

AGENDA

KENT AND MEDWAY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Dear Panel Member

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the **KENT AND MEDWAY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL** will be held in the **Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone** on **Tuesday, 27th June, 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 Connie Nolan	Canterbury City Council
Councillor Richard Wells	Dartford Borough Council
Councillor Charlotte Zosseder	Dover District Council
Councillor Mike Blakemore	Folkestone and Hythe District Council
Councillor Shane Mochrie-Cox	Gravesham Borough Council
Mr Mike Hill	Kent County Council
Councillor Lauren Edwards	Medway Council
Councillor Perry Cole	Sevenoaks District Council
Councillor Richard Palmer	Swale Borough Council
Councillor Lottie Parfitt-Reid	Maidstone Borough Council
Councillor Heather Keen	Thanet District Council
Councillor Des Keers	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Councillor Nancy Warne	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Councillor Tristan Osborne	Co-opted member – Medway Council
Mr Ian Chittenden	Co-opted member – Liberal Democrat Group
Vacancy	Co-opted member – Conservative Group
Vacancy	Co-opted member – Conservative Group
Mrs Elaine Bolton	Independent Member
Mr Gurvinder Sandher	Independent Member

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

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

- 1 Introduction/Webcast Announcement
- 2 Election of Chair
- 3 Election of Vice-Chair
- 4 Membership

To note the following changes to Panel Members

Cllr Connie Nolan has replaced Cllr Ashley Clark (Canterbury)
Cllr Charlotte Zosseder has replaced Cllr Oliver Richardson (Dover)
Cllr Mike Blackmore has replaced Cllr Jenny Hollingsbee (Folkestone & Hythe)
Cllr Lauren Edwards has replaced Cllr Habib Tejan (Medway)
Cllr Perry Cole has replaced Cllr Peter Fleming (Sevenoaks)
Cllr Heather Keen has replaced Cllr George Kup (Thanet)
Cllr Tristan Osbourne has replaced Cllr John Burden (Medway co-optee)

- 5 Apologies and Substitutes
- 6 Declarations of Interests by Members in Items on the Agenda for this Meeting
- 7 Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel held on 18 April 2023 (Pages 1 - 6)

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

- B1 Neighbourhood Policing Review (Pages 7 - 12)
- B2 Update on Fraud (Pages 13 - 18)
- B3 Violence Against Women and Girls Inquiry - update (Pages 19 - 26)

C - Commissioner's Decisions - none for this meeting

D - Questions to the Commissioner

- D1 Questions to the Commissioner

E - Panel Matters

E1 Future work programme (Pages 27 - 28)

F - For Information

F1 Minutes of the Commissioner's Performance and Delivery Board meeting held on 15 March 2023 (Pages 29 - 36)

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

Monday, 19 June 2023

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

KENT AND MEDWAY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 18 April 2023.

PRESENT: Mr P M Hill, OBE (Chairman), Mrs E Bolton, Cllr G Hackwell, Cllr Mrs J Hollingsbee, Cllr S Mochrie-Cox, Cllr R Palmer, Cllr H Tejan, Cllr S Jeffery and Cllr L Dyball

ALSO PRESENT: Mr M Scott (Kent Police and Crime Commissioner) and Mr A Harper (PCC's Chief Executive)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs A Taylor (Scrutiny Research Officer) and Mr M Dentten (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**80. Declarations of Interests by Members in Items on the Agenda for this Meeting**
(Item 3)

No declarations were made.

81. Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel held on 1 February 2023
(Item 4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2023 were an accurate record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

82. HMICFRS PEEL Inspection 2021/22 - update
(Item B1)

1. The Commissioner introduced the report which updated the Panel on Kent Police's progress in addressing the findings from HMICFRS' PEEL Inspection 2021/22. He assured the Panel that he continued to hold the Chief Constable to account for performance. He noted that HMICFRS had commenced their next PEEL Inspection of the Force and that progress and formal closure of the Areas for Improvement (AFIs) would form part of that process. He assured Members that his Performance and Delivery Board continued to focus on the AFIs. Concerning the Force's responses to the public, which were assessed as requiring improvement, he noted that the resourcing of the Force Control Room had been enhanced, which had significantly improved call attrition and response times. He stressed the importance of sustained long-term improvement. It was noted that Kent Police worked with forces which performed well in the areas which required improvement, to identify best practice, including Bedfordshire Police on offender management. He stated that he was satisfied that Kent Police was on the right trajectory and that

reassurance had been received from the Chief Constable that the next inspection would show progress in all of the areas requiring improvement.

2. The Commissioner confirmed, following a question from a Member, that increasing demand and service resourcing were Kent Police's greatest challenges. The importance of ensuring that adequate training and supervision were in place for what was a young and developing workforce was underscored. He assured Members that he challenged the Chief Constable on Force resourcing against its demand profile. The pressure placed on Kent Police from other agencies was highlighted, including in relation to mental health and the wider justice system.
3. In response to a question from a Member concerning performance management, the Commissioner reassured the Panel that a well-rounded framework was in place, overseen by the Deputy Chief Constable and included enhanced monitoring and scrutiny.
4. A Member stressed the importance of residents feeling the progress made and asked for assurance that feedback from residents was sought and taken on board routinely. The Commissioner noted that the three areas for improvement directly involved the public and agreed that residents and victims especially needed to feel that policing had improved. He noted that he continued to hold partners to account at Kent Criminal Justice Board and that Kent Police relied on a strong relationship with the public for information sharing.

RESOLVED to note the report.

83. Vetting, Counter Corruption & Pension Forfeiture

(Item B2)

1. The Chair introduced the item and stated that the Panel sought reassurance from the Commissioner that Kent Police had robust vetting and counter corruption measures in place, following a succession of high profile issues in other forces.
2. The Commissioner introduced the report which provided an overview of Kent Police's Central Vetting Unit and Counter Corruption Unit's functions; the policing Code of Ethics; how the Chief Constable was held to account on officer and staff integrity and standards; and the pension forfeiture process which he could consider in certain circumstances following the conviction of an officer for a criminal offence. He stressed the importance of removing sexist, discriminatory and criminal officers from the Force. He explained that vetting resources had been increased, to handle higher recruitment levels. Reassurance was given that recruitment standards hadn't been reduced during the Police Uplift Programme and that systems were in place to scrutinise social media use. He added that assurance had been received from the Deputy Chief Constable, that any individuals who hadn't had the correct level of vetting were now appropriately vetted. Members were told that proactive counter corruption measures were in place and that the Counter Corruption Unit's priorities remained: sexual misconduct; inappropriate and notifiable associations; misuse of Force systems and disclosure of information; and misuse of drugs. He added that infiltration; financial vulnerability; social

media; and officer morale were the Unit's four identified emerging threats. The independent whistleblowing system, facilitated by Crimestoppers, for reporting wrongdoing was highlighted. Regarding pension forfeiture he cited the cases detailed in the report and noted that he had recommended that the Home Office streamline the process and remove the qualification that the offending must be connected to the officer's service. He concluded by confirming that 65% of the public funded portion of the pension could be forfeited and that in the cases he sought forfeiture, he considered what was proportionate to the crime or misconduct.

3. The Chair commended the use of Crimestoppers for independent whistleblowing and asked the Commissioner whether he was confident that cultural change had occurred in the organisation. The Commissioner assured the Panel that he was confident positive change had occurred and that adequate systems were in place.
4. In response to a question from the Vice Chair, the Commissioner stated that the findings of all internal cases as well as the Casey Report had been taken into account and that the Chief Constable should have further powers to remove officers for misconduct.
5. The Commissioner agreed to provide information on how the public could report police misconduct, following the meeting.
6. Mr Harper confirmed, following a question from a Member, that he met regularly with Kent Police's Head of Professional Standards and that the majority of investigations were instigated by officers. He stated that this reflected good organisational culture.
7. A Member asked whether a Casey Report style investigation into Kent Police would be considered, to assess the current culture within the organisation. The Commissioner stated that the approach would not be necessary at the present time and that many additional measures including culture boards, which officers could attend and were supported by staff associations, were in place to ensure a healthy organisation-wide culture.
8. The Commissioner agreed to confirm, following the meeting, whether the uplift in the Central Vetting Unit would be permanent.

RESOLVED to note the report.

84. Questions to the Commissioner (Item D1)

Question 1

The Commissioner has sought, through his budgets and Police and Crime Plan, to ensure that information sharing about crimes and investigations between partners, including local authorities, is essential as part of the need to communicate, ensure ongoing feedback and engagement between partners and those that experience crime and ASB.

Does the Commissioner feel that Kent Police are fully resourced, including with enough personnel to ensure that investigations and communication of investigations with partners, victims and communities take place in good time and on a regular and ongoing basis?

(Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox, Gravesham Borough Council)

1. In response to the question, the Commissioner emphasised the importance of public feedback to policing and assured the Panel that he continued to hold the Chief Constable to account for Kent Police's compliance with the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (Victims' Code). He confirmed that Kent Police's victims' team and Force Control Room had been further resourced to enhance victim support. He stressed the importance of proactive communication with communities and partners being a by-product of the ongoing neighbourhood policing review.

Question 2

With the work the Police and Crime Commissioner and his office have carried out on Violence against women and girls (VAWG). Can you let us know how Kent Police have used it to improve the service they provide to victims and survivors and what improvements have been seen as a result?

(Mrs Elaine Bolton, Independent Member)

2. Following the question, the Commissioner outlined the key pieces of work which he and his office had undertaken on Violence against women and girls, including his formal Inquiry which published its report in July 2022. He reminded the Panel of the high number of survey responses, trends identified from the responses and areas where partner efforts had been focused, including through more walk and talk events with local community safety partnerships as well as patrolling changes. Concerning the recommendations of his Inquiry, he confirmed that measures were in place to carry out independent victim satisfaction surveys. He addressed the progress made with big data, explaining that it had led to a fundamental rethink about how perpetrators were profiled and looked at five years' worth of violent offences committed by men against women. He concluded by informing Members that as a result of measures implemented following the survey and Inquiry, Kent Police was now considered to be the best force in the country for handling stalking.

RESOLVED to note the responses to the questions.

85. Panel Annual Report - 2022/23

(Item E1)

RESOLVED that the report be approved.

86. Future work programme

(Item E2)

RESOLVED to note the report.

87. Minutes of the Commissioner's Performance and Delivery Board meeting held on 30 November 2022

(Item F1)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Performance and Delivery Board held on 30 November 2022 be noted.

88. Future meeting dates

(Item F2)

RESOLVED that the future meeting dates be noted.

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To: Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel

Subject: Neighbourhood Policing Review

Date: 27 June 2023

Introduction:

1. The defining features of neighbourhood policing can be traced back to the Peelian principles. The clear emphasis on prevention, the recognition that the police are part of the community and that their power depends on public approval, are as important today as they were at the inception of the police service.
2. That is why the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and Chief Constable's Joint Vision states '*...We will retain neighbourhood policing as the bedrock of policing in Kent...*'
3. It is also why, in the [Making Kent Safer Plan](#), under the priority 'Be visible and responsive to the needs of communities' set for the Chief Constable, the PCC states:
'Neighbourhood policing is fundamental, 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.'
4. Further to previous verbal updates by the PCC, this paper provides an overview of the process surrounding Kent Police's Neighbourhood Policing Review, and position statement on the new model which came into effect on 7 June 2023.
5. The PCC is grateful to Kent Police for its assistance with this paper.

