



**AVON &  
SOMERSET**  
POLICE & CRIME  
COMMISSIONER

# AVON & SOMERSET POLICE & CRIME PLAN 2021-2025

SAFER COMMUNITIES FOR ALL

## Contents

Foreword	3
Peelian principles	5
Roles and responsibilities	6
The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner	8
The Avon and Somerset area	9
Priority 1: Preventing and fighting crime	10
Priority 2: Engaging, supporting and working with communities, victims and partner organisations	20
Priority 3: Leading the police to be efficient and effective	26
Priority 4: Increasing the legitimacy of, and public confidence in, the police and criminal justice system	35
How will performance be measured?	41
Resources and budget	44
Grants and commissioning	46
Make a difference and get involved	47
Useful contacts	49
Footnotes	50

## Foreword

As the new Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Avon and Somerset, I am determined that you will have the most effective and efficient police service that meets the needs of your community while delivering the best value for money.

I want your police service, and its partners in the criminal justice system, to work closely with other statutory agencies in your area to ensure we prevent crime and protect the most vulnerable people.

This Police and Crime Plan was built around my manifesto, upon which I was democratically elected into office. It details my priorities of ensuring the police are **Preventing and fighting crime; Engaging supporting and working with communities, victims and partner organisations;** making sure I am **Leading the police to be efficient and effective** and, crucially, **Increasing the legitimacy of, and public confidence in, the police and criminal justice system.** My aim is to support the police to improve their delivery and performance on a variety of policing issues under each of these four priorities.

A Police and Crime Plan is the blueprint for local policing. The Plan outlines specific areas of focus for improvement by the Chief Constable, and their officers and staff, to be delivered during my term in the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC).

A Police and Crime Plan is a statutory document that must be created in consultation with the Chief Constable of Avon and Somerset Police (ASP), our partner agencies, and the public. The plan must also include my aims for the police service to reduce crime and disorder and information on how police funding is allocated as well as how the service will report to me on the progress of its work. It must also take into consideration national policing priorities, for example The Government's investment in policing through the [Uplift Programme](#), the [Beating Crime Plan](#) and the statutory framework of the [National Crime and Policing Measures](#).

My vision is to lead Avon and Somerset Police to reassure our communities by building a culture that puts the emphasis of policing back on to the **prevention of crime**. My plan will support the police to do this through focusing on strengthening partnership working, greater visibility, better engagement within communities, early intervention, reducing reoffending and, most importantly, improving the outcomes and support for victims and witnesses of crime.

My Plan will focus the service on the **Peelian principles** and really get to the heart of what it means to police by consent - that basic mission to prevent crime and disorder which is dependent on the support, approval and respect of the public. **Legitimacy** and **confidence** is the backbone of our model of policing by consent, without which it does not work.

Avon and Somerset is a diverse area from the culturally rich, densely populated and busy cities of Bristol and Bath to the beautiful and scenic countryside and market towns of Somerset. The region has a growing and diversifying population, so it is an exciting place to live or work in and a challenging area to police. I want the police to be innovative and maximise their resources to find opportunities to prevent, disrupt and deter offenders where you live - whether you are a farmer in Mendip, a family in a tower block in Bristol or a student living in a shared house in Bath. I want to ensure everyone's policing needs are heard and understood and my plan sets out how better, and more frequent engagement, with all of our communities is critical to success for the police service, as well as me and my office. True legitimacy and confidence, requires an ongoing and consistent dialogue with all of our communities to ensure we maintain those Peelian principles of approval and respect. I strongly believe that the support of the public should never be taken for granted.

Consultation is a critical part of that dialogue. As part of the process of shaping this plan we consulted more than 4,000 people across the area through an online and postal survey that sought the views on many policing matters. Through our survey delivery methods, we sought the widest possible range of views and targeted geographical areas where I had the fewest votes from the public in my election in order to strengthen the legitimacy of our consultation.

The plan will be implemented through the agreed framework of governance and responsibility which sets out a clear ownership for the **direction, design and delivery** of your policing services in Avon and Somerset.

The direction is my responsibility as your PCC and is set out within the detail of this Police and Crime Plan. The design of your policing services is a collaborative effort between me and the Chief Constable. The delivery, of course, is the responsibility of the Chief Constable and my role is the continued scrutiny of the way in which that is done.

Avon and Somerset Police has been on a pivotal journey of culture change during the last five years. Their vision is **Outstanding policing for everyone** delivered through their mission to **Serve, Protect and Respect** our communities. It has become a values driven organisation, which puts **Inclusion, Learning, Caring** and **Courage** at the heart of everything it does. I want Avon and Somerset to continue to build on this approach on its journey to being an outstanding police service and I believe they can do this by effecting change and real improvements under the priorities I have outlined in this plan because they are the issues that you have told me are important to you.

It is clear that we can't tackle all the issues we face in isolation. There are problems that affect our society which we know won't be solved through policing alone. Only by working together, with our partners and the public, will we find solutions that make our communities safer for all and strengthen the culture of learning and inclusivity that has been established in Avon and Somerset Police.

My promise to you is that I will use my role, as your PCC, and do everything in my power to bring those partners together to work hard to deliver efficient and effective services for Avon and Somerset.

## Peelian principles

Sir Robert Peel was Home Secretary and In 1829, he established the first full-time, professional and centrally-organised police force in England and Wales.

This policing is based on the idea that the power of the police comes from the common consent of the public, as opposed to the power of the state. This concept is underpinned by nine principles. This continues, to this day, to be the basis of the British model of 'policing by consent'

1. The basic mission for which the police exist is to prevent crime and disorder.
2. The ability of the police to perform their duties is dependent upon public approval of police actions.
3. Police must secure the willing co-operation of the public in voluntary observance of the law to be able to secure and maintain the respect of the public.
4. The degree of co-operation of the public that can be secured diminishes proportionately to the necessity of the use of physical force.
5. Police seek and preserve public favour not by pandering to public opinion but by constantly demonstrating absolute impartial service to the law.
6. Police use physical force to the extent necessary to secure observance of the law or to restore order only when the exercise of persuasion, advice and warning is found to be insufficient.
7. Police, at all times, should maintain a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police; the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence.
8. Police should always direct their action strictly towards their functions and never appear to usurp the powers of the judiciary.
9. The test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with it.

## Roles and responsibilities

### The Police and Crime Commissioner

As PCC I am democratically elected to act as the voice of the communities of Avon and Somerset. In addition to this there are a number of legal duties I have which are described below.

- Securing that the police force is efficient and effective
- Setting the strategic direction for policing in Avon and Somerset
- Publishing a Police and Crime Plan, in consultation with the Chief Constable and local people
- Setting the budget for the police
- Setting the policing part of the council tax precept
- Holding the Chief Constable to account for delivering policing
- Appointing, and if necessary, dismissing the Chief Constable
- Supporting and challenging police performance
- Engaging with communities including victims
- Commissioning victim support services and awards grants in the community
- Working with partners in the areas of criminal justice and community safety

### The Chief Constable

The Chief Constable is operationally independent of my role and their key duties are described below.

- Responsible for day-to-day operational policing
- Directs and controls the officers and staff of Avon and Somerset Police
- Maintains the Queen's Peace
- Keeps the communities of Avon and Somerset safe
- Delivers the Police and Crime Plan
- Personally sets and promotes high standards of professional conduct
- Leads by example to create and uphold a quality service to local people

### The Police and Crime Panel

The role of the Panel is to scrutinise, challenge and support the PCC in the effective exercise of my functions. The roles and responsibilities of the Police and Crime Panel are set out in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. The Panel is made up of 14 councillors from all Local Authorities in the area, plus three independent co-opted members. It requires both a political and geographical balance. The Panel scrutinises the work of the PCC by:

- Reviewing the Police and Crime Plan and Annual Report
- Scrutinising (and potentially vetoing) the proposed council tax precept for policing
- Holding confirmation hearings for the PCC's proposed appointments of a Chief Constable, Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer and Deputy PCC. The Panel may also veto the Chief Constable appointment
- Scrutinising the actions and decisions of the PCC
- Considering complaints against the PCC that are not criminal in nature

Further information on the role and work of the Panel can be found at:

<https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/about/police-and-crime-panel/>

## **Partners**

I recognise that police and crime issues are too important and complex to be resolved by the police alone. Throughout this plan you will see I am committed to working closely with partners, especially local authorities, health, criminal justice and the voluntary and community sector to improve services for local people. I will actively seek opportunities to align funding and jointly commission services to address local priorities. Recognising that while some policing issues are applicable in all areas, there are specific needs which are more prevalent in specific areas. By developing local plans with partners in each local authority area, I will ensure that the needs and challenges of specific communities are met and strategic priorities are aligned with partners.

## The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)

As a PCC I would not be able to discharge my duties without the support of a team. I have a small team – the OPCC – who are a publicly funded organisation. As such they must always work in the best interests of the public whilst providing good value for money. The OPCC support on key themes such as:

- strategic financial policy
- community engagement and communications to and from the public;
- scrutiny and governance of the police including performance;
- complaints reviews and misconduct appeal proceedings;
- commissioning victim support services and bidding for additional funding;
- supporting volunteers; and
- facilitating partnership working including through Violence Reduction Units, criminal justice and reducing reoffending.

The team is split into specific business areas. Each area is headed by a senior leader who is accountable for their performance to the Chief of Staff.

The Chief of Staff is the head of the OPCC and I appointed a new person into this role in 2021. They must review and shape the OPCC in order that it can best support this Police and Crime Plan. I expect my senior leaders to work together to set a clear direction and to deliver measurable benefits for communities. This performance will be monitored and reported on to the public.

The OPCC have to work in a flexible way that is responsive to the changing needs of my role and the public. They must help me embed the changes from the national PCC Review. The team need to seize every opportunity to bid for additional funding that will directly benefit the communities of Avon and Somerset.

The OPCC must continue to enhance their work with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC), the Association of Police Chief Executives (APACE), the Home Office and Ministry of Justice to adopt best practice locally and also influence nationally.

None of this can be achieved without a happy and engaged workforce. I will embrace the organisational values in my leadership of the office to be efficient and effective.





## The Avon and Somerset area

Avon and Somerset is an area of about 4,800 square kilometres in the South West of England that is bordered by the counties of Gloucestershire in the North, Wiltshire to the East and Dorset, Devon and Cornwall to the South.

It is a geographically diverse area from the beautiful and scenic rolling hills, national parks, levels and market towns of Somerset to the culturally rich, historic and vibrant cities of Bristol and Bath. Across the whole of Avon and Somerset 22.8% of the population live in rural areas, however this varies greatly by Local Authority ranging from Bristol, which is wholly urban, to Somerset which has almost half the population living in rural areas.

The region has a growing and diversifying population. The Office of National Statistics (ONS) estimated the population was just over 1.7 million people (in 2019) with about 723,000 households. The population is expected to keep growing with the highest growth rates projected to be among children aged 5 to 14, particularly in Bristol and people aged 70 and over, particularly in North Somerset and Somerset.

At the 2011 Census, the overall resident population in the Local Authorities served by the force was less ethnically diverse than the national average. However, diversity is increasing and there are significant differences across urban and rural areas. At the last census, there were just under 110,000 people from Asian, Black, Mixed or Other ethnic minority backgrounds in Avon and Somerset, representing 6.7% of the population; in Bristol people from these ethnic minority backgrounds made up 16% of the population. The new census data, due to be published in 2022, is expected to see an increase in these percentages.

There are small populations of Portuguese and Lithuanian people living in Somerset, with Bristol having larger populations of people from China, Hong Kong, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Somalia and Poland.

### Public sector partner organisations

- Four unitary authorities – Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire
- A two tier authority area made up of Somerset County Council and the district councils of Mendip, Sedgemoor, Somerset West and Taunton and South Somerset (this structure was under review in 2021)
- Five Community Safety Partnerships – Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset, Somerset, South Gloucestershire
- Five Youth Offending Teams covering the same areas
- Three Clinical Commissioning Groups – NHS Bath & North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire (BSW); NHS Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire (BNSSG); and NHS Somerset
- Two Fire Services – Avon Fire and Rescue Service, Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service
- Five Magistrates Courts – Bath, Bristol, Weston-super-Mare, Taunton and Yeovil
- Two Crown Courts – Bristol and Taunton
- Four prisons – Ashfield, Bristol, Eastwood Park and Leyhill
- Vinney Green Secure Children’s Home
- Nine NHS Trusts – Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust, North Bristol NHS Trust, RUH Bath NHS Foundation Trust, Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust, Taunton and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust, University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust, Weston Area Health NHS Trust and Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

## Priority 1 – Preventing and fighting crime

Areas of focus	
Vulnerable children and adults	Male violence against women and girls specifically domestic abuse, sexual offences, stalking and harassment
Drug crime and serious violence	Neighbourhood crime and anti-social behaviour specifically burglary, car crime, robbery, theft, hate crime and rural crime
Fraud and cybercrime	Road safety

The first Peelian Principle says “*the basic mission for which the police exist is to prevent crime and disorder*”.

