

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 **Wednesday, 1st February, 2023, at 10.00 am** when the following business will be transacted

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

Membership

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Councillor Peter Feacey | Ashford Borough Council |
| Councillor Ashley Clark | Canterbury City Council |
| Councillor Richard Wells | Dartford Borough Council |
| Councillor Oliver Richardson | Dover District Council |
| Councillor Shane Mochrie-Cox | Gravesham Borough Council |
| Mr Mike Hill | Kent County Council |
| Councillor Habib Tejan | Medway Council |
| Councillor Peter Fleming | Sevenoaks District Council |
| Councillor Jenny Hollingsbee | Folkestone and Hythe District Council |
| Councillor Richard Palmer | Swale Borough Council |
| Councillor Lottie Parfitt-Reid | Maidstone Borough Council |
| Councillor George Kup | Thanet District Council |
| Councillor Des Keers | Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council |
| Councillor Nancy Warne | Tunbridge Wells Borough Council |
| Councillor Gary Hackwell | Co-opted member – Medway Council |
| Mr Mark Hood | Co-opted member – Green Group |
| Councillor John Burden | Co-opted member – Labour Group |
| Mr Ian Chittenden | Co-opted member – Liberal Democrat Group |
| Mrs Elaine Bolton | Independent Member |
| Mr Gurvinder Sandher | Independent Member |

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

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

- 1 Introduction/Webcast Announcement
- 2 Apologies and Substitutes
- 3 Declarations of Interests by Members in Items on the Agenda for this Meeting
- 4 Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel held on 6 December 2022 (Pages 1 - 8)

A - Items for consideration under Statutory Obligation

- A1 Draft refreshed Police and Crime Plan and 2023/24 precept proposal (Pages 9 - 78)

To consider the Police and Crime Commissioner's draft refreshed 'Making Kent Safer' Police and Crime Plan; precept proposal for 2023/24; and supporting financial information.

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

- B1 Contacting Kent Police (Pages 79 - 86)

C - Commissioner's Decisions

- C1 Decision OPCC.D.032.23 - Kent Victim's Advocacy and Support Service - Contract Award (Pages 87 - 88)

D - Questions to the Commissioner

- D1 Questions to the Commissioner

E - Panel Matters

- E1 Future work programme (Pages 89 - 90)

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

Tuesday, 24 January 2023

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, 6 December 2022.

PRESENT: Mr P M Hill, OBE (Chairman), Mr G Sandher (Vice-Chairman), Mrs E Bolton, Cllr J Burden, Mr I S Chittenden, Cllr A Clark, Cllr L Dyball, Cllr P Feacey, Cllr G Hackwell, Cllr Mrs J Hollingsbee, Mr M A J Hood, Cllr S Mochrie-Cox, Cllr R Palmer, Cllr L Parfitt-Reid, Cllr H Tejan and Cllr N Warne

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 M Dentten (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**64. Declarations of Interests by Members in Items on the Agenda for this Meeting**
(Item 3)

No declarations were made.

65. Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel held on 27 September 2022
(Item 4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2022 were an accurate record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

66. Chief Constable Confirmation Hearing
(Item A1)

Tim Smith (Temporary Chief Constable, Kent Police) was in attendance for this item.

1. The Chairman reminded Members that the Confirmation Hearing was not a re-interview of the candidate but an opportunity for the Panel to ensure they were satisfied that due process and reasonable judgement was used by the Commissioner in making his decision to recommend Mr Tim Smith as the new Chief Constable of Kent Police.
2. The Panel were provided with a report of the Commissioner, in adherence with Schedule 8 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, which detailed the Competency and Values Framework for Policing criteria used for assessing the candidates, appointment process and proposed appointment of Mr Smith to the role of Chief Constable.

3. The Commissioner gave an overview of the two-day interview process, which included: a presentation from candidates on tackling violence against women and girls as well as their strategy proposals; a media exercise based on a mock HMICFRS report; and a long form interview. He confirmed that the interview panel consisted of himself, Cllr Matt Boughton (Leader, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council) and Henu Cummings (Chief Executive Officer, Mid Kent Mind), with assistance from his Office. He reassured the Panel that the College of Policing guidelines were followed throughout the process. It was noted that there was considerable competition in the market with many other forces, including Hampshire and Thames Valley, in the process of recruiting Chief Constables. Members were assured that Mr Smith was aware of the relationship between the Commissioner and Chief Constable, as well as how he would be held to account in public and private. The Commissioner concluded by sharing his confidence that Mr Smith would drive forward improvements to policing in Kent.
4. A Member asked whether the candidates were given the opportunity to meet residents and voluntary and community sector representatives on the briefing day. The Commissioner confirmed that the charity Victims Support had been involved in the process, and as part of his Annual Policing Survey he had asked what residents wanted from their Chief Constable. He noted that good communication, people skills and integrity were the key areas raised. It was explained that there was no direct engagement with residents or voluntary and community sector representatives on the two interview days.
5. A Member asked the Commissioner why he had elected to offer a 10% enhancement to the advertised salary for the role of £172,218. The Commissioner stated that the enhancement reflected the need to attract high quality candidates and salaries of recent Chief Constable appointments made to other forces.
6. Following a question from a Member, the Commissioner reassured the Panel that he had not disadvantaged any candidate based on their local knowledge, with candidates provided the same information at the briefing day.
7. Members shared their concerns at the low number of applicants for the position. The Commissioner explained that applications were low nationally, with eight other recent Chief Constable recruitment processes receiving between one and five applicants. It was noted that in three instances there was only one candidate. He added that it was his intention, in collaboration with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, to make recommendations to the College of Policing and Home Office, suggesting ways to increase the number of suitably qualified chief officers.
8. A Member highlighted engagement as an issue and asked whether Mr Smith had shared his views on how it would be improved. Mr Smith explained that improving 101 response times, with call attrition already halving during his tenure as Temporary Chief Constable, and engaging the force on future changes would be priorities. Regarding engagement with Kent Police officers

and staff, he explained that all staff affected by the neighbourhood policing review were consulted and that local councils would also be engaged in due course. He added that he would use increased resources, where available, to prioritise neighbourhood policing and was aware of the challenges faced by the serious crime units.

9. A Member asked the Commissioner why Chief Constable turnover had increased nationally in recent years. The Commissioner explained that the average time in office had decreased from 4 ½ to 2 ½ years, pension regulations were cited as a leading factor.
10. Members thanked Mr Smith for his recent briefing, in his capacity as the Temporary Chief Constable. They emphasised the importance of maintaining a strong Panel-Chief Constable relationship, without undermining the Commissioner's role in holding the Chief Constable to account. The Commissioner agreed that continued Chief Constable Panel briefings would be appropriate.
11. Mr Smith made a long-standing commitment to Kent, welcomed the Commissioner's scrutiny and pledged to work with the Commissioner to maintain a strong relationship between Kent Police and the Panel.

RESOLVED to:

- a) review the Chief Constable appointment process;
- b) review the proposed appointment; and
- c) agree to the appointment of Mr Tim Smith as Chief Constable of Kent Police.

67. Update following HMICFRS PEEL Inspection 2021/22

(Item B1)

1. The Commissioner introduced the report which provided an update on Kent Police's progress responding to the findings of HMICFRS' PEEL Inspection 2021/22 report as well as his scrutiny of performance. He reminded Members that he had held a bespoke Performance and Delivery Board to consider the measures put in place by the then Temporary Chief Constable, one year after the inspection. He summarised the measures put in place and confirmed that he had received assurances from the Chief Constable that HMICFRS would find significant improvements when conducting their next inspection of the force. He emphasised that the Chief Constable would be held to account against the commitment. Regarding 'protecting vulnerable people', he noted that the Domestic Abuse Hubs had 100% user satisfaction, whilst the overall rate of domestic abuse had decreased by 7%. Concerning 'investigating crime' he told Members that an Assistant Chief Constable now chaired an investigation quality assurance board to ensure standards and improvement in that area of policing. He informed the Panel that he planned to visit other police forces, who were outstanding in areas that Kent Police was found to require improvement in.
2. Following a question from a Member on what operational governance measures were in place to monitor response times, the Commissioner

confirmed that Chief Inspectors reviewed attendance times and absence rates locally, with analysts monitoring the long term trends as well as discrepancies between districts as well as urban and rural areas.

3. The Commissioner confirmed, in response to a question from a Member, that there were mechanisms in place for officers to follow up emergency calls.
4. A Member asked for reassurance that the areas of policing, which were not found to require improvement, had not been negatively impacted by a reorganisation of resources to respond to the findings of the PEEL report. The Commissioner confirmed that the Chief Constable had deployed officers from across force in order to spread demand and build experience across force. He reassured Members that he had requested a list of the teams impacted by force control room staffing from the Chief Constable.
5. In response to a question from a Member on data usage, the Commissioner confirmed that officers from sergeant and above, as well as his Office, had use of Kent Police's data hub, which included outcome rates and district breakdowns. He noted that the data hub was utilised when holding the Chief Constable to account on performance. He acknowledged that it took time for the reporting of new offences, such as stalking, to increase to a level that local trends could be understood.
6. A Member asked how Kent Police's approaches to tackling domestic abuse were enhanced by commissioned voluntary and community sector organisations. The Commissioner confirmed that both his Office and Kent Police worked with a number of organisations, with DAVSS based at Tunbridge Wells police station given as an example. He added that Protection Against Stalking delivered training for Kent Police in order to enhance the understanding of the impact and signs of domestic abuse as well as share lived experiences, whilst Interventions Alliance worked with the force to better understand and change perpetrator behaviour.

RESOLVED to note the report and agree to a further update at the April 2023 meeting.

68. Update on the Violence Against Women and Girls Inquiry *(Item B2)*

1. The Commissioner gave an update on the work underway to action the recommendations of his Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Inquiry report. He reminded the Panel of the extensive public interest in the Inquiry, with over 8000 responses to the survey. He drew Members' attention to the key findings of the big data exercise which analysed Kent Police victim and offender profiles and trends, concluding that 10% of perpetrators caused 63% of harm. He noted that the findings had been helpful in identifying high harm individuals and targeting patrols on VAWG hotspots. Regarding performance, he committed to continue using the Performance and Delivery Board and his chairmanship of Kent Criminal Justice Board, alongside performance monitoring by his Office, to improve outcomes for female victims and reduce

VAWG. It was confirmed that residents' views and priorities for tackling VAWG would continue to be received through the Commissioner's Annual Policing Survey. Concerning advice and signposting, he explained that Collaborate Digital had been commissioned to create age-appropriate messaging on appropriate interactions, changing behaviours, relationships and online harms, which supplemented the schools intervention programme delivered by the St Giles Trust. He introduced his Victims Voice campaign, which aimed to raise awareness of victims' rights and concluded by acknowledging that reducing VAWG was not exclusively the responsibility of the police, with collaboration with councils and the Violence Reduction Unit vital.

2. Following a question from a Member, the Commissioner explained that harm was calculated using the Cambridge Harm Index. He added that the formula enhanced the force's ability to target the offenders who caused the most harm.
3. A Member asked that a greater focus be placed on focus groups and qualitative victim feedback rather than big data exercises, when understanding victim experiences. The Commissioner responded by explaining that the purpose of the big data exercise was to gain a broad understanding of how key offenders were handled by Kent Police, as well as victim experience. He agreed that victims' experiences and views of the justice system were important. He reminded Members that holding the wider justice system to account was a commitment he made in his Police and Crime Plan, with it noted that further powers to scrutinise the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) would be welcomed.
4. The Commissioner reassured the Panel, following a question from a Member, that his Victim Voice campaign as well as Kent Police's continued use of the early advice line would further improve victims' support and satisfaction.
5. A Member asked what additional resources had been allocated to tackle VAWG in Medway. The Commissioner confirmed that Medway, along with Maidstone and Thanet were beneficiaries of Safer Streets funding and that the police resource allocation was influenced by demand. He summarised the collaborative work with Medway Council as part of the Safer Streets initiative.
6. Following a question from a Member, the Commissioner confirmed that not all areas were eligible to receive investment from the Safer Streets Fund and that areas with the highest concentration of specific crime types were the focus. He reminded members that Community Safety Units (CSUs) continued to receive grant funding from his Office.

RESOLVED to note the report and agree to a further update at the June 2023 meeting.

69. Update on the Violence Reduction Unit
(Item B3)

1. The Commissioner provided a verbal overview of the Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit's (VRU) key functions, impact and funding

arrangements, in addition to the information provided in his report on the Unit's performance, structure, interventions, future plans and challenges. He informed the Panel that, due to the success of VRUs nationally, government had agreed a 3-year funding settlement. He drew the Panel's attention to the reduced funding for future years and gave an assurance that work was already ongoing with regards to the sustainability of the programme, with regular updates at the VRU oversight board meetings, to understand what costs partners were able to support going forward and how the programme could be made sustainable. Regarding performance, he noted that the VRU had secured a significant number of positive interventions with young people and communities in addition to the successful multi-agency response to young street gangs, which had reduced from 12 to 2 over the previous year, and county lines which had reduced from a peak of 85 in 2020 to 23. He added that the 12 CSUs had been commissioned to deliver sports programmes in young people community crime hot spots as part of the Unit's work with young people. Concerning the Unit's challenges, he highlighted data sharing with NHS partners as an area which required further improvement.

2. A Member asked what had been done to ensure reductions in government funding would not place additional financial demands on councils, should services provided by the VRU be discontinued or reduced. The Commissioner reiterated his disappointment that government funding for the VRU had been reduced and reassured the Panel that the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) prevention lead had lobbied government for increased funding long term. He agreed to raise VRU funding with the prevention lead.

RESOLVED to note the report.

70. Questions to the Commissioner

(Item D1)

Question 1

Persons attempting to get through to the police on the 101 system are subjected to a barrage of pre-recorded messages, one of which states that if it relates to fly tipping, graffiti, or anti-social parking they should contact their local authority. Whilst local authorities accept their responsibilities to the clearing of fly tipped waste and litter, the removal of graffiti and breaches of local traffic orders, is this a case of the police dodging responsibility and putting out misleading information to the public? In this respect I am minded that fly tipping carries up to 5 years imprisonment, graffiti (criminal damage) carries up to 10 years imprisonment and that local authorities do not operate a 24/7 enforcement service, nor do they have powers of arrest, powers to stop and search for items relating to criminal damage, powers to stop vehicles and powers to deal with obstruction of the highway.

What steps will the Commissioner take to call the Chief Constable to account and to ensure that the Chief Constable only promulgates information that is totally accurate and that officers are alerted as to their responsibilities to catching offenders for these matters.

(Cllr Ashley Clark, Canterbury City Council)

1. In response to the question the Commissioner explained the benefit of automated messages for signposting, so long as the information was correct. He confirmed that he would ask the Chief Constable to assess the automated messages as part of his review of the force control room and that messages are fair, proportionate and do not discourage the reporting of antisocial behaviour.

Question 2

In his role in holding the Chief Constable to account can the PCC update the panel on the ongoing issues regarding 101 response times and further comment on the feedback, engagement and response process that residents can and should expect when reporting crimes to Kent Police and their investigation and outcomes to the ASB or crime(s) reported?

(Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox, Gravesham Borough Council)

2. The Commissioner confirmed that call attrition was monitored on a weekly basis, with the latest data indicating a 28% reduction in call attrition from 55% in October to 27% in November. He stressed that further improvement was required to achieve his ambition of regaining the strong performance experienced before the pandemic, with call attrition under 10% and response times below 90 seconds. He assured the Panel that he was confident that the Temporary Chief Constable had put effective measures in place. Members were reminded of the level of engagement and response which should be expected by residents, as set out in the Victims Code of Practice, which included obligations placed on the police to provide prompt updates to residents where they have been the victim of crime, particularly if it lead to an arrest, within five days and for more serious and more violent crimes within a day.

Question 3

In line with the his priorities for the Chief Constable, to 'work with residents, communities and businesses to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour' and 'be visible and responsive to the needs of communities,' can the Commissioner explain what he has done to hold the Chief Constable to account with regard to Kent Police's performance responding to youth anti-social behaviour and crime against businesses? Can he also explain how increases in the council tax precept have impacted this area of policing and crime reduction?

(Cllr Richard Palmer, Swale Borough Council)

3. The Commissioner reassured the Panel that tackling crime against businesses remained a priority and gave the Problem Solving Task Force and town centre teams as examples of units which focused on countering crimes against businesses. He added that he personally monitored shop lifting and burglary rates, which had decreased since the onset of the pandemic. It was clarified that information on antisocial behaviour was not broken down by perpetrator age and that work was underway to ensure that reductions were not a result of decreased reporting. Regarding the impact of precept increases, the Commissioner explained that the Problem Solving Task Force of 24 PCSOs, as well as crime prevention PCSOs, which had led to direct reductions in

crime against businesses and antisocial behaviour in many communities, had been funded by previous increases to the precept.

Question 4

Can the Commissioner explain how he is holding the Chief Constable accountable following his decision to significantly reduce the number of PCSOs and what impact does he expect this to have on his community policing priorities?

(Cllr Jenny Hollingsbee, Folkestone and Hythe District Council)

4. The Commissioner explained that he had been involved and consulted extensively since the first proposal was made by the previous Chief Constable to review neighbourhood policing, meeting on several occasions subsequently with both the previous and current Chief Constable to outline his expectations and stress that any changes should take account of his Police and Crime Plan. He reminded Members that the previous and current Chief Constable had both given assurances that the future neighbourhood policing offer would be as good as if not an improvement on the existing provision. He noted that it was too early to discuss proposals in depth, as consultation with staff was ongoing, and proposals had not been finalised. He recognised that the review was in part an acknowledgment of the financial challenges faced by Kent Police. The Commissioner agreed to brief the Panel when a final decision is taken following the consultation period.

71. Future work programme

(Item E1)

RESOLVED that the work programme be noted.

72. Minutes of the Commissioner's Performance and Delivery Board meeting held on 31 October 2022

(Item F1)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Performance and Delivery Board held on 31 October 2022 be noted.

To: Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel
Subject: Draft refreshed 'Making Kent Safer' plan and 2023/24 precept proposal
Date: 1 February 2023

Introduction:

1. The [Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011](#) (PRSRA 2011) sets the requirement for Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to issue a police and crime plan that covers their term of Office.
2. A police and crime plan must include the following information:
 - the police and crime objectives to be delivered;
 - the policing that the Chief Constable should provide;
 - the financial and other resources to be provided to the Chief Constable to exercise their functions;
 - the means by which the Chief Constable will be held to account for the provision of policing; and
 - the crime and disorder reduction grants that will be made and any conditions associated with them.
3. Whilst every plan will be localised in nature, they all share a common aim in communicating a PCC's vision and objectives.
4. PCCs are required to keep the plan under review and at any time, may issue or vary a police and crime plan; in doing so, they must have regard to the Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) issued by the Secretary of State.
5. Before issuing or varying a police and crime plan, PCCs must:
 - prepare a draft of the plan or variation;
 - consult the Chief Constable in preparing the draft plan or variation;
 - send the draft plan or variation to the Police and Crime Panel;
 - have regard to any report or recommendations made by the Panel in relation to the draft plan or variation;
 - give the panel a response to any such report or recommendations; and
 - publish any such response.
6. In exercising their discrete functions, PCCs and Chief Constables must have regard to the issued police and crime plan.
7. However, the police and crime plan also impacts upon a wide variety of stakeholders and has a number of intended audiences including the public, victims of crime and witnesses, police officers and staff, the Secretary of State, Police and Crime Panels, community safety partners, criminal justice agencies and the private and voluntary sector.
8. The PRSRA 2011 also requires PCCs to notify the Police and Crime Panel of the precept which is proposed to be issued for the financial year.
9. The Police and Crime Panel must review the proposed precept and make a report to the PCC, which may include recommendations, including as to the precept that should be issued for the financial year.
10. This report fulfils the requirements set out in paragraphs 5 and 8.

Refreshing the 'Making Kent Safer' plan:

11. On 1 April 2022, the PCC published his police and crime plan, titled 'Making Kent Safer – April 2022 to March 2025'.

12. In accordance with the PRSRA 2011, the PCC is committed to consulting with victims and the wider community and to keeping the plan under review, particularly in light of changes to the SPR and/or recommendations made by the Police and Crime Panel. More formally, the PCC has determined that the plan will be refreshed annually.
13. Attached as Appendix A is the 2023 refreshed version of 'Making Kent Safer' in text only format. Once the text has been finalised, photographs and graphics will be added. It will be presented in a similar format to the current plan.
14. As a refresh, the plan has been updated where appropriate but not fundamentally altered; it reflects the PCC's ambitions, with the priorities designed to drive the work of Kent Police, partners and the Office of the PCC (OPCC) until March 2025, as well as setting the strategic direction for policing and community safety in the county.
15. In approaching each refresh, the PCC is committed to positively encouraging feedback from individuals, communities and partner agencies. With circa 1.9 million people living in diverse urban, rural and coastal communities across Kent and Medway, the PCC commenced his formal consultation in the summer of 2022.
16. The PCC launched his Annual Policing Survey in July 2022 and it remained open for five months, to November 2023. A total of 2,964 responses were received.
17. A report outlining the survey methodology, and the full results is attached as Appendix B (and can also be viewed online [here](#)).
18. Below is an overview of some of the key questions and a precis of the results (previous year's figures are also included where comparative data are available):

Q3. Do you agree with the priorities I have set for Kent Police?

| | <i>% strongly agree or agree</i> |
|--|----------------------------------|
| <i>Prevent crime and antisocial behaviour</i> | 92.7% |
| <i>Tackle violence against women and girls</i> | 85.7% |
| <i>Protect people from exploitation and abuse</i> | 86.1% |
| <i>Combat organised crime and county lines</i> | 90.2% |
| <i>Be visible and responsive to the needs of communities</i> | 90.4% |
| <i>Prevent road danger and support Vision Zero</i> | 74.2% |
| <i>Protect young people and provide opportunities</i> | 77.2% |

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

- *Respondents across Kent and Medway felt 7.2/10 safe where they live*
[2021 = 7.0 / 2020 = 7.0 / 2019 = 6.4 / 2018 = 6.5]

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

- *17.9% of respondents indicated 'Yes'*
[2021 = 16.8% / 2020 = 15.9% / 2019 = 19.7% / 2018 = 23.3%]

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

| <i>Very satisfied or satisfied</i> | <i>Neutral</i> | <i>Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied</i> |
|------------------------------------|----------------|--|
| 21.6% | 29.0% | 49.4% |

Q14. Would you be prepared to pay more council tax to support policing in Kent?

- *52.4% of respondents indicated 'Yes' and 47.6% 'No'*

Q15. If so, by how much (per year)?

| <i>£5</i> | <i>£10</i> | <i>£15</i> |
|-----------|------------|------------|
| 19.3% | 30.9% | 49.8% |

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, including gangs / weapon offences
 2. Sexual offences, including rape
 3. Antisocial behaviour
 4. Child sexual exploitation
 5. Burglary / robbery

19. Whilst not mandatory, to monitor how representative the sample was of Kent and Medway's population, respondents were also asked to provide demographic information and indicate whether they worked for, or volunteered with Kent Police.

20. In addition to the survey, other factors considered by the PCC include:

- The [Strategic Policing Requirement](#) which sets out the national threats and the national policing capabilities required to counter them.
- Public conversations around women and girls safety and the Government's [Tackling violence against women and girls strategy](#).
- The Government's '[Beating crime plan](#)'.
- The [Policing Vision 2025](#) which sets out the future for policing.
- Feedback and observations from the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel.
- Emerging local threats and risks.
- The priorities of local criminal justice bodies (as Chair of the Kent Criminal Justice Board).
- The priorities and views of community safety partners, as well as wider stakeholders.

21. Inevitably, the refresh has also taken into account feedback received throughout the year from engagements undertaken by the PCC as well as the thousands of pieces of correspondence received by the OPCC.

22. The Chief Constable has also been fully consulted, and of course the PCC's own ambitions and objectives, as well as overall vision for policing and community safety in the county remain at its core.

23. Further to any recommendations made by the Panel, the refreshed plan will be published on 1 April 2023.

24. The PCC would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who completed the survey and provided feedback on policing and crime across the county.

Changes to the 'Making Kent Safer' plan:

25. It is important to note that based on the survey results:

- there was strong support for the current plan priorities;
- the top five issues respondents felt were most important were consistent with last year and already included in the plan.

26. In light of this and reflecting the significant amount of work that went into developing the current plan, no substantive changes have been made. However, the following two areas have been updated:

- Under 'National expectations', the section titled 'Legislation' to ensure it is current and up-to date.
- The section titled 'Resources and Medium Finance Plan' has been extensively re-written to take account of the latest financial information.

27. In accordance with the PRSRA 2011, the PCC will keep the plan under constant review, particularly in light of changes to the SPR or recommendations made by the Police and Crime Panel.

Policing precept proposal for 2023/24:

28. On 12 December 2022, the Rt Hon Chris Philp MP, Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire wrote to the National Police Chiefs Council and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners to confirm an increase in the precept from £10 to £15. The Minister said:

"I recognise the pressures faced by policing and have listened to those PCCs that requested a greater degree of flexibility when setting budgets. Therefore, I can confirm that the referendum limit for PCCs in England for 2023-24 will be £15 for a typical Band D property and equivalent, raising up to an additional £349 million from precept income (on top of increases to core grant) using the

latest forecasts, should all PCCs utilise the full flexibility. This is an additional £5 precept flexibility over and above the announcement made at Spending Review 2021.

“However, we are also clear that precept rises should not be in place of sound financial management and we expect PCCs to exhaust all other options to reprioritise budgets, seek efficiencies and to maximise productivity of their existing resources before looking to local taxpayers for additional funding. PCCs should consider the pressures on their budgets, including the potential for a 2023-24 pay award above 2% next year, for which they should budget appropriately.

“To that end, I will require PCCs to set out to me in the New Year how you will deliver efficiencies and productivity improvements in 2023-24.”

29. Subsequently, on 14 December 2022, the Minister provided a written statement on the Provisional Police Grant Report to the House of Commons. As the second year of the three-year Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR21) announced in autumn 2021, the Minister said:

“Spending Review 2021 confirmed that PCCs in England will be empowered to raise additional funding through increased precept flexibility of up to £10 per year to 2024-25. However, recognising the financial pressures police forces are facing, we propose to enable PCCs in England in 2023-24 to increase their precept by up to £15 for a typical Band D property... This would equate to an additional £349 million should all PCCs maximise this flexibility.

“Using this precept flexibility is a decision that must be taken by each locally elected PCC. Local taxation should not be in place of sound financial management, and therefore I expect PCCs to exhaust all other options to reprioritise their budgets, seek efficiencies and maximise productivity of their existing resources before looking to local taxpayers for additional funding.”

