5. PEEL (police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy) is HMICFRS' regular assessment of police forces in England and Wales. HMICFRS use inspection findings, analysis and professional judgment to assess how good forces are in several areas of policing.
6. The core questions that make up the PEEL assessment do not remain the same for each cycle of inspections. They adapt to changing priorities and circumstances; for the 2023-25 cycle they were as follows:
 - How good is the force's service for victims of crime? (This question is not graded)
 - How good is the force at treating the public fairly, appropriately and respectfully?
 - How good is the force at preventing and deterring crime, ASB and reducing vulnerability?
 - How good is the force at responding to the public?
 - How good is the force at investigating crime?
 - How good is the force at protecting vulnerable people?
 - How good is the force at managing offenders and suspects?
 - How good is the force at disrupting serious and organised crime?
 - How good is the force at building, developing and looking after its workforce and encouraging an ethical, lawful and inclusive workplace?
 - How good is the force at leading and managing its services to make sure they are efficient, effective and sustainable?
 - How effectively does the force vet its officers and staff?
 - How effectively does the force protect the information it holds and tackle potential corruption?
7. It should be noted that due to changes in the assessment criteria and approach to inspection, HMICFRS make it clear that it is not possible to make direct comparisons between the grades awarded in the 2023-25 cycle and those from previous PEEL inspections.

PEEL 2023-25 – An inspection of Kent Police:

8. On 17 November 2023, HMICFRS published Kent’s inspection report – the [full report](#) can be viewed on their website.
9. The inspection assessed how good Kent Police is in 11 areas of policing and HMICFRS made graded judgements in 10 of these. They also inspected how effective a service Kent Police gives victims of crime, but do not make an overall graded judgment.
10. The findings followed eight months of continuous assessment consisting of document and data requests, chief officer interviews, strategic interviews, focus groups with frontline staff, extensive reality testing and a Victim Service Assessment requiring the review of a number of calls for service, investigations, and subsequent outcomes.
11. The following is an overview of HMICFRS’ graded judgements in the 10 areas of policing:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires	Inadequate
	Preventing crime	Managing offenders	Investigating crime	
	Police powers & public treatment	Tackling workforce corruption	Responding to the public	
	Protecting vulnerable people			
	Disrupting serious organised crime			
	Developing a positive workplace			
	Leadership & force management			

12. As a result of the inspection, the force received 14 Areas for Improvement (AFIs).
13. While the AFI in respect of improving the recording of victim’s protected characteristics from the previous PEEL Inspection was not referenced due to ongoing national work, the force carried this forward. As a result, the total number of AFIs is 15.
14. Although crime recording was not assessed, Kent Police’s grade of ‘Outstanding’ from the previous PEEL 2021/22 inspection still stands and so the force continues to lead the field nationally with one of the highest levels of accuracy.

Progress Update:

15. As reported previously, following the inspection, Kent Police created an Improvement Plan. Progress is monitored at the Future Improvement and Development Board chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable and Chief Officer Management Board chaired by the Chief Constable.
16. While HMICFRS will not formally sign off AFIs until the next PEEL assessment (due to commence in 2025/26), the force maintains regular engagement and where appropriate, provides evidence in support of early closure. As a result of evidence provided, the following three AFIs were recently reviewed by HMICFRS and closed because of the positive progress:
- The force doesn’t always answer emergency calls quickly enough.
 - The force needs to reduce the number of non-emergency calls the caller abandons because they aren’t answered.
 - The force needs to make sure that call takers give appropriate advice on the preservation of evidence and crime prevention.
17. The force has also self-assessed two AFIs as discharged - the development of serious organised crime (SOC) local profiles and the introduction of a disproportionality panel to monitor and respond to vetting decisions.

18. Work on the remaining 10 AFIs continues, with extensive workstreams for each. Attached as Appendix A is a summary of current progress prepared by Kent Police.

Holding to account:

19. The PCC acknowledges the appearance of two areas being graded 'Requires Improvement' and that there is work to do to improve outcomes for victims, but also that overall the inspection shows a more positive outlook for Kent Police.

20. The PCC is also pleased that three AFIs have already been closed by HMICRS and reassured that the remaining AFIs are being progressed, as evidenced by Appendix A.

21. Through his quarterly Performance & Delivery Board, the PCC continues to monitor the AFIs closely and holds the force to account for delivering their responsibilities under the Victims Code, getting the right outcomes and bringing offenders to justice. He also continues to scrutinise the roll out of the Neighbourhood Policing model so that it delivers for residents.

22. Open to Panel Members and the public on a non-participating basis and also live streamed, the meeting is chaired by the PCC 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.

23. The 'Inspections, Audits & Reviews' paper routinely reports on HMICFRS activity and regularly includes updates on progress against the force's Improvement Plan.

24. Progress updates are also reported at the [Joint Audit Committee](#) and the PCC continues to hold the Chief Constable to account via their regular weekly briefings. In addition, he receives bespoke updates from the force and is represented at the periodic Chief Constable Oversight Boards by his Chief Executive.