### Objectives

- Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB).
- Increase the proportion of crimes reported to the police.
- Increase positive outcomes from reported crime and ASB.
- Fewer people to be killed and seriously injured on the roads.

Preventing crime is the single most important thing I want to achieve through this Police and Crime Plan. By preventing crime we reduce the need for a police response and reduce the need to punish people or suppress their rights.

With a focus on prevention we can reduce the amount of crime and ASB but we will never eliminate it. Therefore where incidents do happen I want them reported to the police and I want to see justice done.

### ***National Police and Crime Measures***

*National priorities for policing are specified in these measures:*

- *reduce murder and other homicide;*
- *reduce serious violence;*
- *disrupt drugs supply and county lines;*
- *reduce neighbourhood crime;*
- *tackle cyber crime; and*
- *improve satisfaction among victims with a particular focus on victims of domestic abuse.*

All police forces in England and Wales are expected to contribute to achieving these priorities. As you can see the ‘areas of focus’ in this Police and Crime Plan align well with the national themes. By successfully delivering this plan we will be also contributing to the national effort to reduce crime and improve service for victims.

## Vulnerable children and adults

*“A person is vulnerable if, as a result of their situation or circumstances, they are unable to take care of or protect themselves or others from harm or exploitation.”<sup>1</sup>*

Vulnerability is not just something that effects ‘other people’. Anybody can become vulnerable at any time: that is the unpredictability of life. If you or your loved ones are vulnerable, I want you to be a priority for Avon and Somerset Police.

RISK OF HARM	
<b>Personal Factors</b> ☒ Age ☒ Difference ☒ Disability ☒ Ethnicity ☒ Gender ☒ Mental Health ☒ Religion ☒ Sexual Orientation	<b>Situational Factors</b> ✧ Adverse Family Circumstances ✧ Adverse Community Circumstances ✧ Adverse Cultural Influences ✧ Coercive Control ✧ Grooming ✧ Immigrant Status ✧ Isolation ✧ Lack of Power ✧ Lack of Support ✧ Language Barriers ✧ Poverty ✧ Risky behaviour
<b>PRESENCE OF ABUSER OR EXPLOITER = HARM</b>	

16 STRANDS OF VULNERABILITY			
Adults at Risk	Child Abuse	Child Sexual Exploitation	Domestic Abuse
Female Genital Mutilation	Forced Marriage	Hate Crime	Honour Based Abuse
Management of Sexual or Violent Offenders	Mental Health	Missing Persons	Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking
Rape and Serious Sexual Offences	Risk of radicalisation	Sex Work	Stalking and Harassment

In Avon and Somerset, in the last year, there were nearly 22,000 vulnerable victims of crime<sup>2</sup>. Unfortunately many crimes against vulnerable people are hidden i.e. they are not reported to the police. So this figure only scratches the surface of the harm caused.

Exploitation is when somebody is groomed, forced or coerced into doing something they don’t want to do for someone else’s gain. This exploitation may be financial, emotional or physical. Often victims will have been exposed to risk outside the home – peer influences, the internet and social media are becoming key pathways into exploitation.<sup>3</sup> Exploitation of vulnerable adults and children is a significant part of the model of County Lines drugs dealing and modern slavery.

Slavery was abolished in this country about 200 years ago. However there are people in Avon and Somerset today subject to modern slavery and victims of Human Trafficking. The crime may be hidden but the people are not: they may be forced to work in businesses you have used, examples include nail bars and hand car washes.

Serious and organised criminals are benefitting from exploiting people in our communities.

I mentioned the hidden nature of these crimes therefore it is important that we build trust and confidence and Avon and Somerset Police reach out to these victims in order that they come forward.

It is essential when victims do come forward that Avon and Somerset Police:

- recognise and identify their vulnerability;
- hear their voice so it is at the heart of the investigation;
- investigate well to ensure the right outcome for the victim; and
- where possible secure a criminal justice outcome against the perpetrator.

A different approach is adopted where the perpetrator is a child. In these cases the aim is to work with them to divert them away from the criminal justice system in the first place to help prevent future offending. It is important that even where children have committed a crime their own vulnerability is taken into account and this is particularly true for looked after children and care leavers. Partnership working is crucial in this and the police will continue to work in a way that reflects the national direction such as that set out in the [Youth Justice Board Strategic Plan](#).

The College of Policing and National Police Chiefs' Council have issued a [National Vulnerability Action Plan](#) with the intent of improving how all police forces deal with vulnerability. Avon and Somerset Police have self-assessed against this plan and identified where they need to improve. They will continue assurance work against this plan to check and test their progress.

Vulnerability is complex and so the workforce require continued professional development to be able to effectively respond to these incidents. Avon and Somerset Police are adopting a trauma informed approach to policing. This approach is about recognising the trauma that crimes can cause and other trauma people have been through. This is about the police having empathy for the people they come into contact with and working in a way that does not re-traumatise them. This will take training but it is also about a change of attitudes and culture which will take years to embed. The police and partners should continue to explore, together, new and innovative approaches which will help protect and support vulnerable people; Project Bluestone<sup>7</sup>.

## **Male violence against women and girls specifically domestic abuse, sexual offences, stalking and harassment**

Male violence against women and girls (VAWG) is both a cause and consequence of gender inequality. Women and girls are disproportionately affected by a number of very serious and harmful crimes such as domestic abuse and sexual offences. This starts from a young age with girls much more likely to be the victims of sexual assaults on children. Women and girls are more likely to suffer harm as victims and men are considerably more likely to commit these crimes. Focussing on male violence against women and girls does not in any way detract from the fact that any person can be an offender or victim, nor is it meant to minimise anybody's experience as a victim. Many of the improvements made as a result of focused work in this area will benefit all victims.

Domestic abuse is where a person is abusive towards another, they are personally connected and are 16 years of age or older. Abusive means physical or sexual abuse; violent or threatening behaviour; controlling or coercive behaviour; economic abuse; psychological, emotional or other

abuse. Personally connected is where people are or have been in an intimate personal relationship or are relatives.

Sexual offences cover a wide range of offending. Including non-contact offences such as grooming and offences related to indecent images and revenge pornography. The most serious offence in this category is rape. Rape is second only to homicide when considering severity of all crimes.

Harassment broadly means causing alarm or distress or putting people in fear of violence. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a victim. Stalking includes actions such as following a person, watching or spying on them or forcing contact with the victim through any means, including social media. These offences are about a course of conduct which can leave victims feeling that they constantly have to be careful.

There are about 22,000 domestic abuse recorded crimes in Avon and Somerset each year: this equates to 17% of all recorded crime. This varies by offence type and over a third of all rapes were domestic abuse related. However this does not give a true scale of the harm caused. Domestic abuse is a 'hidden crime' i.e. it is often not reported to the police. Estimates show only about one in five victims of domestic abuse report it to the police. Domestic abuse can and does result in death: in a single year<sup>4</sup> in Avon and Somerset there were five domestic homicides and six suicides in the context of domestic abuse.

There are over 4,260 recorded sexual offences in Avon and Somerset each year of which 1,650 are rapes. Like domestic abuse sexual offences are often not reported to the police and estimates show that one in five women are victims of sexual assault (or attempted assault) in their lifetime<sup>5</sup>. There were 15,500 recorded stalking and harassment offences in Avon and Somerset in the last year<sup>6</sup>. *"There was a lack of understanding of stalking behaviours amongst victims and police which may be resulting in an underestimation of its real prevalence and under-reporting to the police."*<sup>5</sup> Stalking and harassment are also offences which can indicate escalating behaviour and offenders may go to commit much more serious crimes against the victim.

This plan seeks to support the national VAWG Strategy to enter into a decade of change to reduce the harm caused by these crimes. Nationally and locally prosecutions for rape and serious sexual offences (RASSO) have continued to fall over the past three years despite more cases being referred to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). Declining prosecutions have been met with increasingly long times for cases to get to trial which has been exacerbated by the pandemic. More serious and complex cases such as RASSO can take years to get to trial. This is unacceptable and I discuss this more in the 'area of focus' on the criminal justice system.

To address this, we must work to tackle the attitudes, behaviours and ultimately criminal activity of offenders. Investigations should be evidence-led and focus on the offender rather than the victim. There needs to be sufficient support to challenge and change behaviours through offender management and perpetrator programmes. Crucially, positive outcomes for victims require capacity to deal with the volume and complexity of these crimes in a timely manner.

The Avon and Somerset Police workforce need the capability to respond in a way that is trauma and gender-informed which supports victims. This requires a cultural change through leadership and development. In addition the lived experiences of victims and their children should be heard and influence approaches. By collaborating with partners on innovative multi-agency responses we can enhance our impact to work more efficiently and effectively together.

Continuous improvement will be essential to eliminating an issue as pervasive as this. Avon and Somerset Police need to deliver on their own VAWG plans. Project Bluestone<sup>7</sup> is opening the doors of policing to academic scrutiny of RASSO like never before, bringing new ways of working and new perspectives that can bring with it a new era of policing to tackle these crimes. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 will place new duties on Avon and Somerset Police and also present them with new powers they can use.

## **Drug crime and serious violence**

With the illicit drug market being worth almost £10 billion a year in the UK<sup>8</sup>, the cascading effect of crime, exploitation and the impact on public health is becoming ever more increasing and problematic. In Avon and Somerset in 2020-21 there was a 4% increase in crime recorded with a drug related tag<sup>9</sup> this is noteworthy because overall crime reduced (because of the pandemic) which shows the persistent nature of this problem.

Drug supply and organised crime groups (OCGs) are inextricably linked. County Lines has become a very public example of OCGs pushing their harm into different communities. Avon and Somerset consistently has over 30 active lines at any one time and they operate all across the area. The drugs market is a significant problem as it brings visible street violence but also hidden violence and exploitation as well as other crime and ASB.

Avon and Somerset Police will continue to proactively identify and disrupt these OCGs. The police need the help of our communities to be able to do this better. The information provided by communities is essential to understand the problem and be able to target resources in the right places and at the right people. Please report these crimes.

In order to tackle this violence and other drug related crime we need to get upstream and prevent people from getting drawn into drug use. I will bring partners together, in our response to serious violence, building on the Public Health<sup>10</sup> model used by the Violence Reduction Units. This involves working with partners to identify risk and vulnerability at the earliest possible stage and ensure those vulnerable individuals have the right access to support and intervention. It also involves educating young people, local communities and professionals more broadly on the risks and identification of serious violence and child criminal exploitation (CCE). CCE is a common feature of County Lines drug dealing and is where children are used to store and transport drugs and money as well as being used to conduct drug deals and carry out violent attacks on behalf of the OCG. The children who commit these crimes should be recognised as vulnerable and exploited and treated as such. In parallel with protecting the children who are exploited Avon and Somerset Police can improve their proactive disruption of the perpetrators.

We will also work together to help ensure there are appropriate services available for those with drug addiction to break the cycle and prevent the harm caused to themselves and communities.

Bristol has been recognised nationally as having a relatively high number of illegal drug users. In 2021 Bristol City Council and Avon and Somerset Police were awarded funding for a pilot programme to collectively tackle the problem, this is called [Project ADDER](#). By delivering this pilot in Bristol Avon and Somerset Police can use the learning to help improve their response across the rest of the force area.

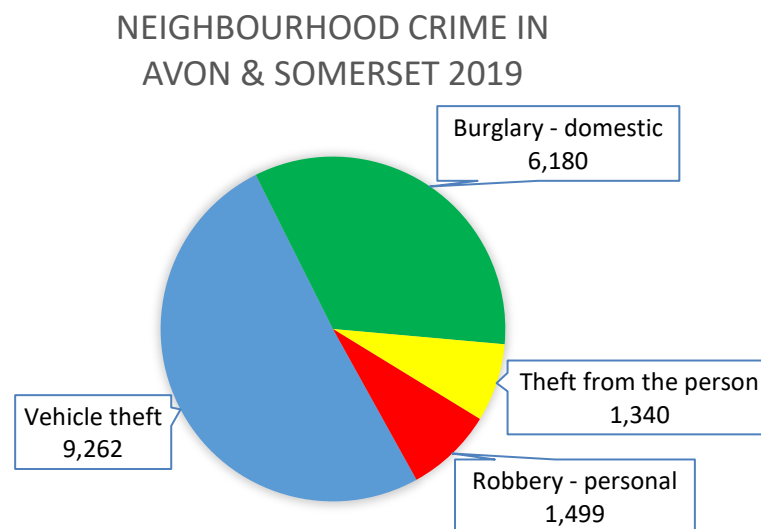
In a broader sense there are over 30,000 violence offences each year in Avon and Somerset. Aside from drugs, alcohol also plays a significant part in these offences. This ranges from the very public

violence seen as part of the Night Time Economy to hidden domestic violence, which alcohol is known to increase the regularity and severity of. These crimes should be properly investigated and offenders brought to justice. People who abuse alcohol need to be identified and offered support as part of their rehabilitation: the police are a critical gateway in this process.