30. On 7 December, the Minister also sent a letter to Chief Constables and PCCs acknowledging that the current funding formula is outdated and confirming a continued commitment to the Police Funding Formula Review. He advised that he has asked Home Office officials to prepare for a first public consultation in early 2023.

31. As a result of the Minister’s statement to the House of Commons, the PCC is proposing to increase the policing precept by the maximum allowable amount of £15 per year, or 6.57% for an average Band D property (equivalent to £1.25 per month, or 4 pence per day).

32. The proposed increase would be used to:

- Make up a deficit in central government funding to maintain policing services and the record number of police officers in Kent.
- Enable police officers to replace PCSO’s in local areas as part of implementation of the Neighbourhood Policing Review. Unfortunately, there will be an associated reduction in the PCSO Headcount.
- Reduce the level of savings required in 2023/24 and limit further reductions in the number of staff.
- Continue the investment at Coldharbour, as well as Maidstone, Sittingbourne, Folkestone, Tonbridge, and Ashford police stations.
- Maintain the police cadet programmes.

33. The decision to propose the maximum precept increase allowed is not one that has been taken lightly; the PCC is acutely aware that Kent residents are facing considerable cost-of-living increases, and this will only add further pressure. However, even with the increase, the PCC is only able to mitigate some, not all, of the cost pressures in the budget.

34. In previous years, whilst highlighting the need to make significant savings, the PCC has been able to identify the additionality to Kent Police that the precept would provide, whether through additional officers, PCSOs or assets and equipment. However, the financial challenges facing Kent Police and the PCC in 2023/24 and beyond mean difficult decisions have had to be made to balance the budget. A shortfall in funding from the Government coupled with significant inflation mean cost pressures for 2023/24 are substantial and savings need to be made.

35. Increasing the precept to the maximum allowed will help mitigate but not remove the need to make savings. Whilst the Chief Constable and the PCC have made every effort to mitigate the impact on frontline policing, even with a £15 increase, £42.2m of savings are required over the medium term - £14.1m in 2023/24. 80% of the budget is expenditure on employees and so it is inevitable that with the level of savings required there will be some impact on staffing levels to balance the budget. Anything less than £15 would require further reductions in staff and service levels.
36. As in previous years, there will be no increase in the cost of running the OPCC, with the budget being maintained at £1.5m.
37. In developing the proposal, the PCC has also considered other factors including:
- 52.4% of respondents to the Annual Policing Survey indicating they were prepared to pay more council tax, with 49.8% willing to pay £15 per year.
 - Delivery of the refreshed 'Making Kent Safer' plan.
 - Professional guidance and advice from the Chief Constable.
 - Kent Police's Force Management Statement (FMS) - a detailed self-assessment of future demand versus capacity.
 - Kent Police's Control Strategy - an annual assessment of long-term key issues.
 - The National Crime Agency's Strategic Assessment - an annual assessment of the threat to the UK from serious and organised crime.
38. By way of context, the Kent PCC remains in the lowest quartile (bottom 10) of precepting PCCs across the country and Kent remains in the lower quartile for Government funding to PCCs.
39. Subject to the Police and Crime Panel's approval, the PCC confirms his intention to increase the policing precept in 2023/24 to £243.15 for an average Band D property. This represents an increase of £15 per year (or 6.57%) on the current precept.
40. Attached as Appendix C is a detailed report dealing with financial matters prepared by the Chief Finance Officer.

Recommendation:

41. The Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel is asked to:
- Review the draft refreshed 'Making Kent Safer' plan and produce a report which may include recommendations.
 - Review the proposed precept and produce a report which may include recommendations, including as to the precept that should be issued for the financial year.

List of Appendices:

- Appendix A** Draft refreshed police and crime plan 'Making Kent Safer – April 2022 to March 2025'
- Appendix B** Annual Policing Survey report – November 2022
- Appendix C** Chief Finance Officer's Report

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Making Kent Safer

April 2022 to March 2025

Version: Spring 2023

Foreword

Since I was first elected in 2016 I have worked with Kent Police to rebuild its strength so that it can provide the service that victims need and deliver on the issues that matter to residents.

By using council tax precept and funding from the Government's uplift programme, Kent Police will have over 4,000 officers for the first time ever. This has helped reduce burglary and cut the number of county lines. It's led to the creation of community and county-wide taskforces, established to deal with deeper rooted issues. And increased visibility in our urban and rural areas.

Since my last plan, our country has been through a lot - and this has led to extra pressures and challenges for policing to address. We've left the European Union changing the way that policing interacts with European and global partners, as well as how our borders operate.

We've also been through a pandemic that has changed so much about our country. Communities came together and the police delivered against a fast-changing set of regulations and expectations fantastically well.

But tragically, we have seen some of the worst of humanity. The murder of Sarah Everard by a serving police officer. The killing of our own PCSO Julia James. The killer of Wendy Knell and Caroline Pierce being brought to justice - only to discover what terrible crimes he committed, abusing his position within a local hospital.

Violence against women and girls is now more than ever something we all have to work together to challenge and tackle.

I thank local residents for their contribution to this plan, which I believe reflects the issues we all want to see action on whilst ensuring that victims, vulnerable people and the voiceless will benefit from the first-class service they want and deserve.



Matthew Scott
Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent

Integrity and transparency

The public expects the highest standards of integrity from those in public life; together with transparency they form the cornerstone of public confidence. Trust and confidence in policing are vital.

From Chief Constables to police officers on the street, there is a need to strengthen public trust and confidence and so the importance of integrity and transparency has never been greater – the public can't just be safe, they need to feel safe.

Of course, Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) elected by local residents also have a key role. PCCs hold Chief Constables to account on all elements of policing. Integrity and transparency must be at the heart of this, both personally and professionally.

I am clear on what my statutory duties are and the responsibilities I have been entrusted to undertake by the electorate of Kent. I will never interfere with operational decisions made by the Chief Constable, or any other police officer or professional staff, but will hold the Chief Constable to account on behalf of the public for the delivery of the priorities set out in this plan. I will also continue to ensure the [College of Policing's Code of Ethics](#) forms the bedrock of standards and behaviour within Kent Police.

To demonstrate my own commitment, I have signed the [Oath of Office](#), the [Committee on Standards in Public Life Ethical Checklist](#) and a [personal Code of Conduct](#) which reflects the Seven Principles of Public Life:

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

As I commit to making my decisions open and transparent, I will also ensure that Kent Police does the same to maintain public trust and confidence.

Policing though is unique, and increasingly challenging. Whilst the workforce of Kent Police is its greatest strength and asset, they need support to make the best possible decisions, and the right skills and knowledge to fight crime and address community concerns. As a result, the Chief Constable and I are committed to developing and supporting the workforce in terms of both service delivery and their own personal wellbeing.

We are also committed to working together to ensure diversity, equality and inclusion are at the heart of service delivery and embedded in both our organisation's culture. We will lead by example and create an environment that celebrates inclusion and diversity; where discrimination has no place and 'difference' is valued and harnessed to make policing more representative of Kent for the benefit of local communities and our staff. I will also hold the Chief Constable to account for delivery of the duties described in the Equality Act 2010.

Guiding principles

For a Police and Crime Plan to be successful, not only should PCCs seek to hold the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of the priorities, but there has to be clear principles that guide the actions and decisions taken by both the Chief Constable and the PCC.

Crime is important no matter where it takes place - urban, rural or coastal communities

Fortunate to have a mixture of urban, rural and coastal communities, the county of Kent is diverse and vibrant.

As PCC I believe that every crime is important no matter where it takes place – it should be investigated appropriately and proportionately, with the right outcome secured for the victim. This includes offences committed in residential, business and online environments, as well as on the roads.

Victims come from all sections of society and the impact can be devastating. It is therefore important that Kent Police has the right resources in the right places to address the serious threat from terrorism and organised crime, whilst meeting the demand from Kent's local communities.

Victims and witnesses at the heart of everything we do

Whilst I want to ensure that fewer people become victims in the first place, where they unfortunately do, it is important that they and any witnesses are at the heart of the criminal justice process.

Being a victim of crime or witness can affect people in very different ways and have a significant impact on the person's life, their family, and the local community. They can also find themselves giving statements and evidence in a system that is complex, daunting and probably at times, confusing.

I believe victims and witnesses must be treated with care, respect and dignity and have confidence in the criminal justice system. I welcome the [Code of Practice for Victims of Crime](#) which sets out the services and minimum standards that must be provided by the police, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), the Courts and wider criminal justice partners. It is important that Kent Police reminds victims of crime about their rights and of the availability of restorative justice. I also support Government proposals to introduce a new Victims' Law, as well as the expectations set out in the [Witness Charter](#).

Victims of some crimes, such as modern slavery and stalking and harassment may also be reluctant to report what's happened to the police because they are worried about their safety, getting into trouble or not being believed. It is paramount that victims and witnesses feel confident to report crime to Kent Police and can subsequently access the right support as early as possible.

Ensure that vulnerable people and those suffering mental ill health get support from the right agency

People with mental health problems or other vulnerabilities may have a range of complex needs, which the police alone are not fully equipped to meet. In some circumstances police involvement is necessary and unavoidable; they are often the first point of call in an emergency or for people in distress or crisis. However, on other occasions it is not in the interests of the person, nor the police or public to have officers taken away from their core front line duties unnecessarily.

Whilst police officers have the training and skills necessary to identify when a person is vulnerable, they are not experts in specific illnesses or disabilities; rather they need to be able to recognise when intervention is necessary and refer the person to the right agency to ensure they receive timely and appropriate support.

Multi-agency working including information sharing, joint decision making and coordinated action are key to the effective identification of risk to vulnerable people, preventing those risks from escalating and ensuring the continued well-being of those concerned.

The Chief Constable and I will continue to work with others to both reduce demand on policing and ensure vulnerable people and those suffering mental ill health receive the right help from the right agency at the right time.

Joint Vision

The Chief Constable and I are committed to working together to secure the best possible outcomes for policing and community safety in Kent. This commitment is reflected in our joint vision for policing which focuses on partnership working, protecting the public from harm, neighbourhood policing and providing a first-class service:

“Our vision is for Kent to be a safe place for people to live, work and visit. By protecting the public from harm, we will allow our communities to flourish and by working with the public and partners, we will provide a first-class policing service that is both visible and accessible. We will retain neighbourhood policing as the bedrock of policing in Kent. We will be there when the public need us and we will act with integrity in all that we do.”

Kent Police's Priorities – 2022 to 2025

The following priorities are based on my engagement and consultation with local residents, community and youth organisations, schools, partner organisations and elected officials, as well as letters and correspondence received by my Office.

The Chief Constable has been consulted on this plan and is expected to formally respond and outline how it will be delivered. As the PCC, I will then hold him to account for the progress made.

Work with residents, communities and businesses to prevent crime and antisocial behaviour

Crime and antisocial behaviour (ASB) are issues that residents, communities and local businesses care deeply about and this is reflected through my on-going engagement and consultation.

Victims of crime and ASB want it to stop, and the perpetrators punished for what they have done. They want the police and authorities to take the matter seriously, to understand the impact on them and to protect them from further harm.

Kent Police must ensure it has the right resources with the right skills to investigate all crimes, and where possible, bring to justice those who harm individuals and businesses by committing offences such as robbery, burglary, fraud, sexual abuse/exploitation and cybercrime. It must also continue to combat knife crime, targeting and tackling those who choose to carry a weapon.

ASB can take many forms – including intimidating and aggressive groups, damage, graffiti, and the anti-social use of vehicles. What they all have in common is that they are a blight on our communities and make people feel unsafe in their homes and wider community.

The police are vital to combatting ASB and are often the first agency residents turn to for help and support, but they cannot solve all problems by themselves. Kent Police must continue to work closely with residents, communities, businesses and partner agencies to address the sometimes complex causes of ASB and deliver effective long-term solutions. They must also ensure that victims and communities know their rights under the Community Trigger process.

Whilst urban, rural and coastal communities across Kent need to feel safe and secure, engagement with businesses of all types and sizes is important too.

Tackle violence against women and girls

Women and girls in our community are at a disproportionate risk of a wide range of crimes, predominantly perpetrated by men, such as domestic abuse, stalking and harassment, rape and sexual offences, including adult and child sexual exploitation.

Many females face violence and abusive behaviour on a regular basis and are too afraid to seek help. Abuse may occur behind closed doors but the consequences can be devastating and long-term, affecting the victim's physical health and mental well-being. It can also have a significant and long-lasting effect on any children, the wider family and local community.

As acknowledged nationally and reflected in the strong public response to my consultation in 2021, the police must actively tackle violence and abuse against women and girls.

To do so, Kent Police must listen to those directly affected by violence and abuse and work with partners to help ensure no woman or girl feels unsafe. Key areas will include:

- Prevention – raising awareness and understanding of the issue in educational establishments, workplaces as well as online, and making public spaces and venues safe places for all;
- Victims – ensuring they have the confidence to come forward, know what they can expect and have access to tailored first-class care and support throughout their criminal justice journey;
- Perpetrators – pursuing and bringing those responsible to justice; and
- System – working as a criminal justice system and with other agencies to deliver a 'whole system' approach, with better joint working and more effective interventions.

Equally, there is a need to continue building trust and confidence between women and girls and the police. The definition of violence against women and girls set out by the Government also includes offences against men and boys. As such, they should not receive any less of a service when they are victims of the same crimes, such as domestic abuse, stalking and sexual abuse.

The Chief Constable and I also expect inappropriate behaviour to continue to be called out within Kent Police, and all allegations of police perpetrated abuse to be dealt with swiftly, thoroughly and fairly with victims receiving first-class care and support.

Protect people from exploitation and abuse

The exploitation or abuse of anyone in Kent is unacceptable. Not only can it cause victims lifelong physical and emotional trauma, but it can also leave a person even more vulnerable to further harm.

Kent Police must continue to have a robust response to all forms of hate crime to ensure they receive the attention they deserve and to protect people from harm.

Child sexual abuse and exploitation present unique challenges for policing and continues to grow. This is particularly true of online abuse, where ever-more sophisticated digital tools protect anonymity and where apps encourage children to engage in risky behaviour.

Those involved in modern slavery and human trafficking are not just using Kent as a gateway to and from the continent but committing offences within local communities. They are also often involved with complex criminal networks which require substantial investment to investigate and disrupt.

The vulnerable in our communities must be protected, but no single agency can tackle exploitation and abuse in isolation. That is why 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.

Recognising that exploitation and abuse is not limited by geographical boundaries, Kent Police must also work with national and international law enforcement agencies to identify and protect victims and detect, deter and disrupt offenders and criminal networks.

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. Whether it is serious violence such as knife crime, fraud and financial crime, cybercrime or the drugs trade, some of the most vulnerable members of society often become victims.

A common feature of county lines drug supply is also the exploitation of young and vulnerable people, where the associated violence and abuse has a devastating impact on the individual and local communities.

Kent Police must continue to develop and share intelligence to build a detailed 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 in order to keep the county safe. There also needs to be a combination of effective local, regional, national and international coordinated activity, and seamless working between Kent Police and other agencies.

In addition, whilst digital technology has enhanced our lives and interactions in many positive ways, unfortunately organised criminals are increasingly exploiting it to commit a diverse range of crimes. Through appropriate technology, expertise and resource, and by working in partnership with other law enforcement agencies, Kent Police must protect residents and bring offenders to justice.

Be visible and responsive to the needs of communities

The relationship between the police and the people who live, work in and visit the county is vital to building trust and confidence that Kent Police will keep people safe.

The public rightly has an expectation that they will be able to contact Kent Police when they need to in ways that work for them, whether to report an emergency, seek advice, offer information or express an opinion. And when they do they should expect to get an appropriate response.

Kent Police must allow individuals and diverse communities to engage and make contact with confidence, by making its services accessible, appropriate, easy to use and safe. It must continue to effectively handle 999 and 101 calls, but also maintain other methods of contact, such as online and through personal interaction, to ensure it is open to all and has the ability to respond to user needs and situations.

The police service would cease to function without the active support of the communities it serves. Kent Police must listen to and understand the needs of communities across the county and provide an appropriate response 24/7, 365 days a year in a timely, empathetic and professional manner. Neighbourhood policing is fundamental to this, providing opportunities for greater community engagement and delivering a local approach to policing that is visible, accessible and responsive to the needs and priorities of local communities.

Whilst the purpose stays the same, to prevent crime and keep people safe, in a world where technology and population change at pace, Kent Police must continue to adapt and transform to remain accessible and responsive to public need, whilst being a human, visible presence in local neighbourhoods.

Prevent road danger and support Vision Zero

Despite the efforts of police officers, road safety partnership staff and volunteers, Kent's roads remain a concern for local communities.

People continue to drive through red lights, at high speeds, under the influence of drink or drugs, use a mobile phone at the wheel, or fail to wear a seat belt and commit a crime. They are putting their lives and the lives of others at risk. Inconsiderate road users who behave dangerously or in an anti-social manner are also making others feel unsafe.

Whilst all road users share a responsibility for their own and others' safety, the police have a vital part to play in ensuring that the road network operates efficiently and that those who use it can do so in safety and security. Kent Police must continue to crackdown on the main factors which contribute to people being killed and seriously injured on Kent's roads and work with partners to prevent road dangers, tackle inconsiderate behaviour and educate where appropriate.

Vision Zero is Kent County Council's Road Safety Strategy. Through partnership working, an evidence-led approach and by combining engineering, education and enforcement, it aims to make Kent's roads feel and be safer for all, with the aspiration of reducing road fatalities to zero by 2050. Kent Police must play its part by continuing to support Community Speedwatch and enhancing its enforcement activity to reduce driver behaviour that puts themselves and others at risk.

Protect young people and provide opportunities

Behind closed doors, a significant number of children and young people are subject to neglect, emotional, sexual and physical abuse; offending can also often be an indicator of vulnerability. With education disrupted, protective factors outside the home reduced and social contact made more difficult, the global coronavirus pandemic made some children and young people even more vulnerable.

However, they are not simply small adults; their knowledge, understanding, emotional and physical maturity is different. This can influence their ability to recognise danger, seek help or protect themselves and manifest in behaviours that may put them at greater risk. Research also demonstrates that without protective factors, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) can have a long-lasting impact.

It is essential that Kent Police and partners maximise the opportunities to support and protect children and young people by adopting a child centred approach which actively seeks out and hears their individual voices, acknowledges their differences, recognises their vulnerabilities and meets their needs.

Whenever an officer or member of staff comes into contact with a child or young person, it is important that they look beyond the immediate situation by asking questions and observing their behaviour and environment. By doing so, they may just help to break the cycle of neglect, abuse, trauma and offending which will reduce demand and improve the lives of children and young people for generations to come.

By actively promoting Child Centred Policing, the Voice of the Child and supporting innovative programmes such as Operation Encompass, we can ensure a brighter future for children and young people.

Every interaction with a child or young person also leaves a mark; it is an opportunity to build trust and to keep them safe. As a result, Kent Police must continue working with educational establishments and other organisations to provide positive engagement opportunities through programmes such as the Volunteer Police Cadets and Mini Police Cadets.

What I will do

PCCs have a broad set of responsibilities that expand beyond policing and it is important that I carry out these functions effectively to support local people's priorities.

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

In setting this Police and Crime Plan, I commit to holding the Chief Constable to account to ensure that the priorities I have set out - the issues which matter to the people of Kent - are being tackled. I will hold the Chief Constable to account in a number of ways, including:

- in public through my Performance and Delivery Board, and the Joint Audit Committee;
- through private briefings when it is appropriate to do so in order to discuss operationally or commercially sensitive matters;
- through an Independent Custody Visiting scheme that monitors the welfare of detainees.

As statutory responsibilities, I will also continue to monitor complaints made against Kent Police and act as the appellate body, providing a review process for complainants who are dissatisfied with how the force has handled their complaint.

Data is important, and I will be looking to track improvements in performance where these can be measured such as through victim satisfaction surveys. Equally though, it is important to consider context and the impact of external factors. For example, in some instances a numerical increase in reported crime may indicate that victims have greater confidence or feel more comfortable to come forward due to the success of awareness campaigns.

But I am not and will not be solely reliant on data. I will also consider other feedback, including Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services reports and other independent publications.

In holding the Chief Constable to account it is also vital that I hear the public's voice on how policing is being delivered. I will therefore provide a wide-ranging engagement programme that enables the diversity of residents, irrespective of background, to have their say.

It is also important to understand the finite role that Kent Police plays in securing justice and keeping our communities safe. Delivering an effective and efficient criminal justice system is not solely a responsibility for the police. Other agencies including local councils, the CPS, Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service, and the Probation Service all have a part to play in ensuring the victim's journey is as swift and smooth as possible. A good police response followed by a failure to achieve justice will still leave many victims dissatisfied and discouraged from reporting future crimes. Lengthy court delays and any public perception that sentencing is too lenient will also damage public confidence.

As chair of the Kent Criminal Justice Board, I will use my convening powers to bring the various agencies involved in the criminal justice process together to ensure we are collectively delivering a joined-up system which puts victims, not offenders and processes, first. In the longer term I would welcome the Government, following the conclusion of its PCC Review, affording PCCs greater responsibility for holding these agencies to account.

Work in partnership with the police and others to prevent crime and antisocial behaviour

Preventing crime and ASB reduces demand on policing and the criminal justice system. But more importantly, it reduces victimisation. Preventing crime from happening in the first place delivers safer communities for all of us, allowing residents and businesses to thrive.

Residents feel reassured by a policing presence in their communities, but effective prevention is not solely a policing responsibility. Through my commissioning budget, I will continue to invest in initiatives which reduce crime and make people feel safer; including community-based partner-led projects.

The effectiveness of a joined-up response has been proven by the work of the partnership Task Forces in Thanet, Medway, and Maidstone, and by the Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit (VRU). It is only by working together that we can effectively prevent crime and ASB by addressing some of the underlying causes such as poor mental health, alcohol and substance misuse, inadequate housing, and lack of provision of youth services.

When vulnerable suspects are brought into police custody, we must maximise the opportunity to reduce future offending through diversion and support. Around 80% of cautioned or convicted crimes are the result of reoffending.

At sentencing, whether a custodial sentence or not, consideration needs to be given to rehabilitation. And when prisoners are released, we must ensure they have a realistic chance to rebuild their lives. That means ensuring they have appropriate accommodation and opportunities for training or employment.

Be responsive to emerging issues and trends through innovation

For nearly two centuries, British policing has constantly evolved and adapted to respond to shifting threats. As a result of my regular engagement with the public, I continue to work with Kent Police to ensure the force has the resources to meet the needs of today and the demands of tomorrow.

Where these threats are national, or international, it is imperative that police forces and other law enforcement agencies work in collaboration to identify the most effective solutions to address these problems; including investing in new innovative practices where appropriate.

Presently, one of the largest threats to public safety is cyber-enabled crime. Fraud, for example, now represents the most common crime type in England and Wales. Much of this crime is conducted online via digital communications. Protecting the public and businesses from this threat requires education and awareness, as well as investment in specialist digital investigators and modern IT. Working with local and national partners, including the Police Digital Service, I will ensure policing is able to exploit the advantages that technology can offer to better safeguard and protect our communities.

Policing must also play its part in tackling wider issues such as the global climate crisis. I am committed to energy efficiency and reducing Kent Police's carbon footprint to help protect the local environment, while potentially realising cost savings through the smarter use of resources and technology. By actively supporting the national procurement service BlueLight Commercial – which I currently chair – PCCs can also acquire a modern, greener fleet and promote social value throughout supply chains while ensuring value for money for taxpayers.

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

I have a duty to ensure Kent Police has the resources it needs. Since I was first elected, I have spoken up for the people of Kent and Medway, lobbying Government for our fair share of national grant funding. The success of the Government's uplift programme means Kent Police now has more police officers than at any time in its history, but there is still more to do.

Our county is uniquely positioned between London and mainland Europe. We have one of the longest coastlines in the country, the longest Strategic Road Network, and some significant pockets of urban and coastal deprivation. As the Home Office reviews the national Funding Formula - the mechanism used to calculate how much national funding each police force area receives - I will continue to engage with decision-makers in Whitehall to ensure our circumstances are fully recognised and that Kent Police is not adversely affected.

I have already been successful in recent years in securing additional money from a variety of Government grants and funding streams to assist in making Kent safer. This includes surge funding to tackle and disrupt county lines; reimbursement for costs associated with exiting the European Union; VRU funding to tackle youth violence and knife crime; Safer Streets funding to make communities safer; and one-off funding to provide additional support for vulnerable victims during the Covid pandemic.

Through my Commissioning Team, I will continue to proactively identify opportunities to bid for Kent's share of national funding streams and ensure any money received is spent appropriately. Doing so will mean that I can further financially support Kent Police to deliver a quality operational response, and support communities to deliver initiatives which make people safer.

Support volunteering

I continue to be in awe of all those, whether they bear a police logo or not, who freely give their time to support our local communities and keep us safe. As well as my Independent Custody Visiting scheme, organisations such as the Kent Special Constabulary, the Volunteer Police Cadets, Kent Rescue 4x4, Kent Search and Rescue (KSAR), Community Speedwatch, victims' support services, and innumerable others deserve our thanks. Without the extensive support of these and a great number of others, there would be extra costs incurred and resources required by Kent Police.

My commitment to those organisations remains that I will do all I can to ensure they have the support they need to thrive and continue their fantastic work. That may include financial assistance when appropriate and in accordance with my commissioning priorities. As an example, with match-funding from my Office, we have seen the return of Volunteer Police Cadets for young people in Kent.

However, because supporting volunteering is not just about money - it is about leadership - where I can, I will also use my convening powers and influence to speak up for their needs and assist them in accessing support from elsewhere.

I have volunteered for a variety of organisations throughout my lifetime and will continue to do so where I can. I will also continue to empower and encourage my own staff to volunteer in their local communities in whatever way they choose.

Commission services for victims that are needs-led

Providing services which support victims of crime, and so helping them come to terms with what has happened as much as possible, is one of the core responsibilities of any PCC.

My firm commitment is that, here in Kent, the services I commission will be victim-led and treat everyone as an individual by taking account of their own needs and unique circumstances. This includes services for those who may be especially vulnerable, such as victims of domestic abuse, child sexual abuse and modern slavery.

Whether a victim chooses to report their crime to the police or not, I will ensure they can access freely available services to help them. Such services may make greater utilisation of digital or other contact channels, but only where it is the right thing for the victim.

I also commit to ensuring people for whom English is not a first language, as well as those who have disabilities or other personal circumstances which impact on their ability to access services, are catered for.