25. Whilst the PCC recognises that the force has work to do to ensure it consistently provides a first-class service, he would like to thank the officers, staff and volunteers of Kent Police for their continued diligence and dedication to service and doing their best for local neighbourhoods and victims of crime.

Recommendation:

26. The Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel is asked to note this report and agree to a further update at their February 2025 meeting.

HMICFRS PEEL 2023-25 – progress update

On 17 November 2023, HMICFRS published their PEEL inspection of Kent Police. Following publication, the force put in a place a plan to progress the 14 areas for improvement (AFIs) issued by HMICFRS. The AFI in respect of improving the recording of victim's protected characteristics issued in PEEL 2021/22 was not referenced in the most recent report however the force has carried this across into the improvement plan to ensure continued monitoring. This brings the total number of AFIs to 15. Details of all the gradings are provided below.

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
	Preventing crime	Managing offenders	Investigating crime	
	Police powers and public treatment	Tackling workforce corruption	Responding to the public	
	Protecting vulnerable people			
	Disrupting serious organised crime			
	Developing a positive workplace			
	Leadership and force management			

HMICFRS will not formally sign off AFIs until the next PEEL assessment due to commence in 2025/26 however continued engagement takes place and where appropriate evidence is provided to request early closure. This has been the case with three AFIs recently reviewed by HMICFRS which have been closed as a result of the positive progress made in respect of answering 999 calls, 101 attrition and providing crime prevention and scene preservation advice to callers (further detail below). The force has also self-assessed two AFIs as discharged regarding the development of serious organised crime (SOC) local profiles and the introduction of a disproportionality panel to monitor and respond to vetting decisions.

The remaining 10 AFIs continue to progress in line with the anticipated completion dates. A summary of current progress is below.

- Victim Service Assessment Ungraded (1 AFI carried over from PEEL 2021/22)

The force continues to await the national guidance in respect of recording all protected characteristics. Gender and age are above 99% compliance. Improvements in the recording of ethnicity continue to be made however further work is needed to ensure a positive trajectory. Guidance has been provided to staff to reinforce the requirements with oversight and scrutiny to drive improvements provided by the Investigative Quality Board (IQB) chaired by the ACC Crime.

- Preventing, Deterring Crime and ASB and Reducing Vulnerability Good (1 AFI)

Problem-solving plans are now stored on the force crime recording system, providing an easy search function, and facilitating the sharing of best practice. Training has been provided to neighbourhood staff and work is underway to ensure officers and staff in wider teams such as Local Policing and Vulnerability Investigation Teams also receive this. Once this training is complete the AFI will be ready to discharge.

- Responding to the Public

Requires Improvement (4 AFIs: 3 Closed)

Following assessment in July 2024, the following AFIs have been formally closed by HMICFRS.

- **The force doesn't always answer emergency calls quickly enough.**

HMICFRS stated "the force has made sufficient process to satisfy this AFI". The force has consistently exceeded the 90% target for answering calls within 10 seconds set out by BT since January 2024.

- **The force needs to reduce the number of non-emergency calls the caller abandons because they aren't answered.**

HMICFRS reported "Twelve-month data provided by the force shows clear and maintained improvements in the way the force is able to answer 101 calls from the public. This is as a result of the work to understand and balance the availability of increased staff to answer both 101 and 999 calls from the public. Data for the twelve months to June 2024 show the 101-abandonment rate for the force is 6.01%. It is clear the force has shown sufficient progress in addressing this AFI which should now be closed down." In addition to the comments made by HMICFRS, the force has consistently had a monthly 101-attrition rate of under 5% since November 2023.

- **The force needs to make sure that call takers give appropriate advice on the preservation of evidence and crime prevention.**

HMICFRS stated "Crime prevention guidance, where appropriate, is provided at the first point of contact as part of a follow up text on most occasions and on the phone when more appropriate to do so. The Investigation Management Unit send a letter or email to all crime victims that do not receive attendance, and this includes the link to force crime prevention page. This also covers contact made via Single Online Home. In total this is in the region of 350 a day. Attending police officers will routinely provide crime prevention advice at the scene as part of victim care. Google Analytics data which monitors website traffic indicates around 30 hits on the crime prevention page per day. The Call Evaluation Team continue to dip test compliance with the provision of crime prevention advice by call takers. Scene preservation advice is provided as part of the phone call by the call taker. This is supported by pages guidance and question sets, that prompt the call taker. The Call Evaluation Team continue to test compliance with the provision of scene preservation advice by call takers. The force has made sufficient progress for this AFI to be closed."

The remaining AFI relates to the monitoring and reassessment of outstanding calls for service that require a priority of attendance. The reinstated RETHRIVE process ensures a timely response and repeated review of risk is provided. Ongoing work is taking place to ensure improvements in line with the AFI to ensure attendance is timely.

