

AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE REPORT

22 SEPTEMBER 2021

The following briefing provides an update for Panel Members on key activities since the last Panel meeting on 24 June 2021. This report reflects the position as at 10 September 2021.

1. SCRUTINY

COVID -19

Wellbeing of officers and staff

Avon and Somerset Police are committed to creating a safe, healthy workplace where the mental health and physical health of all their staff and officers are valued equally. ASC wish to raise mental health awareness and tackle stigma throughout the organisation.

The pandemic has highlighted the importance of supporting their staff and officers in these challenging times, on their own mental health and that of their colleagues and to empower and encourage them to come forward and access timely support when needed.

In recognition of this ASC have improved, updated and introduced different types and levels of Mental Health resources and support for staff and officers in the form of:-

- **Improved, easily accessible and visible guidance and resources to support people struggling with mental health.** This is ongoing and includes work such as updating the intranet and re-configuring the pages to reflect the [Blue Light Framework](#)^[1] which ASC have signed up to; promoting Oscar Kilo with bespoke programmes during Covid for Personal Resilience training; introduced Mental Health First aiders in key areas ie. Comms and Custody
- **College of Policing** – improved resources and tool kits.
- **Ongoing increased visibility and accessibility of external support/helplines for mental health which includes sign posting and practical advice and guidance.**
Add to the above – physical and mental health activities Green cycle to work scheme, resources on importance of Taking breaks, 5 min exercises at desk etc Mental Health – video mindfulness, Yoga, Sleep therapy – Financial Wellbeing – Neyber/Salary Finance – includes resources to support individuals that are struggling financially as part of Covid 19 , ie furloughed. Updates on A to Z of external H&W support available for all staff and officers - Depression/Anxiety/Addictions/PTSD which includes Gamecare/Alcoholics Anonymous/ MIND/ Surfwell.
- **Easier access to the Employee Assistance Programme confidential support service through the website and 'My healthy advantage' app** which staff/officers can download to their mobile phones. Renewed regional EAP contract is now offered to all staff/officers/volunteers

^[1] The framework is a statement of intent, showing the organisation's commitment to the health and wellbeing of the people who work there

and specials. Improved resources and videos, webinars on mental health and the Healthy Advantage app.

- **Improved Data collection, analysis and reporting on mental health** to ensure the right support and mechanisms are in place. An Establishment App – to create a People Data Dashboard at discussion/ project planning stage
- **Improved use of the individual performance review (IPR):**
 - Embedding the use of mental health/wellness health checks
 - Mental Health training documented on IPR as part of CPD
 - Promoting and encouraging the on-going dialogue regarding mental health with line manager/individual

ASC are also putting in place additional resources and services to support Mental Health

- Creation of Health and Wellbeing working group – governance People Committee – ToRs agreed and membership is representative of all directorates throughout the organisation. Meets monthly.
- Bolstering psychological support services. Proposal of additional roles to manage the demand.
- Introducing further education and awareness of Mental Health – through iHASCO (Health & Safety Compliance) online app. To go live September
- Improved tool kit containing guidance and resources to support people struggling with their mental health. On line – July onwards Pocketbook.
- Proposal to create Mental Health/Wellbeing Rooms at HQ/other force sites to be reviewed as part of re-setting and re configuring of the estate.
- Optimising the support for coordinating psychological support, welfare officers and Mental Health First Aiders.
- Blended Organisational Working Principles for Line Managers – part of re-setting.
- Roll out to force -Mental health first aiders (up to 50) over 24month period.
- Further consideration for proposal for Health and Wellbeing co-ordinator role to cover TRiM activities, Welfare officer's co-ordination, psychological support co-ordination and Mental Health first aiders co-ordination.
- Proposal of Wellbeing Dog/s to visit sites throughout the county. Exploring various options one being use of volunteers and their own dogs – early planned discussions –outlined proposal ready for submission People Committee 14th October.
- Planned site visits using Oscar Kilo vans for promotion of health and wellbeing activities and resources.
- Planned mental health presentations as part of CPD days in specific areas of business ie. Communications and Custody.
- Offer of free flu vaccinations for all staff and officers.
- Review of relevant policies and procedures regarding individuals returning from a long absence due to sickness/career break and any other reason.
- Purple passport – Neurodiversity and Disability – review of existing ID strategy/relevant policy and processes – taking a more holistic and enabling approach – using best practice and formulating national standards (working group)to improve the existing resources and identify the leadership and development requirements to support this.

Learning and Development

Learning and Development sought to learn from the benefits realised during COVID and identify opportunities to enhance and improve training provisions and outcomes. A presentation on this

activity was provided to the Panel at the June 2021 meeting (see annex A of the Commissioners Update Report 24th June 2021).

The Constabulary continue to work through the proposed changes and are in a period of re-setting but still working in a COVID safe way. Realisation of the changes post Covid19 have not had a chance to be worked through yet. Further updates will be provided as this work progresses.

Oversight of the Constabulary Response:

The force has now dropped the 'Critical Incident' status of the Policing response to the Covid-19 Pandemic and the force returns to more 'business as usual' approach.

Operation Hydrogen was the force response to CoVid legislation breaches running seven days a week covering the whole force and over and above normal daily resourcing. This was supported by Operations Hawthorne and Hazel when necessary in relation to unlicensed music events and large protests or gatherings. The operation supported the local Neighbourhood Policing Team ensuring there were additional patrols in areas of concern, persistent breaches or high infection rates. Op Hydrogen provided, on average, an additional dedicated 700+ hrs of patrol by officers across the force. The number of calls in relation to Covid -19 breaches has reduced significantly but other demand is now increasing. Op Hydrogen has continued with its high visibility patrols in areas of high footfall or concern, increasing the uniformed presence in our communities to enhance the focus on community engagement as well as rebuilding and maintaining important community contacts.