To make sure funds allocated from my commissioning budget to support victims' services are used to maximum effect, I will continue to utilise a variety of commissioning approaches to ensure appropriate service providers are identified and awards are subject to robust governance and monitoring arrangements, with information made publicly available in the interests of openness and transparency.

National expectations

The Strategic Policing Requirement

Many of the threats Kent faces can be tackled locally, but threats such as terrorism, serious and organised crime, cybercrime and major public unrest need a coordinated approach which brings together resources from across the country.

The policing requirement to counter such threats is set out in the [Strategic Policing Requirement](#) (SPR)¹ and the Chief Constable and I must have 'due regard' to the SPR and ensure that Kent Police is in a state of readiness to respond to the requirements. This may include sharing and pooling resources with other forces in order to effectively tackle such threats. Kent Police already has a strong collaboration with Essex Police and with police forces across the Eastern region to tackle serious criminality, but the Chief Constable must ensure there are sufficient resources to meet these important responsibilities.

As PCC I must also ensure that sufficient funds are available to deliver the required contribution to the SPR.

National Crime and Policing Measures

The Government has been clear that PCCs must achieve significant reductions in crime and restore the public's confidence in the criminal justice system.

To support the '[Beating crime plan](#)', the Home Office has introduced a number of National Crime and Policing Measures to focus effort on key national priorities and allow performance to be measured.

The key national priorities are as follows:

- Reduce murder and other homicides
- Reduce serious violence
- Disrupt drugs supply and county lines
- Reduce neighbourhood crime
- Tackle cyber-crime
- Improve satisfaction among victims – with a particular focus on victims of domestic abuse

They complement the local priorities set out in this Police and Crime Plan and I aim to be as transparent as I can be on performance in this area. In holding the Chief Constable to account, I will provide a statement on the contribution of Kent Police to delivery of the national priorities on a quarterly basis and make this available via my website.

Policing Vision 2025

The [Policing Vision 2025](#) sets out the future for policing, shaping decisions about how police forces use their resources to keep people safe. It has been developed by the Association of PCCs and the National Police Chiefs' Council in consultation with the College of Policing, the National Crime Agency, staff associations and other policing and community partners.

Legislation

New or amended legislation such as the Public Order Bill and Victims Bill represent real opportunities to make Kent safer, tackle crime and ASB, support victims and ensure justice is done. Kent Police must ensure that it provides the right training, empowers officers and staff, and puts in place the right resources to address relevant provisions.

¹ Currently being reviewed by the Home Office

Resources and Medium Term Financial Plan

Funding

I receive all funding for policing and crime in Kent. The total gross funding for Kent is £444.6m and is funded through:

- £224.5m of direct revenue grant funding from central government
- £23.9m of specific government grant
- £161.1m from the council tax including the deficit on the collection fund
- £35.1m of locally generated income such as fees and charges

The overall gross expenditure for Kent is £458.7m and therefore £14.1m of savings are required to balance the budget. Of this, £6.8m is expected from the Neighbourhood Policing Review, leaving £7.3m to be identified and made in year. 99% of the budget is available for the Chief Constable to exercise his functions in delivering the Making Kent Safer plan. The remaining 1% is to enable me to carry out my statutory duties as PCC.

Council tax

The Government sets a limit on how much can be raised through the council tax before I must call a referendum. For 2023/24, the Government announced that PCCs could increase the precept by up to £15 for an average Band D property.

Ideologically, I am a low-tax Conservative, and I have repeatedly stated my desire to not increase the precept unless it is needed to protect frontline policing. I am also acutely aware of the financial pressures faced by households during the cost of living crisis and am reluctant to add to them. However, this increased flexibility has allowed me to mitigate the savings required for 2023/24, continue to maintain police officer numbers, as well as invest prudently for operational policing and the prevention of crime. I believe this exceeds that test and therefore the council tax for Kent will increase by £15 for an average Band D property, or 6.57% (equivalent to £1.25 per month or 4 pence per day).

I have made no assumptions on increases over and above 1.99% in future years.

Budget and medium-term financial challenges

My budget and precept proposal for 2023/24 has been a difficult proposition. In previous years, although highlighting the need to make significant savings, I have been able to identify the additionality to Kent Police that the precept will provide, whether through additional officers, PCSO's or assets and equipment.

However, the financial challenges facing policing in 2023/24 and beyond mean I need to focus on the difficult decisions required to balance the budget. The shortfall in funding from the Government, with only £0.7m of ongoing additional funding received in 2023/24, coupled with significant inflation mean cost pressures are substantial and savings need to be made. I have discussed the savings proposals with the Chief Constable to ensure the impact on frontline policing is mitigated as much as possible, while recognising that they will impact on other areas of the organisation.

An example of this is the Neighbourhood Policing Review. Its aims are to ensure Kent Police has the right mix of roles and functions to ensure it continues to provide a first-class service and to deliver financial savings. The review introduces a new plan for neighbourhood policing which utilises the additional police officers recruited over the last few years to replace PCSOs in local areas so that residents will see more police officers on the street. This will unfortunately mean a reduction in the headcount of PCSO's.

This example highlights the scale of the problem for 2023/24. A significant operational review has identified substantial savings that in most years would have been sufficient to meet the savings gap. However, even with those savings there is still a need for savings of a similar magnitude just to balance the budget.

My increasing the precept to the maximum allowed under the referendum principles helps mitigate some of the savings required. Anything less than £15 would require further reductions in staffing and service levels.

The Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) shows that the next two years are the most difficult in terms of savings required to balance the budget. Although difficult decisions have been and will need to be made, I am determined to ensure that those decisions are taken at an early stage and in a considerate manner so that Kent Police can build on the successes of previous years and face the future in a strong position.

The MTFP is agreed each February as part of the budget setting process and is updated and refreshed throughout the year as further information becomes available. The plan covers the current year plus four from 2023/24 through to 2027/28. A range of optimistic and pessimistic scenarios are produced by the force's and my Chief Finance Officer with several differing assumptions; these are discussed with myself, the Chief Constable and our respective senior leadership teams before the final version is completed and presented.

The current iteration of the MTFP shows £42m of savings required over the lifetime of the plan. There is a savings plan to cover this period which is constantly reviewed by the senior leadership team to identify opportunities for further savings.

The Policing Minister when announcing the financial settlement stated that the police are expected to ensure they make the best use of public money. The Home Office expects to see at least £100 million of cashable savings (as part of CSR21). This should be achieved through the following:

- Working with BlueLight Commercial to maximise financial and commercial benefits related to procurement, through use of the organisation's commercial expertise, leveraging the purchasing power available across the sector, and developing the capacity to implement a full commercial life-cycle approach to procurement.
- Corporate Functions, where the Home Office and BlueLight Commercial are conducting ongoing work with the sector to understand the opportunities around management of corporate functions, for example implementation of shared service models.

I am confident that this budget and the MTFP demonstrate Kent's ability to meet these expectations and my commitment to making the best use of the funds entrusted to me by the Kent taxpayer.

Commissioning and working with partners

In addition to my policing responsibilities, I am responsible for ensuring effective support services for victims of crime, and working in partnership to reduce crime, disorder, and ASB. To support delivery of this I have a commissioning budget which is made up of the following:

- The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 enables PCCs to use an element of the Policing Grant to support crime and disorder reduction within their police area.
- The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) issues a victim services grant to PCCs under section 56(1) of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 to enable the commissioning of support services.
- Funding secured through bidding opportunities made available during the financial year.

My Commissioning Strategy sets out the detail of this budget and how responsibilities will be managed during the financial year. I also intend to take the opportunity to consolidate the impact of the funding I provide and use this to help inform future commissioning decisions.

At the time of writing the MoJ have yet to formally announce their allocations, but it has been assumed that the £2.1m received last year for the specific purpose of delivering support services for victims of crime, regardless of whether the crime has been reported to the police will continue in 2023/24. In total, the combined commissioning and victim services budget is expected to be £4.2m for 2023/24.

My Commissioning Strategy will be released once all allocations from the MoJ have been announced. However, the following provides a broad outline.

Commissioning Budget Strategic Overview 2023/24

| Funding Streams | 2023/24 £m |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| Crime and Disorder Reduction | 1.8 |
| Victim Services | 2.3 |
| Intervention Projects | 0.1 |
| Total | £4.2* |

* These are indicative allocations of the 2023/24 funding streams and will be subject to further amendment. Finalised allocations will be published online.

Allocations from the above funding streams are in the process of being agreed to sustain key provision of services for 2023/24. There are also a number of projects that my team acquired additional funding for, such as the Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme and additional Independent Sexual Violence Advisors. These will continue into 2023/24.

Once the funding outcome is known, further allocations will be made in line with my Commissioning Strategy.

Matthew Scott
Kent Police and Crime Commissioner

Office telephone: 01622 677055
Email: contactyourpcc@kent.police.uk

www.kent-pcc.gov.uk

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



Annual Policing Survey 2022

November 2022

As part of his commitment to actively engage with the diverse communities of Kent and Medway, the elected Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Kent, Matthew Scott, launched his sixth Annual Policing Survey in July 2022.

Like previous years, the aim of the exercise was to survey a large and representative sample of residents on their views and experiences of policing, as well as feelings of safety, whether they had been a victim of crime, and the subsequent support received, amongst other questions.

Collecting information from the sample enables the PCC and his staff to draw meaningful conclusions to help inform the Police and Crime Plan and decisions with regards to the council tax precept.

However, there was a difference in this year's survey because the PCC was searching for a new Chief Constable. Mr Scott wanted to gauge the public's views on which leadership qualities the new Chief Constable should possess and policing priorities they should focus on. These two additional questions were added after the survey was officially launched, so numbers of responses are lower compared to the other questions.

We received 2964 completed survey responses overall.

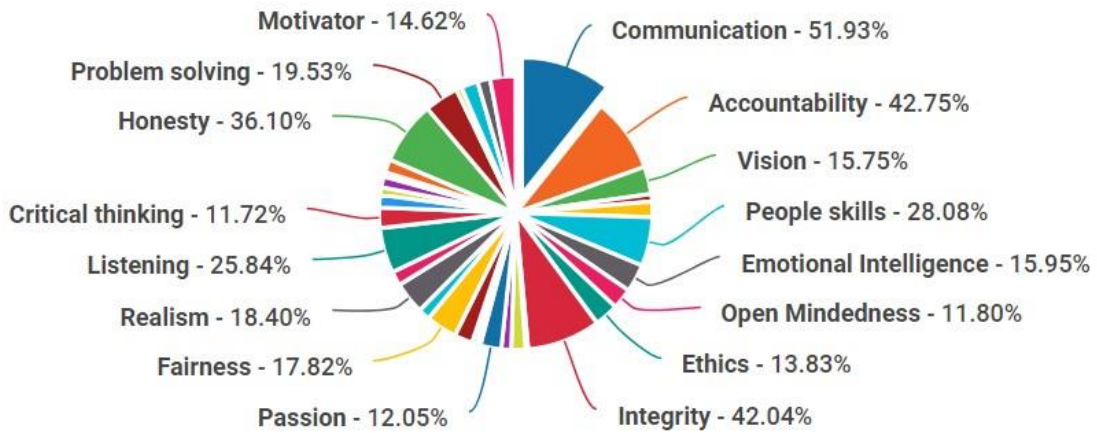
The survey was shared widely throughout Kent in a number of ways and to different communities. More Kent Police officers and staff completed the survey this year in comparison to previous years because the PCC wanted to understand what they wanted from their new Chief Constable.

Hard copies were completed at both the Kent Police Open Day and the Kent County Show. The survey was widely promoted on our social media channels and posted directly on various local community Facebook groups, including diverse communities. 'My Community Voice' and 'Nextdoor' were also channels we utilised to reach out to more local people.

A special edition Newsletter was sent out to our 4000 mailing list recipients and emails were sent to Parish councils, Community liaison officers, Places of worship, Schools, Colleges, Universities, Rotary clubs, Women's Institutes, Kent Scouts, Commissioned charities, Criminal Justice partner organisations, and many more. We asked them to also share more widely with friends, family, and colleagues. The hard copies were also filled in at street stalls in shopping foyers and high streets across Kent.

The first two questions that were analysed focus on the Chief Constable. Question 3 onwards focus on the general annual policing questions.

1. Which of the following leadership qualities do you believe the next Chief Constable should have? Please select up to five.



- Communication
- Accountability
- Vision
- Self motivation
- Confidence
- People skills
- Emotional Intelligence
- Open Mindedness
- Ethics
- Integrity
- Optimism
- Humility
- Character
- Passion
- Networking
- Learning
- Partnership working
- Fairness
- Resilience
- Realism
- Pragmatism
- Listening
- Critical thinking
- Authenticity
- Flexibility
- Innovation
- Creativity
- Change Management
- Honesty
- Problem solving
- Likability
- Empathy
- Compassion
- Motivator

Looking at the results, it is clear to see every single leadership quality is important, with at least 35 people choosing the least popular response; however, the five most popular qualities are:

All respondents

- 1) Communication
- 2) Accountability
- 3) Integrity
- 4) Honesty
- 5) People skills

Police

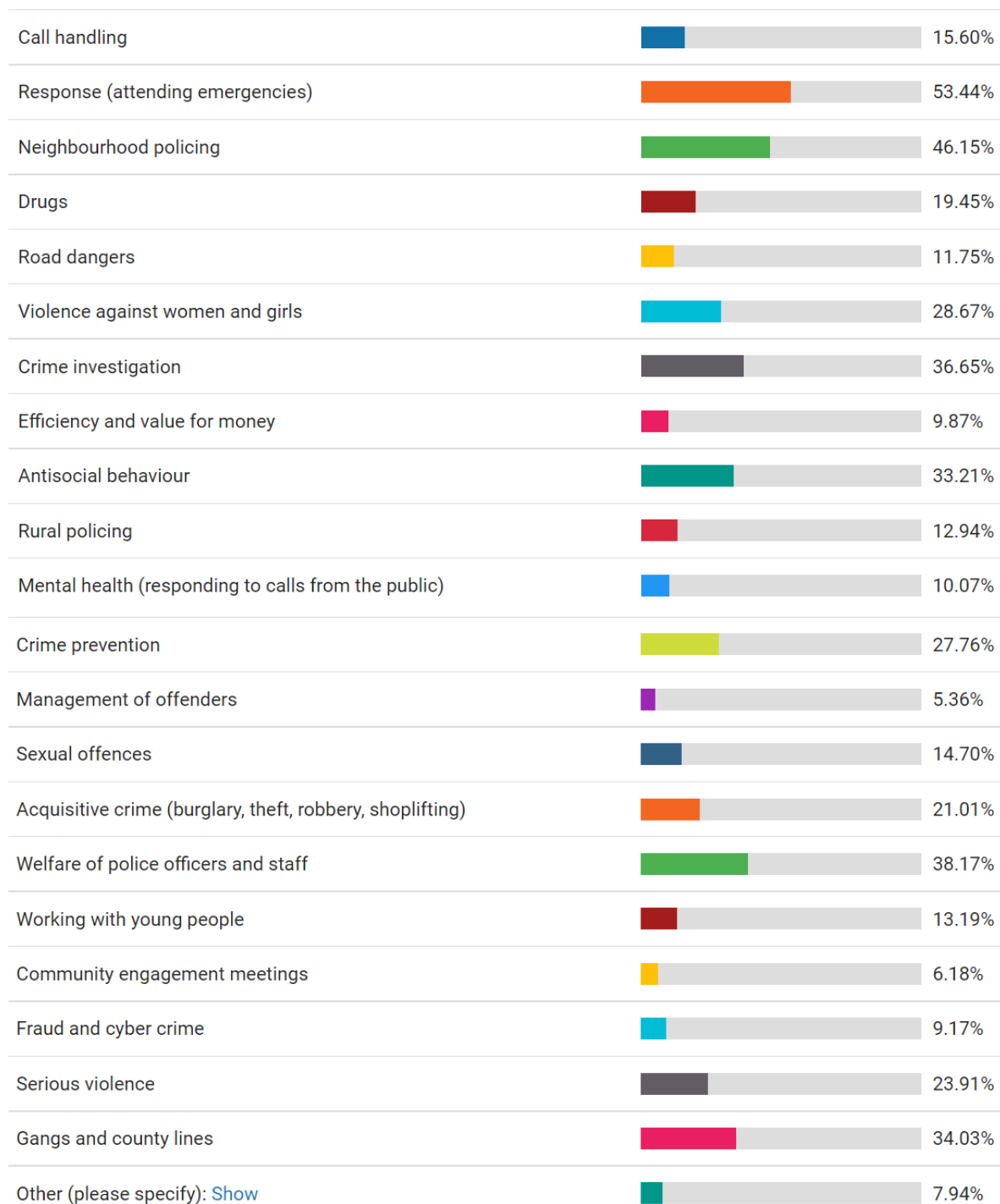
- 1) Communication
- 2) Integrity
- 3) Honesty
- 4) Accountability & Listening
- 5) Realism

Public

- 1) Communication
- 2) Accountability
- 3) Integrity
- 4) Honesty
- 5) People skills

The top 3 scored over 40% each with 'Communication' the only quality being chosen by over half of all respondents. The 6th most chosen quality of 'Listening' was the only other quality that was chosen by more than 1/4 of people outside of the top 5 overall choices. Although important, most qualities failed to reach 10% of respondents' top 5 votes.

2. Which of the following areas should the new Chief Constable be most focussed on? Please select up to five.



Results from question 2 parallel question 1 to an extent. Only a handful of responses are chosen by more than 25% of people (8 out of 22 choices). Again, only 1 area is chosen by more than half of people (Response – attending emergencies).

All respondents

- 1) Response (attending emergencies)
- 2) Neighbourhood policing
- 3) Welfare of police officers and staff
- 4) Crime investigation
- 5) Gangs and county lines

Police

- 1) Welfare of police officers and staff
- 2) Response (attending emergencies)
- 3) Neighbourhood policing
- 4) Crime investigation
- 5) Violence against Women and Girls

Public

- 1) Neighbourhood policing
- 2) Response (attending emergencies)
- 3) Antisocial behaviour
- 4) Gangs and county lines
- 5) Crime investigation

There is consensus between police and public on 3 areas of policing: Response (attending emergencies), Neighbourhood policing, and Crime investigation. They differ when it comes to the police prioritising 'Welfare of police officers and staff' and 'Violence against Women and Girls'. The public want the new Chief Constable to focus on 'Antisocial behaviour' and 'Gangs and county lines'.

A handful of 'Other' examples were specified that differed to the given options:

- All the above (difficult to just pick 5)
- Traveller encampments
- Staffing levels and workloads
- Focusing on policing and not taking on other partner agencies' responsibilities
- Hate crime
- Rehabilitating people from re-entering the Criminal Justice System
- Unnecessary bureaucracy
- More visible police presence
- Securing prosecutions
- Officers in Schools
- Maritime capability
- Custody
- Traffic crime
- Anti-terror policing
- Corruption in policing

3. Do you agree with the priorities I have set for Kent Police?

| Answer Choices | Strongly agree | Agree | agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Response Total |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Preventing crime and antisocial behaviour | 63.91% 1,856 | 28.75% 835 | 5.51% 160 | 0.83% 24 | 1.00% 29 | 2,904 |
| Tackle violence against women and girls | 55.78% 1,611 | 29.88% 863 | 11.39% 329 | 2.04% 59 | 0.90% 26 | 2,888 |
| Protecting people from exploitation and abuse | 50.38% 1,449 | 35.67% 1,026 | 11.61% 334 | 1.56% 45 | 0.76% 22 | 2,876 |
| Combat organised crime and county lines | 59.91% 1,723 | 30.25% 870 | 8.00% 230 | 1.15% 33 | 0.70% 20 | 2,876 |
| Be visible and responsive to the needs of communities | 64.69% 1,867 | 25.68% 741 | 6.76% 195 | 1.80% 52 | 1.07% 31 | 2,886 |
| Prevent road danger and support Vision Zero | 37.94% 1,093 | 36.24% 1,044 | 20.41% 588 | 4.10% 118 | 1.32% 38 | 2,881 |
| Protect young people and provide opportunities | 43.35% 1,252 | 33.86% 978 | 17.90% 517 | 3.50% 101 | 1.39% 40 | 2,888 |

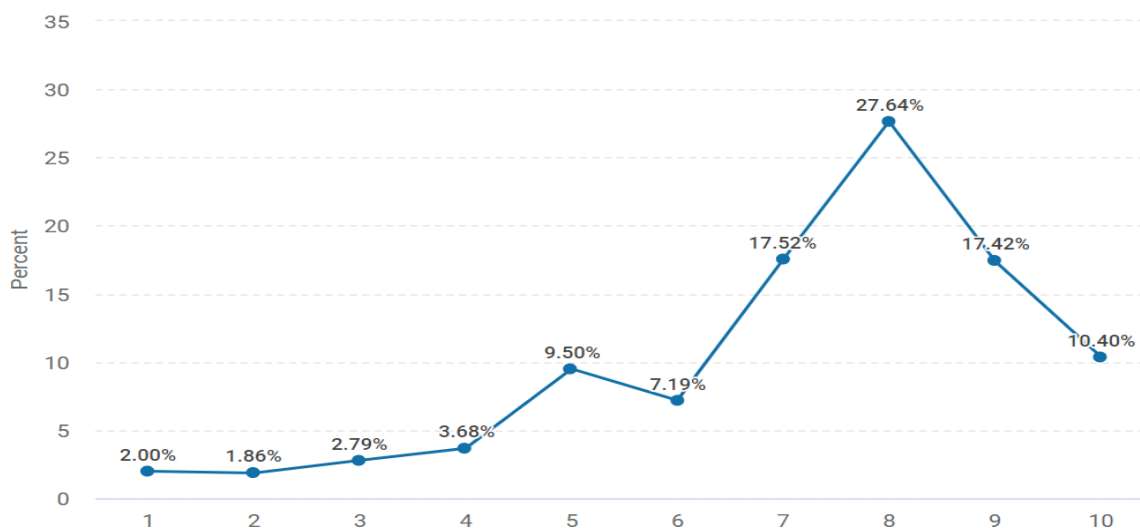
This question asked how far people agreed or disagreed with the six priorities within the PCC's Police & Crime Plan: Making Kent Safer.

Interestingly, overall, people strongly agree with every single priority (shown by the light grey highlighted boxes on the far left). When combining the % of those strongly agreeing and agreeing with priorities, the most popular priority was 'Preventing crime and antisocial behaviour' with 92.66%. The 2nd 'most agreed' with priority was 'Be visible and responsive to the needs of communities' with 90.37%.

These answers correlate with the previous question when looking at the top 2 answers people felt most strongly about: 'Response (attending emergencies)' and 'Neighbourhood policing'. According to responses to these two questions, the public want their police to be more visible and to respond to crime.

Although people still strongly agreed with 'Preventing road danger and support Vision Zero' and 'Protecting young people and provide opportunities' as priorities, these were prioritised less compared to the others (approximately 8-10% less than the 5th most popular priority - if you look at the combined % of those who strongly agree and agree).

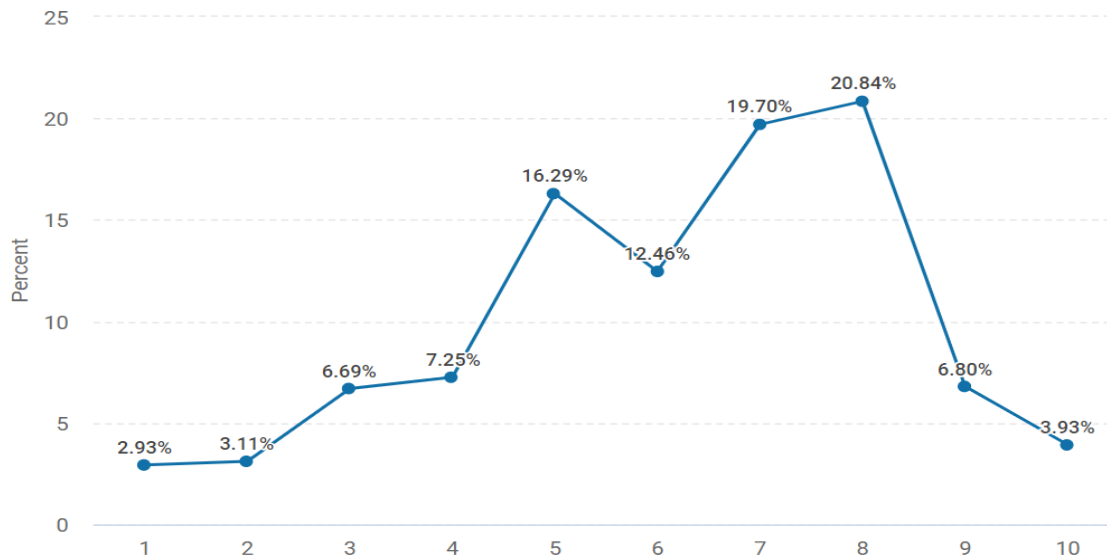
4. How safe do you feel where you live? (1 being 'very unsafe' and 10 being 'very safe')



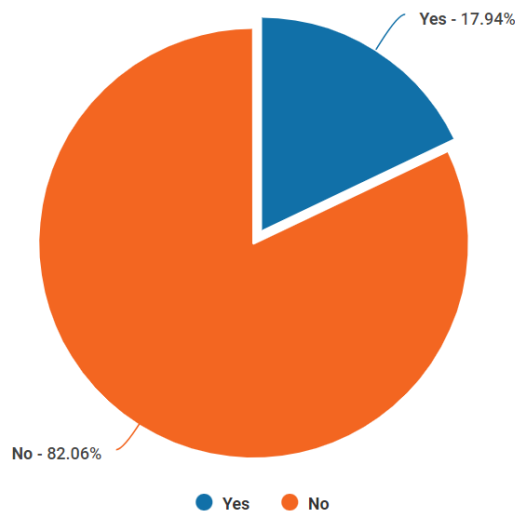
The mean average of responses was a score of 7.24 out of 10, a very slight increase on the recent Police & Crime Plan survey of 7 out of 10. It was also higher than last year's Annual Policing Survey results, which was 6.97 out of 10 and up from 6.38 in 2019.

5. How safe do you feel on Kent's roads, as any road user? (Driver, pedestrian, cyclist, horse rider etc). (1 being 'very unsafe' and 10 being 'very safe')

The chart suggests a similar picture to the previous question, in the fact that people chose 7 or 8 out of 10 more often than any other score. The scores were more evenly spread amongst all options in contrast to question 4, which brings the **overall average down to 6.20 out of 10.**



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



Less than 20% of the 2,898 respondents who answered this question had been a victim of crime in the last year. These 520 people then had an opportunity to answer supplementary questions on the crime, whether they reported it, and the subsequent service from Kent Police and partners.