- Investigating Crime

Requires Improvement (3 AFIs)

The Investigative Improvement Plan continues to progress in line with the actions set across the four pillars overseen by the ACC Crime. The current charge rate for victim-based crime for the rolling year is over three percentage points above that referenced in the PEEL report which demonstrates the positive trajectory the force is on. Nationally, Kent is above the England and Wales average charge rate, however work continues to address the associated AFI.

Immediate action was taken when HMICFRS made the force aware of issues with the administration of outcome 21. The Data Audit Team continue to review compliance and have seen the use of outcome 21 reduce significantly which would indicate it is now being consistently and appropriately assigned.

Work continues to agree a long-term solution for recording victim need assessments (VNA) on the force crime recording system. Whilst this is awaited, improvements in recording continue as a result of training, oversight, and scrutiny.

- Protecting Vulnerable People

Good (1 AFI)

Repeat domestic abuse offenders are targeted by proactive teams who work closely with partners across several agencies to reduce offending and break the cycle of abuse. Work continues to ensure that protective orders are being considered when appropriate and this is monitored at Force Performance Management Committee chaired by the DCC. In addition, policy has been reinvigorated, and training delivered. Whilst national comparator data is awaited, the year ending data for March 2024 shows Kent as having 9.7 DVPOs per 1,000 population (up from 7.9 in the PEEL 2023/25 report). Furthermore, the force continues to use bail with conditions to safeguard victims from offenders.

- Managing Offenders and Suspects

Adequate (2 AFIs)

The force is confident that overdue active risk management system assessments are identified through supervisory reviews however the AFI from HMICFRS in this regard was noted and a formal monitoring process established to provide assurance. The Divisional Policing Review will see the management of active risk assessments aligned centrally which will further enhance the supervision and performance, at which point the AFI will be considered for discharge.

The force has introduced a new digital forensics structure which seeks to improve current performance and address the AFI given. The new structure is well established, and the 'legacy' mobile phone work is now clear. Delivery of the digital forensics' platform solution is critical to support further performance improvement and discharge this AFI, delivery is anticipated September 2024.

- Disrupting Serious and Organised Crime

Good (1 AFI: Closed)

This AFI has been self-assessed as completed and discharged by the DCC. SOC local profiles are in place. The Regional Organised Crime Threat Assessment (ROCTA) reports Kent's performance in respect of disruptions to be positive. The force is second in the region and demonstrating a marked improvement in other disruptions.

- Tackling Workforce Corruption

Adequate (2 AFIs: 1 AFI Closed)

Since the inspection took place, the force has made changes to meet the demands placed on the Force Vetting Unit as described in previous papers. This AFI remains ongoing to ensure improvements are sustained however performance is significantly improved. Consultation for the revised Authorised Professional Practice (APP) closed in March 2024 and the force awaits publication. Once published this will be reviewed to ensure the force remains compliant and consideration will be given to discharging the AFI.

The AFI in respect of monitoring and responding to disproportionality in vetting decisions has been self-assessed as completed and discharged by the DCC.

Governance

Progress of the improvement plan will continue to be monitored at the Future Improvement and Development Board (FIDB) chaired by the DCC and Chief Officer Management Board chaired by the Chief Constable to ensure scrutiny at the very highest level. In addition to FIDB, regular reporting of progress will continue take place at both the PCC Performance and Delivery Board and the Joint Audit Committee.

Police and Crime Panel - Future Work Programme – 10 October 2024**18 December 2024**

Neighbourhood Policing Review	Requested by the Panel/Offered by the Commissioner	PCC
Divisional Policing Review	Requested by the Panel/Offered by the Commissioner	PCC
Road Safety - update	Requested by the Panel/Offered by the Commissioner	PCC
Criminal Justice System – verbal update	Requested by the Panel/Offered by the Commissioner	PCC
Verbal update from the Commissioner	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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The Office of the Kent
Police and Crime
Commissioner
Sutton Road
Maidstone
Kent
ME15 9BZ



Meeting Notes

- Title:** Performance and Delivery Board
- Date & time:** Wednesday 12 June 2024
- Venue:** Clift 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)
- Apologies:**
- Ian Drysdale - Deputy Chief Officer

1. Welcome & Introduction

- Welcoming the CC and his team, the PCC expressed his thanks for the meeting papers.

2. Notes of Previous Meeting – 28 February 2024

- The notes were agreed as a true and accurate record and the following actions discharged:
 - Force to provide a briefing on progress against the PEEL Improvement Plan later in the year – scheduled for the Autumn.
 - Force to share evaluation of re-THRIVE process on all high graded calls once completed - update to be provided at Monday meeting on 17 June.
- The following action from the 7 June 2023 meeting was also discharged:
 - Force to provide the ILAS (Intelligence Lead Assessment Service) Domestic Abuse risk identification pilot results - once evaluation completed, briefing to be provided at Monday meeting.