## Neighbourhood crime and anti-social behaviour specifically burglary, car crime, robbery, theft, hate crime and rural crime

Neighbourhood crime is defined – in the national [Beating Crime Plan 2021](#) – as vehicle-related theft, domestic burglary, theft from the person and robbery of personal property.

These acquisitive crimes reduced during the pandemic due to social restrictions. In 2019, the last “normal” year before the pandemic, these four crime types alone accounted for 13% of all recorded crime in Avon and Somerset. They are crimes which affect many victims across the whole area.



In addition to these crime types I have identified a number of other issues which are also important to communities locally: hate crime, anti-social behaviour (ASB) and rural crime.

Neighbourhood policing has a much wider role than focussing on any particular crime type. I talk later in this plan about visible policing, community engagement and partnership working: neighbourhood policing is at the heart of these. Neighbourhood policing is also the engine room for prevention work.

Prevention requires a clear strategic direction focused on an [evidence-based policing](#) approach supported by a workforce with the skills and time they need to be able to do deliver.

Neighbourhood policing need to capitalise on the new local proactive teams to ensure this specialist capability is effectively targeted at the issues which matter most to the local community.

### Hate crime

Hate crime is where the offender has either demonstrated or been motivated by hostility based on a person’s race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or transgender identity. Avon and Somerset

Police have, for a number of years, also recognised and recorded hate based on gender. Hate crime can take a number of forms from verbal abuse and harassment to criminal damage and violence against the person.

In Avon and Somerset in 2020/21 there were 3,620 hate crimes; a 2.8% increase on the previous year. Race was the targeted characteristic in 71% of these hate crimes.

Hate Crime often increases after significant events. Seen in recent years after terrorist attacks, the Brexit referendum, Black Live Matter protests and COVID-19. There is also a growing amount of hate crime committed online.

Many people have been victims of crime at some point in their life and can understand the impact it can have. Now imagine you were the victim of that crime just because of something about you as a person. It can deeply affect the victims' day-to-day lives. Hate crime can also have a big impact on a community; a whole group of people who share that targeted characteristic can also feel victimised.

At its extreme hate has played a part in a number of high profile murders including that of Stephen Lawrence in London, Bijan Ebrahimi in Bristol and more recently Mikhail Hanid in Weston-super-Mare.

The police and I will continue to build confidence with all communities to encourage people to report these crimes to the police. Improvement really relies on community engagement and partnership working; discussed more in Priority 2 of this plan. This engagement will allow us to better understand the impact of these crimes and improve the service we offer.

Avon and Somerset Police should continue to build on their proactive work tackling repeat offenders and known hotspots. At the same time, the right outcomes for victims need to be achieved.

#### Anti-social behaviour

ASB can be defined as behaviour which causes, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person; or behaviour capable of causing nuisance or annoyance<sup>11</sup>.

People should recognise that ASB is not necessarily something separate from crime. In some cases ASB incidents do not meet the threshold for a criminal offence. However there are many incidents where the behaviour is criminal but ASB still remains as the context behind this.

In Avon and Somerset in 2020/21 there were 88,247 ASB incidents; a 10% increase on the previous year. *"We also know the devastating impact anti-social behaviour can have on individuals and neighbourhoods."*<sup>12</sup> Fiona Pilkington killed herself and her daughter in 2007 after suffering 10 years of ASB (including hate crime). This is one of the most tragic cases in recent history and brings into focus the devastating impact ASB can have on people.

Avon and Somerset Police will deliver against an agreed service standard. This includes understanding where incidents form part of a larger series of events and recognising victims' vulnerability within this.

Partnership working is essential, especially with local authorities. I will support Avon and Somerset Police in working with the councils to try and ensure a more consistent approach across the whole of Avon and Somerset. This includes all agencies making better use of the legal powers available to them.



I will also focus the police and partners on improving the use of the [Community Trigger](#). This is a process for people who have been repeat victims of ASB and do not feel they have had an adequate response from the responsible authorities. We need to collectively promote the Community Trigger to ensure victims are aware of their rights. The Community Trigger process should be efficient and effective, consistently achieving the right outcomes for communities across Avon and Somerset.

### Rural crime

Avon and Somerset Police define rural crime as any offence occurring in a rural area which directly or indirectly affects a farming or rural business or the rural communities. Rural means a close association with or dependence upon the land within that location.

Over a third of the Avon and Somerset's population is rural<sup>13</sup>. Some of the most common rural crimes include theft of farming vehicles and machinery; theft of dogs and livestock; barn arsons; poaching and hare coursing.

There are approximately 750 crimes flagged as rural each year in Avon and Somerset. However this is not an accurate reflection of the numbers as we know these crimes are under-reported. Also a single crime can have a significant impact on the individual and wider community. For example, a second hand tractor may cost £70,000. That tractor may be jointly owned by several farmers who, as a result of the theft, may not be able to sow or harvest a crop at the right time of year so may lose much more than the value of the tractor. Rural crimes can also be linked to Organised Crime Groups who are once again benefiting from victimising our communities.

Avon and Somerset Police have set a Rural Affairs Strategy which includes better identifying rural crimes and using this and other intelligence to provide a targeted response in collaboration with other agencies.

It is crucial that if you are a victim of crime you report this to the police so they can help you. In turn the police should provide the right level of response to you; including an appropriate quality of investigation. I want to ensure that – irrespective of the crime or ASB you suffer – that rural and urban residents receive a consistent level of service.

## **Fraud and cybercrime**

Fraud is when an offender says or does something dishonestly to mislead a person, or business, for their own benefit (usually financial) which may cause loss to the other party.

Cybercrime can be put into two distinct categories.

- Cyber-dependent – crimes that can be committed only through the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) devices, where the devices are both the tool for committing the crime, and the target of the crime. For example developing and propagating malware for financial gain or hacking to steal.
- Cyber-enabled – traditional crimes which can be increased in scale or reach by the use of ICT. This is where fraud and cybercrime significantly overlap.

Fraud and cybercrime pose a significant threat, representing over 50% of all crime in this country and costing the billions of pounds a year. There are between 800-1000 reports of fraud and cybercrime every month in Avon and Somerset however, the actual number is likely to be far higher. These types of crime are increasing in volume and complexity.

Avon and Somerset Police should continue to increase their capability to tackle this growing type of criminality. Consideration will need to be given to recruiting additional officers and staff and developing the expertise of the workforce. It is also important to attract and utilise the breadth of expertise in our communities through Cyber Specials and volunteers.

Cyber and fraud protect officers are a critical part of the workforce's capability working with individuals and local businesses to help prevent victimisation. This should also increase confidence to report these types of offences.

Avon and Somerset Police should continue to identify and disrupt online criminal activity at every opportunity to reduce victimisation and protect people from harm.

One in ten people are a victim of fraud and one in three victims become a repeat victim. Avon and Somerset Police will continue to support victims to protect our communities and break the cycle of re-victimisation. This support should help the most vulnerable to recover from what can be a traumatic experience.

Recognising that fraud and cybercrime are not bound by traditional area boundaries, we will work in partnership to develop and influence the local, regional and national response. To further this agenda I personally have taken on the national lead role for economic and cybercrime on behalf of the [Association of Police and Crime Commissioners](#). Taking this national role will help me and Avon and Somerset Police deliver better outcomes locally.

## **Road safety**

All people should be safe to use the roads in Avon and Somerset: this includes drivers, pedestrians, cyclists and riders alike. The top five contributing factors to death and serious injury on our road network are:

- drink and drug driving;
- inappropriate and excess speed;
- driver distraction, including use of mobile phones;
- not wearing a seatbelt; and
- careless and inconsiderate driving.

More people die on our roads than murder and terrorism combined each year and someone is killed or seriously injured every 20 minutes on UK roads. Road death and injury can cause devastation to residents across the Avon and Somerset region. This is an issue that affects all of our communities and the impact of road related death or injury to residents can be far reaching and long lasting.

Avon and Somerset Police attended 82 fatal road traffic collisions during 2019/20 and processed 12,161 collision reports. During this period 4,704 drink and drug driving arrests were made and 276,118 speeding offences recorded.

Road safety needs to be improved. Residents need and expect to see safer speeds, safer vehicles, safer roads and safer road users. It is vital that collisions are responded to and investigated effectively and victims and families are supported. Avon and Somerset Police will continue to take appropriate enforcement action for those who break the law and cause harm on our roads. Avon and Somerset Police can maximise their capacity in this area by utilising Specials and volunteers.

Prevention work relies on partners. Avon and Somerset Police should continue to work closely with local authorities, National Highways and other strategic partners to jointly address the fatal five. Targeted and collaborative campaigns will raise awareness of the dangers and educate and engage with the public. I will also work with the other PCCs in the region so we can support this agenda and help make the roads across the South West safer for everybody.

## Priority 2 – Engaging, supporting and working with communities, victims and partner organisations

Areas of focus	
Public engagement - particularly with underrepresented groups	Special Constables and citizens in policing
Supporting victims of crime and anti-social behaviour	The criminal justice system
Reducing reoffending	Collaboration and partnership working

I want to reassure the public that the police are there for them. I also want to support communities to be more resilient and resistant to crime. This requires the police to build relationships with victims and communities alike providing a service they are happy with.

### Objectives

- Increase engagement with and from communities.
- Increase victim satisfaction.
- Increase feelings of safety.

Partnership working is fundamental to successful policing. The objectives within this Police and Crime Plan will only be achieved through effective collaborative working. That is why, as PCC, I will work to bring partners together for the benefit of our communities.

Partners include public sector organisations and those from the voluntary and community sector. We must all be aware of the differing and ever changing landscape across organisations and we need to be responsive to each other's needs in improving the lives of our communities.

### Public engagement – particularly with underrepresented groups

Engagement is the interaction between the police and communities outside of response services. It is complicated and varied and getting it right requires sensitivity, emotional and cultural intelligence and a well trained workforce equipped with the right tools. Engagement needs to be embedded in the culture of the organisation.

Engagement is vital for local communities to have trust and confidence in their police service. It is crucial for legitimacy of the service provided, without which the British model of policing by consent will not work.

The police engage with people to:

- prevent crime by listening and acting on what communities are telling them;
- understand the communities they serve and their policing needs;
- build good relationships with all communities including under-represented and marginalised groups; and
- attract high quality and diverse people into the police service as employees or volunteers.

In Avon and Somerset the neighbourhood policing teams are at the heart of engagement. However engagement is broader than this and includes social media and traditional media, recruitment, specialist outreach teams, staff networks, youth outreach like cadets and mini-police, crime-prevention specialists, ride-alongs and open day events.

Avon and Somerset Police should set a clear strategic direction for engagement and help different parts of the workforce come together in a collaborative way.

Avon and Somerset Police can improve their processes by learning from best practice in other organisations. This is to make sure they are accessible, thoroughly consulting people and getting information and feedback into the service from its communities. This feedback is especially important in scrutinising the performance of the police and learning how it can be done better. Engagement is an important part of delivering against Priority 4 of this plan.

The reason PCCs are democratically elected is because they are meant to represent the voice of the people. That is why engagement is a core priority for me as well as Avon and Somerset Police. I want to see and hear from as many of you as possible. I want to work on engaging the many different types of communities across the whole of the Avon and Somerset area. In order to support this my newly appointed Deputy PCC will have a strong focus on community engagement. The engagement I, and my team, do will help ensure successful delivery of this Police and Crime Plan.

## **Special Constables and citizens in policing**

I want fewer people to be victims of crime and fewer people drawn into offending. The police and other public sector services have a key role to play, but local communities can also play an active role in preventing crime.

Citizens in policing refers to people outside the police working with and supporting the police to protect communities. Opportunities include the Special Constabulary, police volunteers, Cadets Neighbourhood Watch, Farm Watch and Community SpeedWatch.