7. If so, which crime(s) were you a victim of?

More than a 1/3 had experienced Antisocial behaviour (ASB) in the last year – significantly higher than any other crime within the list of options. The next highest option chosen was ‘Other’ with almost ¼ of respondents choosing this. Seeing as this option included a variety of crimes, ASB was the stand-out crime experienced. The top 5 were:

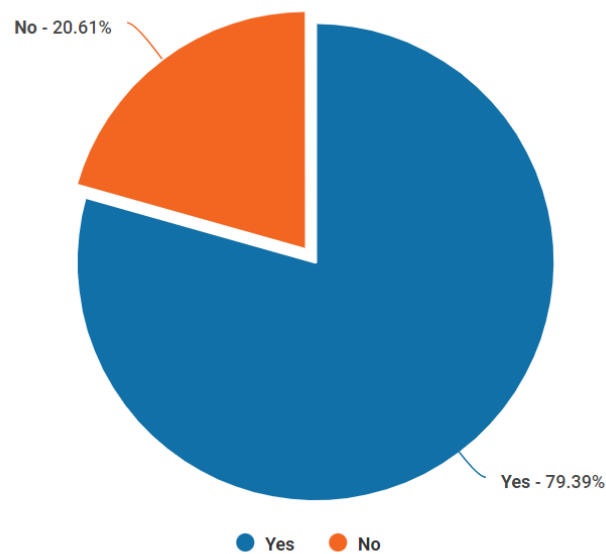
- 1) ASB
- 2) Vehicle crime

- 3) Burglary/Robbery
- 4) Stalking and harassment, including online harassment
- 5) Hate Crime

'Other' consisted of:

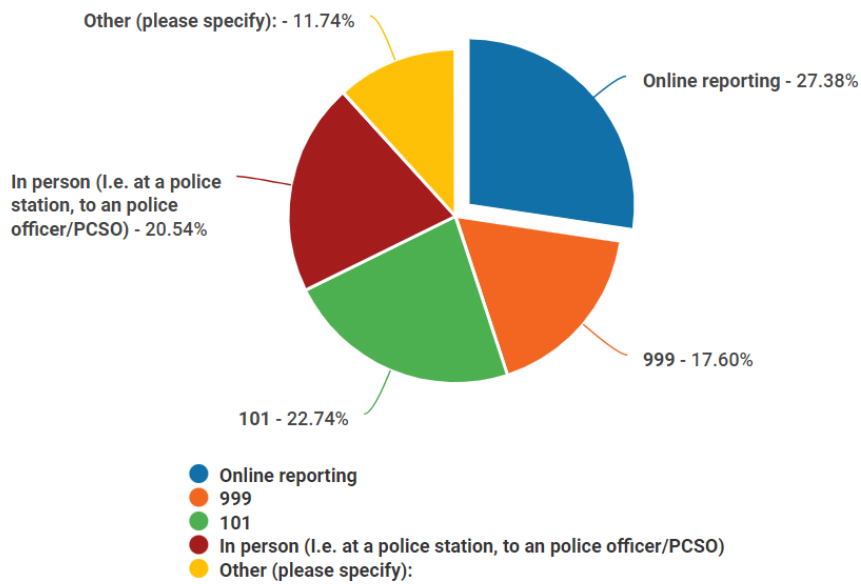
- Drug crime
- Assault (including on emergency and shop workers)
- Public disorder
- Criminal damage
- Upskirting
- Voyeurism
- Neglect
- Malicious communications
- Accosting
- Arson
- Dog attack
- Perverting the course of justice

8. Did you report the crime?



Almost 80% of respondents reported the crime they experienced in the last year.

9. If so, how did you report this?



Out of the 416 people who reported a crime in the last year, 50% used either online reporting or 101. 999 was used the least out of all options.

Responses under 'Other':

- Matter was dealt with internally at work
- Never got through
- Via Transport Police
- Reported to School
- Reported to mental health services
- Action Fraud
- Fraudline
- Bank
- Farming Whatsapp group
- Email to PCSO

10. How satisfied were you with Kent Police?

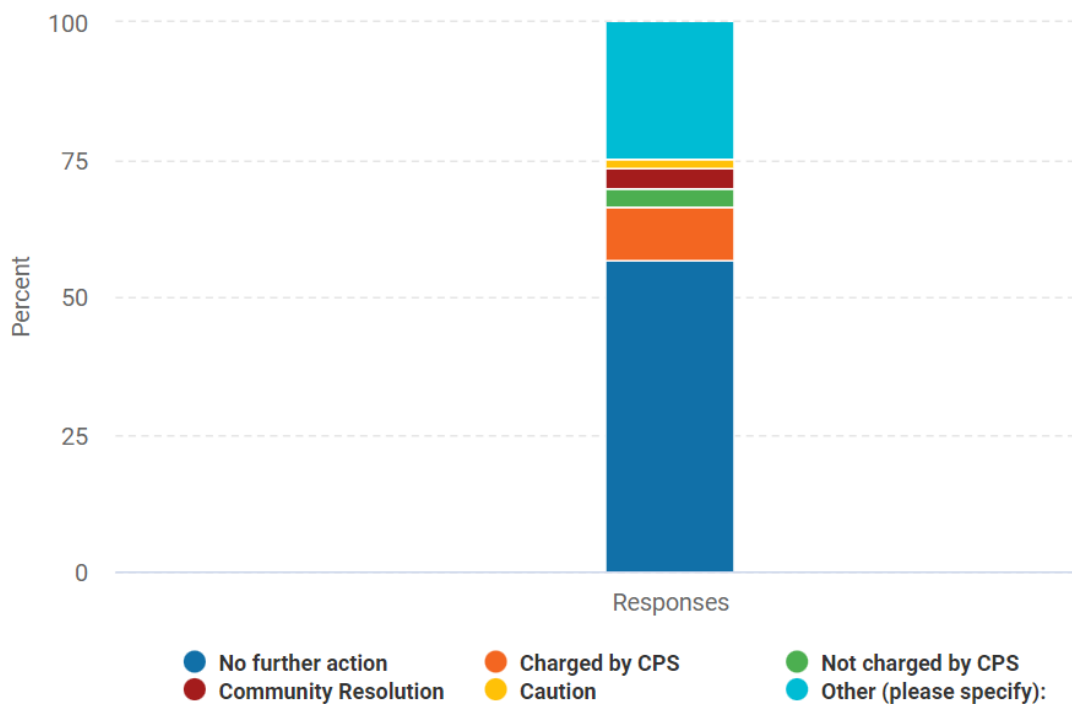
| | | | |
|-------------------|--|--------|-----|
| Very dissatisfied | | 25.86% | 90 |
| Dissatisfied | | 23.56% | 82 |
| Neutral | | 29.02% | 101 |
| Satisfied | | 15.80% | 55 |
| Very satisfied | | 5.75% | 20 |

Based on the immediate response, the most common response is 'neutral' with 29% followed by 'very dissatisfied' at 25%. However, for our victim satisfaction we group the different options for satisfied and dissatisfied together to give overall satisfaction:

| | | |
|--------------|-----|-------|
| Dissatisfied | 172 | 49.4% |
| Neutral | 101 | 29.0% |
| Satisfied | 75 | 21.6% |
| | 348 | |

This shows that people are overall dissatisfied with 49.4% (almost half), 29.0% (almost a third) are neutral and 21.6% (over a fifth) are satisfied.

11. What was the outcome?



The outcome of the crime in over 50% of the 404 respondents' cases (that were reported) concluded in 'No further action' being taken. Just under 10% of the respondents had their case charged by the Crown Prosecution Service. Almost ¼ experienced 'Other' outcomes; examples listed below:

- 'Never got through to 101'
- 'Still waiting for an update'
- 'Still waiting for CPS'
- 'No interest whatsoever from police even though we suffered a follow up assault by the same person and three of his friends subsequently.'
- MP helped us to get the Police to listen and re consider'
- 'Charged for a lower offence'
- 'No one was caught'
- 'Ongoing at the moment - awaiting forensics'

- 'Never heard back despite cctv evidence'
- 'Unable to prosecute as lack of evidence'
- 'Charged by CPS and dropped before court'
- 'Currently awaiting court proceedings'
- 'Verbal warning from PCSO (twice due to reoffending)'
- 'Nothing...the crime was not deemed serious enough or even a crime number'
- 'YOT referral'
- 'I rang 999 they did not turn up'
- 'Was provided with catalytic converter marking kit'

12. If you reported the crime, were you referred to any support services?



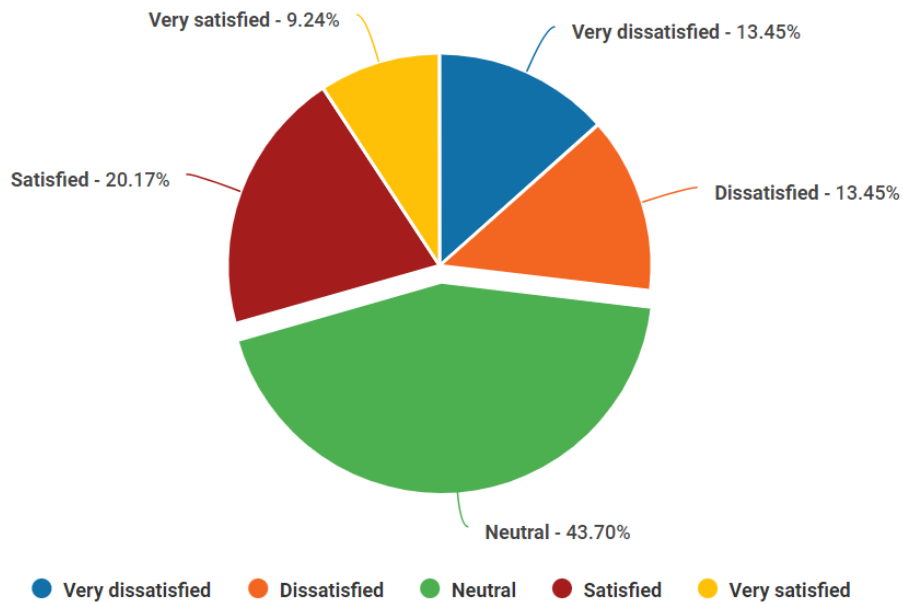
Just over a 1/3 of victims who reported the crime were referred to support services.

13. If yes, which service supported you?

This question gave the respondent a free text box for their answer, which resulted in numerous responses:

- The most popular response was 'Victim Support'
- Clarion
- Social Services
- Oasis
- Restorative Justice
- Visited by police officer to check welfare
- Mental health services
- SATEDA
- New Leaf Support
- DAVSS
- Family Matters
- Counselling
- 'Police Cadet Leaders are helping me'
- Refuge
- Action Fraud
- British Transport Police
- National Fraud Office
- Offered but did not need/want it was a recurring response by many.
- PCSO Special Support for Vulnerable people.
- Stalking Advocacy
- Relate

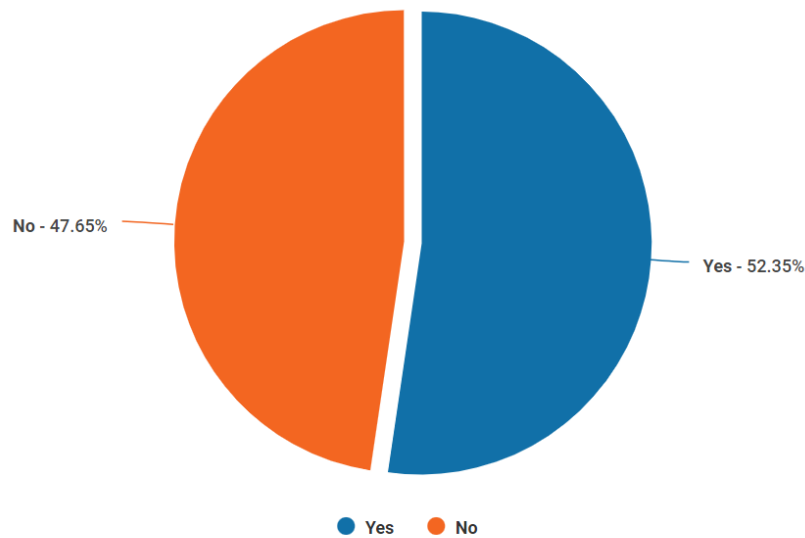
14. How satisfied were you with the service provided?



Overall, it was a fairly even split between those who were dissatisfied and those who were satisfied. Having a neutral view of the service was the option chosen by over 43% of respondents.

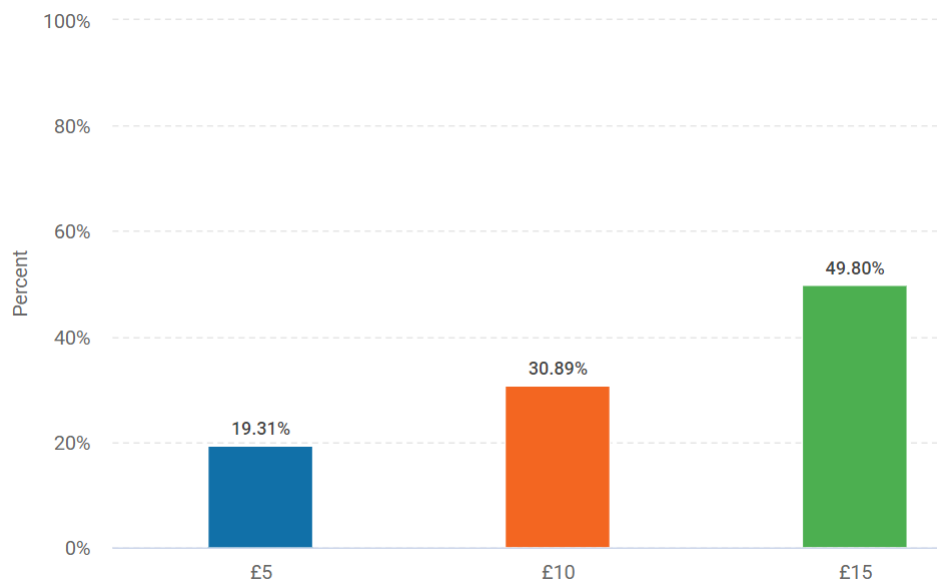
| | | |
|--------------|-----|-------|
| Dissatisfied | 32 | 26.9% |
| Neutral | 52 | 43.7% |
| Satisfied | 35 | 29.4% |
| | 119 | |

15. Would you be prepared to pay more council tax to support policing in Kent?



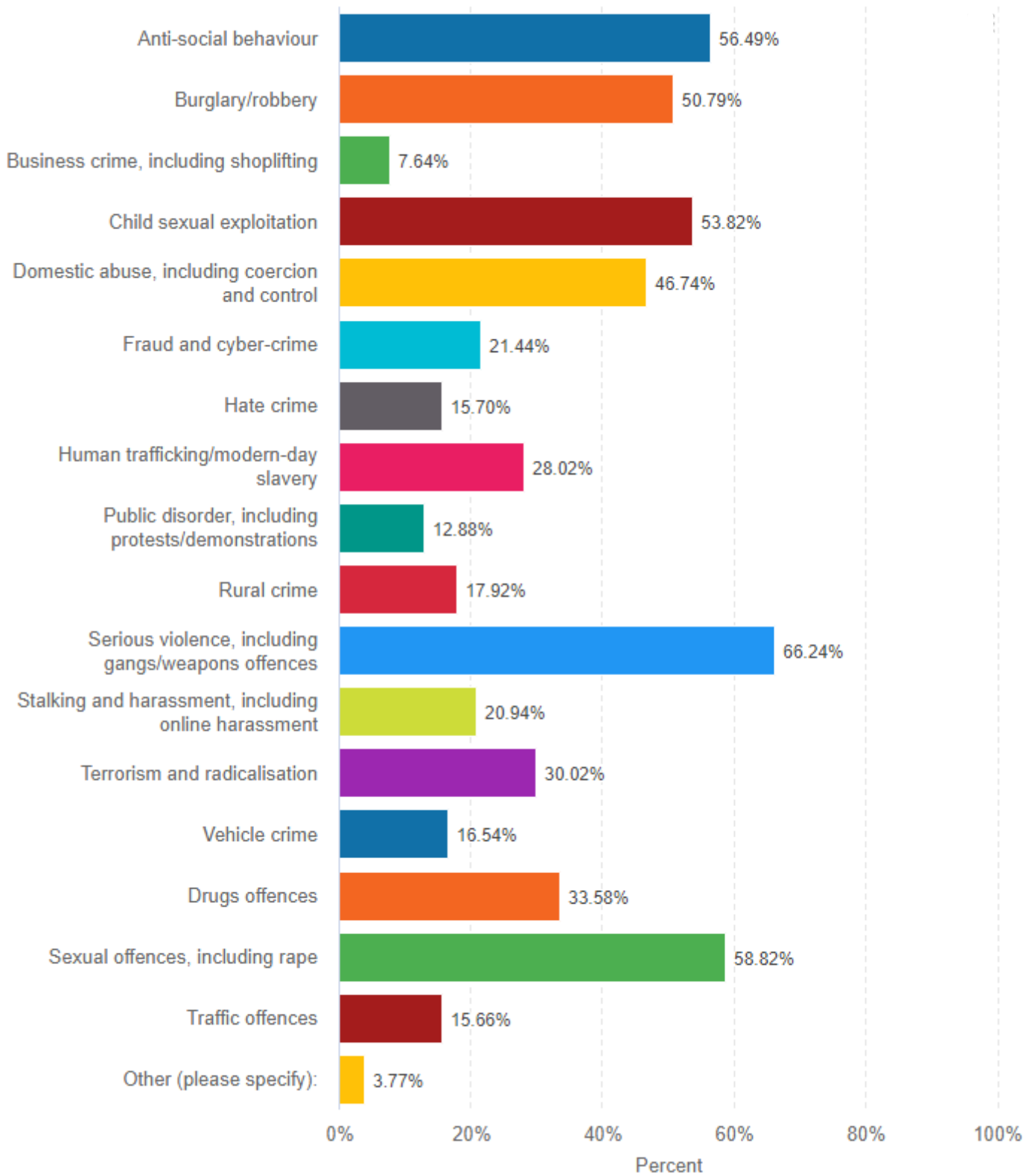
Over 52% of respondents who completed this question stated they would be prepared to pay more council tax to support policing. A further question was asked how much more they would be willing to pay.

16. If so, by how much (per year)?



Almost half of those who stated they would be prepared to pay more were suggesting they would pay £15 a year extra for policing. This is almost equal to the combined scores of both £5 and £10, so is the most popular answer.

17. Which of the following issues do you feel are the most important? Choose a maximum of six



- 1) Serious violence, including gangs/weapons offences
- 2) Sexual offences, including rape
- 3) Antisocial behaviour
- 4) Child sexual exploitation
- 5) Burglary/Robbery

The top 5 responses received over 50% of votes. When comparing these results to the previous annual policing survey, it paints a similar picture, however sexual offences and domestic abuse has risen higher up the priority list.

When looking closer at the difference in responses between the public and police, there were some differences:

Police

- 1) Serious violence, including gangs/weapons offences
- 2) Sexual offences, including rape
- 3) Child sexual exploitation
- 4) Domestic Abuse**
- 5) Burglary/Robbery

Public

- 1) Serious violence, including gangs/weapons offences
- 2) Antisocial behaviour**
- 3) Sexual offences, including rape
- 4) Child sexual exploitation
- 5) Burglary/Robbery

Domestic abuse was seen as a higher priority for police officers/staff, whereas the public saw antisocial behaviour as their top 5 choice. The other 4 crimes in each top 5 remained the same although they were ranked differently.

Conclusion

The respondents who completed this survey have made it clear that the new Chief Constable must show effective communication' in his new role, above everything else.

They also perceive four priorities as being the most important: Response (attending emergencies), Neighbourhood policing, Welfare of officers and staff, and Crime investigation. When it comes to specific crimes, Violence against women and girls, Antisocial behaviour, and Gangs and county lines were the top priorities the respondents feel the Chief Constable should focus on.

Most respondents agreed with the Police and Crime Commissioner's priorities for Kent Police to focus on. 'Preventing crime and antisocial behaviour' and 'Be visible and responsive to the needs of communities' were the outright popular answers.

Overall, those who completed this survey felt safer where they live than previous respondents. However, overall, they feel less safe on the roads.

Most respondents had not been a victim of crime in the last year but those who had been a victim were dissatisfied with the service they received from Kent Police. This sentiment was down to various reasons but mainly because they couldn't get through on the phone, were waiting for updates on the case or the crime outcome ended with 'no further action'.

All methods of reporting were used to report crime – with 101 and online reporting being the most used.

The feedback on victim services was mildly better than Kent Police with an overall 'neutral' view rather than that of 'dissatisfaction'. Only a third of victims stated they were referred to any form of support.

Over half of respondents would be willing to pay more council tax (with half of these respondents stating that they would pay £15 more a year).














Lastly, four crime types mattered most to respondents:

Serious violence, including gangs/weapons offences, Sexual offences, including rape, Child sexual exploitation, and Burglary/Robbery.









Thank you to everyone for taking the time to complete this survey. The feedback will assist the Police and Crime Commissioner in holding the new Chief Constable to account with regards to Kent Police's performance and the priorities the force focuses on.

Appendices

District

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---|--------|-----|
| Ashford |  | 9.23% | 250 |
| Dartford |  | 4.58% | 124 |
| Gravesham |  | 4.43% | 120 |
| Swale |  | 9.08% | 246 |
| Medway |  | 11.96% | 324 |
| Dover |  | 8.67% | 235 |
| Folkestone and Hythe |  | 6.42% | 174 |
| Canterbury |  | 8.41% | 228 |
| Tonbridge and Malling |  | 8.89% | 241 |
| Tunbridge Wells |  | 5.20% | 141 |
| Sevenoaks |  | 4.54% | 123 |
| Maidstone |  | 12.47% | 338 |
| Thanet |  | 6.13% | 166 |

Age

| | | | |
|---------------|---|--------|-----|
| 17 or younger |  | 4.98% | 138 |
| 18-20 | | 1.12% | 31 |
| 21-29 |  | 7.30% | 202 |
| 30-39 |  | 14.99% | 415 |
| 40-49 |  | 19.47% | 539 |
| 50-59 |  | 20.37% | 564 |
| 60-69 |  | 15.60% | 432 |
| 70-79 |  | 12.96% | 359 |
| 80-89 |  | 3.03% | 84 |
| 90 or older | | 0.18% | 5 |

Sex

1178 respondents stated they are female.

1067 respondents stated they are male.

83 respondents stated they are heterosexual/straight.

2 respondents stated they are gay.

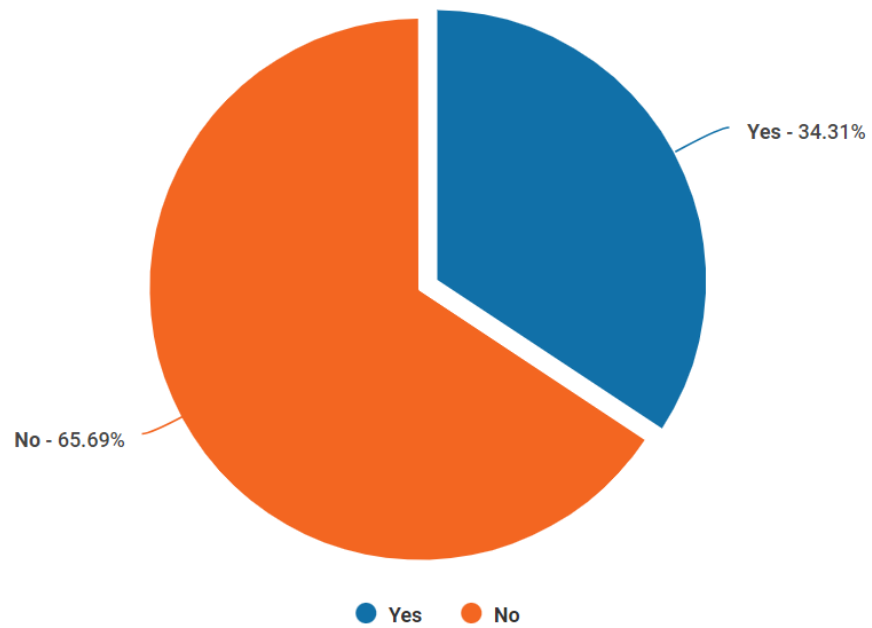
1 respondent stated they are non-binary.

2 respondents stated they were bi-sexual.

Ethnicity

| - | | |
|--|--------|-------|
| White British | 89.04% | 2,397 |
| White Gypsy or Irish Traveller | 0.07% | 2 |
| Any other White background | 3.42% | 92 |
| White and Black Caribbean | 0.19% | 5 |
| White and Black African | 0.15% | 4 |
| White and Asian | 0.93% | 25 |
| Any other Mixed or Multiple ethnic background | 0.85% | 23 |
| Asian or Asian British | 0.67% | 18 |
| Indian | 0.52% | 14 |
| Pakistani | 0.07% | 2 |
| Chinese | 0.19% | 5 |
| Any other Asian background | 0.07% | 2 |
| Black, African, Caribbean or Black British | 0.67% | 18 |
| African | 0.07% | 2 |
| Caribbean | 0.07% | 2 |
| Any other Black, African or Caribbean background | 0.00% | 0 |
| Arab | 0.00% | 0 |
| Any other ethnic group | 0.30% | 8 |
| Prefer not to disclose my ethnicity | 2.45% | 66 |

Are you a Kent Police Officer, member of staff or volunteer?



577 people signed up to join our Newsletter mailing list.

Key Points

1. The key points from the 2023/24 budget and precept proposal from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) are:
 - A proposed increase in the precept of £15 a year, or 6.57% for a Band D property, equivalent to £1.25 a month, or 4p per day.
 - A council tax for an average Band D property of £243.15.
 - Kent PCC remains in the lowest quartile (bottom 10) of precepting PCCs across the country.
 - Increase in Central Government Funding from the Home Office (HO) of £4.1m, only £0.7m of which is core ongoing funding.
 - Funding includes previously announced funding for a 2% pay award to police officers in the CSR21 but this has now been included within the incentive PUP grant.
 - No government funding for police staff pay increases.
 - Kent remains in the lower quartile for Government funding for PCCs
 - Maintaining the record level of police officers in Kent
 - Due to the PCC's previous increases in precept supported by the Police and Crime Panel, Kent now has 358 more police officers than it did in 2010.
 - A reduction in the headcount of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)
 - Total Savings of £14.1m required in 2023/24, with £7.3m in year savings to be made.