3. Making Kent Safer Plan: Review of 2023/24

- The CC advised he would not read the paper verbatim, but pick out key points from each section.
- Work with residents, communities and businesses to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour**
- The CC reported 33 forces were now using My Community Voice which provided the ability to have private communication between the public and officers/staff. Noting the number of sign-ups continued to increase, he said it complemented other communication methods but was becoming the go to platform for communication with the public.
 - The CC highlighted the Rural Task Force's success in using Whats App, with the group now having over 1,800 members and complementing Neighbourhood Watch platforms.
 - The CC thanked the PCC for supporting a bid to the Home Office which had resulted in the Force receiving just over £1.5m for its Hotspot Response Programme. He said it would provide a whole extra layer of operational capability beyond the Neighbourhood Policing Model and other funding streams. He advised the Force would be delivering a programme of enhanced hotspot patrolling in the 25 areas over the coming year and the PCC would be kept updated.
 - Highlighting the Neighbourhood Taskforces, the CC explained they were a newish part of the Neighbourhood Policing Model built on the success of similar teams in a couple of areas but were now in every District. He said the examples in the paper were excellent initiatives and the Force needed to capitalise as much as it could on the capability.
 - Noting that all crime and victim based crime were overarching indicators of Force performance, the CC reported that in 2023/24 they were down 4.9% and 4.4% respectively compared to the previous year. He also highlighted an increase in the solved rate for both.
 - However, he said there was a need to focus on those offences that had bucked the overall trend - Theft of motor vehicle (+5.6%), Theft offences (+3.9%), Possession of Weapons (+13.6%) and Drug offences (+6.5%).

- Reporting an increase in ASB of 3.3% compared to 2022/23, the CC advised it was the first annual increase since 2020/21. Noting the largest increase was in 'Animal nuisance', he explained it was predominantly linked to the change in legislation around XL Bully dogs and the police response in terms of enforcement, seizures of animals and licensing and registration. Despite some excellent operational enforcement work, he said 'Motor vehicle nuisance' and 'Fireworks – Noise /inappropriate Use' had also increased, so specific operations were planned for the current year.
- Noting a reduction in burglary business and community of 9.7% compared to the previous year, the CC also reported that shoplifting and retail crime had increased by 19.2%. Despite national media suggesting policing had withdrawn, effectively de-criminalising shoplifting, he said the Force was focused on it. Referring to a recent media article in which Kent was highlighted as the only Force in the Southeast to have increased positive outcomes, he said there was a need to focus on organised criminality, violence and where vulnerabilities were exploited.
- In terms of burglary residential dwelling, violent crime, robbery and hate crime, the CC reported a significant reduction in recorded offences coupled with increased solved rates.
- Acknowledging that vehicle crime had reduced overall, the PCC highlighted that theft of motor vehicle had increased by 5.6%. He asked if the Force understood the reasons and how it was responding. The CC advised it mirrored the national picture, particularly around organised offending. Noting statistics suggested only one in ten vehicles were recovered whereas it used to be much higher, he said it perhaps indicated a serious and organised crime element as previously cars were stolen for enjoyment or a particular journey before being abandoned. He said the Force had investigated crime groups for organised theft of motor vehicles and it was a pattern likely to continue. Based on the increase in offences and intelligence picture, he advised it had been added to the Force's Control Strategy.
- Commenting the continuing downward trend in burglary residential dwelling was welcome, the PCC asked for an update on attendance as per the NPCC Action Plan. The CC reported 98.8% were attended in 2023/24; noting 36 were not, he said he was satisfied there were good reasons in each case. Advising it would never be 100%, he noted the data was now reported to the Home Office for inclusion in the Digital Crime and Performance Pack.

Tackle violence against women and girls

- Across the year, the CC reported a downward trend in reported VAWG and the discrete offences.
- He said the Force looked closely at domestic abuse (DA) and non DA offences, but noted that changes to the Home Office Counting Rules had impacted on historical recorded levels.
- Advising the charged rate was stable across the year at 19.9%, he reported that for non DA offences it had increased by 2% - an additional 150 offenders – which was positive. He stated it was a real focus in the current year.
- Referring to the projects outlined in the paper, the CC said he was keen for the Force to continue being innovative, highlighting in particular the Taxi Marshal scheme in Folkestone and Hythe and the use of lie detection software.
- In terms of service improvements linked to survey findings and HMICFRS observations, he advised the Force was overachieving on the training staff to the national Rape Investigation Improvement Standards under Op Soteria. He also explained that officers and staff had attended master classes to ensure they understood the standards and had the knowledge and skills to deliver against the strategy.
- The CC highlighted that Kent was either the only, or one of only a handful of forces to be graded 'good' by HMICFRS at protecting vulnerable people. He said there was no complacency and he wanted the Force to continue improving.
- The CC reported that rape offences in 2023/24 decreased by 12.3% compared to the previous year (291 less crimes) with reductions seen in both adult and child related offences. He added the charge rate was 6.9%, an increase of 1.8 percentage points on the previous year.
- He also reported a reduction of 5.7% in sexual offences; whilst positive in terms of less victims, he said it remained a focus. Referring to the Force's Divisional Policing Review, he advised at its heart was maintaining and improving the capability to respond to such harmful crime types.
- Welcoming the increase in the rape charged rate, the PCC asked if the solved rate was higher than the charged rate (i.e. whether charges were the predominant outcome). Advising rape was a crime type where the use of cautions or out of court disposals would not be appropriate, the CC said it required authorisation by a very senior officer and only in specific circumstances. The increase (22 outcomes) were all charges with the rate increasing from 4.2% in 2022/23 to 6.9% in 2023/24. Stating he would like it to be higher, he noted CJ partners also had a big part to play.