Special Constables are volunteers but have the same powers as regular officers. They are an important part of the policing response providing additional deployable resource. In 2020 they provided 78,742 hours of policing. Specials primarily support Patrol but are also deployed in neighbourhood policing, roads policing, and, in smaller numbers, in specialist roles in cybercrime detection, Investigations and public order policing.

Specials bring additional skills and experience into the workforce which it might not otherwise benefit from. They usually police in the areas they live so Specials provide another important link into local communities.

Avon and Somerset Police will particularly seek to recruit those people who are, or might become, 'Career Specials'. These are people who are Specials for a longer time and see it as their volunteer vocation. The experience of these 'career Specials' can especially strengthen the knowledge and skills of the workforce.

Avon and Somerset Police want to get the best value from all those who selflessly volunteer their time. This means improving training and development so they become more integrated into the organisation, increasing their engagement and contribution.

I will also use opportunities to promote how individuals and groups can work with myself and the police. For example, through the [Business Crime Forum](#), I will help the police work efficiently with Business Crime Reduction Partnerships.

## **Supporting victims of crime and anti-social behaviour**

It is incumbent on the police that they support victims from the very first contact with them. This support should continue throughout the life of the investigation until the incident is finalised. This applies to individuals and businesses whether they are in urban or rural areas.

There are about 91,000 victims of crime recorded by Avon and Somerset Police each year. It is not good enough that some victims may not receive the support they need because of the nature of what happened, where they live or that they do not know that what they are experiencing is a crime. As discussed earlier in this plan, many victims do not report their crimes. Trust to report must be earned and those victims that do come forward should be properly supported.

To identify those who require a police response and the level of support required there needs to be a comprehensive look beyond what is reported. Victims should be really listened to and the impact of the crime understood. A report may come to the police as a single incident of ASB but once investigated further incidents and crimes are unearthed. A single phone call to the police might be the only record against a premises but what lies behind that may be years of lost income for a family business.

Victim care is central to all police work and is the responsibility of responding officers, investigators, the [Lighthouse](#) Safeguarding Unit (LSU) and external specialist support services alike. To meet the needs of victims all parts of the system should work together to provide appropriate and timely contact and support.

The [Victims' Code of Practice \(VCOP\)](#) is a national standard which sets out what victims are entitled to. This code makes clear that victims of the most serious crime and vulnerable, intimidated and persistently targeted victims are entitled to an enhanced service. Avon and Somerset Police need to continue to identify these enhanced victims so they get the best possible support.

I will work with fellow commissioners to make available specialist services which help victims cope and recover. My office will ensure there is a vigorous commissioning cycle of procurement, review and improvement. This commissioning should have the victim experience at the heart of the process, ensuring value for money and services suitable for a very diverse group of people and experiences.

Alongside the police, partners, the Watch schemes, employers, colleagues and residents associations can all play a powerful role in preventing crime and raising awareness to support victims.

## **The criminal justice system**

The criminal justice system (CJS) is made up of multiple agencies: the police, Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service, the Judiciary, Her Majesty's Prison & Probation Service, Youth Offending Teams and defence legal teams.

In a normal year, of all crimes reported to Avon and Somerset Police, about 13,000 (about 9%) are charged or summonsed to court and over 350 youth cautions are given. It is critical that all CJS agencies work effectively together to ensure offenders are brought to justice. Bringing offenders to justice is a way of protecting the victim and public from further harm. It is also an opportunity to rehabilitate an offender to prevent future offending.

The CJS is a complex environment and requires all partners to work closely together to ensure that cases are dealt with effectively and in good time. I will help bring partners together and oversee work in this area by chairing the [Local Criminal Justice Board](#).

The pandemic had a massive impact on the criminal justice system and has caused further delays in cases going through the CJS. The system already had backlogs and these were made significantly worse. This is a significant risk to public confidence and has the potential to undermine the system of justice in this country.

The pandemic has changed the way agencies work together such as improved information sharing. All agencies should maintain the benefits from these changes and continue to work together during the recovery phase to reduce the backlogs of cases and help ensure justice is delivered in a more timely way. A productive relationship between the police and CPS is essential with shared learning important for individual cases and at a strategic level. Enhancing information sharing will enable better analysis and performance management.

Avon and Somerset Police will conduct thorough investigations with the ethos of 'get it right first time'. 'Disclosure' is a fundamental part of this investigation process helping to ensure a fair trial and a legitimate criminal justice system. Criminal justice agencies in Avon and Somerset should look to improve by learning from the recommendations in the national disclosure improvement plan.

In March 2021 the College of Policing, National Police Chiefs' Council and CPS made a [National Case Progression Commitment](#). The findings from this national work should be understood and used to make improvements locally. Key themes from this include partner relationships, consistent and timely communication, defence engagement and improved disclosure processes.

The primary purpose of these improvements is to make the system more effective and achieve better criminal justice outcomes for victims and so the victim's voice is really important in this. More efficient processes will also provide better value for money and free up officer time to maximise visible policing.

## **Reducing reoffending**

Reducing reoffending is about preventing those, who have committed crimes already, from going on to commit further crimes. About 80% of all crime is committed by those reoffending. The national cost of reoffending is estimated to be £18.1 billion.

Tackling the causes of crime is essential in reducing reoffending. Illegal drug and alcohol misuse is a key driver. For example nearly half of all acquisitive crimes are estimated to be associated with drug use. Substance misuse is just one part of the problem. The most persistent and problematic offenders are often extremely vulnerable and have varied and complex needs. This is about stopping the revolving door in and out of the criminal justice system. Half of all crime is committed by just 5% of offenders so their rehabilitation will help protect victims and communities alike.

Avon and Somerset Police will be increasing the number of people in their offender management team. However rehabilitation is far beyond the scope of policing alone and that is why Integrated Offender Management (IOM) is so critical. IOM brings a multi-agency response to reoffending. The most persistent and problematic offenders are identified and managed jointly by agencies working together. The fundamental aim is to identify and resolve the causal factors of their offending to rehabilitate and prevent future crime. Community Safety Partnerships (see 'area of focus' on collaboration and partnership working) have a statutory duty to reduce reoffending; improving the connectivity between them and IOM is really important.

Information sharing between agencies is essential to fully understand the problems faced so the right resources can be efficiently and effectively targeted at the right people at the right time. This work must centre on the pathways to reduce reoffending behaviour.

- Accommodation
- Education, training and employment
- Health
- Drugs and alcohol
- Finance, benefit and debt
- Children and families
- Attitudes, thinking and behaviour

This is where working with the voluntary and community sector is crucial. The specialist services they provide significantly enhances the reach and support of the statutory agencies.

All organisations should be aware of and engage with changes and direction from a national level. Examples include the national IOM Strategy and the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill when enacted.

I will use my position to help bring these partners together to deliver the right outcomes for the people of Avon and Somerset. I will also explore opportunities to increase funding and influence commissioning.

As discussed elsewhere in this plan a different approach must be taken for children and adults. This is embedded in the [Child First](#) approach and there is an opportunity, for all partners to seize, to work with these children to protect them and change their lives. If done successfully this would be a significant step in preventing crime.

## **Collaboration and partnership working**

As PCC my primary duty, and that of the Chief Constable, is to the people of Avon and Somerset. However we cannot, nor should we, operate in isolation. There are many areas of policing that work through a local, regional and national level. Avon and Somerset Police work with the South West collaborations for example through the [Regional Organised Crime Unit and Counter-Terrorism Policing](#). The local and regional organisations also work with National Crime Agency in many respects. Collaborative working in these examples is essential due to the borderless nature of these threats.

Collaboration also brings the benefits of a pooled skillset, shared expertise and additional resilience to provide services to the public; the [Major Crime Investigation Team and South West Forensics](#) are good examples of this. Aside from operational policing, forces also collaborate on things like technology and procurement. Examples of this include the Emergency Services Network, Blue Light Procurement and Inter-Niche.



When Avon and Somerset Police collaborate with other agencies, this must be to deliver better services for the public. Financial savings are secondary to this purpose but the funding arrangements should be well defined and fair for all parties. Robust governance needs to be maintained to ensure services continue to be delivered, to the expected standards, for everybody.

As well as formal collaboration police forces will continue to work together regionally and nationally in order to problem solve and share best practice on various aspects of policing.

In addition to law enforcement agencies it is essential Avon and Somerset Police continue to work alongside the public sector and the voluntary and community sector. This partnership working is particularly important in relation to safeguarding and prevention work. The police alone can only tackle the symptoms of crime not the causes. Partnerships should have a clear and shared purpose and Avon and Somerset Police should continue to lead and influence when it comes to the value of data and data sharing. The police will also continue to work with other non-policing agencies with enforcement powers in order to tackle and disrupt offending.

Local authorities are one of the most important partners of policing. They also have legal duties relating to crime, ASB, safeguarding, domestic abuse; and many others. A significant way that the police, local authorities and other agencies<sup>14</sup> work together is through Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and adult and child safeguarding partnerships<sup>15</sup>. Safeguarding partnerships are there to prevent harm of those at risk. CSPs develop plans to reduce crime, ASB, substance misuse and reoffending. I will work closely with CSPs to help develop and ultimately deliver these important plans. The importance of partnership working cannot be understated and cuts across so many parts of this plan; including the Strategic Policing Requirement 'area of focus'.

All agencies should have agreed practices, which they each deliver against; proper information sharing is also essential to make these partnerships work efficiently and effectively. It is important that I help facilitate these partnerships through bespoke local planning and direction. I will also provide oversight of what is being achieved and help ensure all agencies are delivering on their commitments. Prevention is the overriding goal of this collective work which is why it is so important to me that this is done well.

I want these partnerships to seek all opportunities to work more closely together in delivering this Police and Crime Plan for Avon and Somerset. This includes multi-agency training and learning and work such as the Violence Reduction Units and Safer Streets funds and implementation of the [Beating Crime Plan](#) at a local level.

## Priority 3 – Leading the police to be efficient and effective

Areas of focus	
Recruiting officers	Capability including training, wellbeing, leadership, equipment, estate, data and technology
Demand management to increase visible policing and time to fight crime	Crime recording and response to calls for service
The Strategic Policing Requirement: terrorism; serious and organised crime; a national cyber security incident; threats to public order or public safety; civil emergencies; and child sexual abuse	Environmental impact

The [Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011](#) places a legal duty on PCCs to “secure that the police force is efficient and effective”. The police are funded by public money so this is about ensuring the police do the best job they can with the resources available and delivering good value for money. Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) assess the police on three core pillars (PEEL): effectiveness and efficiency are two of these.

### Objectives

- Increase the morale of the police workforce.
- Increase the capability of the police workforce to deliver against local and national priorities.
- Reduce the negative environmental impact whilst maintaining operational efficiency.

The first four areas of focus will ultimately enable the police to deliver on my first priority which is preventing and fighting crime. This will also enable them to deliver on the national priorities like the Strategic Policing Requirement and the National Police and Crime Measures.

## Recruiting officers

There are things the police can do to improve the service they provide which are discussed throughout this plan. However, in addition to this, the police are under-resourced and need more officers.

At the end of 2019 the Government announced Operation Uplift. This was additional funding for the police to recruit 20,000 additional officers nationally. This equates to an Avon and Somerset target of 450 extra officers.<sup>16</sup> Avon and Somerset Police aim to have 3,191 officers by March 2022 and 3,285 officers by March 2023.<sup>17</sup>

- Investigations (CID) – a significant number of officers are scheduled to join CID with many supporting Project Bluestone.<sup>10</sup>

- Anti-drugs – Avon and Somerset Police does not have a ‘drugs squad’ but drug crime is one of the strategic priorities for their proactive teams. This capability will grow with the addition of eight new local proactive teams.
- Rural crime – the Rural Affairs Unit will see a growth in people recognising it as a new priority. This will allow it to operate at a force level whereas previously it has primarily served Somerset.

## **Capability including training, wellbeing, leadership, equipment, estate, data and technology**

### Training

Earlier in this plan I spoke about the significant recruitment Avon and Somerset Police are doing. Recruitment is just the first step. Policing is complex work and the organisation is large and varied. It is essential the whole workforce are supported and enabled to do their job to the best of their ability.

The right training is critical to being able to deliver policing services in an effective and legitimate way. Initial training of officers is a focus given the scale of recruitment. It takes years for a recruit to build the necessary skills and experience and so the benefits of Op Uplift will not be realised for some time. The workforce also need regular re-training to ensure their skills are maintained.