The rationale for change:

6. The Force must achieve a permanent revenue saving of £16-17 million over the next three years. It is unable to realise these savings via police officer pay due to the constraints of the Government Police Uplift Programme (PUP) and associated funding rules.
7. Over the last few years, the Force has developed and invested in the Neighbourhood Policing (NHP) model, including Integrated Offender Management, Schools Officers, Town Centre PCs, District Taskforces, Crime Prevention PCSOs and the Problem-Solving Taskforce. There have also been significant legislative changes nationally such as violence against women and girls, updated College of Policing core NHP guidelines and the Government's 'Beating crime plan'.
8. The significant changes to the policing landscape and the core NHP guidelines require all forces to have an appropriate model which provides visible and efficient NHP, in line with local priorities.
9. Therefore, the Chief Officer Team felt the time was right to remodel NHP in Kent to create an optimal model for the future and to contribute to Force savings.

Objectives:

10. The objectives of the Review were as follows:
 - I. To develop a NHP model that maintains or enhances the service provided to the public, in particular the service provided to victims and witnesses.
 - II. Contact, visibility and vulnerability must remain core to the NHP offer.
 - III. To develop a NHP model with fewer PCSO and staff posts, without compromising service delivery.
 - IV. To develop a model with geographical personal ownership of Ward(s) by police officers.
 - V. Develop a model with a tactical capability to respond effectively to high demand areas, requiring a longer-term problem-solving approach.

- VI. To develop a NHP model that contributes to Force savings whilst maintaining or enhancing the existing neighbourhood service provision.

Governance and oversight:

11. The programme of change has been governed by the Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) in his role as Senior Responsible Officer.
12. The Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) for Local Policing is the lead officer, and programme management is delivered through the Force Change Team.
13. Throughout the development of the model, the following mechanisms have been used to track progress, provide scrutiny, and ensure the programme was meeting the strategic ambitions:
- Chief Officer Management Board
 - Strategic Change and Resourcing Board
 - Chief Constable / PCC weekly briefing
 - Neighbourhood Implementation Board
 - Tactical Delivery Group
 - Senior Design Steering Group
14. The governance structure has ensured that all internal stakeholders, such as operational policing leadership teams, Finance, Force Change Team, police officer and police staff associations, and Corporate Communications, were able to deliver the requirements of the model in an organised fashion.

Consultation and engagement:

15. The level of consultation and engagement during the Review has been extensive, and includes:
- 334 police officers and staff engaged with, to assist in the review of 18 roles and job descriptions
 - Extensive engagement with all 13 Community Safety Units
 - 32 police officer and police staff managers in regular two-way dialogue with the programme team
 - Engagement with all local Independent Advisory Group (IAG) Chairs, as well as the Chair of the county IAG (the model was presented to the IAG at their county engagement event)
 - Staff at seven Community Safety Partnership meetings
 - 12 Senior Leadership Team (SLT) drop-in sessions for local District and Divisional staff
 - 476 attendees at on-line engagement events with the ACC
 - Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC)
 - Joint Kent Chiefs (two formal presentations provided)
 - Violence Reduction Unit
 - KCC Prevent Team
 - Nine other police forces consulted regarding best practice

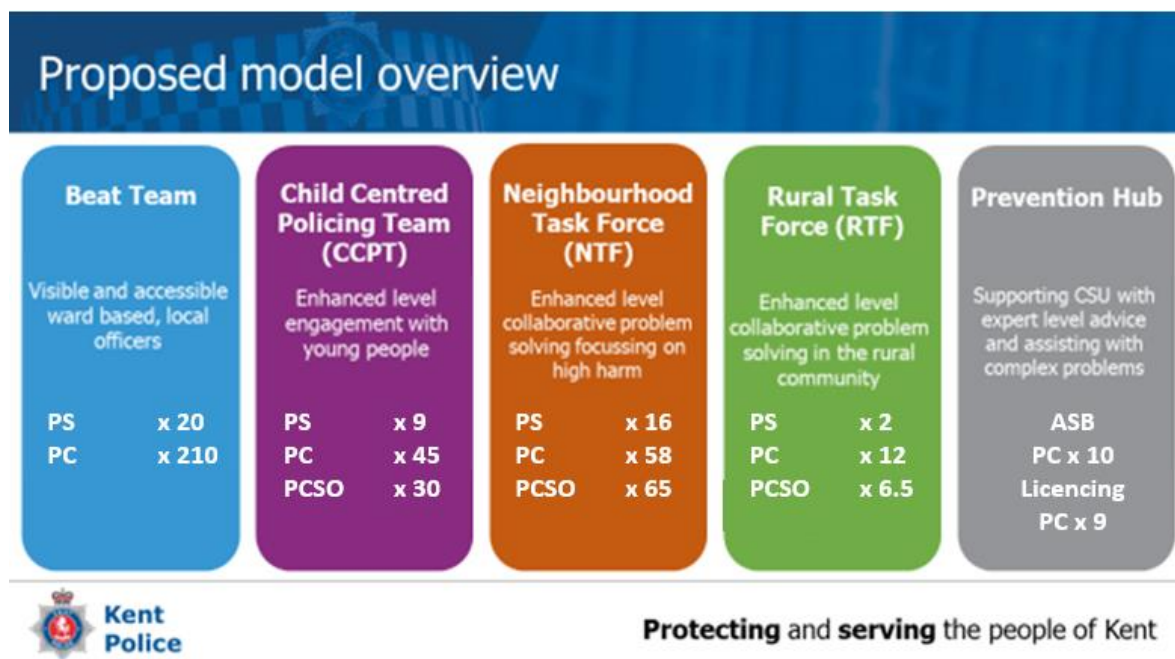
Impact on staff and support provided:

16. Every PCSO affected by the Business Case has been offered 1-2-1 engagement, with many taking the opportunity to meet with HR, operational leads, finance, Unison etc. Officers in the NHP model were likewise offered this opportunity, and in total over 500 1-2-1s have been conducted.
17. Staff associations have been involved in the Review throughout; engagement has included corporate boards, early review of communications, informal updates with two-way discussion and formal Business Case consultation.
18. From the beginning of the Review, communications from the Chief Officer Team to those affected and the wider organisation have been open and transparent. Whilst the reduction in police staff posts has been a difficult message, this has provided staff with advanced notice of the potential changes and the Force has been able to offer support as a result. There has been frequent signposting to Welfare Services, creation of a NHP Review Support Hub on SharePoint and a streamlined pathway developed for those wishing to join as police officers.

19. The Business Case was one of the largest and most impactful on staff for many years, as such, the launch on 23 November 2023 took place with all affected staff, their managers and SLT invited to an in person briefing event. The event was led by the DCC and attended by various teams able to offer help such as Welfare Services, Finance, HR, Unison and the Force Change Team.
20. Projected redundancy and pension figures were calculated for police staff ready for Business Case launch to reduce potential waiting times from external organisations and allow everyone as much time as possible to consider their options.
21. There were 336 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff posts affected by the Business Case with proposals reducing the police staff establishment within the NHP model by 232.5 FTE. This equated to 177 people or 166.15 FTE strength. As there are 103.5 posts within the new NHP model (101.5 PCSOs and two police staff), the Business Case required a reduction of 62.65 FTE.
22. There were also 259 police officers affected by the Business Case, however the proposal increased officer posts from 263 to 391 resulting in an uplift of 128.
23. 51% of PCSOs, 80% of police constables (PCs) and 91% of police sergeants (PS') secured their first preference in the desktop selection and posting processes.

The new model:

24. An overview of the new NHP model, including the number of officer and police staff posts, is shown below:



25. Under the model, every Ward will have a named police officer, and with early intervention and effective engagement at its heart, will see meaningful and targeted activity while building on the Community Safety Units' ability to disrupt those who bring misery to local communities. While not featured in the overview above, all Community Safety Units, made up of Beat Teams, Child Centred Policing Teams and Neighbourhood Task Forces, are very much part of the NHP model.
26. It should also be noted that under the model the specialist Rural Task Force sees an uplift of 1 PS and 6.5 PCSOs.
27. The Force formally moved to the new model on 7 June 2023, but it is acknowledged that to resource to full establishment without impacting on other core functions will take time. As a result, the Force has adopted an interim model with a focus on optimising the number of new Beat Officers.
28. Based on the current timeline, the Force anticipates the model will be up to establishment by September 2024.

29. Following police officer postings there have been challenges with balancing the resourcing requirement for Beat Officers. The Force's commitment to resource Beat Officer posts to a minimum of 50% has required 30 internal voluntary moves and postings through HR. It is anticipated that these officers will be released back to their permanent roles by March 2024 in line with the phased plan that utilises the PUP to fully resource the model.

Benefits/impact of the new model:

30. The model seeks to deliver a number of benefits, all of which will be reviewed at a regular basis:

- Significant reduction in the number of PCSO posts resulting in a substantial financial saving.
- Higher proportion of NHP resources owned and delivered at District level. This will improve flexibility allowing Districts to respond quickly to local problems, increase ownership and improve joint working with partners who operate at the District level. This will result in more timely and effective problem solving and targeted activity to reduce crime and hold offenders to account.
- Streamline 14 separate roles to 4 with an increased focus on local ownership. This will improve resilience (absence or vacancies will have a reduced impact on service delivery) and will ensure the public have a 'one stop shop' for issues and a consistent service, leading to increased public satisfaction.
- Dedicated NHP roles supported by an abstraction policy. This will guarantee resources are 'ring fenced' to community engagement, problem solving and targeted crime prevention activity, which will ensure visibility, improve public confidence, and reduce crime and harm.
- There will be opportunities for specialisation and lateral progression within NHP, with the Beat Officer PC role offering an entry route. This will encourage retention of staff and officers, align with and streamline the professionalising NHP workstream, and address the HMICFRS PEEL recommendation.
- Re-balancing of supervisory ratios. This will result in increased support to staff and officers to maintain welfare, and improved oversight will raise the quality of service to the public.
- Prevention Hubs will be delivered at a Divisional level to support officers with specialist advice and support. This will ensure a more efficient delivery of specialist capability allowing for more Beat Officer resources and create the ability to pool resources to deal with complex problems and sources of high harm.

31. It is acknowledged that the stability and consistency of resources in the model will be of significant benefit to developing local knowledge and relationships with the public and communities. A strategic resourcing ambition for the model has been developed, with the ambition to attract PCs and PCSOs who want to work in NHP for the long term by building an NHP career path including continual professional development.

Review process:

32. The model will continue to be subject of monthly scrutiny via the ACC-led NHP Board.

33. A formal Post-Implementation Review will commence at a time directed by the DCC, but it is anticipated that this will be around December 2023 (6-months after implementation of the model). A further review will also be required after September 2024, once the model is fully resourced. This review will be conducted by the Force Change Team.

Holding to account:

34. Throughout the Review, the PCC has held the Chief Constable to account through his quarterly Performance and Delivery Board.

35. Open to Panel Members and the public on a non-participating basis and also live streamed, the meeting is chaired by the PCC and papers are submitted by the Force in advance and published [here](#). The Chief Constable is required to attend the meeting in order to present and discuss the papers and answer questions about delivery of the [Making Kent Safer](#) Plan and policing generally in the county.

36. Whilst the Force has provided updates via the papers, the PCC has also asked questions and taken a particular interest in the welfare of those officers and staff affected. The PCC will continue to receive updates as the implementation progresses and the Force moves to a fully resourced model over the coming months.

