

AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE REPORT

11 DECEMBER 2019

The following briefing provides an update for Panel Members on key activities since the last Panel meeting on 8 October 2019. This report reflects the position at 29 November 2019.

Governance and Scrutiny

Appointment of OPCC Interim Chief Executive Officer

The PCC wrote to the PCP Chair on 15 November to commence a recruitment process for the appointment of an Interim Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer following the resignation of the current Chief Executive. The appointment term will be part-time on a 9 month fixed-term contract in order to provide continuity of advice to the PCC and management of the OPCC team. The interim post will allow for appointment of a substantive Chief Executive Officer following the PCC elections in May 2020. The recruitment process has commenced in accordance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. It is proposed to hold a selection day on 19 December, incorporating a stakeholder panel session. An invitation has been issued for two members of the PCP to be part of the stakeholder panel. Under the current timetable, it is expected that the PCC will be in a position to inform the PCP of the outcome of the appointment process on 19 December. Arrangements have therefore been put in place to hold a PCP Confirmation Hearing on 8 January 2020, in order to meet statutory time limits.

Police and Crime Needs Assessment

The draft PCNA has been updated to incorporate feedback received from stakeholders. It has been agreed to delay publication of the PCNA pending the outcome of the General Election and the MTFP / budget setting process in order to update finance section. This will be one of the key documents provided to any candidates who declare they are standing in the upcoming PCC elections.

Performance Oversight

A new performance report has been developed to enable the Panel to carry out their role in oversight of performance against the Police and Crime Plan. A draft, containing examples of data, was presented to the Panel at their October meeting inviting comments on the new format. The report will be prepared on a quarterly basis, in line with the financial year, with the reports produced by the end of the first month of the next quarter. This means the reports will be available by the end of the following months:

- Quarter 1 - July
- Quarter 2 - October
- Quarter 3 - January
- Quarter 4 - April

The first full report is attached for Members' consideration. The OPCC Strategic Planning and Performance Officer will attend the meeting to talk through the new report and take questions.

Police and Crime Board

Agendas and minutes of the Police and Crime Board are published at the following link: <https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/Openness/Reports-and-meetings/Police-and-Crime-Board.aspx>

Key Decisions

The following decisions have been made since the last meeting:

- A&S Violence Reduction Units 2019/20 – Funding Allocation and Approach (6/11/19)
- Williton Police Station Business Case (9/10/19)
- Process Automation (9/10/19)
- Yeovil Police Station Business Case (4/9/19)

Decision notices and accompanying documents are published at the following link:

<https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/Openness/Decisions.aspx>

OPCC Scrutiny Panels

The following scrutiny panel meetings will take place after the report deadline for this meeting:

- **Out of Court Disposals Scrutiny Panel** – meeting on 4 December to review cases on the theme of assault on police officers. The theme has been selected to support national work led by the A&S Chief Constable to strengthen the response of the criminal justice system to cases involving assault on police officers, and to feed into a review of Sentencing Guidelines.
- **Scrutiny of the Use of Police Powers Panel** – meeting on 28 November to continue the members' independent review of Taser deployments, Spit & Bite Guard use and Stop Search incidents (within 3 themes of under 16s, BAME, and more than jacket, outer garment and gloves being removed). In response to recommendations of the Panels, frontline Officer training on de-escalation now includes the Panel Chair's video input and 5 Panel members are booked to observe a training session.
- **Independent Residents Panel** - meeting on 5 December to review police complaints on the following theme: are the force values of caring and inclusive evident in the way the Professional Standards Department deal with complaints?

Reports of scrutiny panel meetings are published at: <https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/Openness/Scrutiny>

Independent Custody Visiting Scheme

The Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) continue with their unannounced visits to the 3 Custody Units once every 4 days, to observe and check on the welfare, rights and entitlements of detainees. This includes the new welfare aspects commencing from 21 August 2019 with new legislation in the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) Code C. The OPCC is currently recruiting for volunteers to join the ICV scheme for Patchway and

Bridgwater. Further information can be found at the following link: <https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/Take-Part/ICVs/Apply-to-be-an-ICV.aspx>
Support of Panel Members in circulating this volunteering opportunity through local networks would be gratefully received.