Nationally there is a shortage of detectives and this must be addressed in order to improve the quality of investigations across policing. Traditionally, officers have had to join the police and then after some years have had to work towards additional qualifications to become accredited detectives; this is still the case for officers already employed. However in 2021 Avon Somerset Police have taken on their first recruits through the Degree Holder Entry Programme. At the end of this two year training programme, the recruits will be accredited detectives and enter directly into CID<sup>18</sup>. The new recruits alone will not be sufficient to fill this skills gap and Avon and Somerset Police will continue to use other career progression pathways. The target levels of accredited detectives will not likely be achieved until 2024.

### Wellbeing and leadership

As a responsible employer Avon and Somerset Police want to look after their workforce. This is at the heart of what they do and ‘caring’ is one of their organisational values. Both physical and mental wellbeing are important. More hours are lost to sickness due to psychological reasons than any other.

The most important tool in looking after the workforce is leadership. Every member of the workforce can be caring and demonstrate the qualities of good leadership whether they supervise people or not. Of course, those with the additional responsibility of being supervisors should have both leadership and management skills. Good leadership starts with taking care of colleagues’ wellbeing and then builds on this to ensure people can deliver their full potential at work, increasing morale and performance.

Avon and Somerset Police must continue to tackle bullying and harassment in the work place. This has no place in the culture of the organisation but where it does occur victims should feel able to report it. The organisation needs to take appropriate steps to address the offending behaviour and support the employees who have been victimised.

### Equipment

The workforce should have the best personal protective equipment (PPE) available. Taser<sup>19</sup> is an important part of this and its proper use can quickly bring a potentially dangerous situation under control and help protect officers and the public from harm.

### Estate

The buildings police operate from are both a significant financial asset and liability. They need to provide the right environment for the workforce, support effective deployment of resources and be visible and accessible to the public where appropriate. The way the police operate should influence the estate, the estate should not influence the way the police operate. I will work with Avon and Somerset Police to ensure the estate is providing best value for money. This will be influenced by the longer term changes from the pandemic, such as increased home working.

### Data

The use of data and information is fundamental to a model of evidence based policing. It enables better decision making for both daily business and strategic planning. It allows those on the front line to understand harm and vulnerability in their communities, live time, to be able to respond and intervene early. Senior leaders also use this data to help inform and tailor the organisational response in the longer term.

Although Avon and Somerset Police are considered a leader among policing nationally they can still do better. One of the key improvements needed is data literacy; this is the space where data and people meet. It is not enough to collect and make the data available, the workforce need to know how to correctly interpret it to aid their decision making.

### Technology

Modern policing is built around technology. Communicating with and responding to the public, safeguarding people and investigating crimes all rely on technology. The benefits of data (above) could not be realised without technology.

Technology is the most powerful transformative force in society impacting everyday lives at a rate of change never seen before. The police need to keep pace with this change as technology vastly increases the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide. To benefit from this change investment is required: both financially and in the specialist skills of people needed to do the work.

Avon and Somerset Police should support the successful delivery of national programmes such as the Emergency Services Network. Local systems should be smart and user friendly; supporting and enhancing effective processes. This will reduce the administrative workload and free up officer time for front line policing. There are a multitude of different systems used and these need to work together in a better way to provide decision makers with a 360° view of the organisation. This joined up approach to technology also provides opportunities to better connect with other partners delivering public services.

## **Demand management to increase visible policing and time to fight crime**

The public tell us how important visible police is to them. The local survey I commission also shows that people have greater confidence in the police when they have seen them more recently.

To increase visibility and time spent fighting crime we cannot simply rely on increasing officer numbers. This will rely on managing demand which can be broadly grouped in three ways.

- External demand – requests for service from the public and other organisations.
- Internal demand – requirements from the police of its own workforce.
- Failure demand – this is where something goes wrong which generates additional and unnecessary work.

Bad processes break good people. Policing is an extremely difficult job so the processes must support the workforce to do their job well rather than being a barrier to success. Failure demand is a clear focus and to reduce this the right work needs to be given to the right people, in the right place. Appropriate demand should be moved away from front line officers so they are free to focus on those jobs which only police officers can do.

External demand can be reduced in two key ways. Prevention is the best form of demand management. Not only does this reduce harm to communities, it is truly reducing the need for a police response. You will have read more about this against Priority 1 in this plan.

Another important way to reduce external demand is that from partner organisations. The police are routinely the first and last resort for people and can inadvertently pick up requests for service that partners should be dealing with. People experiencing mental ill-health are an important example of this.

Mental health brings with it many complexities and needs, which require a large number of partners to respond to. It is thought that about 70%<sup>20</sup> of the UK prison population has some form of mental health issue. In Avon and Somerset the Advice Support Custody and Courts (ASCC) service engages with between 150-200 people a month in police custody, most of these have some form of mental health problem. The impact on demand is more about the complexity and the sustained nature of the issue, as opposed to just the volume. The urgency and prioritisation rightly set against those who need crisis support, can have huge impacts on the wider incoming demand. To be more efficient and effective in managing this response, our partners are key.

The police do have a duty in this mental health response but they need to have a clear start and end point for their role. I can support the police in working closely with health partners to collectively define the responsibilities of each organisation.

Health professionals can also help the police in getting the right skills and processes in place to better respond. For example I jointly fund the Mental Health Triage service with health partners and fire. This helps Avon and Somerset Police assess and respond to those who may need crisis support. Avon and Somerset Police can benefit from the expertise of specialist staff in the health sector through joint working.

To prevent more people going into crisis or entering the criminal justice system because of their mental ill-health, we need to understand where people are falling through the gaps of support and why. I will work with health partners to understand what more we can do to ensure our local mental health support and referral processes are meeting the needs of our communities.

Although this focuses on efficiency through demand reduction this is not at all costs. There are some areas where I want to see an increase in demand for the police. One example, discussed throughout this plan, is that I want more victims to report their crimes to the police.

## Crime recording and response to calls for service

The police must record crime in line with [national Home Office standards](#). Not doing this can mean victims do not receive the service they are entitled to; it can impact on investigations and safeguarding. It will also mean the police do not accurately understand their demand and may not appropriately shape their service delivery in a strategic way.

Where a person calls or reports a crime online Avon and Somerset Police accurately records these in most cases. However they need to do better where extra crimes should be recorded as described below.

The general counting rule states that where offences occur together as part of one event and are the same victim and offender only the most serious crime is recorded. Exceptions to this rule – where an ‘in addition’ crime must be recorded – include stalking and harassment, controlling and coercive behaviour and modern slavery.

‘Crimes within crimes’ are where a crime has been recorded and is being dealt with by the police, however, during the course of that investigation further offences, that have already happened, are discovered.

Both ‘in addition’ and ‘crimes within crimes’ tend to see lower recording levels. I have made clear to Avon and Somerset Police it is essential their compliance with these standards continues to improve<sup>21</sup>. They need to continue to adapt to any changes in these national standards.

When a person contacts the police it is essential, from the first point of contact, that an inquisitive mind-set is adopted. The right questions will help understand the circumstances of the call and the vulnerability of the people involved. Getting this right is critical to assess threat, harm and risk and grade the call for an appropriate and timely response.

Given the limited resources Avon and Somerset Police has to work with it cannot respond in person to every incident nor can it conduct investigations in all cases. In some cases the most appropriate response will be a desk-top/telephone investigation. This can result in incidents being dealt with more efficiently and reduces demand on front line policing to enable them to respond in person where needed.

Decisions are made based on the risk posed by the particular incident and potential lines of enquiry. It is essential this decision making continues to be monitored and reviewed and is suitably flexible in its use.

Where it is deemed attendance is required Avon and Somerset Police need to respond to these in good time. There are many interlinked and nuanced reasons why they may not be able to respond in time; not least because of lack of available resource (officer numbers). However, improvement in this area is needed over the coming years.

## **The Strategic Policing Requirement: terrorism; serious and organised crime; a national cyber security incident; threats to public order or public safety; civil emergencies; and child sexual abuse**

The [SPR](#) defines the national threats that require a response beyond local policing. It also places a statutory duty on myself and the Chief Constable to “have regard to” this SPR in delivery of policing.

### Terrorism

Avon and Somerset Police continue to support the national ‘Contest’ Counter Terrorism Strategy by working effectively with Counter Terrorism Policing (CTP), local partners and communities to prevent radicalisation, promote safeguarding of the vulnerable and raise awareness of the issues.

Supporting the ‘Prevent’ agenda is important because CTP rely on local police to be alert to community concerns and to encourage partners to do the same. Radicalisation has just been recognised, nationally as an additional strand of vulnerability and ‘self-initiated terrorism’ activity is increasing. In June 2021 two men from the Bath and North East Somerset area were separately convicted of multiple terrorism offences. This shows that radicalisation and extremist activities do happen in our communities and we need to be vigilant.

The key outcome is the early identification and referral to CTP of those vulnerable to radicalisation in order that appropriate safeguarding action is taken to prevent terrorist activity. To do this Avon and Somerset Police will continue to work with partners to produce and deliver against the Counter Terrorism Local Profile. This joint working will help ensure safeguarding structures are alert to radicalisation and equipped to deal with it.

### Serious and organised crime

Organised crime is serious crime coordinated and conducted by people working together on a continuing basis. Their motivation is often, but not always, financial gain. Organised crime groups are responsible for the exploitation of people including modern slavery; trafficking of people, drugs and firearms; organised illegal immigration; large-scale and high-volume fraud; other financial crimes; counterfeit goods; organised acquisitive crime; and cybercrime.

Serious organised crime affects all corners of the UK and Avon and Somerset is no exception. A large amount of organised crime is hidden and unreported but it is happening all around us and involves the exploitation of the most vulnerable.

There are regularly investigations, across Avon and Somerset, into organised groups involved in modern slavery, child exploitation, fraud, firearms and drug supply. In just one operation in 2020/21 three firearms and several hundred rounds of ammunition were taken off the streets of Avon and Somerset, and five members of the group were sentenced to 57 years.

Organised crime must be tackled from neighbourhood to national and so the collaborative working described in the earlier ‘area of focus’. Avon and Somerset Police should continue gathering and building intelligence, against these groups, from the neighbourhood level up maximising opportunities to disrupt the criminal activity.

### National cyber security incident

One of the most prolific examples of this happened in May 2017 when a global ransomware attack, known as WannaCry, severely impacted the NHS. At least 80 NHS trusts, and a further 603 primary care and other NHS organisations, were attacked. This resulted in the declaration of a major incident after significant disruption to services.

Although an attack of this nature was dealt with at national level by the NCA and National Cyber Security Centre it is essential Avon and Somerset Police are in a position to be able support this type of work. You can read more detail about this work in the 'area of focus' on fraud and cybercrime.

### Threats to public order or public safety

There are three primary types of incidents that require public order policing.

- Planned events – Avon and Somerset has a diverse range of events such as football matches, Glastonbury Festival, the Bristol Harbour Festival, the Balloon Fiesta and St Pauls Carnival. Avon and Somerset Police are also called to support other significant events outside of the area such as the G7 Summit in Cornwall in 2021.
- Protests – are a fundamental human right. The police have a duty to facilitate peaceful protests but must balance this against the rights of others and preventing disorder. Outside of London, Bristol is considered to be the busiest city for protests in the country.
- Spontaneous disorder – this can happen when protest or other gatherings take on a criminal element. This happened in March 2021 when the Kill the Bill protests in Bristol were followed by rioting. This is a very real example of the need for police forces to be ready to support one another as this required public order officers from across the region to respond. Spontaneous disorder also includes unlicensed music events and raves which were more prolific during the pandemic and often occur in rural communities.

To continue to be effective in public order policing Avon and Somerset Police need to maintain the appropriate levels of specially trained officers. Those trained as public order commanders are a particularly relevant example of this.

Another focus for Avon and Somerset Police is planning, including testing and exercising. Proper planning effectively is prevention work. Planning should be coordinated across all relevant organisations and this will help these events run smoothly and minimise the potential for harm. Testing and exercising is part of good planning and is important in organisational learning.

### Civil emergencies

A civil emergency is an event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare, the environment or national security.<sup>22</sup>

Civil emergencies can take many different forms and are unpredictable in nature and will always require a multi-agency response. Significant examples in Avon and Somerset include the 2014 flooding of the Somerset Levels, the 2020 explosion in Avonmouth and of course the unprecedented coronavirus pandemic. You can find out more about these local issues in the [Community Risk Register](#).

The Local Resilience Forum (LRF) is a multi-agency partnership of different organisation's including the emergency services, health services, local councils, Maritime and Coastal Agency, Environment Agency, voluntary agencies, utility companies and transport providers. Avon and Somerset Police will continue to engage with and support the work of this group.