37. The PCC will also continue to hold the Chief Constable to account via their regular weekly briefings and receive bespoke briefing notes and updates from the Force as required.
38. The PCC would like to express his thanks to those officers and staff impacted by the Review who have continued to provide a first class service to local communities through such a difficult period. In addition, he would like to acknowledge the Force's work around engagement and development of the model, as well as the HR processes and welfare support offered to those affected.
39. The PCC is reassured that the new NHP model will provide as good, if not a better policing service to the communities of Kent and Medway and will monitor its implementation and impact carefully.

Recommendation:

40. The Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel is asked to note this report and agree to a further update at their April 2024 meeting.

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To: Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel

Subject: Update on Fraud

Date: 27 June 2023

Introduction:

1. Fraud is the most commonly experienced crime in the UK. It costs the UK many billions of pounds every year. The impact of fraud and cyber-enabled related offences can be devastating, ranging from unaffordable personal losses suffered by vulnerable victims to impacting the ability of organisations to stay in business.
2. That is why, in the [Making Kent Safer](#) Plan, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) expects the Chief Constable to 'have the right resources with the right skills to investigate all crimes, and where possible, bring to justice those who harm individuals and businesses'. It is also the reason the PCC commits to 'working with local and national partners, including the Police Digital Service, to ensure policing is able to exploit the advantages that technology can offer to better safeguard and protect communities'.
3. Further to the paper presented at the June meeting last year, this report provides an overview of how fraud is reported and tackled in Kent, trends in types of fraud, local and national activity to safeguard victims and outlines how the PCC holds the Chief to Constable to account.
4. The PCC is grateful to Kent Police for its assistance with this paper.

Fraud reporting:

5. Fraud is reported to the Force in two ways, via Action Fraud or as a call for service.

Action Fraud

6. If a person is scammed, defrauded or experiences a cyber crime in England, Wales or Northern Ireland, they should report it to [Action Fraud](#). Action Fraud is the UK's national reporting centre for fraud and cyber crime and takes crime and information reports on behalf of the police and also provides advice and fraud prevention guidance.
7. Victims can report a fraud or cyber crime and find help and support via the [online reporting service](#) which is available any time of the day or night. Help is also available over the phone through the Action Fraud contact centre by calling 0300 123 2040.
8. Action Fraud does not investigate cases and cannot advise on the progress of a case, but reports taken are passed to the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB).
9. The NFIB sits alongside Action Fraud within the City of London Police (CoLP) which is the national policing lead for economic crime. All reports of fraud and cyber crime reported to Action Fraud, whether they are identified as a crime report or an information report, are received into the NFIB and assessed to determine the most appropriate action.
10. Experienced reviewers assess each report to determine whether there is enough information to send to a police force to progress an investigation. Not all crime reports received by the NFIB are sent to forces; for instance, some will be circulated as intelligence only, while others will be sent to their Prevention and Disruption Team to allow for the fraud enabler (such as telephone number, website address) to be blocked to prevent others from becoming victims.

11. The allocation of an investigation is based on where an offender lives, with the same force responsible for supporting the victims wherever they may reside. Therefore, the level of support provided to Kent victims is often outside the control of the Force and locally commissioned services. It should also be noted that police forces are not compelled to accept a crime report sent to them by the NFIB for investigation; they will review the report themselves and decide on a course of action.

Call for service (C4S)

12. This covers the following:

- Offenders arrested by police
- Offender is committing, or has recently committed an offence, at the time of the call for service
- There is a local suspect - sufficient details to identify and apprehend an offender at the time of the report
- A vulnerable victim requires an immediate policing response

13. These are allocated from the Force Control Room (FCR) to Division and investigated by the appropriate resource, depending on complexity. Those investigations which require specialist knowledge, such as rogue trader series, romance fraud, mandate frauds, and investment/boiler room frauds will go to the Economic Crime Team.

14. Most fraud and cyber crime offences are reported via Action Fraud.

Tackling fraud:

15. In Kent, the Serious Economic Crime Unit (SECU) within the Serious Crime Directorate is made up of several teams that work together to tackle and prevent fraud:

- Fraud Triage Team (FTT) - review and conduct initial investigations of all NFIB fraud referrals into the Force to assess if there are viable lines of enquiry prior to allocating to the relevant team/department.
- Financial Intelligence Team (FIT) - support the Force in relation to financial enquiries and financial intelligence for investigations.
- Economic Crime Team (ECT) - manage NFIB referrals that have been reviewed by the FTT and have clear lines of enquiry which will either lead to safeguarding of victims, recovery of losses or prosecution of suspects.
- Serious Fraud Team (SFT) - investigate complicated high value frauds with multiple victims or cases which are sensitive in nature involving bribery or politics.
- Proceeds of Crime Team (POCT) - manage asset recovery through different methods such as POCA, confiscation orders, account freezing orders and financial Investigative orders. They also deal with cash seizures made under POCA and provide advice relating to any type of asset or cash seizure.
- Cyber Crime Unit - manage cyber dependant crime and provide assistance with all cyber enabled crime, including those connected to crypto currencies.

16. Nationally, the CoLP own the fraud portfolio. Crimes reported through Action Fraud are owned by the CoLP and allocated to forces for investigation. Therefore, crimes where the offender lives in Kent are investigated by the Force on behalf of the CoLP.

17. As the lead force for fraud and cyber crime, the CoLP also run intensification periods during which forces are required to target specific offence types, increasing pursue and prevent activities and prioritising the arrest of offenders where identified.

18. The Eastern Region Special Operations Unit (ERSOU) also works with regional forces to ensure a united approach to tackling fraud. A regional action plan is managed by ERSOU but requires forces to coordinate their activities to ensure a consistent regional approach.

Volumes and types of fraud:

19. Nationally, Action Fraud recorded a 15% increase in reported fraud in 2021/22. However, Kent saw a decrease of 8% from 12,509 reports in 2020/21 to 11,468 in 2021/22 and a further 20% decrease to 9,164 in 2022/23, bucking the national trend.

20. Approximately 5% of reported cases are disseminated to Kent by the NFIB, and following an initial investigation by the FTT, approximately 20% are assessed as viable investigations and allocated to the ECT or SFT to pursue.

21. Of the 11,468 frauds recorded by Action Fraud in 2021/22, the NFIB disseminated 533 to Kent for further investigation – a 27% decrease on the previous year.
22. Increasingly though, fraud is being reported directly to Kent Police as a C4S. In 2020/21, 791 C4S were recorded but in 2021/22 this increased by 27% to 1,094.
23. The effect of Covid on fraud has remained. Changes in reporting levels and losses continued to be experienced nationally across several fraud types in the first half of 2021/22. As the year progressed, many fraud types saw decreases; however, some offences remained higher than pre-pandemic, such as dating fraud and investment fraud. Concerned by the rising cost of living, it is highly likely that the number of investment fraud victims will continue to grow, lured by suspects spurious promises on potential returns.
24. The most prevalent crime types in Kent replicate those nationally:
- Investment fraud
 - Dating fraud
 - Mandate fraud
 - Courier fraud
 - Cheque, Plastic Card & Online Bank Account fraud
25. In terms of victim typology, generally:
- those aged 20-29 years are most at risk of online shopping and auction fraud, rental fraud, ticket fraud, and other investment and lender loan frauds;
 - those aged 40-59 are most at risk of corporate employee fraud, dating fraud and consumer phone fraud;
 - those aged 60 and over are most at risk of door-to-door sales and bogus tradesmen, computer software service fraud, fraud by abuse of position of trust and fraud recovery scams.
26. Nationally, there has been an increase in investment-based fraud of 18%; this increase was replicated in Kent which experienced a 23% increase in 2021/22 from 2020/21.
27. The SFT is currently investigating more than £85 million of losses linked to investment-based fraud and other similar crimes. They have two significant cases with CPS awaiting charging decisions and have a third large scale investment fraud which already has more than 200 reported victims. This is a significant investigation spanning across numerous businesses that will potentially require the employment of financial experts and impact on resources.
28. The SFT work closely with insolvency practitioners and the POCT to support the restraint and return of funds where possible. Victims in these cases often suffer significant losses and have made lifestyle choices based not only money parted with, but expected returns, and clearly offences can have devastating consequences.
29. Nationally, courier fraud remains a high harm fraud with vulnerable older victims being targeted for large sums of money and valuable goods. The Force continues to work closely with the Regional Proactive ECTs and also takes part in national initiatives. This crime type is predominately facilitated through organised crime groups (OCGs) outside of the county and the Force therefore has a clear focus on protect campaigns to raise awareness and reduce and recover losses whilst supporting the intelligence picture.
30. The Force has also created a nationally recognised trigger response to courier fraud. If three or more similar crimes are reported within a geographical area, notifications are sent to users via ‘My Community Voice’ and through UK Finance to make local banks aware and vigilant to potentially vulnerable people in the area seeking to withdraw suspicious levels of cash from their accounts. Since April 2022 it has been triggered 12 times in Kent, and the following figures for February to December 2022 provides a snapshot of the impact:

No. of reports	Victims reporting a loss	Offences prevented	Protect success rate
303	47	256	85%

These figures reflect the success/efforts of not just Kent Police’s messaging but also the banks via the Banking Protocol and other partner agencies.

31. The Force continues to pursue justice for victims and strives to improve judicial outcomes. Although judicial outcomes are often lower than other crime types, it is important to understand that unlike other crimes, the focus is often on disruption and recovery of losses. Recording of fraud is also different to other crime types. There will often be numerous victims subject to the same type of fraud by the same suspect(s) but on different occasions recorded on one report. An example being an investment fraud involving over 2,000 investors with 500+ reporting to Kent as victims. This would be recorded as one investigation with one positive outcome overall.
32. At present the NFIB only record judicial outcomes for NFIB referrals, but alternative outcomes such as Cease and Desist Notices are currently under consideration.
33. Fraud is often perpetrated by OCGs. The SECU is currently managing five OCGs and in 2021/22 recorded 31 disruptions. As a result, it has obtained two Criminal Behaviour Orders which the department now manages.
34. Examples of notable convictions and pleas include:
- An operation involving courier type fraud offending where the suspects stole £120,000 during a conspiracy which saw 47 elderly victims targeted. Pensioners were targeted in Gravesend, Dartford, West Kingsdown, Maidstone and Penshurst within Kent but also in Essex, Hertfordshire, Hampshire, south London and Northamptonshire. Although the criminality spanned a large area, the modus operandi remained very consistent – a victim would be phoned by a person claiming to be from their bank and told that a courier was coming to collect their card due to an issue. Once the cards had been collected, they were used to withdraw large sums of money or purchase goods at shops close to the victims' homes. On occasions the card would also be used at businesses and cash machines close to the offenders' homes.
Result:
 - Offender 1 was sentenced to five years, which included around 100 identical offences committed across the country. He is estimated to have gained £62,696.
 - Offender 2 was sentenced to three years and two months. He is estimated to have gained £43,180.
 - Offender 3 received a 20-week suspended sentence. He is estimated to have gained £18,166.
 - UK Power Networks (UKPN) reported offences to Kent Police in early 2019 alleged to have been committed by the manager of their distribution centre in Maidstone. The offences suspected were the theft of a large amount of cable belonging to UKPN and the manipulation of records to cover up the theft. A full audit completed on behalf of UKPN showed the potential losses to be more than £1.2 million. Suspected offences investigated were theft and false accounting.
Result: The offender pleaded guilty and is awaiting sentencing.
 - An investigation was launched relating to an individual falsely purporting to be a qualified solicitor. They represented multiple individuals in Kent, Norfolk and Metropolitan Police areas, claiming to be a fully qualified solicitor both in police custody and to the courts. The offender provided some very concerning advice, with a statement from one individual detailing how he was advised to put laces around his neck, so the individual could push the panic button to assist with his release. They set up a business in Kent and attended Magistrates' and Family courts. The offender left the area and changed their name; however, they were located by officers living in Norfolk at the beginning of 2020.
Result: The offender was found guilty and is awaiting sentencing.