 - The increase in precept to be used to:
 - i. Make up for the deficit in central government funding to maintain policing services and the record number of police officers in Kent.
 - ii. These new officers to replace PCSOs in local areas as part of the implementation of the new Neighbourhood Policing Plan. This does mean a reduction in the headcount of PCSOs in Kent.
 - iii. Reduce the level of savings required for next year and limit further reductions in the numbers of staff.
 - iv. Continued Investment in our police stations in Coldharbour, Maidstone, Sittingbourne, Folkestone, Tonbridge, and Ashford.
 - v. Maintaining the police cadet programmes.

 - This will result in:
 - i. Net Cost Pressures for 2023/24 of £26.4m.
 - ii. Total Increase funding for 2023/24 of £12.4m (Government Funding £0.7m / PCC Precept funding £11.7m).
 - iii. Savings Requirement for 2023/24 of £14.1m, £6.8m from Neighbourhood Policing Review identified, £7.3 identified to be made in year.
 - iv. A net revenue budget after savings of £385.6m.
 - v. A potential savings requirement over the medium term of £42.2m.
 - vi. A capital programme of £20.6m for 2023/24 with a further £44.3m planned to 2027/28.
 - vii. A balance in reserves at the end of the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) of £20.4m.
2. The decision to increase the precept to the maximum allowed under the referendum principles has not been taken lightly. The cost-of-living pressures that the citizens of Kent are facing are considerable and it is recognised that this is a further pressure. However, even with this increase the PCC can only mitigate some, not all, of the cost pressures in the 2023/24 budget.
3. As in previous years, there will be no increase in the cost of running the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) with the budget being maintained at £1.5m. This budget supports the 'Making Kent Safer' Police and Crime Plan and enables the PCC to continue to support victims of crime, local crime reduction initiatives, crime prevention strategies and the enhanced complaints process.

Background

4. The purpose of this report is to set out the proposed budget and precept proposals by the PCC. It delivers one of the key responsibilities of the PCC under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and supports the PCC's priorities within the Police and Crime Plan.
5. In determining his budget proposals, the PCC has had regard to:
 - His 'Making Kent Safer' Police and Crime Plan.
 - National targets and objectives including the Strategic Policing Requirement.
 - Consultation with the Chief Constable and Kent Police 'Mission, Vision, Values and Principles'.
 - The results of consultation with the public and partners.
 - The plans and policies of other partner agencies relating to community safety and crime reduction.
 - Government policy on public spending and the Police Finance Settlement.
 - Medium Term Financial Plan.
 - The Reserves Strategy.
 - The Capital Strategy and capital programme.
 - The Commissioning Strategy.
 - Continuous improvement and value for money for the taxpayer of Kent.
 - The Cipfa Financial Management Code of Practice.
6. This report will set out the:
 - Achievements during 2022/23.
 - Government's police funding settlement for 2023/24.
 - 2023/24 budget and precept proposal.
 - 2023/24 funding pressures.
 - The PCC's Commissioning Strategy.
 - Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/24 to 2027/28.
 - Savings.
 - Additional Income.
 - The Reserves Strategy.
 - The Capital Strategy.
 - Chief Finance Officer's Professional Statement.

Achievements during 2022/23

7. In 2022/23 the PCC received funding from the Government to continue the national recruitment drive for an additional 20,000 officers across the country. The number of police officers in Kent was to be increased by 195. This increase will be achieved by the end of March 2023, therefore hitting the Government's target, and releasing the incentivisation funding.
8. During 2022/23 the Government announced additional incentive funding for forces to recruit beyond the initial target for the year. Funding of £20,000 per officer was offered. It is Kent's intention to go over and above the target by the end of March and therefore release further funding into Kent.
9. Thanks to Government funding, over the last three years, Kent will have increased its officer numbers by around 490, with the last intakes for 2022/23 due in March 2023. This, on its own would not replace the reduction in officers that were made post 2010. However, due to the PCC's decision to use precept increases prior to the Government's uplift programme supported by the Police and Crime Panel, Kent now has 358 more police officers than it did in 2010 and has more officers in its ranks than at any time in its history. Over the years these officers have expanded the policing model and dealt with high harm issues, as well as providing more visible neighbourhood policing, rural and roads policing, local communities, schools, fighting cybercrime and providing greater public protection. The increase in numbers has allowed the Force to tackle crime in rural and urban areas, with specialist teams for burglary and gangs.
10. Tackling offences against women and girls has always been a prime concern for the Force with victims and witnesses being a top priority, and central to the Control Strategy for 2022/23. However, to enhance the service provided, a new strategy to tackle violence against women and girls (VAWG) was implemented with the Force investing in over 900 officers to work in local areas specifically investigating those offences that relate to VAWG, such as Domestic Abuse and Rape Investigation. Following the

tragic murder of Sarah Everard, Kent Police immediately instigated a number of activities, including engagement with over 1,000 members of the public at meetings across Kent, and the introduction of a new Officer Identity Verification Check process. This process enables members of the public, if concerned about an officer's identity, to ask for a check to be made through the Control Room operator who will confirm the officer is on duty and respond on the officer's radio.

11. The number of County Lines in Kent have reduced from a high of 82 in July 2020 to below 40, with several districts now deemed as having no county lines in their area.
12. Kent Police continues to invest in prevention work to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour before it starts. For example, the Maidstone Town Centre Task Force worked with Tactical Operations to focus on deterring violence and preventing exploitation and county lines crime within the night-time economy and a knife bar and passive drugs dogs were part of a targeted operation which saw a foot chase along the river and 1,000 cannabis plants seized
13. Local Policing Command hosted the Kent Police Annual Problem-Solving Awards, celebrating the best of problem-solving approaches by all Kent teams across a range of crime types. These awards rewarded officers and staff who had shown initiative in preventing crime and ASB. They covered a number of areas, such as safeguarding in the night-time economy; targeting repeat crime and ASB and drug supply and knife crime in schools.
14. The Cadet programmes continue to be popular. A total of 53 schools have enrolled in the mini cadet scheme since the inception of the programme which is a total of 593 young people participating. The Senior Cadet programme has now fully recovered from the aftermath of the pandemic with the numbers expected to increase to 450 by the end of the year. There are currently 27 ex-cadets who have now joined Kent Police as Police Constables, Special Constables, PCSOs and police staff. In October, the first ever Kent Police Lord Lieutenant's Cadet was appointed.
15. The PCC has been successful in bidding for funding into Kent for victim and witnesses. Approximately £3m of additional funding was acquired in 2021/22 and continued into 2022/23. This enabled the PCC to maintain the support for domestic violence and sexual violence services to manage increased demand and continue with the increased capacity for domestic abuse and sexual violence trauma counselling.
16. The programme to help the perpetrators of domestic abuse change their behaviour established itself during the year. Its aim is to reduce domestic abuse and stalking through behavioural change; reduce the risk to victims and prevent repeat victimisation. It seeks to help people who want to stop being abusive in relationships and improve their current or future relationships and end the cycle of abuse.
17. The PCC has been successful in bidding for over £1.5m of funding from the Government's Safer Streets fund. This involves partnership working to provide improvements to very specific areas of the County. The schemes will cover improvements in acquisitive crime, neighbourhood crime and violence against women and girls. The Safer Street Project in Medway was recognised nationally and nominated for a Public Finance Award.
18. The PCC and his office have also been successful in acquiring continued funding for two specialist Independent Sexual Violence Advisors, one dealing with those affected by gang related violence and the other dealing with universities and students. These have proved successful and are run by two local specialist organisations.
19. The main referral and support service for victims of crime is due to expire on 31 March 2023. As a result, the PCC completed a tender process to commission a high-quality independent Victim's Advocacy and Support Service in Kent. Victim Support were the successful organisation and will provide this service for another 4 years.
20. The PCC also awarded two organisations' contracts to provide input to pupils at both primary and secondary schools. Collaboration Digital provides inputs on Healthy Relationships, including attitudes and behaviours and safety, online harm, cyber bullying, and cyber safety. St Giles Trust provides input on Gangs, County Lines, Knife crime, violence, and criminal exploitation. The service commenced in September 2022 with the first presentations to schools beginning in February 2023.

21. The OPCC has dealt with over 3,500 complaints for the year to date, a significant increase on the previous year. The OPCC is also the 'Review' body for most police complaints, i.e. the OPCC handles the appeals for these matters. The OPCC has dealt with approximately 230 reviews per annum. As previously reported, this is owing to the change in legislation as to the definition of a complaint, and the fact that the OPCC, as opposed to Kent Police, is the review body, thereby being perceived as more independent.
22. The PCC published his final report into VAWG. Many actions have already been undertaken by partner agencies, including the introduction of Kent Police's new VAWG strategy and the school's intervention programme. Other recommendations, like the introduction of comprehensive victim satisfaction surveys will go live during 2023/24.
23. More than 2,900 filled in the Annual Policing Survey. The survey coincided with the recruitment of a new Chief Constable for Kent and included several questions about crime types that the public felt the new Chief should focus on. It also asked about the police budget precept, with 52% of respondents approving a precept rise.

2023/24 Funding Settlement

24. The 2023/24 Provisional Settlement was announced on 14 December 2022 in a written statement by the Policing Minister. This settlement is the second year of the three-year Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR21) announced in the autumn of 2021.
25. The Minister confirmed that policing had available an extra £523.4m in 2023/24. Of this, £349m i.e. two-thirds, would come from local taxpayers through the council tax, provided all PCCs increased their precept by £15, the maximum allowed under the referendum principles. The rest of the funding is made up of £29.9m of core funding, and £140m of Police Uplift Programme (PUP) funding, meaning there has been an increase of £174.4m in grant funding over last year. However, the PUP funding is, as in previous years, an incentive grant, and only received should PCCs maintain their increased number of police officers.
26. The CSR had originally allowed PCCs in England the flexibility to increase funding in each year of the CSR21 period up to a £10 council tax referendum limit. The settlement confirmed that PCC's will have the flexibility to increase the precept up to £15 for 2023/24 only. As per last year's settlement, PCCs did not receive any capital grant funding.
27. The Minister also stated that the Police are expected to ensure that they make the best of public money. The HO expects to see at least £100 million of cashable savings (as part of CSR21). This should be achieved through the following:
 - Working with BlueLight Commercial to maximise financial and commercial benefits related to procurement, through use of the organisation's commercial expertise, leveraging the purchasing power available across the sector, and developing the capacity to implement a full commercial life-cycle approach to procurement.
 - Corporate Functions, where the HO and BlueLight Commercial are conducting ongoing work with the sector to understand the opportunities around the management of corporate functions for example implementation of shared service models.
28. The HO has commissioned the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) to conduct a review of operational productivity in Policing. It is expected that that the review will deliver clear, practical, and deliverable recommendations to improve the productivity of policing.
29. The PCC is confident that through this budget and the delivery of savings that Kent Police can maintain its share of the national uplift in police officers through 2023/24. Therefore, the release of Kent's share of the incentivisation funding has been included within the budget.
30. The PCC is equally confident that this budget and MTFP shows Kent's commitment to the above and has responded to the Ministers request with details of how Kent are meeting those expectations. Furthermore, the PCC's continued role as the national lead for Blue Light Commercial, provides assurance of the organisation's delivery of the Government's expectations nationally with the associated benefits to Kent.

31. Locally, the funding received by Kent is as follows:

Table 1: Funding Settlement

| Funding Stream | 2023/24 | 2022/23 | Variance |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| | £m | £m | £m |
| Police Core Grant | 211.2 | 210.5 | 0.7 |
| Specific Grant: PUP (officer uplift)* | 6.7 | 3.3 | 3.4 |
| Legacy Council Tax Grants | 13.3 | 13.3 | 0.0 |
| Pension Grant Allocation | 3.4 | 3.4 | 0.0 |
| MoJ Victims Funding** | u/k | u/k | u/k |
| Total | 234.6 | 230.5 | £4.1 |

* Although announced as funding the grant is classed as income.

**MoJ funding has yet to be announced for 2023/24

32. Although government funding has increased for 2023/24 it is predominantly through the PUP funding which is an incentive grant and is reliant upon Kent maintaining police officer numbers.

33. The Government expectation on budgeting for pay as set out in the Policing Minister's letter on the settlement is that *PCCs should consider the pressures on their budgets, including the potential for a 2023-24 pay award above 2% next year, for which they should budget appropriately.* It should be noted that funding for pay awards for officers is included within the PUP increase, therefore it's part of the recruitment incentive funding and not guaranteed core funding so could be withdrawn in future years. It also means that if a PCC fails to maintain police numbers it loses almost all its funding including that for pay increases for existing officers.

34. There is no government funding for police staff roles. Therefore, any pay rise for police staff and any pay increase for police officers above 2% will need to be funded through council tax.

35. It is worth putting into context recent funding settlements, since 2010 government funding for Kent PCC has fallen by 19.4% in real terms (1.4% in cash terms). Even when the increases in the precept are included police funding in Kent has fallen by 5.2% in real terms over the same period.

2023/24 Budget and Precept Proposal

36. The 2023/24 PCC budget and precept proposal to the panel is a difficult proposition. In previous years, although highlighting the need to make significant savings, the PCC has been able to identify the additionality to Kent Police that the precept will provide, whether through additional officers, PCSOs or assets and equipment.

37. However, the financial challenges facing Kent Police and the PCC in 2023/24 and beyond mean this report focuses on the difficult decisions required to balance the budget. The shortfall in funding from the Government coupled with significant inflation rates mean cost pressures for 2023/24 are substantial and savings will need to be made. In effect, this report outlines the efforts that the Chief Constable and PCC have taken to ensure that the impact on frontline policing is mitigated while outlining the cuts and savings required in other parts of the organisation.

38. Increasing the precept to the maximum allowed under the referendum principles will help mitigate but not remove the need to make savings. Even with this £15 increase, £42.2m of savings are required over the medium term, £14.1m of which are required in 2023/24. 80% of the budget is expenditure on employees so it is inevitable that with the level of savings required that there must be some impact on staffing levels. Anything less than £15 would require further reductions in staffing and service levels.

39. As an example of the scale of the problem, the Force are currently consulting staff on the Neighbourhood Policing Model. The aim at the outset was not only to ensure Kent Police has the right mix of roles and functions to ensure it delivers for local communities but also make significant savings. The review utilises the additional police officers recruited under the PUP so that local areas will see more police officers on the street. This will require a reduction in the headcount of PCSOs and save £6.8m. In previous years a substantial saving like this would have been sufficient, but with a savings gap of £14.1m the organisation still requires £7.3m of savings on top of that just to balance the budget in 2023/24.

40. This is an issue that is not unique to Kent and is affecting policing across the country. Nationally, the police funding settlement has provided additional funding for the PCC and Chief Constable for the on-going costs of the 2022/23 pay award. It should be noted that this has been included within the police uplift incentive grant and will therefore only be available if Kent Police maintain their share of the national uplift programme officer numbers, although the pay award applies whether we maintain our officer numbers or not. At this stage a pay award for policing for 2023/24 has not been determined and therefore it is unknown what the actual cost to Kent Police would be.
41. The Government has removed additional funding for the National Insurance increase as that decision was rescinded during 2022/23 and no longer applies. However, this would have provided an additional £2.5m and could have been used to fund additional cost pressures.
42. This means that the precept flexibility afforded to the PCC will have to be used to provide support to the Chief Constable to cover the substantial costs not funded through the settlement including pay awards for police staff, incremental pay increases for officers and staff and other inflationary pressures such as fuel and utility costs.
43. Savings plans have been worked on during the year and some savings have been made already. The MTFP requires a further £7.3m of savings to be made even with the increase in government funding, the maximum precept, and the implementation of the Neighbourhood Policing Review. This is a significant saving and should be seen against a backdrop £77m savings having already been delivered since 2015/16 when the PCC was first elected. Over 80% of expenditure is on people and therefore, this has required some difficult decisions to be made. However, the release of savings will be done in a managed way to ensure minimal impact on operational policing.
44. The budget and precept proposal for 2023/24 is as follows:

Table 2: Budget Requirement and Precept

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Budget Requirement | £385.6m |
| Less Police Funding | £224.5m |
| Sub Total | £161.1m |
| Less Collection Fund Surplus | £0.4m |
| Amount to be raised by Council Tax | £160.7m |
| Divided by aggregate council tax base* | 660,621 |
| Band D Council Tax | £243.15 |

*Draft council tax base as final figures not yet received.
Note: Table may not calculate correctly due to rounding

2023/24 Funding Pressures

45. As has already been mentioned despite the government announcing additional funding for maintaining police officers and pay awards, the PCC has not in fact received enough funding for these costs or other significant cost pressures facing Kent Police. Out of the £523m additional funding for policing, Kent will receive just £0.7m in on-going government funding. The increase in precept will be used to mitigate the impact of the lack of funding and these additional costs but will, unfortunately, not cover the everything. The following table shows the additional funding received against the additional cost pressures facing Kent Police for 2023/24.

Table 3: Additional Cost Pressures and Funding

| Additional Funding | £m | £m | Additional Cost Pressures |
|--|-----|------|--|
| Police Core Grant Government funding that is ongoing and in our base budget for 2023/24 and future years | 0.7 | 13.5 | Police officer and staff pay awards. More than 80% of the Kent Police budget is staffing costs and therefore any increase in pay is a significant cost pressure. The assumption in the budget is a pay award of 2% although with inflation currently running over 10% the final award may well be higher and therefore a contingency of 0.5% has also been included. This figure includes £2m for the increase to the Southeast Allowance for all police officers |

| | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|---|
| Council Tax Additional funding raised from local taxpayers through increasing the precept to £15. | 11.3 | 4.6 | Full year cost of the PUP. This is the full cost of the 195 police officers recruited in 2022/23. Officers start working for Kent Police at intervals during the year, so their salaries are not for the full year in the year of recruitment. This is the full year salary cost of those who have been recruited during the previous year. |
| Collection Fund Surplus The estimated balance on the collection fund accounts of all billing authorities at the end of March 2023. This is £0.4m less than we received from the previous year. | 0.4 | 3.1 | Incremental pay increases. All officer and staff are on incremental pay scales that increase each year, based on performance. All new recruits start at the bottom of the pay scale therefore with the increase in new officers' the cost of incremental pay is increasing. |
| | | 3.3 | Utilities Inflation. This is the expected increase for gas, electricity, water, oil, and fuel (petrol/diesel). This represents a 70% increase on the 2022/23 budget. It should be noted that electricity costs account for around £2m of this increase. |
| | | 6.6 | Other inflation and cost pressures. All non-pay costs are subject to inflationary pressures, including contract inflation, as well as several additional other cost pressures from partnerships. There are several factors that are having a significant impact on the budget for next year. General inflation has risen to over 10%, the highest for a decade. This impacts on the costs for the goods and services we buy. It should be noted the changes to general inflation and utility costs will also impact on the costs we are charged by our suppliers. |
| | | 2.6 | Revenue cost of the capital programme. the cost to the revenue budget for the investment programme. This figure includes the increase in our minimum revenue provision (MRP) for previous years borrowing to fund the capital programme, revenue set up costs for such projects that cannot be capitalised and revenue consequences of the capital investment. The investment programme is funded using reserves, receipts from the sale of assets, a revenue contribution to capital and borrowing. The PCC borrowed internally for the investment programme due to robust cashflow management providing the ability to mitigate external borrowing costs. However, this borrowing still requires repayment over time, hence the MRP. This also includes a revenue contribution to capital that will help fund the capital programme both next year and future years. |
| | | 2.1 | Unachieved Savings. In 2022/23 there was £2.1m of savings in the plan which were not achieved. The budget was balanced with one-off savings and income. On-going savings are required and therefore these are added back into the budget as a cost pressure for 2023/24 |
| | | (9.4) | Budget Adjustments/Savings/Income. A number of changes to pay related budgets, some additional income and approximately £1.5m of savings used to offset additional cost pressures. For net budget purposes the £3.4m PUP grant is included as additional income and not additional funding and therefore is netted off the additional pressures. |
| Total Additional Funding | 12.4 | 26.4 | Total Additional Net Cost Pressures |

Commissioning Strategy

46. The PCC's Making Kent Safer Plan includes the guiding principle that 'victims and witnesses at the heart of everything we do' with a priority to 'commission services for victims that are needs led'. The MoJ has yet to announce funding for the specific victims' grant allocations for 2023/24. The CSR21 suggested that there would be more funding for victims' services over the life of the CSR21 period, but it is not clear when or even if, during the three years that will happen therefore for this budget it has been assumed that the allocation will remain at £2.2m for Kent. This means that services can continue or be put in place for the beginning of the financial year. This funding will be allocated as per the Commissioning Strategy on vital services for victims, including those delivered from Compass House, including the Victim Support service, the Independent Sexual Violence Advisor service, Schools Service, and the Restorative Justice service.
47. The PCC has again agreed to put £2m of the budget towards victim services so in total, the MoJ funding plus the commissioning and victims support budget means £4.2m will again be available for allocation in 2023/24, the same level of funding as the previous two years. On top of that, several funding streams successfully bid for by the OPCC will continue into 2023/24 including the Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme and Safer Streets amongst others.
48. As the PCC is still awaiting details of the MoJ funding no Commissioning strategy is available for this paper but will be published on the PCC website before the end of 2022/23.

Medium Term Financial Plan

49. The MTFP is agreed each February as part of the budget setting process and is updated and refreshed throughout the year as further information becomes available. The five-year plan covers the current year plus four from 2023/24 through to 2027/28. For obvious reasons there is more certainty around the figures included in the early years than for those towards the end of the plan. A variety of optimistic and pessimistic scenarios are produced by the PCC and Force CFOs with differing assumptions, and these are discussed with the PCC and Chief Constable and their senior leadership teams before the final version is completed and presented in this report. The MTFP is a living document and is updated regularly for any major changes. The key assumptions included in the current plan are:

Funding assumptions

- The precept referendum limit is £15 in 2023/24 and £10 for 2024/25 in line with the Policing Ministers letter. No assumption is made regarding the use of precept flexibility beyond 2023/24 and therefore the plan includes a precept increase of £15 in 2023/24 but thereafter an increase of 1.99% each year.
- The council tax base will increase by 1.43% in 2023/24, with continued growth of 1% in future years.
- The increase for the officer uplift, including the incentivisation grant in 2023/24 will form part of the base budget in future settlements.
- That the Kent PCC receives the same percentage of the national police funding in future years as in 2023/24.
- That the additional pension grant received in 2020/21 will be maintained as part of the ongoing funding to police.
- Any top slicing and reallocating from the overall police grant by the HO will remain as described in the financial settlement.
- That there will be no changes on the level of funding agreed in CSR21 and the subsequent finance settlement.

Cost Assumptions

- All additional officers recruited under PUP will be maintained across the MTFP.
- These officers will form part of the ongoing establishment.
- Pay cost inflation for officers and staff will be 2% for September 2023 to September 2024 and then a 2% increase every September after. A contingency of 0.5% will be included for any pay award greater than 2% in 2023/24.
- Any additional bonus payment or pay award or change in award date above those highlighted above will have to be funded through any in-year underspend, reserves, additional savings, or potentially additional government funding.

- Specific non-pay inflation is applied to individual cost categories and contracts so the general rate varies for 2023/24, but 2% has been applied in each year of the MTFP after that, in line with the Bank of England's target. This will be revised each year.
- That an investment in equipment and technology to support police officers through capital investment will continue with a further £1m in each subsequent year of the MTFP to help ensure Kent Police has the funds to provide the best support now and in the future.

50. With these assumptions, across the life of the MTFP there are potentially £42.2m savings required to balance the budget. While the Force has a good track record of identifying savings, any changes in the assumptions above, for example pay awards or inflation, could lead to greater or in some cases fewer savings having to be made so will need careful management.

Savings

51. The total savings gap identified for 2023/24 is £14.1m. £6.8m has been found from the Neighbourhood Policing Review, meaning £7.3m of further savings are required to balance the budget for 2023/24. The Chief Constable has briefed the PCC with details of the savings proposals and provided assurance that front line policing will be protected as much as possible. The savings plan for 2023/24 is shown below.

Table 4: 2023/24 Savings Plan

| Category | Description | £m |
|----------------------------|--|------------|
| Staffing | Reviews of staff roles across all years but with specific focus on 2023/24 | 1.3 |
| Allowances | Review of all non-statutory allowances across the Force | 1.0 |
| Pension | A reduction in the employer contribution to the LGPS for 3 years as agreed with KCC. This is the annual saving | 0.8 |
| Capitalisation | Maximising the opportunities to capitalise projects, for example conveyancing costs | 0.8 |
| Recruitment | Planned recruitment profile to maximise savings | 0.6 |
| Efficiencies | Driving out efficiencies in processes such as income generation, licensing, police overtime | 0.4 |
| Project Deferral | Joint project with Essex deferred | 0.3 |
| Police Officer Rank Review | Review of the ranks of senior police officers across the Force | 0.3 |
| One-off | Several one-off benefits for 2023/24 have been identified including additional income | 1.8 |
| Total | | 7.3 |

52. The PCC and Chief Constable are comfortable that these savings can be achieved for 2023/24 and therefore balance the budget. However, should further savings be required on top of the £7.3m then this would have to be found through further reductions.

53. A summary of the medium-term plan is set out at Annex A. The following table shows the level of savings required based on the assumptions in the MTFP alongside predicted funding from government and council tax.

Table 5: Savings requirement

| Savings | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 | 2026/27 | 2027/28 | Total over MTFP |
|--|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------------|
| | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Increase in Cost Pressures | 26.4 | 16.0 | 11.3 | 13.0 | 12.0 | 78.7 |
| Increase in Government core funding | 0.7 | 3.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 4.3 |
| Savings Requirement pre precept increase | 25.7 | 12.4 | 11.3 | 13.0 | 12.0 | 74.4 |
| Increase in precept income | 11.7 | 4.8 | 5.0 | 5.2 | 5.3 | 32 |
| Savings Requirement post precept | 14.1 | 7.6 | 6.3 | 7.8 | 6.5 | 42.2 |

Note: Table may not calculate correctly due to rounding

54. The table shows the calculation of the expected savings over the medium term and shows the continued move away from government funding to local council tax. The precept figures above are based on 2% for each year from 2024/25 but even if the precept was increased to £10, the maximum allowed under the referendum principles for 2024/25 the savings required would only reduce by approximately £3.5m in 2024/25.
55. The Force has developed a savings plan to cover this period and are continually identifying opportunities for further savings. Any savings identified during the year that are not required to balance the budget in 2023/24 will be used to support the investment programme over the medium term to reduce the revenue costs of capital.
56. Savings of this magnitude will require difficult decisions to be made around staffing levels within the organisation. All decision will be carefully managed to protect the welfare of staff and minimise the impact to frontline policing.