Since the last report, Op Hydrogen officers have continued to attend the majority of all Covid-19 breach Storm logs and robustly deal with repeat offenders. There has been an increase in high visibility patrols to increase the communication of the first 3 E's (engage, explain & encourage) in areas receiving high foot fall with the easing of lockdown restriction and people now able to meet inside and outside.

The improved weather and the restrictions on travelling abroad has seen an increase of people visiting the Force area so the increase in high visibility patrols has assisted in providing reassurance to both residents and visitors to the force area.

Op Hydrogen officers undertake the public health England quarantine enquiries but these requests have significantly reduced since the Government has out-sourced the visits to a private security firm. It also supports the Local Policing Areas where required, assisting with demand as well as supporting the Force's surge funding demand on tackling Serious Violence.

ASC has a dedicated media communications team for Covid-19 to ensure changes in legislation are highlighted to the public and to share the actions the force is taking on those who breach the legislation. Recently there has been further media attention on the Force in relation to their Covid-19 response, with the local ITV news highlighting the work being carried out in response to the number of house parties.

On the 31st August, ASC stood down Operation Hydrogen due to greater demand that needed servicing elsewhere in the organisation and the minimal level of enforcement work that was required in light of the easing of the restrictions. Strategic leads are looking at how resources could be used to tackle demand elsewhere within the thrust of the funding parameters. ASC are still working with Local Authorities, supporting them where necessary with location and premises, including joint visits to premises, and supporting the Council Marshalls.

There have been further protests held within the force area with no significant issues and there have been no significant unlicensed music events since the previous report.

Policing at Bristol Airport has increased as the number of flights inbound and outbound has increased and will continue to increase. The force does not currently have a red list hotel and passengers are transported to Swindon or Birmingham. All the necessary plans and procedures are in place for when the force has its first red list hotel.

We are now seeing an increased number of cases relating to non-payment of Covid-19 Fixed Penalty Notice going before the courts. These are being monitored to ensure all relevant supporting evidence and statements are being provided when required to support the prosecution.

Operation Uplift – STANDING ITEM

Based on current information ASC are set to over-achieve against the year-end target for police officer establishment. The programme will result in an overall net uplift in police officer numbers of over 400 (2019-2023). At March 2020 ASC had exceeded the national headcount target (2,281) and recorded a headcount of 2,284. For March 2021 the national target ASC needed to meet was 2,972. At the start of the year, they agreed a local 'stretch target' within their financial tolerances that would take them to 3,001. They actually finished the year at 31st March 2021 on 3,076 thereby exceeding targets. The latest figures as at July 2021 show that numbers now stand at 3,120. Our projections show that they are on track to achieve and slightly exceed the new end of year target of 3,106. ASC have a close scrutiny and monitoring regime for planning their intakes and adjusting for changes in leaver numbers against planning assumptions. ASC are very confident of achieving the targets set and in the mechanisms they have in place to oversee and control delivery against these.

ASC now have a very large number of people at various stages of their training and development. This is one of the biggest changes to the police officer workforce at a single time in the last decade or more. This coinciding with the introduction of new entry and initial learning routes required as a result of national policy changes and the challenges of adapting to respond to the realities of a pandemic has meant considerable challenges which the teams have risen to well. As explained in the last report, ASC continue to be focused on ensuring that they are delivering the new capacity and capabilities to the right places in order to realise the impact on performance expected, cognisant of Police and Crime Commissioner's emerging Plan and the National requirements. They also continue to progress work to address the wide range of associated organisational development implications that are natural when there is such a substantial change in the workforce demographic. These continue to be closely monitored and scrutinised through the relevant management and governance structures including through the Police and Crime Board and Joint Audit Committee.

New : Key Appointments

Work continues on the four key appointments. 25 applications were received for the Chief of Staff post and 5 were shortlisted for interview. The selection day took place on 1 September and the confirmation is scheduled for 22nd September. This process was managed by the independent consultant.

For the Deputy PCC vacancy 6 applications have been received and shortlisting took place on 31 August. 4 candidates were shortlisted for interview and the interviews are being held on 15th September.

The current timeline for the Chief Finance Officer vacancy does not allow for the new Chief of Staff to be involved in the appointment process. This is the second most senior post in the OPCC with deputy and statutory responsibilities and it was felt that a Chief of Staff would want to lead on the recruitment of a substantive CFO and Section 151 Officer. We therefore decided to extend the current interim CFO appointment until 01/04/22 to allow the new Chief of Staff to lead on this appointment and allow continuity during the precept proposal and end of year. This decision was supported by the Police and Crime Panel.

The OPCC team are working alongside the consultant for the Chief Constable appointment process. The original timeline has been revised slightly to manage appointment panel availability and to allow sufficient time for shortlisting, police briefings and selection. The vacancy went live w/c 30 August, closing on 27th September and can be viewed [here](#). Shortlisting will take place w/c 11th October and selection will be held in early November.

With all of these appointment processes two PCP members have been invited to observe both the shortlisting process and the selection days.

2. COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

Engagement

The PCC is currently conducting engagement over two days a week. Thursdays involve visits to police departments and teams and Fridays include external visits to public and partners as well as local political leaders.

The Commissioner has already completed one round of external engagement days in each of the eight Local Authority geographical areas of Bristol, South Glos, North Somerset BaNES, Somerset West, Somerset East, Mendip and Sedgemoor.

We are now planning our next rotation of visits.

External engagement days include a mixture of:

- A visit to a partner (political or local authority leader)
- A visit to a community group/members of the public
- A visit to a stakeholder such as one of our commissioned service providers or grant funded services.
- Drop ins at local events that take place which are attended by the public e.g. mother and baby groups, social events, community events or community classes
- Joint surgery with local MP or councillor (invites sent out this week)
- Walkabout with the local police beat team and local councillor or MP in an area where policing issues have been raised with the PCC (through direct contacts or via police or partners)

When planning engagement days, the team ensures that all visits are strategically aligned with emerging policing issues, policing operations and significant dates and also make sure that consideration is given to current work streams or issues from within the OPCC Commissioning and Partnerships Team as well as emerging themes coming from the public through our Contacts and Conduct department.