Much like public order policing the key to civil emergencies is proper planning and preparation. This should be done in partnership with the other agencies and regular testing and exercising of these plans will allow organisations to learn and improve from each other.



### Child sexual abuse and exploitation

CSA/E is a threat of national importance: included in the SPR because of its potential magnitude and impact. CSA involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activity. This may be physical contact, or non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE is a form of CSA and occurs where people coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology such as the internet, social media and messaging apps.<sup>23</sup>

Child sexual abuse can have wide-ranging and serious consequences. For some victims and survivors these effects endure throughout adult life. Child sexual abuse can affect psychological and physical well-being, family and intimate relationships, faith, education and career. Victims and survivors can also be two to four times more likely to become victims of sexual, physical or emotional abuse again in their lifetime.<sup>24</sup>

In the year ending March 2019, the Crime Survey for England and Wales estimated that approximately 7.5% of the population aged 18 to 74 years experienced sexual abuse before the age of 16 years. This would equate to 90,000 victims in Avon and Somerset. It is also estimated that less than one-quarter of adults had reported their abuse to the police.<sup>25</sup>

Avon and Somerset Police should continue to invest in response to this growing threat. This includes growth of the specialist child protection team in CID, the proactive CSE perpetrator disruption team and the Internet Child Abuse Team. As well as officer numbers it is essential to maintain the necessary training, for example the Specialist Child Abuse Investigation Development Programme. The Trauma Informed approach, discussed in this plan's first 'area of focus' is especially important with victims of CSA/E. In most cases convicted offenders will be placed on the sex offenders register; their numbers have been consistently growing over recent years. Avon and Somerset Police need to be alert to this growing demand and how they fulfil their statutory duties to manage Registered Sex Offenders.

## **Environmental impact**

It is unequivocal that human influence has warmed the atmosphere, ocean and land. Widespread and rapid changes have occurred. The scale of recent changes across the climate system are unprecedented. Human-induced climate change is already affecting many weather and climate extremes in every region across the globe. Evidence of observed changes in extremes such as heatwaves, heavy precipitation, droughts, and tropical cyclones, and, in particular, their attribution to human influence, has strengthened.<sup>26</sup>

A core role of the police is protecting life. This is focused on the local policing area whilst supporting policing regionally and nationally. Helping to reduce our environmental impact is one way we can all help protect life on an international scale.

As extreme weather events become more common this will put additional demand on policing. The police respond to all public emergencies. Events like the 2014 flooding of the Somerset Levels could become more common.

The speed of climate change means all people and organisations should be trying to reduce their negative impact on the environment. This is even more incumbent on my office and Avon and Somerset Police as public sector organisations.

As responsible employers we should reduce our carbon footprint; reduce fuel, energy and water use; and reduce waste and recycle more. These reductions however will not come at the cost of the service to the public.

In order to improve we need a better insight from the available data which can inform the development of a central plan.

Whenever changes are made to the estate we should always consider how the environmental impact can be mitigated. Avon and Somerset Police are part of the Southwest Police Procurement Department and this enhanced collective bargaining power can be used to reduce our environmental impact through the supply chain as well.

## Priority 4 – Increasing the legitimacy of, and public confidence in, the police and criminal justice system

Areas of focus	
Representative workforce	Inequality and disproportionality
Use of police powers	Complaints
Data and information	Scrutiny, performance and learning

I want to maintain the British model of policing by consent. This means the power of the police comes from the consent of the public. The police operate because of the cooperation of the public rather than the public fearing the police as an actor of the state.

I recognise this description to be broadly true although I know there are people and communities, here in Avon and Somerset, who do not trust and even fear the police. This needs to be changed.

### Objectives

- Increased satisfaction with the service provided by the police.
- Increased confidence in the police.

The third pillar of HMICFRS PEEL assessments is legitimacy. Acting legitimately is about people being treated fairly and with respect and the workforce consistently acting in an ethical and lawful way which is accountable to the public.

The police are the front door to the criminal justice system so building legitimacy starts with them. As PCC my oversight in this is really important when I am holding the Chief Constable to account. By chairing the Local Criminal Justice Board, I can also help ensure legitimacy runs through the whole criminal justice system.

Our organisations also have a responsibility under the [public sector equality duty](#). This includes advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people with different protected characteristics as well as eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation. There are a number of ‘areas of focus’ within this plan which seek to advance equality, inclusion and diversity. Avon and Somerset Police have inclusion as one of their core values and have [published a plan](#) to improve. Through my ongoing scrutiny of the police I will help ensure the Chief Constable fulfils their equality duty.

### Representative workforce

*“The police are the public and the public are the police”<sup>27</sup>*. One meaning of this statement is that a police force should be representative of the communities it serves.

Representation comes in many forms depending on how people identify. However the focus for policing nationally, and in Avon and Somerset, is ethnic diversity and there are a number of reasons for this. People from different ethnic minorities are considerably and visibly under-represented in

the workforce at this time. Some ethnic minority groups also have police powers used against them at a much higher rate than White people. This results in different ethnic minority groups often having lower levels of confidence in and engagement with the police.

Aside from being uniquely important to policing – for the above reasons – there is also evidence that inclusive and diverse teams perform better than those that are homogenous.

This is not about meeting numerical targets or box-ticking; this must be delivered in a meaningful and ethical way. None of this can be achieved without an inclusive culture. Avon and Somerset Police has put this at the heart of their business with inclusive being one of their four core values and significant work has already been undertaken.

- **Recruitment** – the organisation needs to be desirable to different communities to work for and the application processes must be fair and supportive of people with different ethnicities.
- **Retention** – once part of the organisation people must feel like they are accepted for who they are and treated fairly in order that they do not feel the need to leave.
- **Progression** – beyond being accepted people need to be valued for their difference and be properly supported in order to develop themselves and be able to move into senior positions. Currently the more senior groups of employees tend to be less representative.

Another focus for Avon and Somerset Police is engaging those communities which policing has traditionally found difficult to do. It is critical they can bridge the gap between the people and the police.

The importance of this cannot be underestimated. It goes to the heart of legitimate policing – there must be trust between police and communities. A representative workforce is part of the solution.

As PCC I am a representative of the communities and I feel it is important that my office is also inclusive and diverse. My office and I are also focussing on more diverse engagement to build those important relationships and trust with communities to invite them to be part of our organisation.

## **Inequality and disproportionality**

Inequality is where people are treated differently because of who they are rather than something they have done or not. Disproportionality is when a group of people with a shared characteristic are over or under represented in a particular set of data when compared to the make-up of the population as a whole.

As stated in the previous ‘area of focus’, inequality and disproportionality can take many forms but the focus for policing is ethnicity. [The Lammy Review](#) was a landmark independent review which showed that people from minority ethnic backgrounds were disproportionately over-represented in the criminal justice system (CJS). People whose ethnicity is Other than White<sup>28</sup> are more likely to be stopped and searched, have force used against them and be arrested. This disproportionality is worst for Black people. Black people were nearly nine times more likely to be stopped and searched compared to White people. This statistic is both at a national level and here in Avon and Somerset. This is simply not fair.

The Lammy Review introduced the principle of ‘explain or reform’. *“If CJS agencies cannot provide an evidence-based explanation for apparent disparities between ethnic groups then reforms should be*

*introduced to address those disparities.”* Although improvements have been made the police and CJS have still yet to explain or sufficiently reform: more must be done.

The ultimate ambition is to have fair and inclusive services across the CJS. All agencies should work collaboratively together to achieve this. It is important to improve two-way communication between ourselves and our communities to listen, learn and establish solutions to change.

This two-way communication is particularly important for the police as the ‘front door’ to the CJS. Engagement is an ‘area of focus’ and Avon and Somerset Police want to hear from you. This feedback should be embedded through an effective system of organisational learning.

My office facilitates a number of scrutiny panels made up of independent members from the community. They scrutinise topics such as use of force, stop and search, complaints and out of court disposals. These panels consider disproportionality as a theme of their work. The learning from these panels should continue to improve performance for individuals and at an organisational level.

My office has employed an independent person to lead on a local response to the Lammy review. This work has focussed on five priority areas: stop and search; out of court disposals; human resources; the judiciary and prisons. The first phase of this work will come to a conclusion in 2021 with the publication of a report. All CJS agencies will be expected to deliver against the recommendations from the report. I will oversee this at the highest level through chairing the Local Criminal Justice Board. To further help drive this work forward a senior member of my office will be taking a lead for equality, diversity and inclusion who will work with all CJS partners.

## **Use of police powers**

The police have a wide range of powers necessary to do their job effectively. These powers enable the police to do things, in the line of duty, which would otherwise be unlawful. The powers are broad ranging but some of the most common examples are stop and search, use of force, arrest and detaining people in custody.

The first Peelian Principle of policing is *“to prevent crime and disorder, as an alternative to their repression by military force and severity of legal punishment”*. It is not enough that the powers are used in a way that complies with the letter of the law they must also be used fairly and in the spirit of the law. These powers must be used only when necessary, in a way that is proportionate to the circumstances and in line with human rights and equalities legislation. The use of force should always be considered as a last resort as described in the Peelian Principles.

The practice of stop and search is often under public scrutiny and I spoke about its disproportionate use in the previous ‘area of focus’. Aside from this there remains a question of how effectively it is used.

In Avon and Somerset there are about 7,800 stops a year and the object searched for was found in just 26% of cases. Even though low only 14 forces had a find rate greater than 25%<sup>29</sup>. For the majority of people no object is found and some may rightfully feel aggrieved and share their feelings with their community which can lead to community tension with the police.

Improper or unfair use of powers is not only harmful to the individual subject to those powers but it can erode public confidence in policing. This undermines the very essence of UK policing by consent.

In the UK, large scale protests and public disorder in 1981, 1985 and 2011 have been sparked by the misuse and perceived misuse of police powers.

*'Justice must not only be done, but must be seen to be done'*. Officers should keep in mind the public perception of their actions when using their powers and ensure they act in a way that is fair and proper in the eyes of the public.

Thorough and open scrutiny of the use of police powers can help improve and maintain public trust and satisfaction. Avon and Somerset Police should continue their internal scrutiny and my office will continue to engage volunteers to independently scrutinise the use of powers.

The use of body worn camera video footage has been invaluable in this scrutiny process. Avon and Somerset Police should ensure officers are properly equipped and, where appropriate, recording these events as they happen. It is important that learning from this scrutiny drives improvements. I expect to see greater consistency and effectiveness of police powers and complaints about their use will help understand progress in this area.

## Complaints

Complaints against the police are either handled by the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) or internally by Avon and Somerset Police. All police forces must adhere to a legislative framework when handling complaints<sup>30</sup>. This framework was significantly changed in February 2020. Complaints now fall into two categories.

- Non schedule 3 – low level complaints which can be resolved quickly, to the satisfaction of the complainant. If they are not satisfied it should be escalated to a Schedule 3.
- Schedule 3 – more serious complaints involving death or serious injury; allegations which might constitute a criminal offence or justify the bringing of disciplinary proceedings; infringement of Human Rights or other specified matters. Within Schedule 3 there are criteria which specify when complaints must automatically be escalated to the IOPC.

In the first 18 months after the regulations changed Avon and Somerset Police recorded a monthly average of 98 Schedule 3 complaints and 80 non-Schedule 3 complaints. The top allegation types for this period were: the delivery of service and duty; the use of police powers, policies and procedures; and individual behaviours.

Handling complaints fairly and effectively is fundamental to a legitimate service and maintaining public confidence. Where a person is dissatisfied with the service the police should be held to account to ensure that standards of policing meet public expectation. As many complaints are dealt with internally it is essential the process is transparent to allay any fears of 'closing ranks'.

One of the important changes in 2020 was the introduction of the Reflective Practice Review Process. This is about ensuring individuals, subject of a complaint, reflect on their conduct and learn from this and how to do things differently and better in future. Avon and Somerset police can share this personal learning for the benefit of the wider workforce. Again this relies on an effective organisational learning process discussed elsewhere in this plan.

All complaints should be accurately recorded and allocated in accordance with the guidance. The recording processes and systems need to support the capture of appropriate information and make it accessible. This is so the complaints process can be reported on, analysed and appropriately performance managed. This performance management should focus on complainant satisfaction

and disproportionality. Complaints should be dealt with efficiently, in good time. They must also be dealt with effectively, providing clear communication about outcomes and the complainant's right to review.

Where the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of a Schedule 3 complaint they have a right to review. More serious complaints are handled by the IOPC however the majority of reviews will be undertaken by my office.