Protect people from exploitation and abuse

- The CC reported a 13.1% decrease in DA compared to the previous year (4,553 less crimes). He advised there had been a downward since the Covid pandemic era during which there were significant increases. The solved rate had increased to 9.3% from 8.7% in 2022/23, equating to 2,195 charges, 461 Cautions and 163 Community Resolutions.
- Whilst commenting it was good to see DA coming down, the CC encouraged victims to come forward and report to the police or other services so action could be taken to stop the abuse.
- Noting the increase in fraud, the CC advised it was a growing crime type with additional complexity compared to the past. He said along with other parts of the Force, the collaborated Serious Crime Directorate (SCD) provided a specific and specialist response and was a resource that a lot of other forces did not have.
- With regards to DA, the PCC asked if there was any evidence the decrease was linked to victims not reporting to the police as his commissioned services were not seeing a reduction in demand. Whilst the Force believed victims were coming forward, the CC acknowledged some may lack the confidence and encouraged them to do so. Referring to Home Office Counting Rules changes, he explained the Principal Crime Rule had been reintroduced which meant when officers dealt with an investigation, whilst there may be multiple offences and they may charge an individual with multiple crimes, in most circumstances they only completed one crime report in which everything was referenced.

He said the reason for the change was demand – Chief Constables wanted officers to focus on investigations, spending time with victims and catching criminals, not tied to a desk writing reports for the sake of it. Offering the PCC a specific briefing later in the year, to ensure the Force really understood the change, the CC said he was not complacent but it was a trend reflected nationally.

- Acknowledging the increase in the DA solved rate, the PCC asked about the circumstances in which a caution or community resolution would be appropriate and sought reassurance they were being administered in compliance with the NPCC guidance. The CC stated he was confident they were being administered in accordance with the guidance as there were checks and balances in place via supervisors and the Investigation Management Unit. Noting on occasions they may be used in non-intimate DA cases, he said there were clear criteria and processes officers had to go through to ensure appropriate use.

Combat organised crime and county lines

- Noting the work of the collaborated SCD, he advised whilst it was well supported by local policing teams and Tactical Operations, around the country such capability was normally provided by Regional Organised Crime Units. He added Kent and Essex benefitted from SCD very significantly in terms of reducing harm.
- The CC stated the SOC table showed the success of the Force. Highlighting the 213% increase in sentences secured, he said that equated to a lot more drugs, weapons and cash seized from criminals and taken off the streets.
- Over the course of 2023/24, the CC reported a reduction in the number organised crime groups and county lines. Whilst zero would be good for both, he said it was sadly unrealistic but the Force's aspiration was to tackle as many as it could to make the county as safe as possible.
- The CC noted the number of arrests, warrants, weapons seized and highlighted the excellent joint working, including through the VRU and with the MPS, BTP and other forces which he said provided a resilient response. He added the examples in the paper showed a real focus on vulnerability and protecting people.
- Acknowledging the excellent work of the Force in reducing county lines and that there would be fluctuations month on month, the PCC asked if it was now sustainable. The CC said he hoped so as the Force's intelligence work was enabling it to get upstream to identify organised crime groups and county lines as early as possible. Some Forces had slightly different tactics but Kent's was clear, aim for the top of the crime group or county line to completely disable it. He added the Harm score was important in identifying the level of violence and determining Force prioritisation.