At the start of each week we debrief on the previous week’s engagement days and follow up communications (internally and externally) to provide transparency about who the PCC has visited and public accountability on any issues or actions put forward by the people during those visits.

Our overall engagement strategy this year will be to focus particularly on vulnerable and under-represented communities e.g. Black, Asian and minoritised communities, and people with other protected characteristics, those living in isolated rural areas, socio-economically deprived communities, women and young people.

Consultation

Our consultation on the Police and Crime Plan launched on June 28th and will run for 12 weeks in total, closing on September 20th.

The aim is to give local people the opportunity to weight their agreement with the proposed draft priorities and objectives set out by the PCC, which were based on his Manifesto, for his new Police and Crime Plan. It is presented as a series of a multiple choice questions rating participants’ agreement between strongly agree to strongly disagree. It also includes free text boxes to give local people the chance to contribute ideas, raise concerns or give feedback that isn’t prescriptive to the priorities and objectives.

At the start of the consultation we created a communications plan. One of our main aims was focus on under-represented groups, with a specific focus improving racial diversity and representation from young people based on the results of our last precept consultation.

To work towards this we set target figures in specific demographic groups, which were incremental increases on our previous precept survey results.

	Number	% of all	% of 2011 Census	Our target
Asian or Asian British	44	1.4%	2.6%	1.6%
Black or Black British	46	1.5%	1.9%	1.2%
Mixed	56	1.8%	1.8%	1.6%
Other	12	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%

Age	Number	% of all	% of declared	Representative (of 11+)	Our target
Under 18	9	0.3%	0.3%	8.6%	2.9%
18 to 24	65	2.1%	2.2%	11.0%	5.5%
25 to 34	316	10.1%	10.8%	15.8%	
35 to 44	480	15.4%	16.4%	13.4%	
45 to 54	624	20.0%	21.4%	14.8%	
55 to 64	663	21.2%	22.7%	13.6%	
65 to 74	561	17.9%	19.2%	12.0%	

75 or above	202	6.5%	6.9%	10.7%	
Prefer not to say	206	6.6%			

As you can see from the figures in the table above:

- In the Asian/Asian British ethnicity category we are still below the representative percentage and also 0.2% from our set target.
- In the Black/Black British ethnicity category we are still 0.4% from being representative but we have surpassed our target figure by 0.3%.
- In the mixed and other categories we have achieved the representative percentage and either hit or surpassed our target percentage.

As well as hosting the survey online and delivering via multiple digital channels including social media, email and online advertising we decided to do deliver a proportion of the surveys via postal delivery.

Our original intention was to use the postal survey was to target the areas of Avon and Somerset where the PCCs electoral mandate was weakest, based on the breakdown by Local Authority from the Electoral Commission.

However, we identified six weeks after launch, based on the ongoing analysis of the respondents via the online survey that we still weren't getting enough representation to hit our target numbers for respondents from Black, Asian and other minoritised communities.

We therefore used the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, crossed referenced with the 2011 Census data on ethnic breakdown in communities across the force area, to identify the LSOAs (Lower Layer Super Output Areas) with the highest resident populations from Black, Asian, mixed and other minoritised communities.

These areas were largely all in Bristol which happens to be where the PCCs mandate was weakest.

We sent out 20,000 postal surveys in two separate tranches.

Again, through analysis of online respondents and returns from tranche one, we also identified that although Sedgemoor area was well represented, responses were under represented from other Somerset areas.

We therefore used the second tranche of the postal survey to target geographically in those districts, as well as including some of the LSOAs identified through Census data as having older populations to improve our representation in the over 75s group and to target LSOAs identified in the IMD as some of the most deprived in Bristol South.

As you can see from the table we are still hugely under-represented in the two youngest age categories.

Marketing and engagement tactics over the final two weeks will focus on face-to-face delivery of the survey, with the help of partners, to groups of young people to try and help improve these figures.

Lammy Review

Due to ongoing resourcing and capacity issues, we are postponing the publication of the Local Lammy Review report until November.

Recently representatives from the OPCC and ASP met with Independent Chairman of the Local Lammy Review, Desmond Brown, and project manager Nichola Grierson to discuss the resource required to complete the remaining work and produce a final written report.

The analysis of all the partner data received, some of which could not be sourced and collated by partners in time for the Chairman’s original deadlines, has been a huge undertaking and will require further time and resourcing to fully inform conclusions and recommendations.

Both the OPCC and ASP are determined that the findings and the recommendations of the report must amount to a meaningful, fit-for-purpose, product that will help all criminal justice system agencies, and our relevant partners, to ensure the legacy of this work will effect real change in the way we work together and with our communities to tackle racial inequality, disparities and disproportionality.

3. COMMISSIONING AND PARTNERSHIPS UPDATE

Violence Reduction Units (VRU)

Grant agreements are now in place and following delays of the Home Office formal notification of funding local VRU activity is underway.

It has been a busy start to the first quarter due to an additional bidding process to the Home Office for specialist interventions, which comprised of 3 pots of funding. The 3 pots were Therapeutic interventions, Teachable moments, and Trauma Informed Training. Locally OPCC and partners chose to concentrate on 2 of these opportunities and were successful in both Teachable moments and Trauma informed Training. The implementation of the these projects has commenced;

A Trauma informed Avon and Somerset: training and wrap around support to enable VRUs and partner agencies to embed trauma informed approaches in their ways of working. **£305,000 received (to be spent by 31st March 22)**

The training provision and coordination (**£215,000**) has been put out as an open procurement process, which is currently live. Additionally, a needs assessment is currently underway with partners as to what would be required as part of their organisations training needs. It is not yet clear as to which partners wish to receive and be part of this programme, however extensive consultation and development has been undertaken through a multi- agency steering group, which is held fortnightly.

As part of this project an independent evaluation will also be commissioned to review the impact of the training.