The OPCC Chief of Staff has a statutory duty as a Monitoring Officer. They will handle complaints about the OPCC and they play an important role in any complaint about me as PCC. Although ultimately these complaints are for the Police and Crime Panel to deal with. I will ensure any reviews or complaints dealt with by my office receive the same vigour I am expecting of Avon and Somerset Police.

## Data and information

In the UK almost everybody has a digital footprint. Data is a commodity and without it policing would not be efficient, effective or legitimate. The police collect and have privileged access to vast amounts of personal data which is necessary to discharge their duties.

Data should be good quality, used and retained in an effective, lawful and ethical manner. It is incumbent on the police that they deal with personal and other sensitive data in line with their responsibilities set out in the [Data Protection Act 2018](#). This is the UK's implementation of the General Data Protection Regulations. The data protection principles state that they should make sure the information is:

- used fairly, lawfully and transparently;
- used for specified, explicit purposes;
- used in a way that is adequate, relevant and limited to only what is necessary;
- accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date;
- kept for no longer than is necessary; and
- handled in a way that ensures appropriate security, including protection against unlawful or unauthorised processing, access, loss, destruction or damage.

The police have additional guidelines set out by the College of Policing in the [Management of Police Information](#). The public absolutely expect the police to get this right and uphold the highest standards. Where this goes wrong it can damage public confidence: such as the [Metropolitan Police Service's Gangs Matrix](#).

Avon and Somerset Police are a leading UK force in their use of data. Many operational and strategic decisions are based upon data and for this reason it should be accurate and recorded in the right place. It is also important that all necessary information is captured to be able to make the decisions as reliable as possible. Data quality is recognised as a strategic risk for Avon and Somerset Police. There are known issues with both duplicate records and records without all the necessary information. For example in 2021 HMICFRS have twice highlighted that forces are failing to record relevant personal characteristics of victims. There is also not an effective system in place to automatically delete records when they are no longer required.

These are all issues which will take time and concerted effort to address but I will be holding Avon and Somerset Police to account for this and I expect to see sustained improvements. This will require developing the workforce to understand the importance of getting it right first time. People must be

supported by effective systems and process. On top of this there should be vigorous governance of information management.

Going beyond legal compliance I, and the public, expect data to be used in an ethical manner. The proportionate use of data must be balanced against Human Rights such as the right to a private life. This debate is ongoing about the police use of live facial recognition software and how police share information with partner agencies. Just because something can be done does not mean it should. There is often not a right or wrong when it comes to ethical debate so consultation is the key.

## **Scrutiny, performance and learning**

As PCC one of my most important roles is to hold the Chief Constable to account. This means overseeing the performance of the police and ensuring the Chief Constable is delivering the most efficient, effective and legitimate policing of the area possible. It is important this scrutiny happens in an open manner, accessible to the public so they can judge the performance of the police, and myself as PCC, and provide feedback. This process is also critical in enabling the Police and Crime Panel to hold me to account.

As well as being important to me this is also being better defined on a national level including through the Specified Information Order<sup>31</sup>. It is really important that I and Avon and Somerset Police continue to respond – to local feedback and direction set at a national level – in order to improve the accessibility of performance information.

Ultimately strong scrutiny should drive improvement in service delivery to the public. Learning is essential to any organisation that wishes to improve and is also one of the values of Avon and Somerset Police. There are many opportunities for the police to learn and improve and some of the main sources of this are HMICFRS reports and recommendations; statutory case reviews<sup>32</sup>; police super-complaints<sup>33</sup>; feedback from The Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC); complaints and other matters handled by the local Professional Standards Department. Police Regulations were changed in 2020 to better take learning opportunities from complaints and this is embedded through the reflective practice framework<sup>34</sup>.

Although there are processes in place for each of these themes, Avon and Somerset Police will continue to develop a more robust organisational learning process. This will help ensure that best practice is adopted by the entire workforce and that collectively the organisation can learn from mistakes made. This process should also enable checking and testing of the learning to ensure it results in better outcomes for the public.



## How will performance be measured?

I have a legal duty, through this plan, to communicate "[\*the means by which the chief officer of police's performance in providing policing will be measured\*](#)". Measuring this performance underpins how I will hold the Chief Constable to account. It will also allow the public to reflect on my performance as the Police and Crime Commissioner.

For most people I suspect the use of the word "measuring" implies numbers (quantitative data). However numbers alone only tell half the story. It is also really important that we understand the context behind the numbers and seek broader assurance through qualitative means.

I want the public to be able to see and understand this performance. That is why it is an area of focus in its own right in Priority 4: increasing the legitimacy of, and public confidence in, the police and criminal justice system.

This plan does not set performance targets. Having targets has been found in the past to drive the wrong types of behaviour. Policing generally does not set targets and this is reflected in the National Police and Crime Measures as well.

Avon and Somerset Police cannot be outstanding at everything: they are simply not funded well enough to achieve this. However what I do expect, and the direction I have set the Chief Constable, is to see sustained improvement across the areas in this plan.

The below are some of the sources of assurance I will use to monitor progress.

### Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

The PEEL inspections are the most important source of external assurance about how well Avon and Somerset Police are performing.

Aside from this specific inspection of the force itself HMICFRS will conduct thematic inspections which may include Avon and Somerset Police. Even where they are not directly inspected the national reports, and in particular the recommendations, can help understand how Avon and Somerset Police are performing. HMICFRS also work with other inspectors to produce joint reports. I publish responses to all HMICFRS reports on my [website](#).

Reports on police super-complaints are also written by HMICFRS in partnership with the College of Policing and the Independent Office for Police Conduct. Again the recommendations from these national reports can be used to reflect on local performance.

### Internal Audit

The Chief Constable and I jointly commission an independent risk-led audit programme which reports to the [Joint Audit Committee](#).

### National Police and Crime Measures

I will provide a quarterly update which will demonstrate the contribution of Avon and Somerset Police to these national priorities; in line with the [Specified Information Order](#).

### Scrutiny panels

I host a number of panels made of independent residents of Avon and Somerset which scrutinise the work of the police. This includes topics like the [use of police powers](#) and how [complaints are handled](#).

My office also participate in a number of other panels and groups from which I can take assurance.

#### Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) Scheme

In satisfaction of my legal duty I run an [ICV Scheme](#) made up of independent volunteers from the community. They check that people detained in police custody are being treated fairly and in line with their rights.

#### Meetings

The [Police and Crime Board](#) is the most senior meeting in the joint governance structure. This meeting is where I formally hold the Chief Constable to account. The content of this meeting includes many of the sources of assurance discussed here.

I have regular 1:1 meetings with the Chief Constable and my team also work closely with other people from Avon and Somerset Police. My office and I also have regular meetings with partner organisations including through the Local Criminal Justice Board and Community Safety Partnership meetings. These meetings are important to aid delivery of this plan but also act as a source of assurance.

#### Internal assurance activity

This is an important approach to understand the progress Avon and Somerset Police are making in their contribution to delivering this plan in particular. The below table shows some of the key ways in which we will monitor progress. There are many other things the Chief Constable and I can use to assess progress but these are the ones we feel most important to communicate to the public.

These measures will form the basis of a quarterly performance report which will be published for everyone to read and will be scrutinised by the Police and Crime Panel.

#### Priority 1: Preventing and fighting crime

- Police recorded crime
- Positive outcome rates
- Avon and Somerset Police self-assessment against the National Vulnerability Action Plan
- The harm caused to repeat victims - this takes account of the numbers of crimes and the severity
- Satisfaction of victims surveyed by Independent Sexual or Domestic Violence Advisors (ISVAs and IDVAs)
- How well police refer victims of sexual and/or domestic violence to ISVAs and IDVAs
- How well and how quickly the police and CPS are working together to secure a charge in cases of rape and serious sexual offences
- Recorded disruptions of drug related organised crime groups including County Lines
- Results from the Crime Survey of England and Wales relating to community priorities and ASB
- Victim satisfaction with police response - measured through a local survey
- Investigation of cyber dependant crime (referred from the NFIB) and specialist advice provided to this victims
- The number of people killed or seriously injured, and the volume of collisions, on the roads

#### Priority 2: Engaging, supporting and working with communities, victims and partner organisations

- How well informed people feel about local policing - measured through a local survey
- How aware people are of opportunities to have their say on local policing - measured through a local survey
- How safe people feel - measured through a local survey
- Amount of policing provided by Special Constables
- Are the public taking part as citizens in policing - measured through a local survey
- Victim satisfaction with police response - measured through a local survey
- Satisfaction with Lighthouse victim support - measured through a local survey
- How quickly cases are resolved that go to court and if a conviction was secured
- The harm caused managed offenders - this takes account of the numbers of crimes and the severity
- Monthly assurance reports will include partnership working as a theme

#### Priority 3: Leading the police to be efficient and effective

- The number of officers
- The number of people working in CID
- The number of people in the proactive teams
- Results from the Avon and Somerset Police annual workforce survey
- The amount of accredited detectives
- How frequently people see the police - measured through a local survey
- Police use of the Mental Health Act (s136) to detain people and whether those people end up in police custody
- How well the police comply with Home Office Crime Recording standards
- How many 999 and 101 calls are abandoned (not answered within the set time)
- How quickly the police attend calls for service
- Avon and Somerset Police self-assessment against the SPR
- Carbon footprint, energy/water/fuel usage and volumes of waste and recycling

#### Priority 4: Increasing the legitimacy of, and public confidence in, the police and criminal justice system

- Public confidence in the police - measured by a local and national survey
- Whether the ethnic diversity of Avon and Somerset Police reflects the communities; including at a senior level
- If the workforce thinks Avon and Somerset Police respects individual differences
- Rates of arrest, stop and search and use of force for people of different ethnicities
- Complaints about use of police powers
- Positive outcomes from stop searches
- Independent Office for Police Conduct quarterly complaints report
- Reviews of complaints handled by OPCC
- How well the police and complying with the Data Protection Act 2018
- Transparency of scrutiny and performance - measured through a local survey
- Avon and Somerset Police self-assessment of organisational learning

## Resources and budget

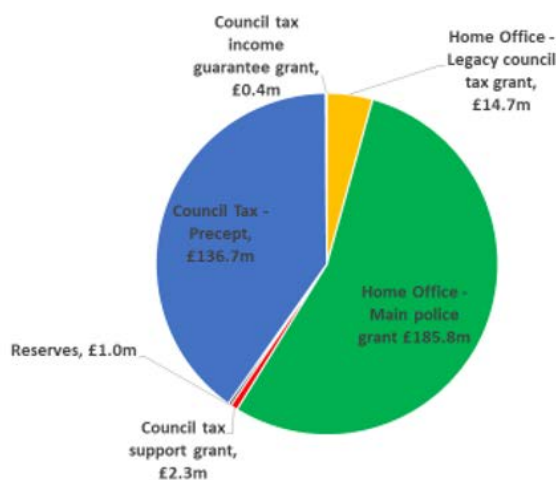
We anticipate that increases in our costs will outstrip funding growth, requiring us to identify and realise further savings from 2022/23 onwards. However we aim to deliver balanced budgets across the five year medium term plan that support planned increases in officer numbers and in the efficiency and effectiveness of services to the public.

Medium Term Financial Plan	Forecast				
	21/22 £'000	22/23 £'000	23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000
Budget requirement	348,140	359,226	372,508	382,451	393,312
Less; Total funding	(339,879)	(350,311)	(361,040)	(370,333)	(379,054)
<b>(Surplus)/Deficit before savings</b>	<b>8,261</b>	<b>8,915</b>	<b>11,468</b>	<b>12,118</b>	<b>14,258</b>
Savings	(7,261)	(7,694)	(8,606)	(7,756)	(5,761)
Planned use of reserves	(1,000)	-	-	-	-
<b>(Surplus)/Deficit after savings</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,221</b>	<b>2,862</b>	<b>4,362</b>	<b>8,497</b>

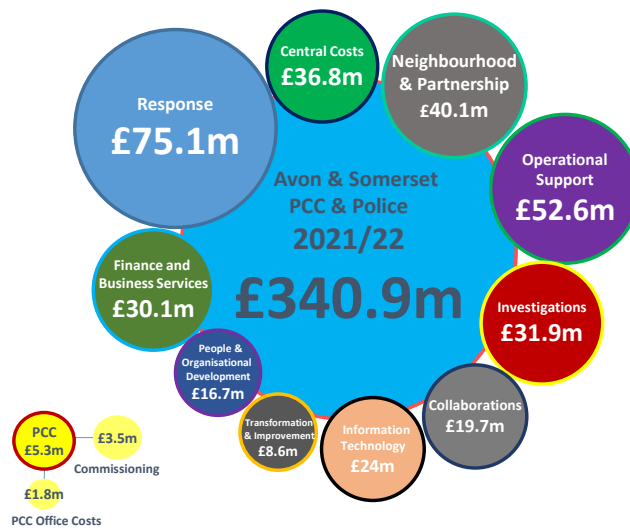
The main police grant was increased by £11m to support the government targets for increased officer numbers. These will see an additional 20,000 officers nationally, whilst the programme for Avon and Somerset has a target of 450 additional officers (2019-2023). We therefore aim to have a total of 3,285 officers in post by March 2023.