Safeguarding victims:

35. The National Economic Crime Victim Care Unit (NECVCU) is a team of specialist advocates working within the CoLP that supports vulnerable people who have fallen victim to fraud and cyber crime, with the aim being to make them feel safer and reduce the possibility of them becoming a repeat victim.
36. The NECVCU assesses each reported fraud and offers a three-tiered response. Every force receives Tier 3, but forces assesses the service level they wish to sign up to in terms of Tier 1 or 2:
- Tier 3 – extremely vulnerable; victims are referred immediately to the appropriate force for bespoke contact. In Kent, contact is made directly with the FCR for patrol attendance. The NECVCU operator remains on the line with the victim until the FCR takes ownership. The SECU also receives a notification so they can follow up on relevant safeguarding.
 - Tier 2 – vulnerable; victims are contacted by telephone by the NECVCU team.
 - Tier 1 – non-vulnerable; victims are sent a letter by the NECVCU team.

37. Kent also receives a weekly victim data list from the NFIB; upon receipt, a Victim Care letter is sent to all those who have provided an email address.
38. Under Operation Signature - a national initiative aimed at reducing fraud within communities and providing additional support to vulnerable victims of fraud - the NFIB data is also separated into the three Kent Divisions and sent to the Divisional Fraud Prevention Co-ordinators. The Co-ordinators review every report and assess whether additional support is necessary. A telephone call or face to face visit is conducted and consideration is given as to whether further support (e.g. social services referral) or signposting is required.
39. By way of example, Fraud Prevention Co-ordinators engaged with a vulnerable victim of fraud who was scammed after receiving calls on their mobile telephone which led to them losing over £90k. Physical visits by the Co-ordinators identified vulnerabilities which had led to them becoming a victim. They worked with the victim so they could understand how the situation had developed. The Co-ordinators helped them understand that the "investment" they had made was a scam and that their bank account had been used to launder criminal money. Over several months, the Co-ordinators worked with the banking sector to reduce the victim's access to large sums of money and engaged with Health Services, Adult Services and the family. This multi-agency approach has ensured safeguards are now in place to protect the victim from further harm.
40. In Kent, there has been an overall reduction in losses from victims of fraud from approximately £60m in 2020/21 to approximately £40m in 2021/22.
41. Communication is critical in the prevention and reporting of fraud offences. The Prevent and Protect Team play an important proactive role in the Force's attempts to reduce the number of economic crime victims.
42. The Team sent out 401 advisory Tweets in 2022 which had 1.5 million views. Additionally, the Kent Fraud Alert System (KFAS) sent 114 alerts. Each of these reached an estimated audience of more than 150,000.
43. An example of the Team's work was the Christmas fraud campaign - 12 Frauds of Christmas - which had more than 46,000 reads across all Kent Police social media and reached an audience in excess of 250,000 per alert on KFAS, potentially achieving a total read of three million. In terms of results, there was a reduction in Action Fraud reports in December 2022 compared to the previous year of 18% (from 870 to 710) and a reduction in losses of 29% (from £2.7m to £1.9m).
44. The Team also develops contacts and intelligence sharing between the police and external agencies/charities/organisations, as well as providing bespoke presentations to a diverse range of victims, groups and businesses on how to protect against fraud. They support the Fraud Prevention Co-ordinators by delivering fraud protect messaging in direct response to issues identified.
45. The SECU supported the national fraud enforcement campaign known as Op Henhouse. During the last initiative which was for the month of February 2023, the Force increased arrests and disruptions of fraudsters, submitting over 44 investigations to CPS for charging authority, with 11 so far authorised. £200,000 was seized and over £100,000 of assets recovered. The Force also promoted awareness with a live broadcast on BBC South East News regarding romance frauds, three live public events promoting fraud prevention, 14 social media alerts and five email alerts reaching approximately 150,000 people.
46. Kent Police is committed to the prevention and recovery of losses through protect and prevent campaigns along with supporting the Banking Protocol. On average this prevents losses of approximately £100,000 per month. A recent example saw the SECU assist with the recovery of £18,000 for the victim of an online purchase fraud who bought a camper van via a cloned company website.
47. The Force also has a Cyber Prevent and Protect Officer; their role is to:
- Provide advice to businesses and the public on how to change their cyber behaviours.
 - Offer bespoke cyber protect advice and support for victims of cyber dependant crimes.
 - Deliver training and awareness packages for individuals and businesses.
 - Train police officers and staff so they have the knowledge and are equipped to share cyber crime prevention advice.
 - Work closely with partners, to help develop capabilities and enhance reach.
 - Promote National Programmes (i.e. Police Cyber Alarm, Cyber Digitools).
 - Support national campaigns via the @KentPoliceCyber Twitter pages.

Holding to account:

48. One of the principle ways the PCC holds the Chief Constable to account is through the quarterly Performance and Delivery Board.
49. Open to Panel Members and the public on a non-participating basis and also live streamed, the meeting is chaired by the PCC and papers are submitted by the Force in advance and published [here](#). The Chief Constable is required to attend the meeting in order to present and discuss the papers and answer questions about delivery of the [Making Kent Safer](#) Plan and policing generally in the county.
50. Most recently, the PCC received a comprehensive update on fraud at the Performance and Delivery Board held on 15 March.
51. The PCC also holds the Chief Constable to account via their regular weekly briefings which allow discussion of a wide variety of subjects.
52. Supplementing the above:
- the Association of PCCs (APCC) regularly circulates data primarily focused on matching disseminations from the NFIB to outcomes returned by each force to inform discussions with Chief Constables; and
 - on a quarterly basis the Chief Executive attends the Force Performance Management Committee where the Deputy Chief Constable rigorously challenges performance internally.
53. Whilst many forces have reduced or withdrawn their specialist fraud teams in favour of a regional response, the PCC believes Kent Police are in a good position in terms of dedicated skilled investigators, the SECU and its Prevent and Protect Team.
54. Unfortunately, the PCC believes the policing response across the UK in recent years, not because of the efforts of individual officers and staff, but in terms of process and management has been disappointing. It has let victims down by not being sufficiently joined up at a national and local level and the service being based on where the offender lives. As a result, there has been a postcode lottery based on the resources allocated by the local police force tasked with investigating it.
55. However, the Government published their Fraud Strategy in May which includes proposals to:
- replace Action Fraud;
 - reduce the number of scams reaching people by banning 'SIM farms' and cold calling for sales of financial products;
 - introduce a new 400 strong National Fraud Squad; and
 - increase cross-border work between UK intelligence and international partners to disrupt overseas fraud operations.
- Kent Police are part of the working group helping to steer delivery by the CoLP and heavily involved to ensure what is delivered provides a quality service to victims.
56. The PCC welcomes the Fraud Strategy and Kent Police's involvement in its delivery as it has prevention and enforcement at its heart. He also believes it will address the historic issues with Action Fraud and most importantly, improve outcomes for victims.

Recommendation:

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

To: Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel
Subject: Violence Against Women and Girls Inquiry - update
Date: 27 June 2023

Introduction:

1. Further to the most recent paper presented at the 6 December 2022 meeting, this report provides an update on the Police and Crime Commissioner's VAWG Inquiry.

Background:

2. On 10 December 2020, the Government launched a 10 week call for evidence on violence against women and girls (VAWG) to inform a new national strategy. Following the tragic murder of Sarah Everard, the national call for evidence was re-opened for a further two weeks.
3. Building on the 2016-2020 strategy, the Government's refreshed 'Tackling violence against women and girls' strategy was published on 21 July 2021 with specific policy commitments.
4. In the wake of Sarah Everard's murder and several other high-profile shocking events, as well as the Government's refresh of the national VAWG strategy, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) launched his own Inquiry on Wednesday 4 August 2021. The aim was to understand the extent to which such crimes are being committed and to work in partnership to understand what more could be done to prevent and tackle them.
5. The Inquiry was designed with partnership-working in mind and the PCC was determined to consult with victims, witnesses, support services and partnership agencies and authorities.
6. To oversee the Inquiry, a Steering group of stakeholders was set-up to provide direction, complete a Gap Analysis and set priorities. It included the Chief Constable, the Chief Executive of Maidstone Borough Council, a representative from Kent County Council, Medway Council and some of the Office of the PCC commissioned services.

Activity:

VAWG Survey

7. From 31 August to 19 November 2021, the PCC ran a 'Call for Evidence' survey to:
 - find out the extent of violence and abuse being perpetrated against women and girls in Kent, including online; and
 - understand how safe women and girls felt in different aspects of their lives.
8. In total, 8,263 responses were received, an unprecedented number for a survey launched by the PCC and evidence of the strength of public feeling. The survey was open to anyone over the age of 16 and just over 93% of responses were from women and 3.5% from men.
9. A [full report](#) on the findings from the survey can be found on the Office of the PCC website.

Big Data exercise

10. The PCC commissioned i3 Analytics to analyse Kent Police data to look at victim and offender profiles and trends.

11. The analysis objectives were to produce a detailed problem profile of VAWG. Furthermore, it was to identify insights regarding trends, extents and patterns of repeat offending and victimisation, geographic profiles, and nominal characteristics. Seasons and time of day were also analysed, potential drivers of crime, and what crime looked like in different districts across Kent.
12. As outlined in the previous paper, key conclusions included:
- 30-35 year olds being the leading offender group
 - Year of birth being a stronger determinant of violence than age, with 1989 being the peak birth year
 - 10% of offenders being responsible for 63% of harm
 - 1 in 8 victims being aged 25-30 in deprived areas
 - Increased temperatures sparked greater violence, especially among those aged 30-35 in deprived areas

Roundtables

13. The PCC hosted several Roundtable events with different stakeholders to understand how they were tackling VAWG. Discussions included how to improve provision for victims through commissioned services, and how to prevent misogyny through education.
14. The roundtables also included representation from the British Transport Police to gain a better understanding of how residents and visitors were being kept safe on the railways.

Victim Panel focus group

15. On 24 May 2022, the PCC hosted a Victim Panel focus group for those with lived experience of VAWG.
16. The focus group was a great success, with each victim speaking forcefully about their experiences. As outlined in the previous paper, common themes included:
- Lack of communication from authorities (including the police and the CPS)
 - Victims feeling the burden of proof fell on them
 - Victims feeling more traumatised by the criminal justice process, than the crime itself
 - A perception that the system favoured the suspect rather than the victim
 - Feeling like the CPS played ping pong with cases
 - A belief that the first interview was their 'one shot' to get it right and if testimonies/statements differed between statements it was seen as them lying or changing their story
17. Valuable feedback was provided to Kent Police and the wider criminal justice system (CJS) through the PCC's role as chair of the Kent Criminal Justice Board (KCJB).