Additional Income

57. There are effectively two methods of balancing the budget, the first is to reduce costs by making savings and these have been outlined above. The second is to increase income. The PCC does not currently have a general power of competence like local authorities or in a more limited way like Fire and Rescue Authorities. Therefore, there are limited powers that can be used to increase income and levy charges.
58. Almost all the PCC's income is from Government Grant which is determined by the Government and by the precept. Although there is flexibility on the precept it is capped by the Governments referendum principles.
59. However, both the Force and PCC have been successful in bidding for further funding into Kent with the PCC attracting over £3m of additional funding into the Commissioning budget to provide additional services for victims.
60. It should be noted that these funds tend to be for additional services, but both the PCC and Chief Constable remain committed to finding and bidding for any additional funding into Kent.

Reserves Strategy

61. An important element of the PCC's overall financial strategy is the use of reserves over the life of the MTFP. The following section summarises the current and medium-term position on reserves. The full Reserves Strategy is attached at Annex B.
62. The PCC's Reserves Strategy has the following key elements:
- A general non-earmarked reserve of 3% of the net budget will be maintained for unknown and/or unforeseeable events.
 - A prudent approach to risk management will be maintained and accordingly earmarked reserves will be created where appropriate to cover for possible significant risks.
 - The PCC will maintain a reserve to support the provision of victim support services and crime reduction.
 - Reserves not required for the above purposes will be clearly identified as available for other discretionary opportunities.
 - In the interest of the council taxpayer, the PCC will where possible build up and maintain a level of reserves for investment, borrowing only where the life of the asset and economic environment make it the most efficient way of financing investment.
63. The total general and earmarked reserves are expected to be £20.9m as at 1 April 2023. Of this, the general reserve will amount to £12.0m or 3% of the net budget. This is in line with the 2023/24 reserves strategy policy of holding 3% of the net budget in general reserves.
64. The remaining reserves are all earmarked for specific purposes. Capital investment in 2023/24 will be funded from asset sales during the year, a revenue contribution to capital and borrowing. In the first instance this will be internal borrowing, where the PCC 'borrows' from cashflow during the year, reducing the level of funds available for investing in the money markets but reducing the cost of borrowing.

65. The level of reserves has reduced significantly over the last few years due to planned use to support recruitment, strong performance of delivering capital projects and reducing asset sales. This reflects a strong direction from the Government to reduce policing reserves from a high level in 2017/18. The three years of overspending reduced this level further.

66. For 2022/23 the Force are expected to underspend, the PCC has notified the Chief Constable that any underspend will be taken back into reserves to fund the capital programme and mitigate risks over the medium term. Any in-year reallocations of underspends will only be considered by the PCC where an exceptional business case is made.

67. The reserves position over the medium term is set out below:

Table 6: Reserves

| Reserve | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 | 2026/27 | 2027/28 |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| General | 12.0 | 12.1 | 12.6 | 12.9 | 13.3 | 13.6 |
| Risk (inc Insurance) | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 |
| Investment Reserve | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 |
| Ring fenced (inc PCC) | 5.1 | 4.5 | 4.0 | 3.7 | 3.3 | 3.0 |
| Total | 20.9 | 20.4 | 20.4 | 20.4 | 20.4 | 20.4 |

68. Over the medium term, taking all the plans and provisions into account, total reserves are expected to be £20.4m at the start of 2027/28.

Capital

69. The Capital Strategy is a key document for the PCC and forms part of the integrated financial planning process. It provides a high-level overview of how capital expenditure and capital financing contribute to the delivery of desired outcomes. It also provides an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability. It includes an overview of the governance processes for approval and monitoring of capital expenditure. This document is published alongside the budget report and can be found at Annex C.

70. The key themes driving capital investment can be summarised as follows:

- Policy led with clear linkages to operational requirements and the Making Kent Safer Plan.
- Maximising the efficiency and effectiveness of the estate.
- Using technology and innovation to reduce demand and increase the time and focus officers can devote to core policing.
- Where possible, generate revenue savings.
- Ensuring sound and reliable equipment and facilities for officers.
- Exploiting tangible efficiency and effectiveness opportunities in partnership with others.

71. All projects expecting to be funded from the investment reserve will have to produce a business case and projects will be identified on the strength of that case and the priority to the organisations. This reflects a more agile way of working within a constantly changing environment and provides substantial flexibility to the delivery of the investment programme. As per normal practice, actual release of funding next year and in future years will depend on the completion of sound business cases.

Table 7: Investment Programme

| | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 | 2026/27 | 2027/28 | Total |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Total | 20.6 | 14.0 | 14.4 | 7.4 | 8.5 | 64.9 |

72. 2023/24 continues the substantial investment in the Kent Police Estate. The Estates programme under Operation Zenith is taking existing core buildings and ensuring they are fit for policing in the 21st century. The change in working arrangements brought about through the Covid pandemic has meant more people working from home on a regular basis. Operation Zenith is Kent Police's response to this and will provide a leaner, more efficient and crucially more effective estate. It will also release substantial revenue savings back into the budget, especially from utility and maintenance costs.

73. The 2023/24 programme is a significant undertaking, and the PCC is taking a personal interest in the estate's redevelopment, receiving assurance regarding costs, delivery, and value for money. The PCC is keen to increase collaborative work on estates with our partners, particularly the Kent Fire and Rescue Service so that both organisations can benefit from efficiencies and increased understanding and collaborative work. The PCC will continue to hold the Chief Constable to account over the delivery of this programme.
74. The investment programme is funded by a combination of investment reserves, a revenue contribution to capital, borrowing and the use of capital receipts from disposing of assets during the year. All asset disposals are subject to a business case and require approval by the PCC. It should be noted that the Capital Grant from the Government has been abolished so therefore we no longer receive any government funding for capital expenditure.
75. The PCC will have to borrow to fund the capital programme. Any decision to borrow will be made, like all decisions, with value for money for the taxpayer in mind and only be done when it is the most cost-effective way of delivering a project and will consider the project, business case and asset life expectancy. A decision to borrow will also consider taxpayer equity, this is where taxpayers of today may be funding assets that future taxpayers will use. Spreading the cost of a long-term asset over its life cycle will ensure that all taxpayers who benefit from the asset will be contributing to the cost.
76. In the first instance, borrowing is likely to consist of internal borrowing. This is where the PCC will borrow against future cashflow, foregoing the interest that could have been earned through investing the funds in the money markets. This is a way of borrowing with the lowest cost. This internal borrowing does require repaying back into the cashflow and the impact of this has been considered within the MTFP. In essence this will be short-term borrowing for cashflow purposes, providing the most economic way of borrowing the substantial investment that is being made in the Kent Police Estate. This will ensure that the Force are maximising the benefit from the new way of working from a leaner, more efficient and effective estate. This will also release significant revenue savings.

Chief Finance Officer - Professional Statement

77. It is a statutory requirement that the designated Section 151 Officer, in this case, the PCC CFO must issue a professional statement on the adequacy of reserves, the robustness of estimates and the overall effectiveness of the systems of financial control and risk management.
78. In determining the above the PCC CFO has reviewed the financial environment and the risks facing policing in Kent and has taken the following into account.
79. 2023/24 is the most challenging year that Kent Police and the PCC have faced. A number of significant issues have all arrived at the same time; the requirement to maintain the increase in police officers achieved through the PUP; higher than expected levels of inflation leading to higher-than-expected pay pressures and contract/ utility inflation. All while not receiving a commensurate increase in funding from the government needed to meet these pressures as well as increasing demands on policing.
80. The Minister's funding announcement provided a small uplift in funding for the maintenance of police officer levels and the full year effect of the 2022/23 pay award. However, this funding was given as part of the PUP Incentive funding. This means funding is not received unless we maintain police officer numbers. We have every confidence that we can maintain police officer numbers, but the Government have yet to indicate when and how often they will monitor officer levels during the year. This means it is difficult for HR to plan recruitment levels effectively to ensure that a) we meet the required level and b) use our resources in the most effective manner to recruit replacement officers. The risk on recruitment numbers is low but there is a risk that without the certainty from government there could be increased recruitment costs as well as a small risk that the uplift won't be maintained.
81. Individual allocations to PCCs were for one year only. Although there are indications of what our potential settlement could be in 2024/25, without the exact details of local allocations it is difficult to plan with any certainty. By putting all our increase in funding into the incentive grant means there is a risk that this funding is removed for 2024/25 which will increase the pressure to balance future years budgets without a commensurate reduction in police officer numbers.

82. Although there is still uncertainty over Government funding for policing in the future, the assumptions included within the MTFP are prudent and the organisation has proved itself agile enough to respond to changing levels of resources.
83. The Government's planned review of the formula for distributing the national pot of general police grants has begun again and initial consultations will begin during 2023. As has been stated in previous budget reports this could be a significant risk or an opportunity for the funding received by Kent particularly post 2024/25. While changes to the funding formula should rectify the historic underfunding of Kent Police from central government, the formula itself only provides the share of overall police funding that Kent will receive. The opportunity is that Kent gain a larger share of the allocation with the risk being that the overall allocation to policing is smaller. However, due to the unknown timing of any implementation of the formula there is no requirement to have some protection against this risk and therefore no provision in reserves has been made.
84. The Government's planned rectification to the public sector Pension Funds due to recent court cases (e.g., McCloud) could have a substantial financial impact on employers' contributions to the pension schemes as well as other administrative costs. At this stage it is hard to ascertain just what the financial impact will be but it could become a budget pressure of several million pounds. There are conversations nationally across the public sector to determine how the rectification of pensions schemes is resolved and funded. Until further clarity is provided this has not been included within the MTFP but will be monitored closely as a risk.
85. The triennial valuation of Pension Funds took place during 2022/23 with a change in employer contribution rates taking effect in 2023/24. Kent currently has an overfunded position in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) and therefore we have taken the opportunity to reduce our contributions for the next 3 years. This provides a saving on our revenue budget. The MTFP shows rates returning to their pre- 2022 review rates but there is a small risk that rates will have to increase more at the next triennial evaluation in 2025. These changes have all been agreed and confirmed with our pension actuary, therefore currently no provision for an increase in rates has been included in the budget.
86. The Minister's letter outlining the funding settlement suggested that *PCCs should consider the pressures on their budgets, including the potential for a 2023-24 pay award above 2% next year, for which they should budget appropriately.* The CSR announced in 2021 and to which the Government have largely committed to maintaining, included an expectation of 2% pay awards across the period. Inflation is currently in double figures, and it is difficult to determine the level of pay award that will be agreed. Each 1% increase in pay is the equivalent of £2m for officers and staff. In line with government expectations, we have budgeted for 2%. Any pay award above 2% should be covered by central government funding, however, it is unclear as to whether that would be the case. Therefore, we have set aside a further 0.5% for 2023/24 which would be funded through the council tax precept. Any increase above that level would be funded through reserves or savings.
87. The increase in precept flexibility from an initial £10 to £15 for 2023/24 with confirmation of £10 for 2024/25 is helpful and allows PCCs the scope to set a precept in line with their Police and Crime Plan priorities and provides a boundary for potential scenario planning around funding in future years. Although as CFO it is my duty to plan different eventualities, the PCC will take any decision on future precept levels at the appropriate time and therefore the MTFP for future years precept reverts to the pre-precept flexibility limit of 2%.
88. The limited additional funds from the government and the placement of that funding within the incentive grant continues the government's intentions for PCCs to fund their significant budget pressures through precept rather than central grant. The movement of funding away from central government funding to council tax places a significant burden on local taxpayers. It is inherently unfair and increases the disparity between those PCCs who receive a greater proportion of their funding from central government.
89. Due to historic differences in council tax the proportion that £15 represents can vary significantly between force areas. The £15 increase means that Northumbria's percentage increase is 10.9%, Essex is 8.0%. Kent's increase is 6.6% towards the lower end of increases across the country. The proportion of funding raised through council tax also differs significantly between force areas too. Northumbria's Council Tax makes up 19.3% of their total funding, conversely Surrey has 55.8% of their funding coming

from Council tax. On average, nationally 35% of budgets are made up from Council tax. Kent's council tax makes up 42% of funding up from 28% in 2010/11.

90. As has been stated in previous CFO commentaries this reliance on council taxpayers to help fund budget pressures leaves PCCs facing potential fluctuations in tax collection and the tax base that any local tax incurs. This was reflected during the Covid pandemic where a reduced tax base (when growth was expected) and a deficit on the collection fund (when it's usually a surplus) caused additional pressure and meant the Government had to provide additional funding. There is no indication that this is the case for the 2023/24 budget, but the cost-of-living crisis will be felt hard during the year and may impact on both collection rates and the tax base for future years.
91. 2022/23 will be the first year since 2018/19 that Kent Police have underspent on their budget allocation. This is due to many factors, but largely higher than anticipated vacancies and one-off savings. It is hoped that this is a return to normal spending patterns, although no presumption of in-year underspending should be made because, having agreed the budget the PCC authorises its spending. With strong budget management arrangements and the medium-term savings plan, which sets out where and how savings may be found, this increases the flexibility of the Force to bring forward or push back savings plans dependent on future cost and income pressures
92. The level of general reserves has been maintained at 3% of the net revenue budget over the MTFP in line with the Reserves Strategy. This level of general reserves will account for any major event that may require recourse to the Government's Special Police Grant. The 3% in general reserves covers us for two such events and a further contingency. This policy is reflected in the Reserves Strategy and is reviewed annually.
93. While the Force has a good track record of identifying and managing savings through effective financial management and planning, unfortunately significant savings are once again potentially required over the medium term. These savings are only a forecast of the future and will change as we go through the MTFP. But the Force has a continuing medium-term savings plan which seeks early opportunities to identify savings and deliver them wherever possible. Any savings identified and not required to meet savings targets will be taken into reserves.
94. It is recognised that the delivery of savings becomes harder each year. There are projects that will generate significant savings in future years including the redevelopment of the Police estate. The scale of the task for 2023/24 cannot be underestimated and it is a sign of the positive attitude to tackling this issue that the Force have a regular Finance Oversight Board to which the OPCC is represented through the PCC CFO and Chief Executive and where savings are a standard agenda item. The Force have had to work innovatively to identify where savings can be made without impacting on front line services. The Neighbourhood Policing Review announced in 2022/23 is a result of this innovative thinking and willingness to make difficult decisions and more will be required over the medium term. It should be recognised that the level of savings required is challenging and will require challenging decisions especially around staffing which adds complexity and cost to the delivery of the savings plan. The flexibility in our budget will be used to mitigate against the non or late delivery of savings in year.
95. The key assumption on funding is that the Kent PCC's share of the national funding settlement will remain over the CSR period. Although actual allocations are unknown it seems prudent to reflect the current settlement as a continuing commitment. Any further funding that is announced in future years will help offset proposed savings targets. Beyond the precept announced for 2023/24 it is assumed precept limits will return to historic levels of 2% in line with non-pay inflation forecasts.
96. The increased demand for capital investment coupled with the reducing ability to produce capital receipts means that there is a risk that funding may not be available for the investment programme. This risk is being managed initially through borrowing, and particularly internal borrowing to fund elements of the investment programme. This significantly reduces the cost of borrowing as it is the opportunity cost of investing the funds that is lost. This does cause a revenue pressure as this borrowing still needs to be repaid (albeit without the interest element) and the cost of the project included within the MRP calculation. This has been included within the MTFP. The redevelopment of the Police Estate is a significant project carrying a substantial financial commitment. The investment programme is a crucial element of the PCC's determination to support Kent Police wherever he can.

97. Due to its geographical location Kent is faced with issues around its border which require the involvement of the Force. The contingency planning undertaken by Kent Police and its partners around the exit from the European Union proved successful. However, planned changes to border rules and the use of Kent by the Government's immigration service does place demands on policing resources. The PCC has been successful in obtaining funding from the Government, so the Kent taxpayer is not funding the consequences of national decisions. It is still unclear as to what 'business as usual' will be at the borders post transition and therefore the impact that it will have on policing and in particular Kent. This will become apparent over the next few years. The PCC and the Force are actively engaging with the HO to ensure Kent's voice is heard on these issues and to take advantage of any funding opportunities should they arise. However, should business as usual have any unexpected impact or costs then this would be managed through the reserves in the first instance with a view to reimbursement from the government.
98. The Force and the OPCC maintain active risk registers and associated risk management processes for operational and management risks which are monitored by the independent Joint Audit Committee. As well as the financial challenges described above, many of the key risks inevitably fall on the Force, rather than the OPCC, from both existing and newer threats. Examples of the latter include the local response to counter terrorism threats, child sexual exploitation, organised crime, and cybercrime. Within the OPCC, on-going strategic risks relate to ensuring the core statutory functions of the PCC are met; this includes overall financial governance and value for money, the commissioning of victim's services and the complaints regulations.
99. Overall, I have considered the level and need of reserves against the strategic risk registers of the Force and the OPCC. There is a significant financial challenge facing the organisation but there are proactive plans in place to deliver the savings required in a managed way and a robust governance framework overseeing the challenge. The reserves position provides some resilience without increasing risk to the organisation and therefore, I am satisfied that the reserves for next year and over the life of the plan are prudent and appropriate after consideration of the latest key risk assessments. I am satisfied that the estimates have been drawn up in a robust way, recognising that medium term forecasts beyond 2023/24 will inevitably carry more uncertainty. I am also satisfied that the operation of internal and external audit and the implementation of new monitoring processes improve the sound operation of financial controls. Regular monitoring and review of delivery plans and active risk management, including via the Independent Joint Audit Committee, remain vital parts of the local governance arrangements.

Rob Phillips
Chief Finance Officer
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent
January 2023

Supporting information:

- Annex A – Summary of Medium-Term Plan, 2023/24 to 2027/28
- Annex B – Reserves Strategy 2023/24
- Annex C – Capital Strategy 2023/24

**Kent Police and Police and Crime Commissioner
Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/24 to 2027/28**

| | Budget 2023/24 | Budget 2024/25 | Budget 2025/26 | Budget 2026/27 | Budget 2027/28 |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Expenditure | | | | | |
| Police Pay - incl 20-21 & 21-22 Uplift posts | 246.34 | 254.13 | 261.44 | 268.90 | 276.51 |
| PSE - incl PCSO costs | 103.72 | 107.72 | 110.39 | 113.13 | 115.91 |
| Overtime | 7.91 | 8.14 | 8.37 | 8.61 | 8.86 |
| Other Employee Related Costs | 16.06 | 16.06 | 16.06 | 16.06 | 16.06 |
| Premises | 26.91 | 28.37 | 28.74 | 29.11 | 29.49 |
| Transport | 9.50 | 10.02 | 10.15 | 10.28 | 10.41 |
| IT | 19.51 | 21.02 | 21.48 | 21.76 | 22.08 |
| Other Non-Pay costs supplies & services etc | 12.84 | 12.83 | 12.83 | 12.83 | 12.84 |
| Third Party Payments | 5.34 | 5.34 | 5.34 | 5.34 | 5.34 |
| Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) | 1.54 | 1.54 | 1.54 | 1.54 | 1.54 |
| OPCC - Commissioning and Victim Services | 4.12 | 4.12 | 4.12 | 4.12 | 4.12 |
| Revenue cost of the capital programme | 1.12 | 1.12 | 1.12 | 1.12 | 1.12 |
| Borrowing costs of the capital programme | 3.05 | 3.53 | 2.92 | 3.65 | 2.96 |
| Project Zenith | 0.74 | -0.29 | -0.53 | -0.54 | -0.54 |
| Total Gross Spending | 458.70 | 473.65 | 483.97 | 495.91 | 506.70 |
| Income: | | | | | |
| Specific Grant - Victims Funding | 2.12 | 2.12 | 2.12 | 2.12 | 2.12 |
| Specific Grant - Counter Terrorism | 12.42 | 12.42 | 12.42 | 12.42 | 12.42 |
| Specific Grant - Pension Grant | 3.37 | 3.37 | 3.37 | 3.37 | 3.37 |
| Specific Grant - PUP Conditional Grant | 6.73 | 6.73 | 6.73 | 6.73 | 6.73 |
| Locally Generated Income | 9.68 | 9.68 | 9.68 | 9.68 | 9.68 |
| Reimbursed Services | 25.51 | 25.51 | 25.51 | 25.51 | 25.51 |
| Transfer to (from) Reserves | -0.78 | -1.78 | -2.78 | -3.78 | -4.78 |
| Net Spending | 399.65 | 415.60 | 426.92 | 439.86 | 451.65 |
| Savings Required 23/24 | -14.07 | -14.07 | -14.07 | -14.07 | -14.07 |
| Savings Required 24/25 | 0.00 | -7.55 | -7.55 | -7.55 | -7.55 |
| Savings Required 25/26 | 0.00 | 0.00 | -6.32 | -6.32 | -6.32 |
| Savings Required 26/27 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | -7.79 | -7.79 |
| Savings Required 27/28 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | -6.48 |
| Total Net Spending after savings | 385.58 | 393.98 | 398.98 | 404.12 | 409.43 |
| Funding: | | | | | |
| General Policy and Legacy Council Tax grants | 224.50 | 228.10 | 228.10 | 228.10 | 228.10 |
| Council Tax Precept including estimated collection fund balance | 161.08 | 165.88 | 170.88 | 176.02 | 181.33 |
| Total Net Financing | 385.58 | 393.98 | 398.98 | 404.12 | 409.43 |

Kent Police and Crime Commissioner Reserves Strategy 2023/2024

Introduction

1. An important element of the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) overall financial strategy are the reserves held over the life of the medium-term financial plan. This strategy outlines the level of reserves, how and why those reserves are held and any planned use of or transfer to reserves during the period covered.
2. The Reserves Strategy is published as part of the Police and Crime Plan and Budget Papers reported to the Police and Crime Panel in February each year. Alongside the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), Capital Strategy, Commissioning Strategy and the Treasury Management Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision policy it forms part of the overall financial strategy of the Kent Police Group (the PCC and Force).
3. In line with the financial papers listed above, the Reserves Strategy is reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

Background

4. Reserves are held as part of the overall MTFP, and it forms part of a number of legislative safeguards in place that help prevent the PCC from over-committing financially. These include:
 - The requirement to set a balanced budget as set out within the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
 - The requirement for the PCC to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and the appointment of a Chief Financial Officer (PCC CFO), or Section 151 Officer, to take responsibility for the administration of those affairs.
 - The requirements of the Prudential Code, Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice, and the Financial Management Code of Practice.
 - The PCC CFO's duty to report on the robustness of estimates and the adequacy of reserves when the PCC is considering his budget requirement.
5. This is reinforced by Section 114 of the Local Government Act 1988 which requires the PCC CFO to report to the PCC, Police and Crime Panel and the External Auditor if there is or likely to be unlawful expenditure or an unbalanced budget. This would include situations where the PCC does not have sufficient resources to meet expenditure in a particular year.
6. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 also requires PCCs as a 'precepting' authority to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement.
7. It should be noted that there is no defined minimum level of reserves that PCCs should hold. Local circumstances in terms of resourcing, expenditure and demand vary significantly across the country and so the level of reserves held is a judgement by the PCC with advice from the PCC CFO taking into account all local and national circumstances. However, the Government have specified that any level of general reserves over 5% requires explanation within the Reserves Strategy.

Financial Regulations

8. As all financing is issued to the PCC then it follows that all reserves are held by the PCC. The Kent Policing Financial Regulations sets out the key responsibilities for the PCC's CFO, Force CFO (FCFO), Chief Constable and the PCC regarding reserves and how they are used and maintained.

Reserves Strategy

9. The PCC holds reserves for four reasons:
 - a) As a general contingency against unknown or unforeseen events
 - b) To manage strategic risks in the organisation
 - c) To manage change within the organisation
 - d) To be held for statutory reasons

10. The PCC's Reserve Strategy has the following key elements:
- A general non-earmarked reserve of 3% of the net budget will be maintained for unknown and/or unforeseeable events.
 - A prudent approach to risk management will be maintained and accordingly earmarked reserves will be created to cover for possible significant risks.
 - Reserves not required for the above purposes will be clearly identified as available for other discretionary opportunities.
 - In the interest of the council taxpayer, the PCC will where possible build up and maintain a level of reserves for investment, borrowing only where the life of the asset and economic environment make it the most efficient way of financing investment.
11. These elements are the aims of the PCC's Reserves Strategy and have not changed, however, the attainment of these aims has become more challenging due to the current financial climate. The aims are the overarching guiding principles to which the Reserves Strategy of the PCC will aspire.

Reserve Levels

12. The total general and earmarked reserves are expected to be £21m as at 31 March 2023. Of this, general reserves will amount to £12m or 3% of the net revenue budget. This is the current level of reserves recommended by the PCC CFO in the strategy to be held for general contingency. This level is generally regarded best practice and comparable with other PCCs. The MTFP, budget and Reserves Strategy all have clear guidance on the use of general reserves. If at any time general reserves are utilised so that their level falls below the recommended level, then the first call on the budget is to replenish the general reserves to 3% of the net revenue budget.
13. The remaining reserves are all earmarked. It should be noted that the investment reserve is expected to have a balance of £0.3m at the start of the financial year. Capital investment will be funded from asset sales during the year and largely borrowing. In the first instance this will be internal borrowing, where the PCC 'borrows' from cashflow during the year, reducing the level of funds available for investing in the money markets but reducing the cost of borrowing.
14. The level of reserves has reduced significantly over the last few years due to the planned use of reserves to support recruitment, delivery of capital projects and reducing asset sales. This reflects a strong direction from the Government to reduce policing reserves from their high in 2017/18 but also the strict financial environment in which policing operates. Recent years overspends have exacerbated the reduction in reserve levels further.
15. The PCC has notified the Chief Constable that any underspends will be taken back into reserves in order to mitigate risks over the medium term. Any in-year reallocations of underspends will only be considered by the PCC where an exceptional business case is made.
16. The reserves position over the medium term is set out below:

Table 1: Reserves over the MTFP

| Reserve | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 | 2026/27 | 2027/28 |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| General | 12.0 | 12.1 | 12.6 | 12.9 | 13.3 | 13.6 |
| Risk (inc Insurance) | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 |
| Investment Reserve | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 |
| Ring fenced (inc PCC) | 5.1 | 4.5 | 4.0 | 3.7 | 3.3 | 3.0 |
| Total | 20.9 | 20.4 | 20.4 | 20.4 | 20.4 | 20.4 |

17. Over the medium term, taking all the plans and provisions into account, total reserves are expected to total £20.4m at the end of 2027/28.
18. The expenditure from the investment reserve is reliant on borrowing and in-year asset disposals being realised and available to spend. A contribution to capital investment continues to be made over the life of the MTFP to support the investment in ensuring that police officers have the appropriate equipment and technology to be as effective as possible.