Commissioning and Partnership Working

A&S Criminal Justice Transformation Programme

As Members will recall, the A&S Criminal Justice Transformation Programme was established to deliver recommendations of a Home Office-funded review of the local criminal justice system carried out by the Behavioural Insights Team in 2017. The Programme is led by a Senior Responsible Officer appointed on a 2 year fixed-term basis with partner funding, match funded by the PCC. The SRO term is due to come to an end in December 2019.

The Executive Board met in November to consider progress in delivering priorities for the remainder of the SRO term including work with the Constabulary Data Analytics team to agree data sharing arrangements to enable multi-agency, real-time performance management information to manage demand across the criminal justice journey. The Board also considered proposals for future governance and arrangements to take forward the following programmes of work:

- A 'Back to Basics' programme of work led by the Police and CPS to drive up performance in file quality with a focus on establishing 'what good looks like' and getting it right first time;
- Proposals to improve the criminal justice response to RASSO (Rape and Serious Sexual Offences) cases.

A plan for outstanding workstreams and proposal for future governance arrangements will be considered at the A&S Criminal Justice Board meeting on 3 December.

Victims Governance

VCOP Compliance

As Members will recall, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) wrote to PCCs on 8 May 2019 setting out requirements for PCC-led monitoring and reporting of local compliance with the Victims Code of Practice. The first dip-sampling session was held on 18 September and findings were submitted to the MoJ in November. A second round of consultation on revisions to the Victims Code of Practice is expected in the new year. A response from the MoJ to feedback submitted from local areas in relation to the dip sampling process is also awaited. The next meeting will take place in late January.

Lammy Review

Desmond Brown was appointed in May as Independent Chair of the Avon & Somerset Lammy Review Sub-Group, established to lead local implementation of the Lammy Review of BAME representation in the criminal justice system. The group is taking forward a programme of work based around the three pillars of fairness, trust and shared responsibility. Work is ongoing to take forward priority work in reviewing data collected by partners to build a clear picture of data currently available and taking forward work to challenge discrepancies, improve recording practice and ensure that local data is consistent

and robust. A presentation on progress will be provided to the Panel as part of the work programme later in the year.

Avon and Somerset Reducing Reoffending – Resolve

Work continues in the Resolve Programme, bringing together key partners to deliver a portfolio of activity to tackle reoffending in Avon and Somerset. The programme is led by a Senior Responsible Officer, jointly funded by partners. Funding has been secured to extend the SRO role for an additional year, to September 2020. This follows a review of the post, approach and progress to date led by the OPCC Chief Financial Officer during the summer. A workshop was held during the summer with strong engagement from partners to identify opportunities to work together in development interventions. Priorities for the coming months include: a review of Integrated Offender Management; exploring opportunities arising from the Homelessness Reduction Act; taking forward recommendation of the Recall to Custody project following completion of the pilot and specific work around female offenders, for which the Commissioner is the regional lead.

Avon and Somerset continues to represent the South West PCCs in national work to develop proposals for the future of probation services, which were announced by the Government in May. The future approach will see the offender management function handled by the National Probation Service, and co-commissioned services tailored to meet local need.

The Regional Reducing Reoffending Board, chaired by the Commissioner, continues to meet and recruitment of a Regional Reducing Reoffending SRO is underway to lead this area of work. As Members will recall, the South West was the first in the country to establish a Regional Reducing Reoffending Board, and progress in developing the regional approach has received strong support from the Ministry of Justice.

Serious Violence

The OPCC and partners continue to prioritise work to introduce Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) across the five local authority areas of Avon and Somerset. Work is progressing well with the focus being on the mobilisation of resources to deliver the year one priorities (the first two of which will be completed by the end of February 2020):

1. Problem Profile / Needs Assessment
2. Response Strategy
3. Interventions

This is alongside work being undertaken by the Constabulary including Op Remedy and the Home Office's Policing Surge funding.

The next meeting of the Strategic VRU chaired by the PCC, will be on the 7 January 2020 and includes Local Authority Leaders. This meeting's priorities are informed by a workplan based on the BIT report (now available [online](#)). Following the first meeting, membership has been expanded to include Probation and Immigration and the Terms of Reference updated for the group to meet quarterly. The group has already prioritised engagement with health on data sharing and work is progressing with a range of partners to make improvements in this

important area. Within the OPCC the initial focus has been on establishing governance arrangements and meeting Home Office reporting and grant agreement requirements.