Outcome:

18. On 26 July 2022, the PCC published his [Violence against women and girls Inquiry Report](#). The PCC would like to thank everyone who took the time to inform his Inquiry.
19. The report notes that over the course of the Inquiry, Kent Police and other agencies took action to address VAWG. As a result, some of the recommendations the Inquiry would have made were already being delivered, including:
- VAWG strategy - tackling offences against women and girls was always a prime concern for Kent Police with victims and witnesses being a top priority, and central to the Control Strategy. However, to enhance the service provided, a new strategy to tackle VAWG was implemented with the Force investing in over 900 officers to work in local areas specifically investigating VAWG related offences, such as domestic abuse and rape Investigation.
 - VAWG forum - Kent Police held engagement events across the county which reached over 1,000 women and girls, giving them an opportunity to have their say on local safety issues and crime. This led to the establishment of a VAWG Community Forum which meets regularly and is chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable for Local Policing. It also led to immediate changes and a review of local patrol deployment strategies where concerns were raised around public safety in particular areas, to enhance the visibility of patrols at key times and locations.
 - Officer verification checks - this process enables members of the public, if concerned about an officer's identity, to ask for a check to be made through the Force Control Room operator who will confirm the officer is on duty and respond via the officer's radio. Officers are encouraged to be proactive in offering checks, especially if they believe the individual feels uncomfortable asking.

- [StreetSafe](#) tool - as part of the Home Office's strategy to tackle VAWG it launched this online tool. It is available to anyone wishing to anonymously tell the police about public places where they have felt or feel unsafe because of environmental issues (e.g. street lighting, abandoned buildings or vandalism) and/or because of some behaviours (e.g. being followed or verbally abused).
- Kent Police Domestic Abuse Hub – operating seven days a week, the skilled workforce provides a prompt response to domestic abuse victims, utilising video technology (Rapid Video Response) and telephony to capture evidence first-hand, assess risk, safeguard victims and make referrals to a wide range of support services. Rapid Video Response has also attracted national interest and the National Police Chiefs' Council wants to work with Kent Police to promote the Domestic Abuse Hub as part of the response to VAWG.

20. For all the good work that the police, councils and other agencies and partners were doing, people wanted to see more. As a result, the report also made several recommendations which have been prioritised by the PCC; updates are provided below for information:

- Listening to women and girls
 - Further Victim Panel focus groups have not taken place as yet, but members were consulted when the PCC launched [Victim Voice](#) and gave very positive feedback.
 - Kent Police's VAWG [Walk and Talk events](#) continue and have been warmly received by partners and members of the public. They allow the Force to engage with women and girls across the county, to learn from their experience of living and socialising in areas identified through analysis (GRIP Hot spots and the StreetSafe tool). The Force is in the process of evaluating responses so it can provide feedback to communities about what action has been taken as a result (e.g. mirrors in underpasses, improved lighting).
 - The PCC has participated in Walk and Talk events and continues to receive feedback from the Force on a regular basis.
- Holding to account
 - In April 2022, the PCC published his Police and Crime Plan '[Making Kent Safer – April 2022 to March 2023](#)' which includes tackling VAWG as a priority for the Chief Constable. In February 2023, the Home Office also published the new [Strategic Policing Requirement](#) (SPR) which includes VAWG as a national threat. The PCC therefore continues to use his [Performance and Delivery Board](#) as a mechanism to hold Kent Police to account for delivery of their VAWG strategy, the Police and Crime Plan priority and the capacity/capability associated with the SPR.
 - In his capacity as chair of the KCJB, the PCC has made VAWG a standing Agenda item and recent meetings have focused on progress around reporting, charging, timeliness and outcomes for domestic abuse, rape and serious sexual offence cases. To date there has been limited discussion around a shared data set and terms of reference to enable agencies to be held to account.
 - In relation to the Serious Violence Duty, a partnership Board which the PCC will chair is being created and will include the Violence Reduction Unit and representation from youth justice, secure estate, probation and other partners. For the purposes of the Duty, violence includes domestic abuse, sexual offences, violence against property and threats of violence, and therefore the Board will ensure activity is joined up and enable the PCC to hold agencies to account.
- Victim satisfaction surveys
 - As part of the re-commissioning of the main victim referral and support service contract, a requirement was included to undertake independent victim satisfaction surveys into their experiences within the CJS and of relevant agencies. This will enable a clear understanding of victims' experiences to be identified and action to be taken.
 - Victim Support were successful in being awarded the tender and discussions are underway to develop the survey, including the use of technology to enable a wider number of individuals to share their views.
 - Commissioned services also report on client satisfaction with the service they have received, and the PCC is required to report annually on the reasons for victims withdrawing from the CJS or not reporting to the police. Responses to this indicate victims are fearful of not being believed or they are seen as the problem, they have concerns about lack of communication from the police and the length of the CJS process, as well as the impact on their mental health.

- Supporting men and boys
 - Please see Appendix A.

- Performance audit
 - Unfortunately, the Office of the PCC was unsuccessful in appointing an Analyst; as a result, the regular publication of an audit using publicly available information and data held by criminal justice agencies to show how well they are performing for victims of crime, and specifically VAWG has been delayed.
 - However, the PCC is currently considering using an analytics company to collate and interpret relevant datasets.

- Schools Intervention programme
 - Collaborate Digital has been commissioned to deliver universal, open to all, age-appropriate messages to children and young people with the aim of building social skills, aiding decision-making, supporting resilience, and changing behaviours. The aim is to support them in making better, informed choices regarding healthy relationships (attitudes, behaviours, and safety), online harms and cyber-safety and cyber-bullying. These messages are delivered to those aged 9 years to a maximum age of 14 years, within targeted educational and youth settings to help tackle VAWG.
 - Collaborate Digital deliver interactive, media workshops and assemblies with the emphasis on active learning and participation. They use video, creative thinking, myth-busting, discussion, and mind-mapping to explain and explore the facts about healthy relationships and online safety and offer sources of advice and support. Following the inputs, the facilitators, provide workshops with small groups of young people so they can create their own scripts, and produce their own podcasts, Tik Toks or YouTube videos, based on their new knowledge. During this part of the workshop the young people reflect on what they have heard and learned and actively demonstrate their understanding. The best podcasts and videos across all schools participating will be submitted to a public vote to identify the most popular.
 - Delivery commenced in the east of the county in January, with 33 schools able to receive the programme during 2023. Over 90 schools applied, demonstrating the high need for the intervention. 21 primary, 11 secondary and 1 specialist school (33 in total) have now received the programme and feedback has been exceptionally positive from both teachers and those young people involved.
 - The options to commence delivery in north and west Kent are currently being explored as demand is expected to be high in these areas.
 - To illustrate how successful the programme has been, the following feedback was received from the headteacher of a primary school:
 - 'I just wanted to say a huge thank you for this lovely opportunity that you brought to our children. I know that you have been dealing with my colleague, but I felt I just had to say thank you myself. We are so proud of our children and so grateful to people like yourself who make this kind of thing happen for them. The recordings are fabulous!*
 - It is such an important message and what a wonderful way to get it out there. Not only that but our children had an amazing day and learned lots whilst doing it!*
 - Thank you.'*
 - A youth survey has also been created and shared by the Office of the PCC to build on Collaborate Digital's work. The survey aimed to understand the experiences of young people online and feelings of safety around their neighbourhood, particularly journeys between home and school. It was distributed to all schools and colleges in Kent and to youth clubs, scout and guide groups etc. In total, 4,400 responses were received; the full survey report is due to be published on the Office of the PCC website imminently.

- Further commissioning
 - On 14 June, the Office of the PCC hosted a Commissioned Services event which Members were invited to join virtually. It was designed to promote and improve understanding of the variety of commissioned services located across the county, many of which focus on domestic abuse and sexual violence, as well as increase referrals to them. Over 150 representatives from Kent Police, commissioned services and partner agencies participated and a booklet providing the details of all commissioned services was also given out

- The Office of the PCC Communications Team have developed a specific page on the Kent Police intranet (inSite) which is designed to be a 'one-stop-shop' to help officers and staff find the most suitable service for a victim.
- Please also see Appendix A.
- Victim Champion training
 - Through an information sharing programme called [Victim Voice](#), the PCC has started to raise awareness of the Victims' Code and key opportunities to challenge criminal justice agencies.
 - A [Victim Voice pamphlet](#) has been produced and it has been widely distributed across the county; the online version has been downloaded and the QR code scanned over 600 times. Presentations have been given to promote Victim Voice at the KALC AGM, the Commissioned Services event, and at Parish Council, Rotary Club and WI meetings. There is a short training video and Podcast available. Over 25,000 business cards are being distributed by the Office of the PCC and Kent Police with a Victim Voice advert and a link to My Community Voice.
- StreetSafe tool outcomes
 - A number of Safer Street funding bids (see Appendix A) have utilised data from the [StreetSafe](#) tool to assist in the identification of areas that would benefit the most.

Next steps:

21. The PCC intends for the report to be a living document; a platform to work from to improve women and girls' physical safety and feelings of safety. The Association of PCCs have also built an action plan to hold organisations to account and this will be factored into the PCC's work to keep track of performance against different areas of business.
22. Whilst tackling VAWG has always been a priority for the Force, the PCC is reassured that progress continues to be made and opportunities seized to prevent offending and improve the service to victims. By way of example, this has included:
 - the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Hub;
 - securing support to include VAWG as a priority across the key partnership boards;
 - leading the field nationally with a review of the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC);
 - working collaboratively with the University of Kent to improve the response to stalking; and
 - securing funding (in collaboration with Essex) for a risk identification pilot that it is hoped will provide proactive intervention points to reduce the risk of domestic abuse.
23. Importantly though, VAWG is a priority in the PCC's [Making Kent Safer](#) Plan and included in the SPR, therefore the Chief Constable will be required to continue providing regular updates on Force activity and outcomes at the quarterly Performance and Delivery Board.
24. Open to Panel Members and the public on a non-participating basis and also live streamed, the Performance and Delivery Board is chaired by the PCC and papers are submitted by the Force in advance and published [here](#).
25. The PCC acknowledges that VAWG is one of the challenges of our time and that as a society, there is a need to come together to address it. He wants to ensure offenders are brought to justice and improve the journey for victims and survivors. That is why the PCC will continue to monitor and evaluate how Kent Police and the Office of the PCC are working towards tackling VAWG in all its guises.
26. In Kent there is already good work going on, from Kent Police to that provided by partners and commissioned services, but the PCC recognises that there is a continued need to pull together to make a difference and make things better.

Recommendation:

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

Introduction

PCCs can commission or grant fund services to support the delivery of their Police and Crime Plan priorities.

As one of the PCC's key priorities, several services have been commissioned or grant funded with the aim of ensuring appropriate support and interventions are available to those impacted by VAWG.

The following is a summary of those services; it is not an exhaustive list but highlights key activities that align to the PCC's VAWG Inquiry.

Additional Funding Secured

The Ministry of Justice (MOJ) recognised the greater demand for victim support services and the positive impact being made through PCC commissioning approaches. As a result, they extended the additional funding received during 2021/22 until 2024/25 to ensure that victims could continue to access effective support.

The additional funding awarded for 2023/24 is:

Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) and Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) Funding (£861,926) aimed at increasing the number of ISVAs and IDVAs available in Kent. This funding has increased the number by 18.5 FTE, including Child and Young Person (CYP) IDVA's across 10 services.