The second project is the **Education Inclusion project:** Education inclusion Managers or Coordinators (EIM or EIC) and Youth Justice Support workers (YJSW) to be attached to each VRU to respond at the ‘teachable moment’ when a young person is at risk of being excluded from school due to serious violence. **£491,986.85 received (to be spent by 31st March 22)**

<p>Banes EI Coordinator within Education safeguarding YJSW within YOS With VRU oversight</p>	<p>1 EIC 1 YJSW</p>
--	----------------------------------

Bristol 5 YJSW under existing EIM provision – targeting specific schools	5 YJSW - in addition to current 3 EIM
North Somerset Increasing capacity by recruiting 2 YJSW. Targeting specific schools based on perm exclusions and FTE. Offering opportunity as secondments.	1 EIM 2 YJSW
Somerset EIM based in education safeguarding – triage and assessment and YJSW linked with VRU funded interventions 2 YJSW based in YOS. Secondment from council or partner agencies.	1 EIM 2 YJSW
South Gloucestershire Looking at adding to exiting Education inclusion provision with additional Coordinator role to increase capacity and outsourcing the support work to youth providers.	1 EIC 1 YJSW

The roles have been based on the approach already used within the Bristol VRU, following consultation and working with VRUs, YOTs and Education Safeguarding, the roll out of these two roles was felt to be of benefit across the force area. In summary the key duties of the two roles are;

Education Inclusion Manager / Coordinator

- Initial risk meeting with schools, young person, parent/s and lead professionals.
- Advocacy at exclusions / inclusions panel and YOT OOC panel
- Onward referrals, including to relevant interventions and activities
- subject matter expertise
- Consultancy to schools
- Local knowledge and cultural competence

Youth Justice Support Worker

- 6 weeks of bespoke 1:1 support sessions around consequences and legality of carrying weapons.
- Trusted relationship and support to young person
- Where appropriate and required, support to the young person’s immediate family and support network.

Both will;

- make relevant referrals to Social Care or Early Help as an added safeguarding measure

This will also be independently reviewed for impact. Although this is also a short term funding opportunity, we hope to build an evidence base to inform whether this approach is one that VRUs and Local Authorities should continue to adopt for future delivery.

VRU Reach for Q1;

A total of 178 persons were reached through individual specialist interventions funded this quarter, with one in six of these being female. Almost a third of all individuals reached were defined as being white males between 14- 16 years old. The most common risk factors identified with these individuals

included 'being absent/excluded from school' (52%) and 'being known to social services' (51%). Consequently, the focus of most interventions in this quarter was on improving 'education/training' (85%) with the highest reported intervention aim being 'improved attendance/behaviour/progress at school/college' (80%).

A large number of broader, group based interventions and awareness sessions have also been delivered, reaching an additional 1990 individuals. Over half of these were focused on universal interventions to improve better knowledge and awareness of crime. The rest of these focused on high or potentially high risk groups, including 794 persons reached by detached youth workers in target areas. It should be noted that this universal activity was partly funded through the 2020/21 grant. Due to Covid implications last financial year, a number of interventions have been rolled across into this year's delivery.

Strategic Oversight

In- depth work has been undertaken at the beginning of this year to enhance the reporting approach from the VRU's to the OPCC (and subsequently the Home Office). A framework has been developed to provide consistency and greater detail in their reporting. Although still being tried and tested, we are confident that this will provide us with a much better insight as to VRU reach and intervention impact on a quarterly basis.

The OPCC VRU leads have developed a detailed strategic delivery process map, which has considered key actions and recommendations from a number of sources, including; the initial Serious Violence review for A&S (completed by Behavioural Insights), the Process Evaluation conducted on the Hub and Spoke Model (Completed by Cordis Bright), the recently publicised Serious Violence Statutory Duty and core Home Office delivery requirements. This will enable us to ensure strategic direction is clear and owners for areas of development and system change are held accountable in this Public Health Response. The document has been RAG rated to prioritise direction setting. This will be owned by the OPCC but reviewed by the Strategic VRU Board as it becomes fully implemented. This may also be helpful in helping shape the planned 'Serious Violence' deep dive in due course.

The next Strategic VRU board will be on the 15th September 21. The key points for discussion of this Board will be; the introduction of the previously mentioned process map, update and direct next steps on Health data sharing and review the Terms of Reference for the Board. We are still without a formal chair but have agreed to conclude the recruitment of the Deputy PCC and Chief Of Staff, we will then consider who is best placed to take on this Chair role.

Reducing Reoffending

Cranstoun are the successful delivery partner for Drive in South Gloucestershire. They have a lot of experience in providing Domestic Abuse services and are already delivering drive in Herefordshire and Worcestershire. <https://www.cranstoun.org/s-glos-press-release/>

They have now recruited to roles and have recruited an experienced and skilled team with an impressive amount of skills and experience gained from a variety of relevant backgrounds e.g. mental health, health, prison, as well as criminology-related skill sets. This team is led by an experienced & enthusiastic service manager, who is actively developing the service.

Cranstoun are heavily engaged with the implementation process and have met with commissioners, ASC Drive Fellow and South Gloucestershire managers to implement the service. The first perpetrator panel took place in March and they have had 10 cases on the programme so far.

Missing Link are the successful delivery partner for Court Up. They have a lot of experience in delivering female based services in and around the Bristol area. They were notified of their success in achieving the bid mid-January 2021. Implementation meetings have happened between commissioners and Missing Link and they are due to update our Resolve board with progress on the 22nd September.

The Programme Manager for the Ready for Release programme in Bristol prison, Laura Dornan has now recruited to her team. Ready for Release has benefitted 91 males during its first quarter of delivery. Governance meetings are taking place on a regular basis to oversee the service progress and delivery. Evaluation of the service is inbuilt to the programme delivery eg a UWE research student has recently undertaken interviews with 5 prison staff, 5 external agency staff and 5 residents to look at current approaches to release planning and their knowledge of release planning, this feedback will inform development of Ready for Release.