Be visible and responsive to the needs of communities

- With regards to S136, the CC reported it was used 781 times in 2023/24 compared to 2,050 in 2019/20. He added the Force hoped to drive it down even further with innovation and the ongoing support of partners.
- The CC advised in April 2024 the Force implemented Right Care Right Person (RCRP) and offered to provide a briefing to the PCC later in the year on progress. He said each time officers did not have to exercise the S136 power was a saving in resource, but more importantly meant an individual in crisis received the right care from the right person. Acknowledging policing would always have a role, he said it was good to see other partners stepping into the space.
- Noting the PCC's previous concerns around call handling, the CC said following changes in the FCR, the Force was now in a much better place and he was growing in confidence that performance could be sustained. He advised August would be challenging due to high demand coupled with high staff absence. Noting a step change in performance, for January to March 2024, the CC reported an average 999 answering time of under 4 seconds with over 90% answered in under 10 seconds, compared to over 10 seconds and 70% in 2023.
- In terms of 101 contact, the CC acknowledged performance had been poor, referring to April 2023 when 13.1% of calls were not answered and the average answering time was 1 minute 41 seconds. In comparison, he reported over recent months less than 3% of calls were not answered and the average answering time was around 20 seconds. Referring to the Beating Crime Plan data provided by BT, he said it highlighted the change in performance with the Force now comparing very favourably nationally. He added that he was very proud of all the staff involved
- The PCC said the FCR was now delivering a much better service and congratulated the Chief Officers and those involved. In answer to a question about how sustainable performance was, the CC said he was pleased with the current position and the data showed it was not fluctuating hugely month on month. He said he would like to see it continue over the summer months as they were the most challenging, with overall demand increasing and officer and staff absence increasing from an average of 16% to around 19% due to leave. He said the difference this year compared to previous years was that the FCR was in a much stronger and more resilient position.
- The PCC asked about the current strength of the Special Constabulary and plans for further recruitment. Reporting the strength at the end of May was 179 - well down on the peak of over 300 – the CC said it was a positive story as many had joined the Force through the Uplift Programme. Noting the Force had a healthy and vibrant Special Constabulary, he said in national surveys of morale, Kent always came top. Advising they did pretty much everything regular officers did with some specific and unique exceptions, the CC stated whilst he did not wish to commit to a target, he would like to see the number increase and hopefully to around 300 again.

Prevent road danger and support Vision Zero

- The CC stated the priority was embedded in the core policing model and there was a significant resource commitment in terms of roads policing, the specialist Serious Collision Investigation Unit (SCIU) and forensic investigation.
- Reporting a 5% increase in road deaths in 2023/24, the CC advised the SCIU attended 55 road deaths compared to 52 the previous year.
- Noting the Force's goal was to reduce deaths and serious injuries, he said it continued to work closely with partners through Vision Zero to try and find ways to make the roads as safe as possible.

- Highlighting the examples in the paper, the CC advised enforcement activity was strong, adding that he was determined the Force would pursue individuals who drove so dangerously that they presented a significant risk.
- Referring to the section on prevention activity, the CC said it highlighted a number of operations and initiatives that were supported by Force staff and key partners. He stated the Force could not do enough of such activity and very much tried to match demand to resources. Noting the PCC's support with the specific operation around VAWG, the CC said it was an extra tool in the toolbox to tackle driving offences.
- Referring to the Special Constabulary Roads Policing Unit, the CC said he was extremely proud of the specialist areas Special Constables had moved into over many years, adding most members of the public would not know if a roads policing officer was a regular or Special Constable.

Protect young people and provide opportunities

- The CC reported a 3.1% increase in child protection related offences compared to the previous year. Sexual offences saw a decrease 4.1% which he said was very pleasing given the level of harm caused.
- Advising it was an area of focus and the Force had specific teams tackling it, he said he was interested in seeing how the Divisional Policing Review impacted on child protection as it was one of the drivers behind some of the changes.
- Referring to the VRU and the table in the paper, the CC said he had no doubt it was doing great work, but there was a need to consider impact in terms of reducing violence. Whilst there was some evidence in the paper, he advised it would continue to be monitored to ensure it was fit for the challenges ahead.
- With regards to the innovations highlighted in the paper, the CC said it was sometimes difficult to say whether they would be effective, but he was convinced they would at least make one young person question their actions and hopefully save serious injury or even lives.
- Thanking the CC for his update, the PCC said he hoped the data sharing project would be delivered as soon as possible since it would be key going forwards.

Actions

- **Force: Provide a briefing on the reduction in DA later in the year.**
- **Force: Provide a briefing on RCRP progress later in the year.**