We have also received one-off grants of £2.6m to off-set the impact of COVID-19 (both increased costs and loss of council tax income).

### PCC 2021/22 funding = £340.9m

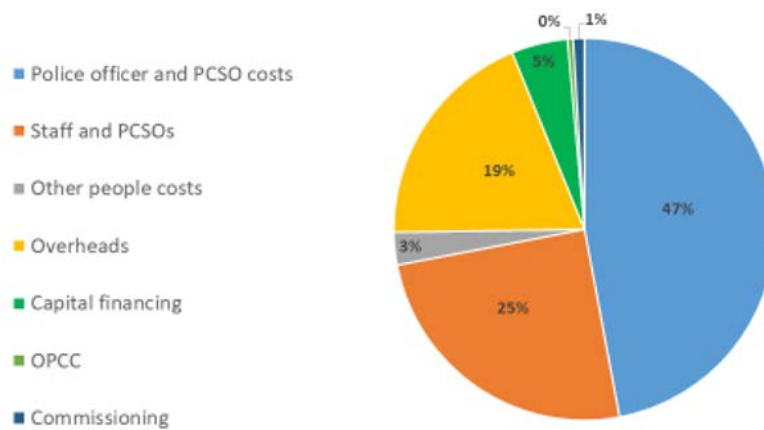


The net income to the PCC in 2021/22 will be £339.9 million; with the addition of £1 million from reserves this will deliver a balanced budget. As well as grant to meet the increase in police officers, funding growth is being generated by an increase in the council tax police precept by £13.39 per month for the average Band D home.



However a large part of the funding uplift is also required for unavoidable cost increases to be managed in coming years, especially the increased employer contributions to fund police pensions, pay increases and funding our investment in technology.

### PCC 2021/22 costs



In the medium term, we have made pragmatic assumptions of future funding and cost pressures which we anticipate refining when the Government's Spending Review is announced. We are optimistic that the review will cover a three year period to enable us to improve the resilience of our financial planning.

## Grants and commissioning

I will:

- Remain outcome focussed so we know the impact we are having on service users and communities while maximising the positive social and environmental impact we have in delivering services.
- Work with the market to enable optimum service delivery and put in place proportionate and transparent commissioning and outcomes monitoring.
- Ensure the lived experience of service users informs the design and delivery of services
- Work in partnership with other commissioners on shared outcomes and issues of joint priority in order to ensure the most efficient and effective approach. Wherever possible take a co-commissioning approach.
- Undertake effective planning so we have a clear rationale for commissioning activity with resources allocated according to need and in line with the areas of focus set out in this Plan.

Supporting the delivery of this plan will be a range of funding for services and projects. This will include to support people who have been victims of crime and anti-social behaviour, services to support offenders' rehabilitation and ongoing work through the Violence Reduction Units to prevent serious violence. In addition funding will be made available to local areas – via Community Safety Partnerships – to support local priorities and a small grants scheme will be available to support voluntary and community sector projects. For further details please visit the PCC website.

## Make a difference and get involved

If you care about making your community safer and stronger and you want to get involved, in the below opportunities.

### Police Support Volunteers

Join the team of around 280 Police Support Volunteers who undertake a wide variety of roles including driving, administration, research, public engagement and animal care. Volunteering for the police is a great way to demonstrate evidence for your CV or to use your valuable time.

[How to volunteer with us](#)

### Police Cadets

After initial training, Cadets get involved in a range of activities and have the chance to patrol with regular officers as well as going behind the scenes to learn about all aspects of policing. They are also able to complete a Duke of Edinburgh award. Avon and Somerset Police Cadets have ten units based in Bath, Central Bristol, Hartcliffe, Patchway, Portishead, Southmead, Speedwell, Street, Taunton and Weston-super-Mare.

Avon and Somerset has a provision of youth programmes that includes our Volunteer Police Cadets and mini police. These are for young people ranging from 8 to 18 and are run in partnership with local schools and communities. These programmes encourage young people to develop an understanding of policing, become active in their communities and learn more about our values.

[Find out more about becoming a Police Cadet.](#)

### Volunteering with the OPCC

- Join our [Independent Residents Panel](#) which scrutinises the police complaints system.
- Become an [Independent Custody Visitor](#) and help us ensure that detainees in our custody suites are being held in safe and appropriate conditions to which they are entitled.
- Join our [Out of Court Disposal Panel](#) who help us to ensure that these disposals are used in an appropriate way.
- Join our [Scrutiny of Police Powers Panel](#) which scrutinises the use of stop and search powers and use of force by the police.

*“As an independent panel member I play a crucial role in contributing to Policing Standards that are inclusive, recognising why policing strategies must address structural inequalities and disparities.*

*I am passionate about shaping policing standards in response to our diverse communities through my role as an independent panel resident, it is important that we address issues of under-representation by getting involved in decision making.*

*I see myself as a positive force for justice and equality through my role in the independent resident’s panel, driving policing standards in response to the needs of our diverse communities.”*

**Peninah Achieng-Kindberg – Independent Residents Panel volunteer**

### Neighbourhood Watch

Being part of Neighbourhood Watch means looking out for members of the community, helping to prevent and tackle crime.

[How to join your Local Neighbourhood Watch Scheme](#)

## **Community Speedwatch**

- **Set up a Community SpeedWatch scheme**

Community SpeedWatch(CSW) is a partnership between the community, police, fire service, and local authority with an aim to tackle the problem of speeding motorists.

- **Participate in Community SpeedWatch (CSW)**

CSW has around 120 active schemes with approximately 1200 volunteers. Volunteers monitor vehicle speed at approved locations, send the information to the police and then the police write a warning to drivers who were speeding. Community SpeedWatch is a positive example of the use of the community itself to raise awareness and educate those who cause risk and harm in our community.

[How to join your local Community SpeedWatch](#)

## **Join a Farm Watch or Horse Watch scheme**

Rural crimes can really be reduced by the use of Watch schemes. By using your knowledge and awareness of what is happening on and around your land, you can help to reduce crime and deter criminals.

### **Aims of the Farm Watch Scheme**

- To reduce local opportunities for rural crime.
- To reinforce the community spirit so that everyone can contribute towards the protection of their property by mutual co-operation and communication.
- To introduce early warning systems in farming and countryside areas.
- To improve the intelligence flow between the agricultural communities and the police.

### **How the aims are achieved**

- Text, email and landline voicemail alerts for members of the community.
- Intelligence gathered by police on all farm-related crimes and suspicious incidents.
- Visits from local PCSOs.
- Crime Reduction Officers can offer advice on securing property and, under certain circumstances, will visit farms to conduct a crime prevention survey.

### **Benefits of the Scheme**

- A reduction in crime and the fear of crime impacting on the community.
- Suspicious people and vehicles can quickly be reported to the police and other members of the countryside communities.
- Information and advice can be quickly and efficiently circulated between the police and the community.
- A crime vigilant community in partnership with the police will create a safer environment.
- To join the Farm Watch Scheme or to find out more information, email - [ruralandwildlifeunit@avonandsomerset.police.uk](mailto:ruralandwildlifeunit@avonandsomerset.police.uk)



## Useful contacts

Avon and Somerset Police	<a href="http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk">www.avonandsomerset.police.uk</a> <b>999 in an emergency</b> 101 non emergency
Make a complaint about the police	<a href="http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/updates-and-feedback/complaints/how-to-make-a-complaint">www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/updates-and-feedback/complaints/how-to-make-a-complaint</a>
Lighthouse Safeguarding Unit	<a href="http://lighthousevictimcare.org">lighthousevictimcare.org</a> (includes a range of support services for victims of crime and anti-social behaviour)
Support service for victims of crime and ASB (independent of the police)	<a href="http://victimsupport.org.uk">victimsupport.org.uk</a> 0300 303 1972 0808 168 9293 (out of hours supportline)
Crimestoppers	<a href="http://crimestoppers-uk.org">crimestoppers-uk.org</a> 0800 555 111
Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner	<a href="http://avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk">avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk</a> 01278 646188

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> Vulnerability definition adopted by the College of Policing (CoP) and National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC).

<sup>2</sup> September 2020 – August 2021. It should be noted that assessment of vulnerability is subjective and this is based on the Avon and Somerset Police risk model.

<sup>3</sup> [Preventing Exploitation Toolkit](#)

<sup>4</sup> August 2020 – July 2021

<sup>5</sup> [HM Government Tackling violence against women & girls 2021](#)

<sup>6</sup> September 2020 – August 2021. Due to improved crime recording standards figures from before this period are less reliable.

<sup>7</sup> Avon and Somerset Police response to Rape and Serious Sexual Offences. A transformative pathfinder approach being rolled out nationally as part of the cross-governmental improvement plan Operation Soteria.

<sup>8</sup> [Review of drugs part two: prevention, treatment, and recovery](#)

<sup>9</sup> A tag is applied based on personal judgement; it can indicate a specific drug crime or drugs as a risk factor.

<sup>10</sup> [Preventing serious violence: a multi-agency approach](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 – Section 2](#)

<sup>12</sup> [Beating Crime Plan 2021](#)

<sup>13</sup> Based on 2011 Census data counting rural and rural related hub towns together.

<sup>14</sup> Other agencies include NHS Clinical Commission Groups (CCGs), health and social care organisations, Fire and Rescue Services, probation providers, childcare and education services, residential homes and care providers and many more.

<sup>15</sup> In some local authority areas all three groups are merged into one.

<sup>16</sup> This 450 will include officers who will work in the Regional Organised Crime Unit rather than at Avon and Somerset Police directly. This is based on headcount rather than hours.

<sup>17</sup> Some officers work part time and so we also talk about 'full time equivalent' (FTE). This is based on the total number of hours *if* all officers were full time. When considering FTE the targets are 3,020 by March 2022 and 3,199 by March 2023. The FTE figure is used for budget purposes and is a more realistic measure of total resource. The reason we refer to headcount is for consistency with the national Uplift Programme.

<sup>18</sup> Approximately three quarters of DHEP recruits will take the detective programme and the remainder will enter as regular uniformed officers.

<sup>19</sup> Taser is in fact a brand name for a conducted energy device (CED). However Taser is used in our documents as this has been adopted into common language usage.

<sup>20</sup> [Together for Mental Wellbeing - Criminal Justice Services](#)

<sup>21</sup> It is important to note that improving standards will mean more recorded crime and particularly more domestic abuse crime will be recorded given the types of offences discussed.

<sup>22</sup> [Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#)

<sup>23</sup> [IICSA What is child sexual abuse?](#)

<sup>24</sup> [IICSA The effects of child sexual abuse](#)

<sup>25</sup> [ONS Child sexual abuse in England and Wales: year ending March 2019](#)

<sup>26</sup> [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report](#)

<sup>27</sup> This is one the Peelian Principles.

<sup>28</sup> Other than White includes people whose ethnicity is defined under the top tier groups of Asian, Black, Mixed or Other. You will have also have seen this referred to as BAME. It is also acknowledged that there are ethnic minorities within the White group however the data is not always reliable enough to disaggregate this group.

<sup>29</sup> HMICFRS [Disproportionate use of police powers: A spotlight on stop and search and the use of force](#)

<sup>30</sup> [Police Reform Act 2002](#), [Policing and Crime Act 2017](#), [The Police \(Complaints and Misconduct\) Regulations 2020](#) and [IOPC Statutory guidance on the police complaints system](#)

<sup>31</sup> [The Elected Local Policing Bodies \(Specified Information\) \(Amendment\) Order 2021](#)

<sup>32</sup> Statutory case reviews are undertaken in the most serious of cases where a person has died or suffered serious harm and fall into three categories: Domestic Homicide Reviews, Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and Safeguarding Adults Reviews.

<sup>33</sup> The [police super-complaints](#) system allows designated organisations to raise issues on behalf of the public about harmful patterns or trends in policing.

<sup>34</sup> [IOPC Statutory guidance on the police complaints system](#)