A detailed Integrated Offender Management (IOM) meeting took place on the 27th July which required all local areas to give a detailed update on progress in Avon and Somerset. We will be monitoring IOM closely in conjunction with the force lead. In addition to this there are scheduled meetings to take place in preparation for the Police and Crime Panel deep dive in December.

Victim Services

Critical Fund and Male Rape Fund

The OPCC is pleased to share further success in obtaining national funding to support local victim services:

Critical Fund	Amount	Purpose
SARSAS 21/22	£22,500	To reduce specialist sexual violence counselling waiting times
Young Victim Service 21/22	£40,189	Domestic Abuse support for children
Safelink 22/23	£19,524	Learning Disability Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (to make part time post full time)
Male Rape Support Fund		
Trauma Breakthrough 21/22	£20,897	Therapeutic group work for men

This brings the total additional investment secured by the OPCC for victim services supporting survivors of domestic and sexual abuse in Avon and Somerset to almost £1.6m this year.

Therapeutic services for survivors of sexual assault

The *Needs Assessment for Sexual Abuse and Assault (SAAS) Therapeutic Pathways in the South West* has now been published by Lime Culture CIC and shared with stakeholders. NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSEI) commissioned this report which details of the context of therapeutic support provision across the South West for victims and survivors of sexual assault, estimates demand for therapeutic support and makes a number of recommendations for the improvement of provision. Therapeutic services are provided by a range of services and funded by NHSEI, CCGs, Local Authorities, charitable trusts and the OPCC. Recommendations include having oversight of capacity, alignment with the new Community Mental health Framework, data sharing and ways of working. This report is welcomed given the OPCC's longstanding concern about capacity in this sector given the volume and complexity of need and we look forward to working with health and local authority commissioners via the Sexual Assault and Abuse Strategy (SAAS) Board to review these recommendations.

Domestic Abuse Act

Members will recall that the OPCC commissions a range of services for victims of crime and ASB from a Victims Grant awarded by the Ministry of Justice for this purpose (as well as using other funds to enhance provision). The OPCC's approach is set out in its [Commissioning Plan](#) (2018). On the important matter of support for victims of domestic abuse the OPCC recognises and supports the vital role of Local Authorities as lead commissioners for these specialist services. Alongside this the non-crime type, force-wide services that the OPCC commissions by their very nature will support some victims of domestic abuse.

The Domestic Abuse Act (2021) has set a statutory duty for all Local Authorities to conduct a domestic abuse safe accommodation needs assessment. The five tier 1 Local Authorities across Avon and Somerset have commissioned *Davis and Associates* to undertake their needs assessments. While sitting outside of the strict accommodation-based focus on the Act, the OPCC has contributed evidence towards this process to demonstrate the level of domestic abuse referrals that OPCC services (non-crime type specific) are receiving. In particular the team has flagged the need for **support at standard risk level** and the gap in provision that will exist for **children and young people** once the Home Office grant to the Young Victim Service (YVS) ends.

Safer Streets Fund (VAWG)

The OPCC was pleased to support Local Authority colleagues in the preparation for submissions to the Safer Streets Fund's third round which focused on Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). The PCC's role in this process as determined by the Home Office was to prioritise bids in primary, secondary and tertiary order. Following a review process based on the Home Office's criteria, bids were submitted as below. The outcome of the bidding process to government is awaited at the time of writing.

Prioritisation	LA	Description
Primary	Somerset/ N Somerset	A collaborative bid from North Somerset Council and Somerset County Council covering the whole Somerset policing area with a specific focus to reduce VAWG in Weston-super-Mare, Taunton, Yeovil and Bridgwater town centres. Combines situational crime prevention and education and awareness programmes.
Secondary	Bristol	A bid to reduce VAWG at various locations in and around Bristol City centre through traditional street hardening measures and more innovative legacy initiatives. Including (but not exclusive to) street marshals, street lighting, publicity campaign.
Tertiary	BANES	To reduce VAWG and enhance feelings of public safety in Bath City Centre, Twerton and Midsomer Norton. Funds would be used to upgrade existing CCTV and street lighting and implement a Safe Hub space in Bath city centre.

Criminal justice partners, Police, LSU, CPS, HMCTS and Probation have spent time reviewing the Victims Code of Practice and have completed a self-assessment across all victims' entitlements according to their compliance of the rights, but also the recording and evidence of compliance. This will form a national piece of work that the MOJ will be looking at to establish best practice and ensuring PCC offices have the best opportunity at scrutiny of victims' rights during their whole journey through the criminal justice service.

4. SCRUTINY PANELS

Independent Residents' Panel

The Independent Residents' Panel (IRP) scrutinise completed cases of complaints made by members of the public against Avon and Somerset Police. The panel is chaired and run by volunteers and they meet on a quarterly basis.

The last meeting was held on the 2nd September 2021 and the theme was Mental Health. IRP members were furnished with police public complaints and it relates to a mental health concern.

It was an interesting meeting consisting of meaningful discussions with senior staff from Avon and Somerset's Professional Standards Department around the scrutiny of the police complaints regime. Also in attendance was a representative from Avon & Somerset Constabulary who updated the Panel on the mental health training and support officers receive.

Under our new revised meeting structure, the IRP's findings are now shared with the Professional Standards Department for comment prior to the meeting therefore enabling a meaningful discussion with PSD colleagues during the meeting. A quarterly report is produced and published for the public following the meeting.

The IRP's reports are published on the PCC's website at:

<https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/reports-publications/independent-residents-panel-reports/>

Scrutiny of the Use of Police Powers Panel

The June 2021 Scrutiny of Police Powers Panel meeting remained online/remote, with the PCC attending the welcome, introductions and Constabulary update/Q&A on assaults on Police Officers. Whilst the numbers of recorded assaults on Police each month fluctuate there is an increasing trend when comparing the incidents in 2019 against 2020/21. However the level of severity is mostly 'without injury' and relatively stable. The Panel welcome the review of increased cases of assaults compared to the level of use of force and de-escalation of the situation. In addition to this, the Panel welcomed the update that Police Taser training has been revised to include a vehicle scenario as well as all policing tools (e.g. PAVA spray, batons, all PPE) within the National Decision Making model, not just Taser as a tool for deployment, with situation de-escalation work continuing. Panel members were also briefed on the Mobile Biometric Fingerprinting trial and viewed a video conversation between two outreach officers about Stop and Search.