Domestic Abuse (DA) and Sexual Violence (SV) Ringfence Funding (£936,104) aims to increase the availability and capacity of DA and SV support services in Kent. This funding has enabled additional posts to be recruited such as a specialist IDVA for the 16-25 age group and an IDVA to support older victims of DA, alongside additional Outreach Workers, a free legal advice service, stalking advocates, therapy, and counselling.

Support Services for Men and Boys

Through the additional funding awards, the PCC has allocated funding to specialist support services for men and boys who have been or are victims of DA or SV. These services include:

Dads Unlimited have been commissioned to provide the only dedicated male IDVA Service in Kent, DA Victim Empowerment (DAVE). This service provides confidential advice, support and advocacy across Kent and Medway. They are also piloting a male victim recovery programme called Discovery. 718 males were supported by Dads Unlimited during 2022/23 because of this funding.

Health Action started in 2006 to support African males who were victims of domestic abuse; whilst originally aimed at the BAME community, all male victims of DA are now supported. 53 males were supported in 2022/23 because of this funding.

East Kent Rape Crisis Centre (EKRCC) and Family Matters have been funded £31,504 for 2023/24 to continue providing a collaborative approach to men and boys impacted by rape and SV across Kent. Detailed research into the barriers to men accessing support has also been conducted, with the findings used to inform service delivery. 56 males were supported in 2022/23 because of this funding.

Perpetrator Interventions

The PCC has been successful in securing approximately £1.6 million in additional funding from the Home Office to extend and enhance the delivery of domestic abuse and stalking perpetrator interventions in Kent. This funding commenced on 1 April 2023 and runs to 31 March 2025.

Delivery will entail intensive multi-agency case management through a team consisting of Kent Police, the perpetrator interventions provider (Interventions Alliance), and victim services (Lookahead and Victim Support). The team will provide

- Early response that delivers targeted motivational, denial and minimisation work to increase the motivation to engage with programmes.
- Two 1:1 Behaviour Change interventions - Healthy Relationships (HR) for domestic abuse perpetrators and Compulsive Obsessive Behaviour Interventions (COBI) for stalking perpetrators.
- Through a Victim Link Worker (Qualified IDVA) and a Step-Down Worker, Victim Support will manage support needs after the perpetrator intervention has concluded.

Crime Reduction Grant – Community Safety Partnerships

Each year a portion of the PCC's commissioning budget is allocated to Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) via the Crime Reduction Grant. £558,385 was given to support delivery of the Police and Crime Plan priorities.

To support the PCC's priority, CSPs were asked to consider VAWG projects as one of the priority areas for the 2023/24 grant funding. Whilst the approval process for 2023/24 CSP project spend is progressing, it is estimated at this point that £110,413 of the overall grant to CSPs will be spent on VAWG related activities, with £51,524 planned for a Safer Streets approach to crime prevention.

Examples of the projects identified to date include,

- Thanet (£7,500) - continuing support for a self defence programme for women, support the Ask Angela / Andrew scheme and drink spiking awareness campaign.
- Canterbury (£5,000) - to extend the Best Bar None accreditation programme which promotes good practice in licensed premises.
- Maidstone (£8,000) - to support the Urban Blue Bus that provides vulnerable people in the night-time economy with a safe haven, first aid and also provides educational talks to young people about keeping safe.
- Medway (£5,500) - working in partnership to continue the successful Night Safety Sessions implemented through the Safer Streets 3 funding round.

Safer Streets Funding

Safer Streets is a Home Office initiative aimed at supporting crime prevention and reduction in targeted areas. The PCC was successful in being awarded funding from the previous three Safer Streets funding rounds.

The latest round, Safer Streets 4, focused on preventing VAWG in public places and improving perceptions and feelings of safety regarding VAWG, anti-social behaviour or neighbourhood crime, such as burglary, robbery and theft. Once again, the PCC was successful in the four bids submitted and secured £1.4 million.

The projects are in the last four months of delivery and have been successful in delivering a range of activities in the identified bid areas of Canterbury, Gravesham, Maidstone, and Medway including:

- Installation of CCTV and additional / improved street lighting
- Recruitment of additional Street Pastors and Urban Blue volunteers to provide suitable guardians in the night-time economy
- Provision of Safe Spaces
- Delivery of Active Bystander Training
- Partnership community events to support signposting and distribution of personal security equipment
- Delivery of Youth Outreach Workers
- Extending the 'Best Bar None' Scheme
- Education and awareness raising VAWG campaigns

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Police and Crime Panel - Future work programme – June 2023**17 October 2023**

Complaints against the Commissioner – Annual Report 2022/23	Statutory Requirement	Panel Officers
Contacting Kent Police (101/999)	Requested by the Panel/Offered by the Commissioner	PCC
PCC's Annual Report	Statutory Requirement	PCC

Standard item at each meeting

Questions to the Commissioner

Items to note at each meeting

Commissioner's decisions

Performance and Delivery Board minutes (if available)

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Meeting Notes

Title:	Performance and Delivery Board
Date & time:	Wednesday 15 March 2023
Venue:	Kent Police Headquarters, North Kent (also broadcast via Microsoft Teams Live)
Attendees:	<p>Office of the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matthew Scott - Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Rob Phillips - Chief Finance Officer (CFO) <p>Kent Police:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tim Smith - Chief Constable (CC) Peter Ayling - Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) Ian Drysdale - Deputy Chief Officer (DCO)
Apologies	Adrian Harper – PCC's Chief Executive

1. Welcome & Introduction

- The PCC welcomed the CC, DCC and DCO; he thanked them for the papers and advised they were publicly available.
- Noting it was the first meeting in their new roles, the PCC congratulated both the CC and DCC on their appointments.
- Mr Harper's apologies were noted.

2. Notes of Previous Meeting – 30 November 2022

- The notes were agreed as a true and accurate record and there were no matters outstanding.

3. Making Kent Safer Plan: Delivery & Performance

- As his first meeting in the substantive role, the CC confirmed a commitment from himself and the chief officer team to the Safer in Kent Plan and priorities within it.

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

- With regards to My Community Voice, the CC advised the number of subscribers continued to increase. He stated the Force aspired for it to be the main tool but needed to maintain momentum so engagement did not plateau.
- November 2022 to January 2023, the CC reported nearly 3,000 less victim based crimes. He also noted an increase in solved outcomes and the charge rate which he said was a pattern across several crime categories. As to why, he advised it was something about the policing model, the increase in police numbers and the reduction in offences, some of which was the result of police activity. Overall, he said it was a positive picture around crime in the county.
- November 2022 to January 2023, the CC reported ASB decreased by 13% (764 incidents). Despite the reduction, he advised there was an increase in motor vehicle nuisance on roads, adding it mainly involved vehicles being used in an anti-social manner at 'car meets' in places like retail parks. He said it was a phenomenon linked to a few locations and the Force was doing lots of work to understand it and target it.
- Referring to previous queries about whether the reduction in ASB was due to 101 call handling challenges, he stated the Force was now confident there was no direct correlation. He advised the reduction had continued even though 101 performance had improved significantly from roughly 40% attrition in November 2022 to 15% in January 2023.
- The CC noted Best Bar None was supported by the Home Office and very much focused on safety in the night-time economy, particularly violence and sexual offences against women and girls. He said 60 premises had been assessed and reached the required standard of accreditation, with more assessments planned for 2023.
- November 2022 to January 2023, the CC reported burglary business and residential decreased by 8.7% (41 offences) and 11.5% (143 offences) respectively. He stated charges had also continued to increase.
- November 2022 to January 2023, the CC reported violent crime fell by 11.1% (2,427 offences). While there was a slight decrease in suspect interview rate, he said the charge rate had increased from 5.4% in 2021 to 7.4% in 2022.
- November 2022 to January 2023, the CC reported robbery decreased by 13.7% (43 offences), and the charge rate increased from 8.0% to 13.7%.

- The CC said he was pleased to see a robust response from the Crime Squad. With regards to the table showing rolling year totals, he advised it was not produced for every team but was helpful to show the activity generated and outcomes because they were intrinsically linked to the key crime categories of burglary residential and robbery.
- In relation to motor vehicle nuisance, the PCC advised he had received positive feedback from Dartford and Medway with regards the use of Dispersal Orders. Noting it did not just involve cars but also motorbikes, he asked about the proportion of incidents that resulted in police action and the actions taken. In terms of initial response, the CC reported around 31% were attended as immediate or high incidents – for example, where vehicles were driven dangerously and likely to cause injury. The remainder were sent to the Community Safety Units to review – for example, to engage with local businesses to determine what action could be undertaken to reduce occurrences, and from a police perspective to consider enforcement activity. The DCC commented the Force could achieve greater consistency across the Districts in terms of prevention and post event action. He also advised Safer Spring would focus on use of vehicles for anti-social purposes and he was keen to collaborate with Local Authorities to exploit all tactics.
- Noting the good results around residential burglary, the PCC requested an update on the level of attendance. Advising it was a crime type where attendance was vital in terms of victim care but also potential forensic evidence, the CC reported the proportion attended in January 2023 was over 99% and February 97%. In terms of those not attended, he said they were usually where the record had been incorrectly marked up or there was a good reason – for example, where officers were unable to gain access to the property.
- The PCC asked the CC to comment on how the Force provided victims and witnesses with feedback on things like investigations and charges, and also where people were affected by crime and ASB, but not directly involved. Highlighting the Force needed to comply with the Victims Code, the CC said it could not always give detailed information to the wider public and intended to use My Community Voice for positive messaging and to promote what it was doing. He said the Force needed to get better at promoting positive messages to improve public confidence, adding he was reassured the amount of information put out on Twitter was positive.

Tackle violence against women and girls

- In relation to Op Soteria, the CC reported the national team had visited and helped with completion of a self-assessment. He said the Force was now working on the changes needed but they cut across several partners involved in the response to rape, including the CPS.
- With regards to the VAWG Walk and Talk events, the CC advised feedback had been overwhelmingly positive for what was a simple and straightforward idea. Noting the Force intended to continue them, he said the 'so-what' coming from them was important as he was interested in how the Force could make areas safer for women and girls.
- He stated the Community Safety Partnership was strong and that choosing VAWG as the theme for their next conference was a significant step in mainstreaming it into the wider partnership.
- The CC highlighted the support of Dr Jan Storey in helping the Force to understand the psychology behind stalking behaviour. He said he hoped it would provide greater insight on how best to intervene and stop it earlier, enable officers to obtain and issue more Prevention Orders, and ultimately arrest more offenders and protect more victims.
- November 2022 to January 2023, the CC reported a decrease in rape offences of 10.8% (67 offences). He said there continued to be a strong response by the Force, adding the charge rate also continued to increase.
- Noting a similar decreasing trend in sexual offences and increase in charge rate, the CC stated that both rape and sexual offences were key priorities for the Force because the harm and impact on victims was so great.
- Congratulating the Force on receiving a letter from the Home Office advising it was achieving more Stalking Protection Orders per head of population than any other police force, the PCC asked about the length of time to secure Orders. The CC advised it largely depended on whether the Order was contested or not: on average first hearings were held within about three weeks and so it could be issued then, but if contested could be delayed by two to three months. However he said the focus of the Multi Agency Stalking Intervention Programme (MASIP), which the Force was a key part of, was to track and monitor applications and manage any risks presented by an individual. Whilst acknowledging the Force had been successful, he said it would not be complacent and wished to increase the number further.
- The PCC queried whether the Safer Streets App referenced in the paper was the same as the Home Office's Street Safe Tool. The DCC confirmed it was.