4. Inspections, Audits & Reviews

- In terms of PEEL 2023/25, the DCC advised there were 15 Areas for Improvement (AFIs) that continued to be reviewed at the Force Improvement & Development Board. Noting the Force had assessed two AFIs as discharged, he said it was frustrating HMICFRS would be unlikely to formally sign AFIs off until the next PEEL Inspection.
- Victim Service Assessment AFI (carried over from previous inspection): the DCC advised there remained challenges awaiting national guidance and the Force had to work within the constraints of the Athena system. Nevertheless, he said it had adapted local processes and was seeing improvements, particularly around the Needs Assessment.
- Responding to the public AFIs: the DCC advised at the time of the inspection there were challenges in responding to calls from the public. As discussed previously though, there had been a marked improvement which had been sustained over a period of turbulence, with the operating system changing to the ICCS and the FCR moving to Coldharbour. He shared the CC's confidence performance would be sustained in the long term.
- Investigating Crime AFIs: the DCC reported the Force continued to improve with the ambition of achieving a step change in both charged performance and solved outcomes. Noting there were some technical AFIs, he said the key one was around the Victims Needs Assessment; whilst the Force was awaiting improvements to the Athena system, there was regular oversight and the compliance rate had increased to 63% against the PEEL baseline of 29%.
- In terms of Managing Offenders and Suspects, the DCC highlighted the introduction of the new Digital Forensics structure. He said previously there were challenges with the interrogation of digital devices, particularly phones, with a build-up of legacy devices delaying investigations. Through the new structure that had been completely cleared, but had created another bulge in the system. Whilst seeing good progress, he advised it had been elevated as a performance priority to be monitored every week to get to a better position longer term.
- Tackling Workforce Corruption AFIs: whilst the Force had made good progress, the DCC explained there was a new HMICFRS inspection focused on all aspects of Professional Standards and so the Force had an eye to the new criteria in order to benchmark itself ahead of the formal inspection.
- Noting the Angiolini Report was published the day after the last meeting, the DCC stated it was an important moment in time for policing, but particularly Kent Police. The CC had directly contributed to Part 1 of the Inquiry which looked into the offending of Wayne Couzens with a focus on three principal forces, of which Kent was one. For the record, the DCC expressed the Force's profound sense of anger and disgust at his offending and the impact on Sarah Everard's family. He reported the Force had made a number of changes and addressed the 16 relevant recommendations which could be categorised under three broad headings: 1) the investigation of indecent exposure; 2) recruitment, vetting and sharing of information; and 3) culture, standards and experiences of women within policing. He said the Force had its own action plan, and an important event had taken place on 25 April when more than 500 officers and staff gathered at the Detling Showground for an event led by the CC on standards of behaviour, culture and leadership. The DCC advised he held a bi-monthly governance meeting where plan progress was reviewed.
- With regards to Internal Audit, the DCC reported 100% of audits conducted in 2023/24 received a positive assurance rating. Noting there were some still outstanding, he said plans were in place to address them.

- In terms of the agreed 2024/25 internal audit plan, the DCC highlighted two in particular: Information Asset Ownership which he said was linked to work the Force was keen to progress with Canterbury Christchurch looking at the protection of digital information in the wake of cyber-attacks elsewhere; and Firearms Licensing which he said was very topical and the Force would welcome external assurance on.
- Noting it was not due to start until October, the PCC said he would like to receive an update on the Firearms Licensing audit in due course.
- The PCC said he was equally frustrated the PEEL AFIs would not be signed off by HMICFRS for up to two years because he knew how hard the Force had worked to turn some around, especially call handling within the FCR. Noting the Force did not currently have a HMICFRS Liaison Officer, the CC stated it would continue to push for HMICFRS to assess and hopefully discharge some before the next PEEL inspection.
- With regards to the Victims Needs Assessment, the PCC said the improved recording was positive and asked if the Force also monitored quality. The DCC advised it was monitored closely in terms of compliance around the Victims Code of Practice and explained there were two forums that examined quality: the Investigative Quality Board (IQB) chaired by the ACC – Crime and the Criminal Justice Department itself which undertook a review of 30 investigations each month. He added the latest update from the IQB was they were seeing improvements to the quality of investigations and importantly a positive response where issues were identified.
- Following the Business Case being agreed, the PCC asked when the Digital Forensics platform would be delivered. The DCC explained it would be delivered in four phases, with the Force shortly commencing phase one which would see the high speed network developed and the move to a Central Digital Forensics Hub at Ashford. The latter phases would then see it rolled out to the local hubs in October and March, with the programme continuing through to March 2026 and incremental improvements with each phase.

Action

- **Force: Provide an update on the Firearms Licensing audit once completed.**

5. People

- The DCC reported the headcount figure as at 31 March 2024 was 4,225, two over the maintenance requirement of 4,223. He advised pressure remained on the recruitment pipeline with four intakes planned totalling 312 recruits.
- Referring to the Police Constable Entry Programme, he reported full licensing was achieved on 6 June with the first intake planned for 29 July. Through the process of validation, he advised there was significant praise for the team and their development of the programme in Kent.
- Noting a drop in ethnic minority applications, the DCC said a lot of work was underway as described in the paper. Advising there was a healthy increase in the proportion of female recruits, in terms of Force representation, he said there was work to do particularly around the recruitment of ethnic minority officers and staff.
- As of 23 April, four candidates were enrolled in the Positive Action Engagement Programme which aimed to provide support to those who were unsuccessful, to enhance their chances in the future.
- Reporting 162 officer resignations in 2023/24, the DCC said it was scrutinised at the Force Management Board. He advised there continued to be a high proportion of officers leaving when particularly young in service, adding that whilst a national trend, the figures were slightly higher in Kent and therefore a deep dive had been conducted which would be reported at the Management Board.
- The DCC advised there was a specific leaver process which ensured a good understanding of the reasons, adding it was an opportunity to try and prevent some, but also where appropriate, ensure a dignified exit.
- In relation to the Police Staff Week of Celebration and Recognition, the DCC advised it was the first time it had ran and was well received. Over many years of policing, he said it was obvious how much had been invested by Kent and policing more widely into the development of police staff roles and their contribution to frontline policing.
- With regards to PCSOs, the DCC reported the Force was under the establishment of 101.5fte despite a recent recruitment drive. He said the Force had further plans to get the numbers back up to support the NHP Model.
- In terms of average days lost, the DCC advised it was subject to scrutiny at the Force Management Board. He said psychological related absence accounted for the highest proportion of hours lost followed by respiratory related absence. Referring to the paper, he said there was a focus on managers and supervisors being able to respond to issues, principally to provide support but also interventions where required. He added the emphasis was on providing a supportive environment for officers and staff to thrive.
- Referring to Occupational Health, the DCC reported an increase in length of time from referral to appointment due to a significant increase in referrals in the last quarter of 2023/24 compared to the previous year (653 compared to 481). He said the Force was clear the desired response level was 10 working days and so work was underway to support the department, including looking at external providers where appropriate.
- The PCC said he would be interested in seeing a copy of the deep dive report on officer leavers.
- Noting the proportion of females joining appeared to have dropped, the PCC asked if the Force understood the reasons. The DCC explained there was a period where the number of applications dropped, but it had now recovered. He added the Force was learning from the Investigate First offer which had a high uptake of female applicants that converted through to new joiners.
- With regards to the increase in Occupational Health referrals in the last quarter of 2023/24, the PCC asked if there were any specific reasons. Advising that despite a great deal of analysis, none could be identified, the DCC said the