19. Any revenue underspends not required for unforeseen expenditure will be taken back into reserves.
20. The reserves are held for the following:
- **The General reserve** is used to mitigate against unknown and unexpected events that incur considerable cost that could not be borne within the revenue budget. This could include public order, major investigation costs or to fund initial costs of major disruption/disaster response (i.e. Covid 19 pandemic, flooding). Kent Police Group issues that could be applied to this reserve include Operation Stack or EU exit. This would be used before applying to the Government's Special Grant scheme should the criteria be met. The Special Grant scheme usually only accepts applications from those PCC's who have incurred costs greater than 1% of their net revenue budget with a further 0.5% for a second event. This reserve covers two such instances plus a further 1.5% for unknown and unexpected costs.
 - **Risk** is used to mitigate any sudden or unexpected changes in funding levels. This also includes the **Insurance reserve** which is held to cover potential liabilities in any insurance claim. To keep our insurance premiums at a reasonable level we self-insure to a significant degree. This level is suggested by our Insurance advisors as an appropriate amount to keep in reserve should we incur a large insurance claim. This is reviewed annually by our actuaries.
 - **Investment Reserve** funds the capital investment in our investment programme. The investment programme consists of medium and long-term projects that are designed to improve, renew, or create assets that will reduce financial commitments and improve policing in Kent. All sales of assets (capital receipts) fall into this reserve to be used for future capital investment. Capital projects will typically incur some revenue investment, and this is included within the revenue budget.
 - **Budget Support** is held to mitigate risks around the current year budget, including risk in the non-delivery or delayed delivery of the savings plans. It will also, where appropriate, fund costs for significant operations that would not lead to a claim for Special Grant avoiding the need to use general reserves.
 - **Partnership** reserves are held for statutory reasons and are held on behalf of specific partnerships. They can only be used for the purposes they were intentionally held for.
 - **PCC** reserve holds funds set aside from the PCC's own budget to fund innovative projects to help transform policing and fund local PCC priorities.
21. The expenditure from the investment reserve is reliant on borrowing as in-year asset disposals reduce. A revenue contribution to capital continues to support the investment programme and this contribution will increase over the medium term. Any fluctuations in asset disposals may mean a reduction in investment, or where appropriate for long term projects a need to borrow.

Home Office Classification

22. The Home Office set out clear guidance on publishing the Reserves Strategy. It also states that the information on each revenue reserve should make clear how much of the funding falls into each of the following three categories.

| | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 | 2026/27 | 2027/28 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Classification | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Funding for planned expenditure on projects and programmes over the period of the current medium-term financial plan | 2.1 | 1.5 | 1.0 | 0.7 | 0.3 | 0.0 |
| Funding for specific projects and programmes beyond the current planning period | 3.3 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 3.3 |
| Funding held as a general contingency or resource to meet other expenditure needs in accordance with sound principles of financial practice | 15.5 | 15.6 | 16.1 | 16.4 | 16.8 | 17.1 |

23. Further details of the PCC's reserves can be found in Annex B1.

Summary of Reserves Position

| | | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 | 2026/27 | 2027/28 | Reason | Planned Use |
|-----------------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---|---|
| | Classification | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | | |
| General | Contingency | 12.0 | 12.1 | 12.6 | 12.9 | 13.3 | 13.6 | 3% of Net Revenue Budget. Held to mitigate against unknown and unexpected events. Will fund major operations, public order, major investigation costs that are not expected or to fund initial costs of major disruption/ disaster response (i.e. Covid 19, flooding) before applying for Police Special Grant. | This is the minimum level of reserves we would be expected to hold. There is no expectation that these reserves will be used over the medium term, but should there be an unexpected event then they can be. The increase in the net budget means this reserve will increase over the medium term. |
| Risk | Contingency | 7.9 | 7.3 | 6.8 | 6.5 | 6.1 | 5.8 | This reserve is held to support the budget in times of funding changes (both increases and decreases) to avoid precipitous decisions being made It also covers our potential liabilities in any insurance claim. In order to keep our insurance premiums at a reasonable level we self insure to a significant degree. | There is no planned use of the reserve during the MTFP. £3.5m is the minimum level of reserves we have been advised to hold by our insurance as it mitigates against large insurance claims of which we currently do not have any. This may fluctuate over the medium term depending on our advisor's advice. |
| Investment Reserve | Planned | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | This reserve funds the capital and revenue investment in our investment programme. The investment programme is a number of long term projects that are designed to improve/ create assets for the Force that will reduce financial commitments and improve policing in Kent. All sales of assets (capital receipts) fall into this reserve to be used for future capital investment. This reserve funds the revenue investment involved in our investment programme. Capital projects will typically incur some revenue investment and this reserve helps fund that part of the investment programme without impacting on the ongoing revenue budget. | This reserve is used during the year as income and expenditure are incurred. This is the residual balance that can only be used for specific expenditure. |
| Partnership Funds | Planned | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | The reserves are held on behalf of partnerships within policing and can only be used for the purpose for which they are held. | There are no plans to use these over the medium term although partnership decisions may require to add or reduce them. |
| PCC | Planned | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.6 | This reserve holds funds set aside from the PCC's budget to fund innovative projects to help transform policing and fund local PCC priorities. | These reserves were depleted during 2020/21. Should flexibility allow these will be increased over the medium term although no assumption is made that they will. |
| Total Reserves | | 20.9 | 20.4 | 20.4 | 20.4 | 20.4 | 20.4 | | |

Kent Police and Crime Commissioner Capital Strategy 2023/2024

1 Purpose

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Prudential Code requires Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to produce a Capital Strategy to demonstrate that capital expenditure and investment decisions are taken in line with desired outcomes and take account of stewardship, value for money, prudence, sustainability, and affordability.

The Capital Strategy is a key document for the Kent PCC and Kent Police and forms part of the integrated revenue, capital, and balance sheet planning. It provides a high-level overview of how capital expenditure; capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the delivery of desired outcomes. It also provides a summary of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability and an overview of the governance processes for approval and monitoring of capital expenditure.

Throughout this document the term Kent Police Group is used to refer to the activities of both the PCC and Kent Police.

2 Scope

This Capital Strategy includes all capital expenditure and capital investment decisions for Kent Police Group. It sets out the medium to long term context in which decisions are made with reference to the life of the projects/assets.

3 Legislation

Expenditure on capital is bound by legislation and codes of practice. This strategy complies with and has regard to:

- Local Government Act 2003
- Localism Act 2011 (England)
- Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2020
- Capital Finance: Guidance on Local Government Investments, third edition (2018)
- Capital Finance: Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision, fourth edition (2018)
- CIPFA Prudential Code (2021)
- CIPFA Prudential Code Guidance Notes (2021)
- CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes (2021)
- CIPFA Financial Management Code (2019)

4 Links to other Corporate Strategies and Plans

The PCC produces a Police and Crime Plan every four years. Making Kent Safer 2022-2025 is refreshed annually.

The PCC and the Chief Constable have produced a Joint Vision which is supported by the Chief Constable's Policing Model.

To support these overarching documents a number of interrelated strategies and plans are in place, such as the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), Medium Term Capital Plan (MTCP), Reserves Strategy, Commissioning Strategy, Asset Management Plan, and the Treasury Management Strategy (TMS).

The operation of all these strategies and plans is underpinned by the Code of Corporate Governance and Financial Regulations.

Capital resources should be directed to those programmes and projects that optimise the achievement of the outcomes contained within those documents. The following processes are designed to ensure this happens.

5 Capital Expenditure

Capital expenditure is incurred on the acquisition or creation of assets, or expenditure that enhances or adds to the life or value of an existing fixed asset. Fixed assets are tangible or intangible assets that yield benefits to Kent Police Group generally for a period of more than one year, e.g. land and buildings, ICT, equipment and vehicles. This contrasts with revenue expenditure which is spending on the day to day running costs of services such as employee costs and supplies and services.

The capital programme is Kent Police Group's plan of capital works for future years, including details on the funding of the schemes.

6 Capital vs. Treasury Management Investments

Treasury Management investment activity covers those investments which arise from the organisation's cash flows and debt management activity, and ultimately represent balances which need to be invested until the cash is required for use in the course of business.

For Treasury Management investments the security and liquidity of funds are placed ahead of the investment return. The management of associated risk is set out in the Treasury Management Strategy.

The CIPFA Treasury Management Code recognises that some organisations are entitled to make investments for policy reasons outside of normal treasury management activity. These may include service and commercial investments. However, like all police bodies, Kent PCC does not have a General Power of Competence, which gives councils the power to do anything an individual can do provided it is not prohibited by other legislation and as such is prevented from entering into commercial investment activities.

7 The Capital Budget Setting Process

Kent Police Group is committed to a rolling Medium-Term revenue and capital plan that covers the current financial year plus four years. The plans are drawn up, reassessed, and extended annually and if required re-prioritised to enable Kent Police Group to achieve the aims and objectives established in the PCC's Police and Crime Plan, the Chief Constable's Policing Model and to support national drivers like the National Policing Vision for 2025.

Although an MTCP is published the Capital Strategy takes a view beyond the medium term and looks at the long-term implications of the capital projects and the funding thereof.

The MTCP provides the Kent Police Group infrastructure and major assets through capital investment, enabling Kent Police Group to strengthen and streamline core assets and systems, and provides the framework for delivering innovative policing with a lower resource profile.

Key focuses of the Capital Programme:

- To ensure the property estate remains fit for purpose, identifying opportunities to streamline assets and develop the estate infrastructure, maintaining core sites, improving core training facilities and progressing the Estates Strategy and Asset Management Plan.
- To ensure provision is made for ICT and Business Change Technology to maintain and develop the existing infrastructure and invest in the core technologies required to provide innovative digital policing services.
- The maintenance and replacement of other core assets where necessary, e.g., vehicles and communication infrastructure.
- Improving our environmental sustainability and mitigating our impact on the environment.

The plans acknowledge the constrained financial position of Kent Police Group and maximise both the available financial resources and the capacity to manage change projects.

8 Collaboration and Wider Sector Engagement

Although Kent Police Group has its own Capital Strategy and MTCP, the natural drivers that encourage local and regional forces to collaborate, such as cost and resource sharing, along with structured collaborations and national plans, can have a significant influence on local decision making.

One of the focal points therefore of Kent Police's Capital Strategy is to acknowledge regional and national partnership working, both with other forces/PCCs and in the wider context of engagement with local authorities, other emergency services, the Crown Prosecution Service and central government and its agencies, to improve overall service to the public.

9 Affordability and Financial Planning

Prior to submission of the Draft MTCP in late autumn, a significant amount of financial work will have already been undertaken on revenue and capital budgets. This work will have identified the potential financial position for Kent Police Group in respect of the coming medium term, considering core known information and stated assumptions.

The work will include forecasts on inflation, committed growth requirements, forecast productivity and efficiency savings, assumptions around grant and council tax funding plus any other information introduced during the budget process.

The revenue financial position is also influenced by the Capital Bid process and the MTCP – in terms of both revenue consequences of capital programmes and through the ability or requirement to financially support capital investment, either through direct financing or borrowing.

10 Capital Sustainability

For a long time, Kent Police Group has benefitted from substantial capital reserves, supported by the sale of operational buildings or police houses or from revenue reserves built up over a number of years from in year revenue underspends.

Recently this position has changed. Looking ahead over the medium term the prudent use of reserves, the level of overspending and the reducing number of assets available for sale means that alternative ways of funding the capital programme have been considered. A Revenue Contribution to Capital Outturn (RCCO) was introduced to set aside an increasing level of revenue expenditure over the medium term to provide revenue funding for short life programmes.

Kent Police Group will also use internal borrowing to fund the programme. This means borrowing against future cashflow. It is recognised that this reduces the availability of funds for investment and the impact of this is considered in the Treasury Management Strategy. It is also recognised that borrowing internally will impact on the revenue budget as this borrowing is repaid into the cashflow. This will be considered when making decisions in the level of capital funding available.

These borrowing decisions are not made in isolation nor are they made over a one year or five-year view. Borrowing plans are expanded across the long term to ensure that decision makers are aware of the financial impact their decision will have beyond the medium term.

The Kent Police strategy is to invest in core infrastructure now that will not only offer overall service improvements to the public, but also maximise revenue savings into the future through:

- A smaller, more efficient and effective estate.
- Protecting our officers and staff, through the purchase of safety equipment
- Making our officers and staff more efficient and effective enabled through improved Information and Communication Technology solutions
- Improving our environmental sustainability and mitigating our impact on the environment.

Its Investment Strategy will also be influenced by and take account of National visions for policing, regional and local priorities.

The Force Chief Finance Officer (FCFO) and PCC's Chief Finance Officer (PCCCFO) believe that the Capital Strategy and Capital Programme proposed are sustainable.

11 The Formal MTCP Approval Process

The MTCP is continuously updated during the financial year but begins to crystallise formally in the autumn. The MTCP is presented to Chief Officers Management Board (COMB) and once agreed is then presented to the PCC as part of the overall suite of budget reports for formal approval. The programme will be a mixture of continuing projects, regular maintenance, and new projects. How this programme is funded will have been discussed and agreed through the FCFO and PCCCFO prior to the PCC's final approval. The taking of loans, if required, then becomes a decision for the PCCCFO in conjunction with the FCFO who will decide funding of the capital programme based on the level of reserves, current and predicted cashflow, and the money market position. It will then be determined whether borrowing should be met from internal or external borrowing. Where appropriate, both CFO's may seek advice from external partners, including but not limited to our Treasury Management advisors on the most appropriate and cost-efficient method of borrowing.

The PCC approves the funding envelope and a high-level view of projects in February each year. Once the PCC has approved the capital programme, then expenditure can be committed against these high-level schemes subject to a full business case being submitted, normal contract procedure rules and the terms and conditions of funding.

Whether capital projects are funded from grant, contributions, capital allocations or borrowing, the revenue costs must be able to be met from existing revenue budgets or identified (and underwritten) savings or income streams.

12 Individual Project Management

Capital Projects are subject to scrutiny. This varies dependant on the type of project and may be influenced by size or by the makeup of regional involvement. Each project will have a Project Manager and potentially a team to implement the project.

Typically, projects will have a dedicated Project Board, which, if part of a larger programme may sit under a Programme Board. Programme and Project Boards will have a Senior Responsible Officer or Chairperson. Detailed oversight is further provided through ICT Project Management Office, Strategic Estate Groups and Force Change Boards. Regional Projects or Programmes may also report into Regional Boards.

For large capital projects or those that are of public, or PCC interest, the PCC or a senior member of the PCC's team will be invited to have a seat on the programme board for that project or regular personal briefing to the PCC will be requested.

13 Monitoring of the Capital Programme

The FCFO will submit capital monitoring reports as part of the regular financial reporting requirements to the PCCCFO monthly. These reports will have already been to COMB and be shared with the PCC on a regular basis throughout the year. The reports are submitted to the Finance Oversight Board and are based on the most recently available financial information. These monitoring reports will show spending to date and compare projected income and expenditure with the approved capital budget. The report will also include current forecast of the funding of the programme alongside the revenue implications.

For proposed in-year amendments to the annual capital budget, for schemes not already included in the medium-term capital plan, the FCFO will prepare a business case for submission to the PCC for consideration and approval, including details on how the new scheme is to be funded.

Monitoring reports presented and discussed with the PCC at his Performance and Delivery Board meeting with the Chief Constable are published on his website. The reports are also presented to the Joint Audit Committee on a quarterly basis.

In addition, for those business change programmes where a formal board has been established, a detailed scheme monitoring report is presented to each Board meeting.

14 Multi-Year Schemes

Payments for capital schemes often occur over many years, depending on the size and complexity of the project. Therefore, estimated payment patterns are calculated for each project so that the expected capital expenditure per year is known. This is called a cash flow projection or budget profiling.

The approval of a rolling multi-year capital programme assists Kent stakeholders in a number of ways. It allows the development of longer-term capital plans for service delivery. It allows greater flexibility in planning workloads and more certainty for preparation work for future schemes. It also allows greater integration of the revenue budget and capital programme. It also matches the time requirement for scheme planning and implementation since capital schemes can have a considerable initial development phase.

15 In Year Changes to the Capital Programme

An MTCP is produced which shows all planned expenditure over the next five years. This plan will include a schedule to show how the planned expenditure is likely to be funded subject to business case approval.

A separate annual capital budget is produced before the start of the financial year. Initially this budget will only include ongoing schemes from previous years as well as annual provisions such as vehicles, plant, and equipment. Additional schemes from the MTCP are included in the annual budget after cases have been accepted and timescales are known.

16 Funding Strategy and Capital Policies

16.1 Government Grant

The PCC no longer receives any direct Government support for capital expenditure.

16.2 Capital Receipts

A capital receipt is an amount of money which is received from the sale of an item on the fixed asset register. This can only be spent on other capital expenditure and cannot be used to fund revenue items.

These capital receipts, once received, are used to finance the capital programme. The sale of assets is a one-off receipt and means the pool of assets available for sale reduces limiting the ability to fund projects from capital receipts.

16.3 Revenue Funding

Recognising that the pool of assets available for sale is declining a RCCO is seen as a sustainable funding alternative. However, the pressures on the revenue budget are acute with substantial savings already being required. Where appropriate and affordable an appropriate provision for RCCO is included within the annual revenue budget and the medium-term financial plan.

16.4 Prudential Borrowing

Local authorities, including PCC's, can set their own borrowing levels based on their capital need and their ability to pay for the borrowing. The levels will be set by using the indicators and factors set out in the Prudential Code. The borrowing costs are not supported by the Government so Kent Police Group need to ensure it can fund the repayment costs. The authority's Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy, published within the TMS sets out a prudent approach to the amount set aside for the repayment of debt.

16.5 Internal Borrowing

The PCC holds significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus any balances and reserves held. The level of funds for investment is determined by the cashflow into and out of the organisation. To minimise borrowing costs, any surplus funds that would normally be held for investment can be used to fund projects within the capital programme. This is called internal borrowing and means the cost of borrowing is the return on investment foregone. The impact of this will be reflected within the TMS.

16.6 Reserves and Balances

Unspent capital grant and capital receipt monies can be carried forward in the Balance Sheet until they are required to fund the capital programme. Kent Police Group can also hold revenue reserves built up over a number of years to fund elements of the capital programme. Reserves are held and controlled by the PCC through the PCCCFO. Details on Reserves is contained within the Reserves Strategy, published alongside this strategy and the Budget and Precept Report.

16.7 Leasing

Kent Police Group may enter into finance leasing agreements to fund capital expenditure. However, a full option appraisal and comparison of other funding sources must be made and the FCFO and the PCCCFO must both be satisfied that leasing provides the best value for money method of funding the scheme before a recommendation is made to the PCC.

Under the Prudential Code finance leasing agreements are counted against the overall borrowing levels when looking at the prudence of the authority's borrowing. Under the code Private Finance Initiatives (PFI) are classed as leasing. Kent has two such PFI projects, North Kent, and Medway Police Stations. They are monitored carefully and reviewed to ensure they are operating effectively, retain value for money and that Kent are prepared for when the PFI financing ends and the buildings revert to Kent Police ownership.

17 Procurement and Value for Money

Procurement is the purchase of goods and services and the financial regulations clearly set out the processes and rules in place for effective procurement. Kent Police Group have recourse to two key partnerships to leverage the best value for money from our capital activities.

7F Commercial ensures that all tender processes and contracts, including those of a capital nature, are legally compliant and best value for money. It is essential that all procurement activities comply with prevailing regulations and best practice as set out in the Code of Corporate Governance, which includes Contract and Financial Regulations. Guidance on this can be sought from the 7F Commercial Team.

The national BlueLight Collaboration is a government funded organisation that acts on behalf of all PCCs and Chief Constables across the country to obtain efficient and effective services providing value for money opportunities. This works on our behalf across both revenue and capital spending.

The main aim is to hold 'value for money' as a key goal in all procurement activity to optimise the combination of cost and quality.

18 Partnerships and Relationships with other Organisations

Wherever possible and subject to the usual risk assessment process Kent Police Group will look to expand the number of capital schemes which are completed on a partnership basis and continually look for areas where joint projects can be implemented. In support of this initiative Kent has a joint ICT Department with Essex Police and several ICT and business change programmes are being delivered collaboratively.

Where Kent Police Group procures capital items on behalf of other consortium partners only Kent Police Group related expenditure which will be included in the fixed asset register will be included in the medium-term capital plan and the annual capital budget.

19 Management Framework

All contracts are in the name of the PCC meaning that the PCC owns all of the assets. However, the Chief Constable has day to day operational control over short life assets, such as ICT, equipment, and vehicles. Ownership of the estate belongs with the PCC, but as these are operational buildings, the Head of Estates manages the estate on behalf of the Chief Constable with regular reporting to the OPCC and oversight.

The PCCCFO and FCFO manage the medium-term capital plan and the annual capital budget. The FCFO provides regular updates to COMB who, collectively, maintain oversight of planned operational expenditure.

The PCCCFO is responsible for developing and then implementing the strategic documents; Capital Strategy; Reserves Strategy and the Treasury Management Strategy in consultation with the FCFO.

During the budget preparation process COMB take a strategic perspective to the use and allocation of Kent Police Group capital assets and those within its control in planning capital investment. They receive reports on proposed capital projects and make formal recommendations to the PCC during the development of the capital programme.

Having approved the medium-term capital plan and the annual capital budget in February each year the PCC formally holds the Chief Constable to account for delivery of capital projects as part of the regular Finance paper at the Performance and Delivery Board meetings.

20 Performance Management

Clear measurable outcomes should be developed for each capital scheme. After the scheme has been completed, the Chief Constable is required to check that outcomes have been achieved.

Post scheme evaluation reviews should be completed by Kent Police Group for all schemes over £1.0 million and for strategic capital projects.

Reviews should look at the effectiveness of the whole project in terms of service delivery outcomes, design and construction, financing etc. and identify good practice and lessons to be learnt in delivering future projects. These reviews will be presented to the Finance Oversight Board.

21 Risk Management

Risk is the threat that an event or action will adversely affect Kent Police Group's ability to achieve its desired outcomes and to execute its strategies successfully.

Risk management is the process of identifying risks, evaluating their potential consequences, and determining the most effective methods of managing them and/or responding to them. It is both a means of minimising the costs and disruption to the organisation caused by undesired events and of ensuring that staff understand and appreciate the element of risk in all their activities.

The aim is to reduce the frequency of adverse risk events occurring (where possible), minimise the severity of their consequences if they do occur, or to consider whether risk can be transferred to other parties. Both the Force and the OPCC have a corporate risk register which sets out the key risks to the successful delivery of Kent's corporate aims and priorities and outlines the key controls and actions to mitigate and reduce risks or maximise opportunities.

To manage risk effectively, the risks associated with each capital project need to be systematically identified, analysed, influenced, and monitored. It is important to identify the appetite for risk by each scheme and for the capital programme as a whole, especially when investing in complex and costly business change programmes.

Kent Police Group accepts there will be a certain amount of risk inherent in delivering the desired outcomes of the Police and Crime Plan and will seek to keep the risk of capital projects to a low level whilst making the most of opportunities for improvement. Where greater risks are identified as necessary to achieve desired outcomes, Kent Police Group will seek to mitigate or manage those risks to a tolerable level. All key risks identified as part of the capital planning process are considered for inclusion in the corporate risk register.

The FCFO and the PCCCFO will report jointly on the deliverability, affordability and risk associated with this Capital Strategy and the associated capital programme. Where appropriate they will have access to specialised advice to enable them to reach their conclusions.

21.1 Credit Risk

This is the risk that the organisation with which we have invested capital monies becomes insolvent and cannot complete the agreed contract. Accordingly, Kent will ensure that robust due diligence procedures cover all external capital investment through its arrangements with 7F Commercial and where appropriate through BlueLight Commercial. Where possible contingency plans will be identified at the outset and enacted when appropriate.

21.2 Liquidity Risk

This is the risk that the timing of any cash inflows from a project will be delayed, for example if other organisations do not make their contributions when agreed. This is also the risk that the cash inflows will be less than expected, for example due to the effects of inflation, interest rates or exchange rates. Our exposure to this risk will be monitored via the revenue and capital budget monitoring processes. Where possible appropriate interventions will occur as early as possible.

21.3 Interest Rate Risk

This is the risk that interest rates will move in a way that has an adverse effect on the value of capital expenditure or the expected financial returns from a project. Interest rates will be reviewed as part of the on-going monitoring arrangements to identify such adverse effects. As far as possible our exposure to this risk will be mitigated via robust contract terms and when necessary, contract re-negotiations.

21.4 Exchange Rate Risk

This is the risk that exchange rates will move in a way that has an adverse effect on the value of capital expenditure or the expected financial returns from a project. Where relevant, exchange rates will be reviewed as part of the ongoing monitoring arrangements to identify such adverse effects. As far as possible our exposure to this risk will be mitigated via robust contract terms and when necessary, contract re-negotiations. However, for Kent Police capital projects this is unlikely to have a material impact.

21.5 Inflation Risk

This is the risk that rates of inflation will move in a way that has an adverse effect on the value of capital expenditure or the expected financial returns from a project. Rates of inflation will be reviewed as part of the ongoing monitoring arrangements to identify such adverse effects. As far as possible our exposure to this risk will be mitigated via robust contract terms and when necessary, contract re-negotiations.

21.6 Legal and Regulatory Risk

This is the risk that changes in laws or regulation make a capital project more expensive or time consuming to complete, make it no longer cost effective or make it illegal or not advisable to complete. Before entering into capital expenditure or making capital investments, Kent Police Group will understand the powers under which the investment is made. Forthcoming changes to relevant laws and regulations will be kept under review and factored into any capital bidding and programme monitoring processes.

21.7 Fraud, Error, and Corruption

This is the risk that financial losses will occur due to errors or fraudulent or corrupt activities. Officers involved in any of the processes around capital expenditure or funding are required to follow the agreed Code of Corporate Governance. Kent Police Group has a strong ethical culture which is evidenced through our values, principles, and appropriate behaviour. This is supported by the national Code of Ethics and detailed policies such as Anti-Fraud and Corruption and Declaration of Interests.

22 Other Considerations

Capital Schemes must, as with all PCC and Force spend, comply with all appropriate legislation, such as for example, the Disability Discrimination Act, the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and building regulations etc.

February 2023

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To: Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel

Subject: Contacting Kent Police

Date: 1 February 2023

Introduction:

1. Over recent months, Kent Police's performance in terms of managing non-emergency 101 calls has deteriorated, with an increase in the length of time callers have to wait and also in unanswered calls.
2. Whilst primarily the result of staff leaving the Force Control Room (FCR) and an increase in emergency 999 calls, this paper provides context in terms of how the FCR operates and the level of public demand as well as outlining how Kent Police is addressing the issue.
3. The PCC is grateful to Kent Police for its assistance with this paper.