Protect people from exploitation and abuse

- November 2022 to January 2023, the CC reported a decrease in domestic abuse (DA) of 14.1% (1,311 offences) and increase in charge rate from 5.6% to 7.3%.
- With regards to stalking & harassment and coercive & controlling behaviour, the CC advised the way the Force used the risk assessment tool (DARA) had resulted in offences being recorded that should not have been; as a result there had been some adjustment in the figures.
- The CC commented DA was the one category where he would not automatically say a reduction was a good thing. He said whilst he would like less DA and harm, he never wanted to stop a victim coming forward.
- In relation to the Proactive DA Teams within VIT, the CC said work around those who caused the most harm was a success, but the Force needed to look at how it dovetailed into other areas because lots of the tactics were similar.
- The CC reported positive feedback from victims on the DA Hub and the support offered through Rapid Video Response (RVR). He said he was looking at how RVR could be maximised and potentially rolled out to other crime types, adding the Force had secured funding to do so along with partner forces in the region.

- The CC noted the Prevent and Protect Team's conference which he said was a good opportunity to share awareness and upskill other agencies and partners on the signs to look out for. He also offered to give the PCC a more detailed and bespoke presentation on their work.
- He said there had been a positive investment into the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Team which meant there was a very bespoke focus on it as a crime type.
- Noting some of the reduction in DA was due to a change in recording practices, the PCC asked if there was any understanding as to why the decrease was so large. The CC explained stalking & harassment was down about 15% and coercive & controlling behaviour about 40%, predominantly because of more accurate crime recording. He said the effect would impact the figures for some time but was being factored into the data to ensure the Force was not missing any other DA trends.
- Following a query from the PCC, the CC advised that at times for the right reasons, officers were making crime recording decisions based on risk assessment questions that actually had no veracity. He said the police response was still there: if a victim needed to be safeguarded, other offences were disclosed that needed to be recorded, or someone needed to be arrested, they were. However the change was important because by not addressing it, supervising staff would continue to receive essentially administrative reports, when they could focus on other cases.

Combat organised crime and county lines

- The CC advised staff in the Organised Crime Group Management Unit were extremely skilled and knowledgeable around the mapping and scoring process. He said it was important because it made sure OCGs in Kent were comparable to other forces and the Force received the right resources when working with regional partners.
- To underscore the level of harm caused by county lines, the CC reported that only that week a young man in Gillingham stabbed another and the motivation was drugs supply. He added it was high harm and the Force's decision to invest in specific teams recognised the devastating impact.
- The PCC commented that the sustained effort was really delivering results and asked that his thanks be passed to staff in relevant teams.
- The CC reported continued growth in fraud, not just in Kent but nationally and internationally, advising it now accounted for circa 40% of all crime in England and Wales. He said it was a constant battle to combat the ever changing tactics used to defraud people, but added the Force was in a strong position with the SCD.
- In terms of the National Policing Measures, the CC made the following comments:
 - Reducing murder and homicide offences – increase of seven against the previous 12 month period. The Force had the advantage of ACC Simon Wilson who led the national work on Homicide Prevention and would continue to monitor closely, with a focus on what more could do with partners to drive homicide rates down.
 - Reducing serious violence – the Force lacked accurate data from some partners, which whilst not a criticism, reflected the challenge of providing data for police purposes. The VRU was working hard to address the data issues, particularly from A&E and Trusts so resources were focused in the right place. He offered to give the PCC a specific briefing on combatting serious violence and the VRU.
 - Disrupting drugs supply and county lines – monitored closely by the DCC through the Force Performance Framework but was an indication of how proactive and robust the Force response around it was. The figures were good because it showed the Force was uncovering the criminality and intervening.
 - Reducing neighbourhood crime – the Force had struggled with the change in definition to residential burglary and ensuring the appropriate response where a house was burgled versus that needed where for example, tools were stolen from a shed. The Crime Squad continued to focus on robbery and burglary residential and the Neighbourhood Policing Review had the Beating Crime Plan and PCC's Safer in Kent Plan at its heart.
 - Improving victim satisfaction, with particular focus on DA victims – the Force continued to survey victims of DA, hate crime and rape, and performance remained strong. Following the PEEL inspection AFI around assessing public satisfaction, the intention was to widen the surveys significantly.
- With regards to cybercrime, the CC advised it was an area being worked on with regional colleagues in terms of the national response and the Force's part in it. Whilst his focus would always be on the public of Kent and reducing crime in the county, he said cybercrime was global and often impacted Kent residents.
- Noting the national intensification period around fraud in February, the PCC asked for an update on Force activity. The CC reported there were 12 arrests; 3 voluntary interviews; 9 warrants executed; cease and desist notices issued; 30 offences submitted to CPS; 11 charges for fraud offences; and over £200k seized.
- Noting the Force was reliant on information provided via Action Fraud and not every case was passed to forces, the PCC asked how much was triaged out. The CC advised that part of the challenge for UK Policing was that fraud was global and national coordination around it difficult. He reported only around 5-6% was directly allocated to the Force, adding that other agencies also undertook investigations in the county.

Be visible and responsive to the needs of communities

- The CC advised the Schools Team were focused on a system of triaging school based incidents and working with the VRU to roll out the Knife Pledge which was aimed at teaching children why they should not carry knives.
- Highlighting the close working relationship with schools, the CC said the Force was very alive to concerns around Schools Officers and movement of staff into the Force Control Room. He stated the commitment to Schools Officers and working with schools remained and was written large in the Neighbourhood Policing Review.
- With regards to mental health, the CC said it continued to be a positive story with the Force's commitment to helping those in crisis being unwavering, but importantly less and less incidents where it was the primary and main responder.

- The CC highlighted the improved 101 performance, noting that whilst it was difficult, the Force was in transition and doing lots of work to get to a position where there was resilience in the Force Control Room (FCR). He said the Force would get there with a combination of technology and the right number of people with the right skills, adding that police officers were currently working in the FCR and he had agreed to an extension of six months to November. He stated the Force would look carefully at where the 35 posts were taken from to spread the impact across the organisation, but advised it was normal to move resources around. He said he was confident performance had been stabilised, but his anxiety was around traditional peaks in demand. He added the response to 999 calls remained good but there was lots to delve into as the change programme continued. He said the challenge was around digital contact as the Force was not seeing huge seismic changes in terms of public engagement through them.
- Highlighting the extremely dedicated and hard working staff within the FCR, the CC advised he was seeing a member of staff that afternoon as part the Quality Service Awards. He said she was 10 days out of training and did a fantastic job speaking to a victim of a violent attack on the phone for 30 minutes who was in absolute crisis. As CC, he said his job was to ensure the FCR had the right resources so the service to the public was as good as it could be.
- Echoing the CC's tribute to the member of staff, but also acknowledging the wider FCR team, the PCC said they were working hard in challenging circumstances and doing their absolute best to provide a first class service. He also thanked the CC, his leadership team and other officers/staff for how they had responded to the challenge of improving the responsiveness of the FCR and said the results were clear to see in the data.
- The PCC asked for an update on the implementation of the Neighbourhood Policing Review. The DCC advised the 60 day business case consultation ended on Sunday 22 January and the Force had gone through the selection process for posts, with 88% of staff getting one of their top three choices and 61% their first preference. Noting the forthcoming milestones were 6 June when the Notice Period ended and the move to the new structure on 7 June, he said the next stage was focused on the transition period. He explained that for a period, although it was not known how long but assumed between 3-6 months, the Force would adopt an interim model with an optimum number of officers and a focus on the new Beat Officer function. He said whilst there were challenges around ensuring the interim model was right and did not impact on wider service delivery, he had a high level of confidence the transition would take place on 7 June, with the final model in place and up to its required staffing level towards the end of 2023.
- With regards to mental health and the reduction in section 136 detentions, the PCC commented on the excellent work in partnership with the NHS to ensure those in crisis received the right care. Noting Kent had received funding for a centralised Section 136 suite in Maidstone, he asked if it would impact on police resources or the response. The CC advised that whilst officers travelling halfway across the county was not ideal, if the proposed facility was staffed appropriately, it should reduce the occasions where two officers were spending almost their entire shift at A&E with an individual because there were no alternative places of safety. Noting there were plans for crisis houses to be introduced in 2024, he said he also wanted his staff to be able to use them to reduce travel time. Advising the continuing work to reduce the Force's response to crisis was probably more important, he said instinctively it seemed a good thing as it was not right for those in crisis to be sat in A&E for hours with two police officers.

Prevent road danger and support Vision Zero

- The CC said there was a strong Force commitment to Vision Zero and a particular focus on the four areas that had the biggest impact – speeding, substance misuse, seatbelt offences and mobile phone use.
- November 2022 to January 2023, the CC reported a reduction in road deaths of 8% (1 less fatality).
- Highlighting the Road Safety Unit's third operation of the year, the CC said it was impressive and a good example of multi-agency working.
- The CC highlighted the impressive number of hours recorded by the Special Constabulary Roads Policing Unit, which he said was a superb supplement and supported the road traffic teams out and about, day in and out.
- Noting the Force had previously committed to creating a permanent PC post to support Community Speedwatch, the PCC asked if that was still the intention as part of the Neighbourhood Policing Review. The CC confirmed it was, advising he was content the individual was needed and so there was a commitment to at least the next year.

Protect young people and provide opportunities

- Highlighting the voice of the child, the CC advised the Force was trying to get itself to the position where every single member of staff had a good understanding, and therefore the response was correct.
- He said the Force was engaged with the Office of the PCC around youth prevention commissioned services, adding that its response to child protection was very robust.
- With regards to use of powers and the letter from the Children's Commissioner requesting data on the number of children strip searched, the CC advised the Force had reviewed each occasion a search of a child had taken place where there was a need to expose intimate parts. Based on that work, he stated he was happy the Force was complying with the rules and professional practice. He said whilst it would be inappropriate to include the number of occasions in a public document, it was very low, adding he was comfortable the power was being used appropriately.
- In terms of stop and search, the CC advised it was constantly monitored with support from the Independent Advisor Group (IAG). He noted the changes from the new IAG chair were positive, adding the increased independent scrutiny around the use of powers was welcome.
- Referring to the Cadets, the CC said the Force had covered about every age range for children with different programmes. He acknowledged and thanked the PCC for his support, noting Cadets were seen at almost every major policing event in the county. The PCC acknowledged the excellent progress and congratulated those involved.