assumption was that it correlated with training and CPD linked to raising awareness and increasing the confidence of managers and staff to access services. He added that it had levelled off again, but was being monitored

- With regards to Public Enquiry Officers, the PCC asked if there was an update on recruitment. The DCC said the Force was seeing progress, with a marked improvement in the opening hours of tier two front counters, and many approaching 100% of published opening hours. He reported the Force had 9.5fte vacancies in March and that had now reduced to 4.3fte.
- Advising his office was receiving enquiries from people about the progress of their application, the PCC asked about the timeliness of processing the police element of DBS checks. The DCC stated it remained a stubborn challenge, not just for Kent but all forces. He reported the Force reached a high point at the end of May 2023 with nearly 16,500 DBS checks and 6,000 over 60 days. Advising the Force had worked with the national Disclosure and Barring Service to implement a recovery plan and also recruited into the team, he said there were now less than 10,000 and those over 60 days had halved. He added the situation had improved, but there was still lots for the Force to do. The PCC said that was good to hear and thanked the Force team for their support with the queries his office was receiving.

Action

- **Force: Provide a copy of the deep dive report on officer leavers.**

6. Finance

- The CC advised the main challenge to the Capital Budget was the sale of land at Sutton Road not going ahead and the capital receipt therefore not coming to fruition. He added it would require further discussion in the coming year.
- In terms of Revenue, the CC advised headcount was an arbitrary figure when looking at experience and pay scales, with the number of anticipated leavers and how that was costed being more important. He advised a reduced number of leavers than anticipated was positive in terms of skills and experience retained, but had a negative financial impact.
- Referring to the paper, the CC highlighted the PSE vacancy factor and what it meant in terms of the Force budget. With regards to the target, he advised it was not one he wanted to continue or something he thought could be a permanent arrangement for the Force. Whilst it had a positive impact in terms of achieving the budget requirement each year, he said the Force had to try and get back to something of a more normal vacancy rate.
- The CC stated the PUP rules coupled with an outdated Funding Formula had resulted in a MTFP with savings required of multiple millions across several years. He said it was an unsustainable position and he was referring to it as the single highest risk in the Force’s Risk Register, the FMS and the Annual Governance Statement. He added it was also being raised nationally by the NPCC in its work on the challenges to policing UK and the support required from Government. Acknowledging the PCC’s support and lobbying on behalf of the Force, the CC stated the Funding Formula had to change, whatever decisions were made on the overall budget.
- The CC said the Force was grateful for the PCC’s support through his precepting powers, but he would be discussing the issue with the new MPs after the General Election and would appreciate the PCC’s support.
- Irrespective of who won the General Election, the PCC said he would carry on lobbying for changes to the Funding Formula. He said he grew less and less optimistic that anyone would change it, but would continue making the case.
- Noting there was recognition of the great work by OH in the People paper, the CE said he would also like to thank those staff who contributed discretionary effort around areas such as the Men’s Forum, KNOW and Menopause Action Group. He said it never disappointed him to see staff looking out for each other and sharing their own experiences to help others. Thanking the CE, the CC said he would make sure his comments were passed on.

7. Topical issues & Update on Significant Operational Matters

- The CC stated there was nothing, advising that he kept the PCC regularly updated via their weekly meeting.

In closing, the PCC thanked the CC and DCC for the reports and their teams for producing them. He also thanked his team for their support with the technology.

	Status	Owner	Due date
Provide a briefing on the reduction in DA	Open	Force	02/10/2024
Provide a briefing on Right Care Right Person progress	Open	Force	02/10/2024
Provide an update on the Firearms Licensing audit	Open	Force	02/10/2024
Provide a copy of the deep dive report on officer leavers	Open	Force	02/10/2024

Date of next Performance and Delivery Board: 2 October 2024