The Chair of the Lammy Review Group – a Panel member - provided an update on their draft report and recommendations. The Panel's review of Stop & Search cases linked in to the Lammy Group Report, being the ongoing theme of **disproportionality**. Panel members reviewed the Body Worn Video (BWV) footage for cases where the subject of a Stop Search is Black and recorded as 'compliantly

handcuffed'. Stop and Search disproportionality is highest in the county of Somerset and so this geographical area was chosen, as well as Bristol East/Central as a comparison. Members' positive feedback includes: Professional Police Officers, no goading; Member empathy for Police Officers acting on their suspicions (in response to a burglary) and observing; and a case example of a female Officer conducting herself really well, being clear, balanced, gentle and seeks permission before taking actions.

The Members' concerns include: the standing item of BWV switched on but late; Possible learning regarding officer conversations with people; and questionable grounds for a Stop and Search.

The September Panel will include cases of Stop and Search where the grounds include 'smell of Cannabis'.

Panel reports, when authorised, are published on the PCC's website at:

<https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/reports-publications/scrutiny-police-powers-panel-reports/>

Independent Custody Visiting Scheme

Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) continue with weekly unannounced visits throughout the pandemic, now onsite as well as a few still remote Custody Record reviewing, at each of the 3 Custody Units. During April to June 2021 (Quarter 1), the total number of detained people through custody was 4264 (Q1 2020 was 4277). At the time of the 41 ICV visits in Q1 there were a total of 341 Detainees in custody and ICVs visited 110 Detainees, checking each person's Rights, Entitlements and welfare. ICVs also remotely reviewed 114 Custody Records.

ICVs report **positive findings**, including: ICVs commended Detention Officers (DOs) for their caring and kind management of vulnerable Detainees with complex needs and challenging work; Solicitors visiting custody to advise vulnerable and child detainees and attending interviews, rather than remote working; DOs taking the time to have conversations with Detainees, to de-escalate the situation.

Causes for ICV concern include: Minimum staffing levels at Bridgwater Custody Unit resulted in 2 abandoned ICV visits in May and June 2021; One ICV reports a lack of Local Authority accommodation for a child (under 18) detainee (post charge) and an extended detention time. This is a national problem of a lack of emergency accommodation. There is also an ICV supported request for stakeholders to lobby to have an Appropriate Adult as a statutory requirement for vulnerable adult Detainees, not just children in custody. PCC commissioning (or none) is inconsistent nationally and has limited hours at best. It would be ideal to have Liaison and Diversion staff (locally called 'Advice and Support in Custody & Courts' – ASCC) based in each Custody Unit 24/7, or even to be available via video link 24/7.

Examples of where ICVs have effected change:

1. Decoration of some cells (repainting cell walls) resulted in the overpainting of the compass point (to aid Muslim detainees to position themselves for prayer). This was reported and the situation was rectified. During the ICV visit the Muslim detainee was moved to another cell with the compass point visible, as normal, above the cell door.
2. Pilot newly painted Exercise Yard at Bridgwater Custody Unit, with a goal post painted on the end wall and a soft ball. The painted goal post (or basketball hoop) is a distraction/de-escalation proposal, made by the ICVs. The foam football was damaged by a detainee (as has happened in the past) but has been replaced. However, it's on a request basis.

3. An ICV's football shirt donation at the beginning of the visit delighted a young detainee football fan shortly after. The ICV/Detainee conversation included football and led to the top being given via the EO. A very welcome happy moment. A kind and caring gesture could make all the difference for that person. The football and other magazine donations (staples removed) are very much appreciated too.

The next theme for ICVs will include 'Request culture', to seek assurances that Detainees are clearly informed of their entitlements as well as their Rights, rather than being expected to ask for a specific entitlement, such as a shower, exercise yard use, reading and religious material, as well as nicotine replacement lozenges.

Out of Court Disposal Panel

Out of Court Disposal's are a way of dealing with less serious offending without going to court.

The Out of Court Disposals Scrutiny Panel independently scrutinises the use of Out of Court Disposals in response to national recommendations following concerns about their appropriate use.

The most recent meeting took place on the 7th September with the theme of Disproportionality.

The final reports will be shared with the constabulary for comment and then published on the OPCC website.

<https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/reports-publications/out-court-disposals-reports/>

5. CONTACTS AND CONDUCT

Contacts/Complaints Oversight

The OPCC Contacts Team receive a varied amount of email and telephone calls per week internally and externally. These contacts range from members of the public seeking to invite the PCC to events, enquiries about funding and more complex matters such as complaints or community issues raised by MPs. Of this correspondence an average of 32 per week result in a case being created in the OPCC case management system and case work being required.

No. of cases created and managed per month:

Month	2021	2020	-/+
June	191	491	-300
July	195	239	-44
August	135	225	-90

The comparison of year on year data is impacted by the 2020 demand in to the office during the Bristol BLM protest, toppling of the Colston Statue and the Government response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The OPCC average contact handling time for this period reduced from an average of 5.3 days in 2020 to 4.7 days in 2021. 79% of contacts over June to Aug in 2021 were closed within 5 days or less.

High cases (these are cases that are higher complexity, risk, public impact or organisational reputation) continue to be higher in comparison to last year with an 85% increase in cases graded as high and a total of 67% of cases graded as high or medium over this period.

Cases of this nature require more senior and in depth handling and the contact team held 80 to 100 live and active cases at any one time.