Actions

- **Force: Provide a detailed and bespoke presentation on the work of the Prevent & Protect Team.**
- **Force: Provide a specific briefing around combatting serious violence and the work of the VRU.**

4. Inspections, Audits & Reviews

- The DCC advised the Force was entering a busy inspection and audit period, particularly with the next round of PEEL.
- HMICFRS Publication - Inspection of Vetting, Misconduct and Misogyny in the Police Service: Kent was one of eight forces inspected. The DCC advised HMICFRS made 43 recommendations with 28 for Chief Constables, as well as five areas for improvement (AFIs). He reported the Force had already discharged 21 with full evidence and the remaining 12 would be met within the required timeframe.
- HMICFRS Publication - A report into the effectiveness of vetting and counter-corruption arrangements in Kent Police: the DCC stated whilst disappointed to be graded 'Adequate', the Force accepted the AFIs and both had progressed:
 - 1) officers being in designated posts without enhanced vetting – the DCC said due to pressure on the team it was regular practice for individual's to be risk managed, but HMICFRS commented on the number outstanding and the risk management process. He advised that of the 58 individuals identified in posts without enhanced vetting, all had now passed, and the risk management process made more robust.
 - 2) the Force should scrutinise and have regard to vetting refusals where people had protected characteristics – the DCC reported the Force now had a Scrutiny Panel that reviewed vetting refusals to ensure they were no issues of disproportionality.
- HMICFRS Publication - Digital Forensics: HMICFRS inspected eight forces and four Regional Organised Crime Units. Whilst Kent was not inspected, the DCC advised Essex was and with a collaborative SCD it was assumed similar issues would be found. In summary, he said the recommendations were being progressed by the Head of SCD, with ongoing scrutiny by himself and the DCO, adding they would be discharged within the required timeframes.
- HMICFRS Publication: Super Complaint: How the police respond to victims of sexual abuse when the victim is from an ethnic minority background and may be at risk of honour-based abuse: the DCC advised Kent was not inspected, but the report made five recommendations, with three for Chief Constables. He said the Force accepted the recommendations and would provide a response within the required timeframe.
- With regards to Firearms Licensing, the DCC reported there were a high number of license holders in the county which had caused demand pressures, particularly at peak times for renewals. Noting there were three questions required of forces by the Policing Minister, the DCC advised the Force had responded as per the information in the paper. He added that at renewal time, when there were peaks in demand, the Force regularly made use of temporary licenses, but all renewals were discharged within the period of the temporary certificate.
- The DCC advised all forces had received a Prevention of Future Death Notice from the Coroner overseeing the Plymouth shootings. He said the required return date was 3 May and the Force would easily meet that timeframe.
- The DCC reported the Force was just entering its period of continuous assessment for the next round of PEEL. He said much of the work the Force was doing through PEEL 2021/22 to monitor, improve and discharge the AFIs would now be swept up in the new PEEL process. Whilst the Force still had oversight, he said formal sign off would now be incorporated into PEEL 2022/23.
- The DCC provided an update around the Force's response to Subject Access Requests (SARs) and the associated notice received from the Information Commissioner's Office. He advised there had been acute pressure within the Public Disclosure Team as the number received had doubled in three years and there was no limit, as there was for FoI, that disqualified those exceeding a certain threshold. He said the team took a risk based approach, prioritising those pertaining to the protection of children or vulnerable adults, but the demand had caused a backlog which the ICO observed. Noting planned investment had taken place and the period for training new staff had been compressed, he reported that in December 2022 the backlog stabilised, and by March it had reduced by 12%.
- With regards to the internal auditors, RSM, the DCO reported that of the 12 planned audits, 3 had been issued, 4 were in fieldwork and 5 were yet to be done. He said there were no particular risks and work had commenced to set next year's programme.
- He said the external auditors, Ernst Young, were less frequent visitors to the Force but played an important role in closing and signing off the accounts. He reported they were completed without any adjustment and published on time.
- With regards to the outstanding AFIs being wrapped up with the new PEEL inspection, the PCC asked whether any had been signed off. The CC advised none had been formally signed off by HMICFRS, adding that was not due to a lack of progress on the Force's part but reflected their process. Commenting that HMICFRS were notoriously slow in reviewing AFIs, the CC said the Force applied the same focus through its own inspection team and captured appropriate evidence to validate completion. The CC confirmed he was confident the AFIs were still being discharged.
- The PCC requested an update on the NPCC Historical Data Wash of officers and staff. Advising the PCC was keen to participate, the DCC said along with many forces Kent had included the Office of the PCC. He reported the Force had completed the first phase which was submission of the data, and the second phase was receipt of the data wash result which the Force anticipated would arrive on 20 March. He advised every member of staff would be run through the Police National Database and this would produce lots of data which a small team would review because most of it would be information already known or where staff were victims of crime. Noting that an NPCC Return had to be submitted by 29 September, he said the Force anticipated the work would take between 12 and 16 weeks and expected to understand the results well before the deadline.

5. People

- In terms of the Police Uplift programme, the DCO advised Kent's targets were Year 1 = 147; Year 2 = 147; Year 3 = 195 – a total of 489 by 31 March 2023 and to reach an establishment of 4,144.9 police officers. He reported the current Force strength was 4,053.18, with an intake of 110 scheduled to start on 27 March.
- He stated technically there was a buffer as the Force's headcount including officers on Career Break, Op Magenta personnel and ERSOU was 4,109; 56 higher than the strength.
- He also noted that in July it was agreed the Force would over recruit by 43, taking the 195 target for Year 3 to 238.
- Noting there was an embargo on transfers from December through to March, he reported there were 59 transferees waiting to leave. He said 23 were likely to leave in April, 26 in May and 10 in June, with 41 going to the MPS. He added they had been incorporated into the 2023/24 recruitment plan which had been signed off by the CC.
- Commenting that it was one thing to recruit but another to retain officers, the DCO stated the Force was as active and energised around retention as it was around initial recruitment.
- With regards to representation and diversity, he said it remained a priority and started with generating applications. In terms of applications from females, Year 1 = 31.06%; Year 2 = 37.49%; and Year 3 (to date) = 39.11%. Applications from ethnic minorities, Year 1 = 8.78%; Year 2 = 8.4%; and Year 3 (to date) = 13.13%.
- The DCO reported the current application pot of 506 was healthy in terms of meeting next year's expectations.
- He advised there were currently 154 ethnic minority officers serving representing 3.62% of the workforce; and 1,440 females representing 34.62% which was the highest ever number and proportion of officers in the Force.
- The DCO advised PCSO's featured heavily in the last quarter due to the Neighbourhood Policing Review. Noting the Force started with a strength of 160 in January 2022 - 176 under the establishment - he advised the consultation concluded in January 2023. He said preference forms were received on 17 February and the Desktop Selection process took place on 22 February. He reported there were 142 individuals for 102 roles; 113 were offered roles in the new structure; 25 were unsuccessful and made redeployees with 'at risk' status giving them an opportunity to apply for internal vacancies ahead of other staff; and 4 were recommended for voluntary redundancy
- He said the Force achieved a good result in terms of individuals getting their first choice (69 or 61%), second choice (23 or 20%) and third choice (8 or 7%), adding it was better than any previous large scale re-organisation.
- In terms of absence, the DCO reported that Kent remained a strong performer nationally, albeit there was limited comparable national data presented in the Value for Money profiles. He advised there were no significant hotspots, trends or patterns of concern and that absence was reported to Chief Officers on a bi-monthly basis.
- With regards to the business change that was inevitable in any large organisation, the CC stated his focus would always be on how to progress in as compassionate way as possible for the staff affected.
- Commenting on the extraordinary work that had been required to achieve the uplift, the CC stated his own intake was 20 officers and considered large, but 141 was staggering. He highlighted the amount and sustained pressure on the Recruitment Team, Training School and Vetting in particular. Referring to the Vetting inspection, he said whilst the Inspectors observations were valid, he was convinced the Force would have been graded higher had it not been in the period of the uplift programme where Vetting was 'white hot'. He added the uplift was positive for the public as there were more police officers, but it had required a huge effort from lots of staff.
- The PCC said the Force had done exceptionally well over a sustained period; not just the three years of the uplift, but also the three years before that. He expressed his thanks to all involved for the tremendous job they had done.
- Noting a number of Trainers had left Learning and Development recently, the PCC asked what the Force was doing to mitigate the impact and support those who continued to deliver training. The DCO advised the Force could bridge the gap and had already identified 3 staff replacements, adding whilst it would prefer to have some control over leavers, there was a benefit in turnover as it brought recent operational experience into the Training School. He said whilst they were head hunted and there was nothing the Force could do to stop them leaving, it presented the Force with an opportunity to bring in people with fresher experience, although they would initially lack the experience.
- The PCC said well done and thank you to the Kent Police College team for managing the large officer intakes over recent years.

6. Finance

- The DCO reported the Capital Budget was £39.88m with an expected outturn of £27.4m; an underspend of £12.4m. Despite BlueLight Commercial's help around vehicles, he advised it was due to other supply chain issues including building materials and contractors.
- He said the Force would not rush to pay contractors for work that had not been completed to the expected standard, and noted the schemes that had been delivered and paid for were of a high standard and had preserved the fabric of buildings for years to come.
- Advising the money would not be lost but rolled forward and used at the point goods/services were received, the DCO said he looked forward to when Capital Budgets were for three years rather than the current one year deadline.
- With regards to the Revenue Budget, he said it was looking lightly there would be a marginal underspend at less than 1% of the Force's budget.
- The DCO advised that he and the CFO's would be recommending the underspend be transferred into the Capital Budget; this would have a positive impact on revenue owing to less borrowing being required and therefore less repayments to service the debt from revenue next year.

- He said underspends were largely around police staff headcount and officer turnover differential which was effectively the difference between the salary of a leaving officer and the new replacement. He added that whilst the Force wanted officers with energy and enthusiasm, it was of course losing operational experience.
- Pressures in year the Force had to contend with included an unfunded pay award and inflation.
- The DCO reported the Force had a strong plan for next year to meet the £7.3m of savings required, adding the figure was £14.1m but had reduced by £6.8m owing to the outcome of the Neighbourhood Policing Review. He said the Force had assumed an unfunded 2.5% pay increase but was monitoring the wider public sector debate and might need to increase that to 3.5%, which would be an extra £1m.
- He noted savings options were diminishing: the Police Uplift rules restricted the CC's options around police officer establishment; the 19% non-pay budgets had been subjected to inflation of up to 10%, with gas and electricity higher: and police staff and support functions ranked 38 out of 43 forces in terms of cost per 1,000 population. He added where the Force had been able to make economies of scale in buildings, it had done so, but the age and number restricted the opportunity in terms of energy costs.
- The DCO advised the savings plan for 2023/24 was established some months ago and the Force had a degree of confidence it would be able to balance the budget. He stated he was less confident about 2024/25 because: there was unlikely to be any sustained period of deflation to counter the increase in the cost of goods and services; demand would continue to grow in volume and breadth; and pay awards were unlikely to be funded – he said those 3 factors alone made for a strong financial headwind.
- The CC stated the Force continued to be very lean and despite some challenges, he was confident the plans in place would continue to keep it financially sound. However, he said he had a parochial feeling of a little unfairness in the funding formula as it did not seem to favour Kent. The PCC said he understood.
- The PCC thanked the DCO for the update and said he appreciated the ongoing work between the two CFOs on the savings plan and future forecast.

7. Topical Issues & Update on Significant Operational Matters

- The CC advised in light of their weekly briefings there were none specifically, adding topical matters were covered in the papers and others were of such a sensitive nature they needed to be shared in private.

In closing the PCC thanked the CC, DCC and DCO for their presentations and for answering the questions. He thanked their teams for pulling the papers together and his team for their excellent work with the technology.

	Status	Owner	Due date
Provide the PCC with a detailed and bespoke presentation on the work of the Prevent & Protect Team	Open	Force	07/06/2023
Provide the PCC with a specific briefing around combatting serious violence and the work of the VRU	Open	Force	07/06/2023

Date of next Performance and Delivery Board: 7 June 2023

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