On the 22 October 2019 the Head of the Head of Serious Violence Priority Projects Unit and team visited Avon and Somerset to learn more about the local VRU model. This included discussions with the PCC and senior representatives from the Constabulary and OPCC. The meeting was an opportunity to demonstrate the value of the devolved model and lobby for clarity on the future funding position. In addition, Somerset and Bristol VRUs presented their work so far which was well received.

Following this visit, PCCs in the 18 VRU areas nationally received a letter from the Minister of State for Crime, Policing and the Fire Service stating 'the Government's intention is to make £35m available in the 20/21 financial year to support Violence Reduction Units' continued operation. Should this process continue as we would intend, each of the 18 areas will be able to apply for VRU funding in 20/21, and in due course, Home Office officials will provide further details of that application process available to [PCCs].' The OPCC is currently considering its approach to any potential funding for 2020/21.

Home Office funding for Child Criminal Exploitation

The ROUTES project funded by the Home Office Early Intervention Youth Fund (until March 2020) is underway and delivering in Bristol and Somerset. As of June 2019 in Bristol they have received 50 referrals since it went live in January (30 open cases in current quarter). In Somerset the project has focused on a smaller cohort in relation to county lines with 20 referrals since inception (14 open cases in the current quarter). Work in Bristol has focused on the Central and East District. This has included both 1:1 therapeutic work but also preventative work with 5 secondary schools. Demand from schools in need for this type of support is growing. ROUTES is also running a Young Men's group developing enterprise opportunities in Bristol, this has been well received by the service users. In Somerset the 16 open cases are receiving 1:1 therapeutic support, where individuals have extracted themselves from gangs they are requiring a high degree of advocacy in terms of being better protected and accommodation options. Preventative work involving psycho-educational sessions in identified schools commenced in September.

The ROUTES service will be participating in a Home Office-hosted event on 5 December to showcase and share best practice. Work is ongoing to explore funding options beyond the current funding period in March 2020.

Mental Health

Significant work has taken place over recent months to attempt to review and remodel the mental health control room triage service, based in the control room at police headquarters. This came after the provider struggled to staff the service and it became apparent it was delivering less over the phone advice to officers and staff than had originally been envisaged. This review will report in December, with the intention being to implement any revised model by the end of the financial year.

Road Safety Funding

Grants of up to £5000 are available from the Road Safety Fund, part of the A&S Police Community Trust. Funding is available for community and voluntary organisations for projects to improve road safety. Further information on the grant criteria and how to apply is attached at **Annex A**. Support from Members in circulating this funding opportunity through their local networks would be welcome.

Standing Updates:

Fire Governance: The PCC, Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer for Avon Fire and respective officers met with representatives from South West Ambulance Service in July. The purpose of the meeting was to explore emergency services collaboration. Key areas discussed included joint estates opportunities and the potential for Tri Service officers. The Joint Asset Board set up by the West of England Combined Authority was also discussed and it was agreed that there would be a single emergency services representative on that board. It is planned to meet again to follow up on discussions.

Estates: An update will be circulated to Members in advance of the meeting.

Recruitment Update: At the request of Panel Members, an update on police officer and PCSO numbers will be provided as a standing item through the coming year, using 1 April 2018 as the baseline. The position as at 31 October 2019 is as follows:

Staff Group	FTE as at Apr-18	FTE as at end Oct 2019
Police Officers	2,593.63	2,748.28
PCSOs	331.44	350

PCC Election 2020: As reported at the last meeting, the OPCC has commenced preparatory work for the PCC Election in May 2020. Preparations are being overseen by the Election Planning Board, chaired by the OPCC Chief Financial Officer. The current focus of work is development of the Election OPCC Microsite which will host briefings, responses for information requested by candidates through the FOI process and information on the election. Introductory meetings will be arranged for candidates as they are announced.

National Updates

Operation Uplift

As Members will recall, the Government announced its intention to provide funding in order to enable the recruitment of 20,000 additional police officers over the next 3 years. The specific allocation of officers to Avon and Somerset has been announced as 137 by the end of the next financial year (end March 2021). Funding has yet to be received from the Home Office, however work continues to respond to the proposals.

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