Month	High 2021	High 2020	Med 2021	Med 2020
June	94	22	155	123
July	37	19	103	142
Aug	25	18	60	123

Email is still the primary means of contacting the PCC with 70% of contact received via this medium. High demand themes over this period included both the Constabulary response and PCC's commitment to tackling VAWG offences, the Constabulary relationship with Stonewall, the wider use of e-scooters, local concerns around ASB and contact relating to police complaints and dissatisfaction with service.

Data also includes monitoring of complaints which is a statutory function for the PCC. Since Sept 2019 (when records started), the PCC has monitored 300 police complaints. The team continue to check complaints handling regularly to support timely resolution and compliance with the IOPC Statutory Guidance 2020.

Complaint Reviews

The complaint review process allows the PCC to independently scrutinise complaints handled by the police on behalf of complainants and to check whether a complaint was handled lawfully and correctly. There has been a sustained increase in review applications compared to 2020 with over a 100% increase year on year. The PCC has received 85 complaint review applications since taking office.

23% of reviews were upheld, 72% not upheld and 5% were void. These rates are comparable with those in similar forces.

The review process provides a valuable insight into dissatisfaction themes. Learning is shared with the force and reviewed at a quarterly forum attended by the Independent Office for Police Conduct and local policing bodies in the South West and Wales.

The Joint Audit Committee (JAC) are carrying out a comprehensive audit of complaints in September and the OPCC are working closely with the audit team to help facilitate this important work.

6. GOVERNANCE

HMICFRS

Since last reported four new responses have been published:

- *Review of policing domestic abuse during the pandemic - 2021*
- *Interim report: inspection into how effectively the police engage with women and girls*

There are five new publications requiring a response (the first three of which will be published by the time the meeting takes place):

- *Neurodiversity in the criminal justice system: A review of evidence*
- *A joint thematic inspection of the police and Crown Prosecution Service's response to rape – Phase one: From report to police or CPS decision to take no further action*
- *State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2020*
- *A shared confidence: A summary of how law enforcement agencies use sensitive intelligence*
- *A review of 'Fraud: Time to choose'*

The police super-complaint report *A duty to protect: Police use of protective measures in cases involving violence against women and girls* was also published and contains recommendations for Chief Constables.

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/reports-publications/police-crime-board-reports/>

Key Decisions -

There have been two formal decisions since the March Panel meeting:

- Appointment of OPCC Chief of Staff
- Appointment of Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner
- Interim OPCC Chief Finance Officer contract extension
- Award of Zscaler contract

All decision notices and accompanying documents are published at the following link:

<https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/reports-publications/decisions-log/>

Update on Yeovil: Whilst provision within Yeovil remains a priority it is not appropriate to constrain any decision to a superseded timeline. The project is being paused and reviewed in the context of the overall review for South Somerset and the overarching principles of the estates strategy.

NEW: Operation Remedy

The PCC continues to discharge regular multi-faceted scrutiny in this area. This is through Police and Crime Board where it is tabled for an assurance report for October 2021 and will be further scrutinised by the Police and Crime Panel in December 2021 as part of their work programme. The PCC has spent time through his engagement work with officers from Operation Remedy across the force area. He continues to liaise with the Chief Constable and senior leads on the effectiveness and efficiency of the approach. The PCC continues to challenge the police on use of body worn video in this area.

A more comprehensive report has been provided to the panel including performance data and an overview of how the Operation Remedy activity supports the National Policing Outcomes.

Estates – STANDING ITEM

A comprehensive programme reviewing the current estate strategy and principles is well underway informing the development of a renewed strategy which will align with the principles of the developing Police & Crime Plan. The process includes examining the efficiency and effectiveness of arrangements for custody and prisoner transport, enquiry office provision, the tenure of assets and the opportunities

presented through the changing utilisation and ownership of property that is developing. This work has been brought together at two key meetings with senior constabulary and OPCC leaders and will be further progressed over the autumn.

There has also been a successful partnership approach to the investment at Lewis House where additional rooms have been made available by the Council enabling the existing services to continue whilst the refurbishment works take place. This is a welcome approach which will provide a continuous service to be delivered to public without undue disruption.

Green agenda

Further to the progress and performance shared with Panel in June, ASC had intended to run a workshop to progress the Sustainability Plan work in August which will culminate in a new 5 year strategy. Unfortunately, contrary to expectations, the COVID situation wasn't sufficiently improved to allow a face to face workshop to go ahead and this is now planned for Thursday 23rd September. However, the core group have met and progressed work on a number of key themes including decarbonisation (particularly buildings, fleet and digital), 'scope 3' emissions which includes supply chain, waste, commuting and the carbon cost of crime, and how we engage our people and gain commitment to being greener as part of being an 'employer of choice'. The core working group includes representation from frontline policing, corporate communications and academia.

The Police and Crime Plan will include a Sustainability objective which will help ensure that there is appropriate oversight and scrutiny in this critical area.

The Constabulary will also be audited on Sustainability by SWAP, our Internal Auditors, in Quarter 3.

7. POLICE AND CRIME PLAN

Consultation

The online survey will close on 20th September having been open for 12 weeks. There have already been 2900 responses which surpasses the original target of 2328. Over three quarters of respondents have been victims of crime. We are satisfied the statutory duty has been discharged in a meaningful way.

As detailed in the Communications and Engagement section, both tranches of the postal survey have been sent out: 20,000 in total. Early indications show a really strong response from different ethnic minority groups. There remain three significant areas where the survey has not met expected ambitions:

- Age – the overall profile of respondents is skewed with significant under-representation from those aged under 25.
- Voting status – 67% of survey respondents voted in the 2021 PCC election. This compares with only 29% of the actual adult population of A&S that voted. In terms of disproportionality this means people who have voted are 6.5 times more likely to have completed the survey.
- 'Internal' engagement – less than 10% of the Constabulary workforce have completed the survey.

Content

The significant portion of the content of the plan will be based on the objectives. This content has all been drafted and is under review by the PCC before sharing with partners.

Performance and assurance

The majority of Key Performance Indicators have been agreed. Most objectives have at least one numerical measure. These KPIs will form the basis of new performance reporting and assurance arrangements and there are already meetings booked in September to refine these plans more. This will include development of a public scrutiny forum.