Background:

4. The public rightly has an expectation that they will be able to contact Kent Police when they need to in a variety of ways that work for them, whether that be to report an emergency, report a crime, seek advice, offer information, or express an opinion. When they do make that contact, they expect to receive a timely and appropriate response.
5. The Force encourages individuals and communities to engage and make contact with confidence, by making its services accessible, appropriate, easy to use and safe.
6. In addition to handling 999 and 101 calls, it also maintains other methods of contact, such as online and through personal interaction, to ensure it is open to all and can respond to user needs and situations. Communication is key and the Force recognises the importance of adapting and being flexible and developing modes of communication to suit all.

Contacting Kent Police:

7. The routes through which the public can contact Kent Police are as follows:

Emergency

Call **999** if:

- a serious offence is in progress or has just been committed
- someone is in immediate danger or harm
- property is in danger of being damaged
- a serious disruption to the public is likely

Those with a hearing or speech impairment can use textphone service **18000** or text on 999 if pre-registered with the [emergencySMS service](#).

British Sign Language users can use the [video relay service](#) where an interpreter will help.

Non-emergency

- Call 101 (those with a hearing or speech impairment can use textphone service **18000**)
- Online via the website: www.kent.police.uk (includes Live Chat function)
- Police station front counter
- Out of hours police station phone

8. All contacts are triaged using a risk assessment tool called THRIVE:
- THRIVE is a mnemonic for Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation, Vulnerability and Engagement.
 - It guides call handlers in collecting, analysing and prioritising information and intelligence they receive.
 - It offers flexibility, but also organisational structure and therefore consistency; additionally, it acts as an aide memoire when dealing with time critical incidents.
 - Vulnerability (overt and hidden) is a critical element to ensure victims receive the best service and advice.
 - Every incident created (except for immediate calls where there is an obvious threat) has a clear THRIVE rationale recorded.
 - New information or a change in the incident response results in a new THRIVE assessment.

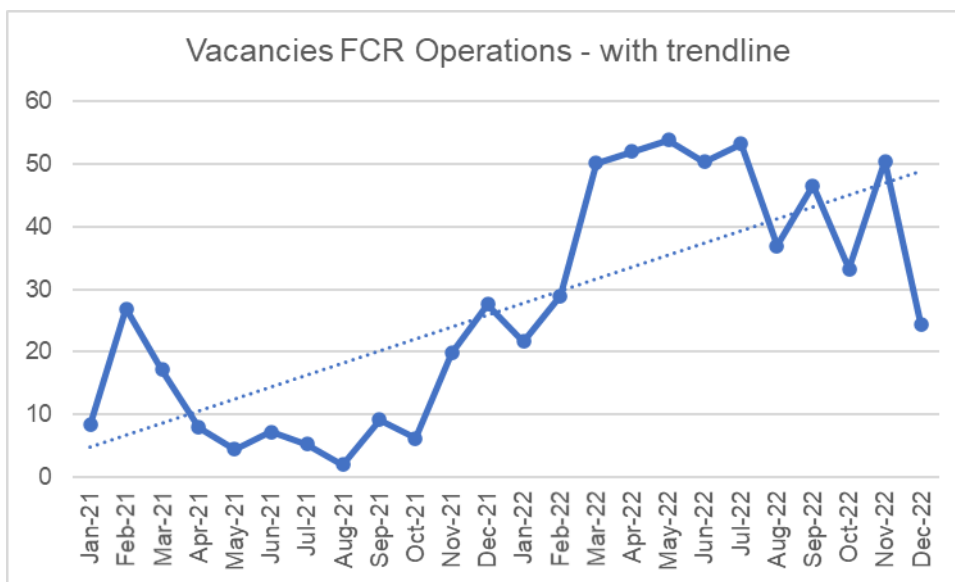
Structure of the FCR:

9. A Chief Superintendent heads up the FCR and the senior leadership team consists of both officers and police staff.
10. On the operational floor, there are 5 teams. Positions include:
- Single skilled contact handlers
 - Single skilled dispatchers
 - Dual-skilled operators (handler and dispatcher)
 - Other non-call handling functions
 - Crime Investigators and Administrators
 - Duty Inspectors (also Initial Firearms Commanders)
11. Kent is split into 3 policing divisions with each having a Team Leader overseeing staff on their dispatch pod. They will deal with all incidents on that division. Allocation to roles is based on skills as opposed to any local knowledge.
12. All new joiners are given introductory briefings and overviews of Kent and Kent Police, as well as opportunities to interact with both local policing and specialist teams. In addition, attachments within and outside the FCR are encouraged to enhance an operator's knowledge.
13. The following is an overview of the staff establishment and current strength within the FCR (as at 05/01/2023):

| Role | Establishment | Current strength | Vacancies |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| Contact handler | 162.16 | 125.29 | 36.87 |
| Dispatcher | 25.81 | 9.57 | 16.24 |
| Dual-skilled | 98.93 | 92.27 | 6.66 |
| Team Leaders | 30.00 | 31.40 | - |
| Team Managers | 5.00 | 6.00 | - |
| Trainees (not currently operational) | 0.00 | 33.00 | - |
| Total | 321.90 | 297.53 | 24.37 |
| PC Uplift (6-month posting)* | 35 | 32 | 3 |

*101 trained only and not all 24/7

14. Members will note the level of vacancies and the following graph also shows that there has been a significant increase in the number of staff leaving in recent months.
15. Reasons for this include the pay that Kent Police can offer which is much less than many other call centres, and the characteristics of the work in terms of being 24/7 and significantly different in terms of level and nature of the demand.



16. Whilst recruitment continues to be a significant challenge, joint work with central HR is now delivering a sustained higher yield of new joiners.
17. The most recent three courses have yielded 23 (August), 28 (October) and 32 (December) new call handlers and retention at course closure remains high with only 2 leaving from the August and October courses.
18. A further course is scheduled for February 2023, and this currently has capacity for 42 students with 30 already either cleared or in pre-employment checks.
19. Chief Officers also allocated 35 police officers to be posted into the FCR for 6 months to assist with 101 calls. These became effective from mid-November 2022, and whilst not a long-term solution, they will form part of a planned strategic reserve of officers who can assist the FCR to manage demand peaks in the future.
20. Under the FCR Transformation Project, retention options are also being considered to achieve workforce stability given the growing numbers being recruited, to maintain skills and experience and provide a high-quality service to the public. Workstreams include:
 - A review of leaver exit interviews to identify common themes and address any action necessary.
 - A review of role profiles to ensure they are appropriate (which may inform pay/grade review).
 - Review of shift patterns (alignment to Force pattern balanced with demand and staff welfare).
 - Review of supervisor to staff ratios.
 - Review of options around a blended establishment of police officer and police staff.
21. To canvas staff views on recruitment, retention, impact, and environment, the FCR now conducts a Pulse survey every six months.

Emergency 999 contact:

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

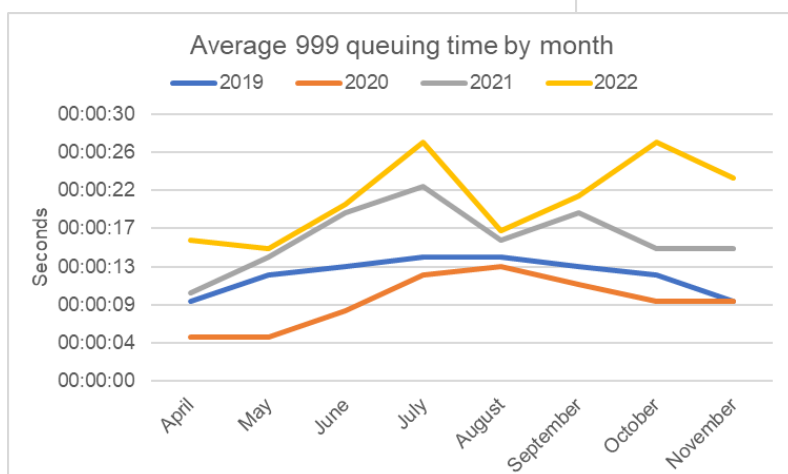
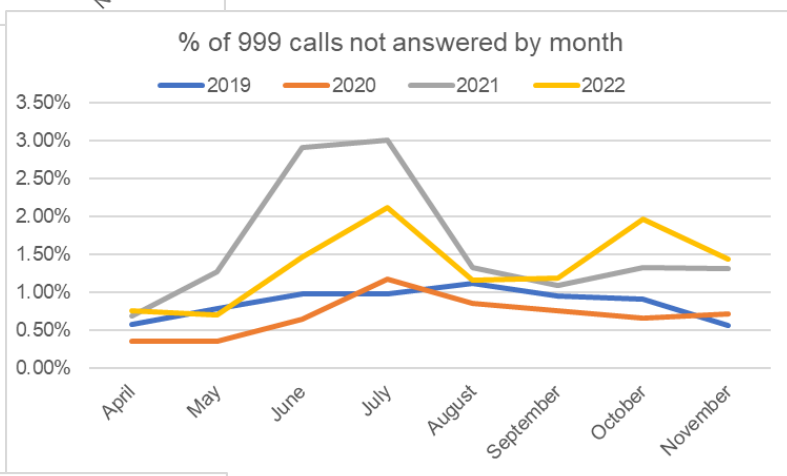
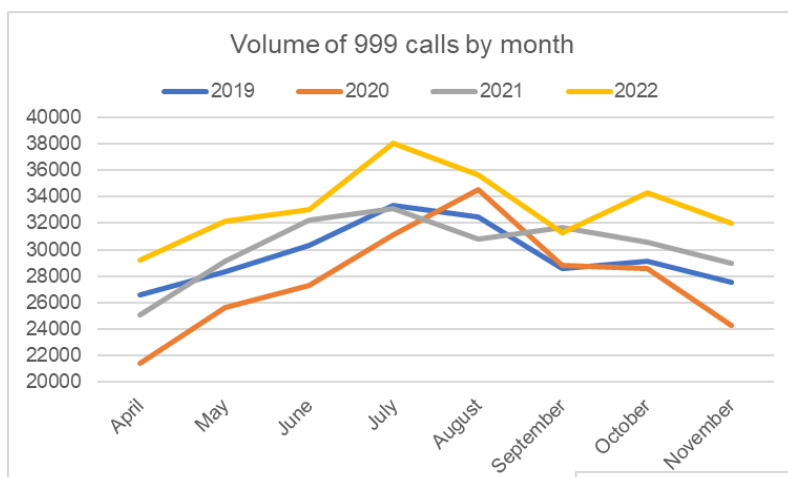
| | April to November | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| Total received | 236,342 | 221,595 | 241,482 | 265,747 |
| Total answered | 234,289 | 220,022 | 237,471 | 262,088 |
| % answered | 99.13 | 99.29 | 98.34 | 98.62 |
| Total not answered | 2,053 | 1,573 | 4,011 | 3,659 |
| % not answered | 0.87 | 0.71 | 1.66 | 1.38 |
| Average queuing time | 00:00:12 | 00:00:09 | 00:00:16 | 00:00:21 |

23. April to November 2022, the number of calls received increased by 10% compared to 2021 and 12% compared to 2019 (pre-pandemic).

24. The number of calls not answered (or call attrition) was also 1.38%, within the aspirational national benchmark of 2%. Where a 999 call is unanswered, the caller will initially be directed to a pre-recorded message that provides alternative self-service options but subsequently receive a call back as soon as FCR staff are able to.

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

26. The following graphs show Kent Police's 999 call volume, % not answered and average queuing time by month over the last four years



27. In line with all forces nationally, 999 calls in Kent continue to increase. This is recognised by the NPCC lead, ACC Todd and by BT who are similarly challenged with meeting public demand, particularly at peak periods.

- In the rolling year 2021 to 2022, 999 volumes increased 16% nationally.
- Comparing the month of November 2021 with November 2022, 999 volumes increased by 10.6% in Kent, nationally they increased 9.7% and in the Most Similar Group (MSG) of forces by 10.4%.

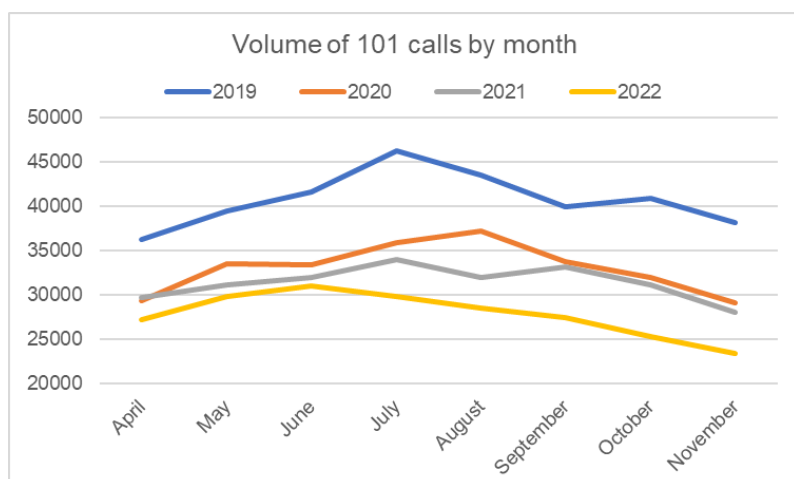
28. Nationally, there is also an Increase in 999 answering delays (calls waiting more than 2 minutes). This is reflected in Kent and some of the MSG forces also.
29. Emergency 999 call handling will remain the priority recognising the threat, harm and risk that sits within these call types.

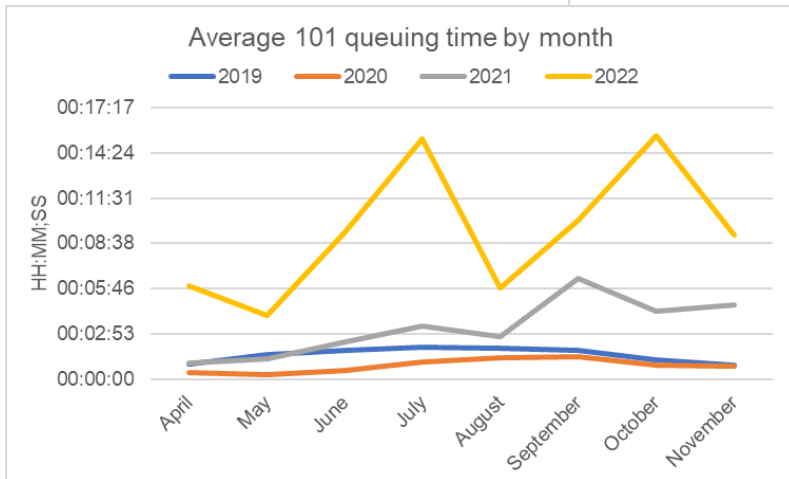
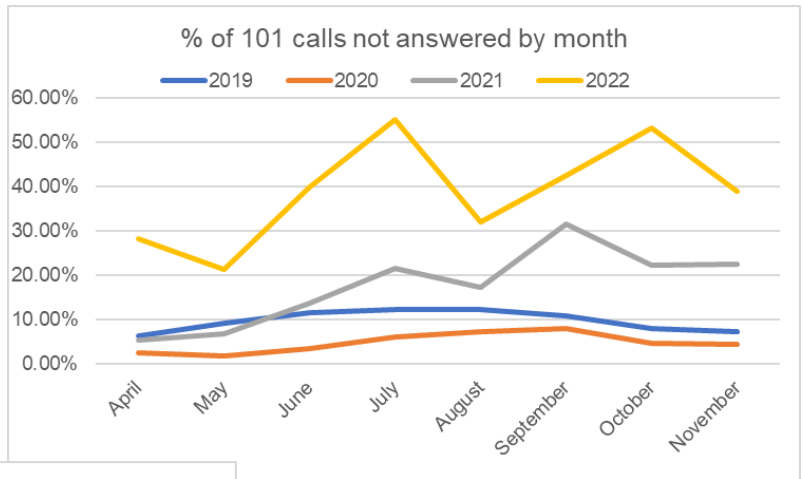
Non-emergency 101 contact:

30. When someone calls 101, the purpose of the messaging is to assist in sign posting to the most appropriate service, contact method or relevant agency, similar to other businesses and services. The information is designed to manage expectations, empower, and educate service users, and assist Kent Police with demand prioritisation, management, and response (and therefore effective use of resources).
31. The current messaging includes direction and advice on self-service options to save the service user time (e.g., online crime reporting) and the Interactive Voice Response has been further refined to allow it to be phased in response to demand. When there are significant increases in 999 demand the Force Incident Manager can authorise messaging for a time limited period that directs non-emergency calls to digital where possible. This supports the strategic aim and responsibility of protecting the Force’s ability to answer emergency 999 calls while providing an effective service to the public.
32. The table below shows 101 data for the period April to November over the last four years.

| | April to November | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| Total received | 326,035 | 264,074 | 250,851 | 222,293 |
| Total answered | 293,726 | 251,017 | 206,160 | 136,099 |
| % answered | 90.09 | 95.06 | 82.18 | 61.23 |
| Total not answered | 32,309 | 13,057 | 44,691 | 86,194 |
| % not answered | 9.91 | 4.94 | 17.82 | 38.77 |
| Average queuing time | 00:01:32 | 00:00:51 | 00:03:17 | 00:09:24 |

33. April to November 2022, the number of calls received decreased by 11% compared to 2021 and 32% compared to 2019 (pre-pandemic). Nationally, there is also a downwards trajectory in calls received, but it is not clear yet whether this is due to channel shift (to 999 or digital services) or purely a reduction in demand.
34. The number of calls not answered (or call attrition) was also 38.77%. Where a call is unanswered, the caller will be directed to a pre-recorded message that provides alternative self-service options.
35. Whilst the volume of 101 calls received saw a continuation of year-on-year decreases, the totality of non-emergency contact demand remained fairly stable when digital contact was taken into account.
36. The following graphs show Kent Police’s 101 call volume, % not answered and average queuing time by month over the last four years

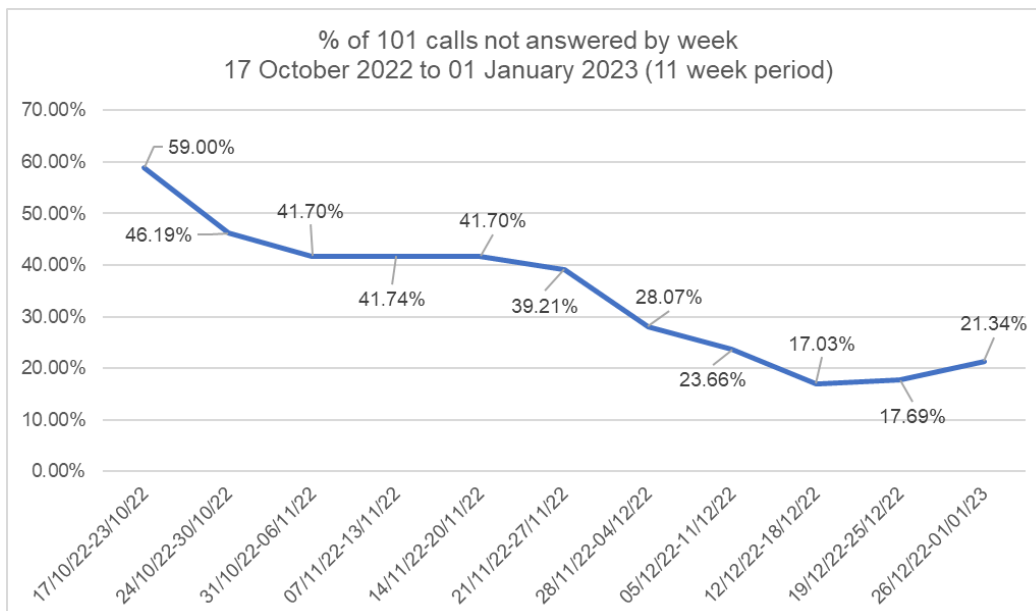




37. The next graph shows the percentage of calls not answered for an 11-week period up to 1 January 2023 (the latest data available at the time of preparing this report).

38. Importantly, it shows a significant downward trend in the percentage of calls not answered. This is the result of a dedicated workstream of the FCR Transformation Project which has included:

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



Digital contact:

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

| | April to November | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| Online Crime Reports | 16,515 | 21,799 | 25,171 | 32,306 |
| Live Chats | 10,478 | 36,817 | 28,991 | 46,757 |
| 'Contact Us' forms | N/A* | 6,997 | 8,103 | 8,729 |
| Total digital contacts | 26,993 | 65,613 | 62,265 | 87,792 |

*Prior to 2020 this facility was not available

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

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

Holding to account:

42. One of the principle ways the Commissioner holds the Chief Constable to account is through the quarterly Performance and Delivery Board.

43. The meeting is chaired by the Commissioner and papers are submitted by the Force in advance and published [here](#). The Chief Constable is required to attend the meeting in order to present and discuss the papers, and answer questions about delivery of the [Making Kent Safer](#) Plan and policing generally in the county.

44. The Force has, and will continue to provide a substantive update on public contact within the 'Making Kent Safer: Delivery and Performance' paper.

45. The Commissioner also has, and will continue to hold the Chief Constable to account via their regular one-to-one meetings and briefings.

46. On 18 January 2023 the PCC visited the FCR. In addition to receiving a briefing on performance and speaking with the Senior Leadership Team and other staff, he spent time observing activity and listening to calls.

47. It is clear that staff leaving and the increase in 999 calls has unfortunately had a negative impact on 101 call answering times, as the FCR works to protect and answer 999 emergency calls as a priority. As a result, the number of unanswered 101 calls and average queuing time has unfortunately increased. Whilst there are signs of improvement and the PCC understands the need to prioritise 999 emergency calls, he has made it very clear to the Chief Constable that he expects the direction of travel to continue and be sustained.

48. In response, the Chief Constable has agreed a programme of strategic transformation which is now under way. It will build a FCR that seeks to provide a first-class service, that can meet multi-channel future requirements, including the exponential growth in digital demand and move to Coldharbour as part of the Zenith programme.

49. The PCC also recognises that the current issues are not a reflection of the staff who work in the FCR. and he would like to thank them for their hard work and resilience. The level and nature of the demand, as well as the often challenging and difficult decisions made by FCR staff every day in terms of managing risk, should never be underestimated.

Recommendation:

50. The Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel is asked to note this report and agree to a further update at their September 2023 meeting.

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Record of Decision

ORIGINATOR: Chief Finance Officer

REFERENCE: OPCC.D.032.23

TITLE: Kent Victim's Advocacy & Support Service – Contract Award

OPEN **CONFIDENTIAL** *Reason if Confidential:*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PCCs have a statutory responsibility to commission support services for victims of crime; these services should include but not be limited to:

- A referral and support service for all victims of crime.
- Therapeutic services.
- Helpline or live chat support.
- Tailored or specialist support for specific groups, needs or risks.

Victim Support were commissioned in April 2016 to deliver the main referral and support service for victims of crime and the service is due to expire on 31 March 2023. As a result, the PCC completed a tender process to commission a high-quality independent Victim's Advocacy and Support Service.

The specification required the service to be needs and risk led, with a strong evidence base that was trauma informed. It had to be available countywide to all victims of recorded crime who resided in Kent, including children and young people regardless of when the crime took place or if it was reported to the police. The support had to extend to close relatives of victims, particularly those aged 18 years and under. Service provision had to be appropriate for the individual with the aim of supporting them in the immediate aftermath of crime, or when they sought support for that crime.

The specific delivery requirements for the service were:

- Referral and triage for all victims accessing support, including support for the Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service and Medway Integrated Domestic Abuse Service. The service may also offer short- or long-term support to standard or medium risk domestic abuse victims if they chose to remain with the service.
- Short- and long-term support provision.
- Advocacy support for specific groups (e.g. Stalking and Hate Crime).

The service design was supported by surveys of victims and partner organisations such as the police, support services and Health.

The procurement exercise was undertaken through 7F commercial in conjunction with Essex PFCC who were also seeking to procure a victim support service. Although issued as a joint tender, Kent and Essex were looking for different services and completed the moderation process separately.

The contract award was for 4 years - 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2027. It included the option to extend, depending on funding availability, delivery of a quality service and sustained performance, on a yearly basis for a further 3 years. The contract value per annum is £1,000,000.

Two organisations bid for the service and a moderation panel including members of the OPCC and the Force convened in October and November 2022. The tender process was completed in November 2022 with Victim Support being selected as the preferred provider.

RECOMMENDATION

The PCC is recommended to award the contract for the Kent Victim’s Advocacy and Support Service to Victim Support.

DECISION

To award the Victim’s Advocacy and Support Service contract to Victim Support for 4 years commencing 1 April 2023.

Chief Finance Officer:

Comments: This service is a statutory requirement for the PCC. The contract was awarded through a legally compliant procurement process and funding has been identified and set aside across the life of the contract.

Signature:



Date: 23 January 2023

Chief Executive:

Comments: Commissioner, this was a competitive tendering process that led to Victim Support being successful. We have a long running relationship with the provider, and they have demonstrated excellent support to victims over a sustained number of years. Monitoring occurs throughout the life of the contract to ensure high levels of service are delivered and maintained. I fully support your issuing of this contract to Victim Support.

Signature:



Date: 23 January 2023

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR KENT

Comments: I am satisfied that Victim Support have won an open and competitive tendering process. This will deliver not just consistency but also help improve the service on offer to victims of crime.

Signature:



Date: 23 January 2023

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Consultation results, Invitation to Tender

IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

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

Supports delivery of the Making Kent Safer Plan by providing a service that is victim-led and treats everyone as an individual by taking account of their own needs and unique circumstances. Also offers services to those who may be especially vulnerable, such as victims of domestic abuse.

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been completed?

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

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

Yes No
The service delivers free and confidential support, advice, information, signposting and referral to any Kent resident who has been a victim of crime. Therefore, it does not have a differential/adverse impact on any particular strand of diversity.

Police and Crime Panel - Future work programme – February 2023**18 April 2023**

| | | |
|--|--|-------|
| Update following HMICFRS PEEL Inspection 2021/22 | Requested by the Panel/Offered by the Commissioner | PCC |
| Panel Annual Report | Requested by the Panel | Panel |

27 June 2023

| | | |
|--|--|-----|
| Election of Chair | Statutory Requirement | |
| Election of Vice-Chair | Statutory Requirement | |
| Update on Fraud | Requested by the Panel/Offered by the Commissioner | PCC |
| Update on the Violence Against Women and Girls Inquiry | Requested by the Panel/Offered by the Commissioner | PCC |

September 2023

| | | |
|---|-----------------------|----------------|
| Complaints against the Commissioner – Annual Report 2022/23 | Statutory Requirement | Panel Officers |
|---|-----------------------|----------------|

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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