Police and Crime Plan Programme Board

The Board continue to meet monthly and comprises of key representatives from OPCC and ASP to check, test and review progress in the development of the plan specifically, consultation, content and performance/assurance as well as ensuring delivery against the agreed timeline and risks/issues are identified, recorded and mitigated. The Police and Crime Panel are well represented and have provided valuable contributions.

Timeline

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Date</u>
Consultation closes	20 th September 2021
Draft plan submitted to Police and Crime Panel	15 th October 2021
PCC to present draft plan to Police and Crime Panel	26 th October 2021
Panel feedback on plan and any revisions	27 th October 2021-25 th November 2021
Final submission of plan to Police and Crime Panel	26 th November 2021
Final PCC presentation of the plan to the Police and Crime Panel	9 th December 2021

8. PCC REVIEW – PHASE 1 AND 2

Status Update

The Policing Minister wrote to PCC's in late July to confirm the intention to launch Part Two of the Government's review into the role of Police and Crime Commissioners. Phase One of that review has now been completed and the recommendations are now being implemented, with support from PCC's and other policing partners. The recommendations focus on ways to sharpen the accountability, visibility and transparency of PCCs, as well as considering their role in strengthening fire governance and progression of the Government's longer-term ambitions on mayoral devolution.

In Part Two, the review will focus on:

- Work alongside the Ministry of Justice and Probation Service to examine the role of PCCs in offender management aligned to existing operating models.
- Consider the role of PCCs in the partnership landscape and assess whether their current set of tools and levers are sufficient to drive and co-ordinate local activity to reduce crime, combat drugs misuse and tackle anti-social behaviour. The Review will focus on Local Criminal Justice Boards, Community Safety Partnerships and Violence Reduction Units.
- As previously announced during Part One, we will also bring forward a stakeholder consultation on giving a general power of competence to PCCs, as afforded to Local Authorities.

Alongside expanding the role of PCCs, the review aims to build on the work carried out in Part One of the Review, ensuring there are effective local scrutiny mechanisms in place and that PCC's continue to be accountable to the communities they serve.

The review will also:

- Assess the Police and Crime Panel Model - specifically the potential benefits of independent members, identifying and securing the right skill sets and options to strengthen panel support.
- Consider whether the existing mechanisms for investigating complaints and allegations against PCCs are sufficient and examine the role of the IOPC in assessing criminal wrongdoings by PCCs and the issue of vexatious complaints.
- Work with the Cabinet Office and the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government to consider the merits and demerits of introducing recall for PCCs for very serious breaches of behaviour, including what might be a suitable trigger mechanism.
- Through Part Two of this Review and the upcoming Spending Review, the Home Office will examine how PCCs use data in holding Chief Constables to account for the efficient and effective delivery of policing services in their respective areas, including how data is fed into centrally-held databases and is utilised by the Home Office and relevant policing partners to reduce crime.

Both the APCC and the Home Office have launched their 'Calls for Evidence' which reflect the areas considered under Part Two of the review. The PCC and OPCC are currently working on the response which is due by the 17th September.

Fire Governance –STANDING ITEM

The Government has been clear that further reform of fire and rescue is required in order to respond to the recommendations from Phase 1 of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, the Kerslake Review and to build on the findings from Sir Thomas Winsor's State of Fire and Rescue Report.

The Home Office were due to launch a consultative White Paper on fire reform in July 2021 however this has been delayed and is expected later in the year.

NEW: PCC Review - Specified Information Order

The government have now published guidance on this. There are three parts to this reporting.

- **National Police and Crime Measures** – This is the most complex of the three areas. The office has been connected with APACE group work on this. This is a significant piece of work to do this thoroughly which will involve joint work between the OPCC and Constabulary. We have already started discussions with the Constabulary and an example report has been produced which Panel members can feedback on.
- **HMICFRS** – this is about publishing their reports on the PCC website which we already do along with responses to these.
- **Complaints** - The Order provides that PCCs must publish the most recent IOPC quarterly complaints data for their force and the IOPC annual statistics report, alongside a narrative setting out how the PCC is holding the chief officer to account, and the PCC's assessment of their own performance in carrying out their other complaints handling functions.

The Order also requires PCCs to provide a statement on the contribution of their force to achieving improvements against those priorities. The Home Office recommend that this statement includes:

1. reflections on force performance and how the force has contributed towards the delivery of the national measures, including contextual information that might help explain that contribution

2. a summary of planned action for the next quarter to drive the force's performance against applicable measures
3. an explanation of which of the Measures are assessed to be applicable and which are not applicable in the local context, including the reasons for that assessment

A joint working group has been established to deliver this suite of work which is provided quarterly with first publication due alongside the launch of the Police and Crime Plan in December 2021. A copy of the first draft of the format for the reporting has been provided to the panel separately. The Order requires that this statement is published at the same time as the Policing and Crime Plan, and that it is reviewed quarterly, and any variation published, within one month following publication of an annual report on the force by HMICFRS.

NEW: Succession Planning

The Policing Minister wrote to PCC's in July 2021 reiterating the recommendations they committed to legislating, when Parliamentary time allows, to mandate that all PCCs must appoint a deputy.

The PCC has elected to appoint a deputy in recognition of the national view that selecting a deputy not only provides the local accountability model with greater resilience in the event of incapacity, for example, but also the ability to effectively carry out the duties and responsibilities of the role by increasing the capacity of the model.

It is also expected that PCCs to work with their office to put in place a formal succession plan to be followed in case of vacancy or incapacitation, where one does not already exist. In Avon & Somerset, this work is already underway and Legal Services are designing a draft protocol based on inputs from both the Democratic Specialist and the Interim CEO and in consideration of the legislation. A final draft is expected in the mid-Autumn which will be submitted for sign off by both the PCC and the Police and Crime Panel

Contact Officer – Sally Fox, Interim Chief Executive