

Public Agenda Pack



Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel
Hosted by Somerset Council Democratic Services



Date: Thursday, 28th September 2023

Time: 10.30 am

**Venue: John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road,
Taunton TA1 1HE**

Membership:

Councillor Andy Wait

Councillor Ann Morgan

Vacancy

Councillor Asher Craig

Councillor Jonathan Hucker

Richard Brown

Gary Davies

Julie Knight

Councillor Peter Crew

Councillor Steve Hogg

Cllr Heather Shearer

Cllr Brian Bolt

Cllr Nicola Clark

Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts

Cllr Martin Wale

Councillor Sood

Councillor John Bradbury

Bath & North East Somerset

Bath and North East Somerset

Bristol City Council

Bristol City Council

Bristol City Council

Independent Member

Independent Member

Independent Member (Vice-Chair)

North Somerset Council

North Somerset Council

Somerset Council (Chair)

Somerset Council

Somerset Council

Somerset Council

Somerset Council

South Gloucestershire Council

South Gloucestershire Council

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Somerset Council

County Hall, Taunton

TA1 4DY

Issued by (the Proper Officer) on Tuesday, 19th September 2023

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Agenda
Public Information Sheet

Guidance about procedures at the meeting follows the agenda. This meeting will be open to the public and press, subject to the passing of any resolution under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972. This agenda and the attached reports and background papers are available on request prior to the meeting in large print, Braille, audio tape & disc and can be translated into different languages. They can also be accessed via the council's website on

Public Guidance Notes contained in Agenda Annexe 7 - 10

Click here to join the online meeting 11 - 12

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Public Question Time

Members of the public who reside or work in the Avon and Somerset Force area may submit a statement or petition or ask a maximum of two questions at a Panel meeting.

Statements or questions should be e-mailed to Patricia.Jones@somerset.gov.uk, or sent to the Democratic Services Team, County Hall Taunton TA1 4DY (marked for the attention of Patricia Jones). Statements must be received no later than 12.00 noon on Wednesday 27th September 2023. Questions must be received no later than 3 clear working days before the meeting – Friday 22nd September 2023.

Please note that all statements and questions must relate to matters that fall within the Panel's functions and responsibilities.

3 Declarations of Interest

The Statutory Register of Member's Interests can be inspected by contacting Patricia Jones in the Democratic Services Team on Tel: 07855 284506 or patricia.jones@somerset.gov.uk.

4 Minutes of the meeting held on 27th June 2023 (AGM) (Pages 13 - 30)

To confirm as a correct record.

5 Matters Arising

To consider any matters arising or actions emerging from the minutes.

6 Chair's Business

To receive any updates from the Chair.

7 Crime Prevention Assurance Report (Pages 31 - 42)

To consider progress against the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan/Priorities. The Panel will receive a presentation from Chief Superintendent Liz Hughes, Head of Neighbourhoods and Partnerships.

8 Commissioner's Update Report (Pages 43 - 58)

To receive an update on the Commissioner's activities since the last meeting.

9 Performance Summary/National Police and Crime Measures (Pages 59 - 74)

To consider and discuss the latest performance information.

10 Standing Complaints Report (Pages 75 - 78)

To provide the Panel with an overview of all complaints.

11 Governance Review Report (Pages 79 - 110)

The Panel is invited to note the final version of the Panel's Operating Arrangements and to consider the proposed amendments to the Panel's Rules of Procedure.

12 Panel Annual Report (Pages 111 - 132)

Members are invited to review and approve the Panel's Annual Report 2023/24.

13 **Panel Funding and Expenditure Report (Pages 133 - 138)**

The Panel is invited to consider the budget information and decide the value of the contribution from the component authorities in 2024/25.

14 **Work Programme (Pages 139 - 142)**

To note the current work programme.

15 **For Information - Commissioner's Annual Report (final draft) (Pages 143 - 210)**

16 **Date of Next Meeting**

Friday 8th December 2023 at 10.30am (The Deane House, Taunton).

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Avon & Somerset Police and Crime Panel

Public Information Sheet

Council Meetings

The legislation that governs council meetings requires committee meetings to be held face to face. Panel Members and key supporting officers are required to attend in person. Insofar as possible, provision will be made for those who do not need to attend in person, such as the public and press, to view the meeting virtually.

Inspection of Papers/Register of Member Interests

You can find papers for all our meetings on our website at www.somerset.gov.uk

Please contact Patricia Jones, Governance Specialist on telephone: 07855 284506 if you wish to inspect the papers or the Statutory Register of Member's Interests.

Public Question Time

Members of the public may submit a written statement to meetings, provided that the statement is received by the Democratic Services Team no later than 12.00 noon on the working day before the meeting. The statement must relate to business that the Panel has responsibility for.

Questions must be received no later than 3 clear working days before the meeting and must also relate to Panel business. Questions will be limited to 2 per person/organisation.

Statements or questions should be e-mailed to democraticservices@somerset.gov.uk or Patricia.Jones@somerset.gov.uk

Alternatively, you can post your statements or questions to Somerset Council, Democratic Services Team, County Hall, Taunton, TA1 4DY.

Any statement submitted should be no longer than one side of A4 paper. For copyright reasons, we are unable to reproduce or publish newspaper or magazine articles that may be attached to statements.

By participating in Public Question Time business, we will assume that you have consented to your name and the details of your submission being circulated to the Panel and recorded in the minutes.

We will try to remove personal information such as contact details. However, because of time constraints we cannot guarantee this, and you may therefore wish to consider if your statement contains information that you would prefer not to be in the public domain. Statements will not be posted on the council's website.

Process during the meeting:

Public Question Time is normally one of the first items on the agenda. If a statement concerns a specific item on the agenda, it may be taken just before the Item concerned.

- Statements or questions will not be taken if they are defamatory, frivolous, vexatious or offensive.
- You will be allowed a maximum of 2 minutes.
- The Chair will call each submission in turn. When you are invited to speak, please make sure that your presentation focuses on the key issues that you would like Panel Members to consider. This will have the greatest impact.
- You may direct any questions or comments through the Chair. You may not take direct part in the debate.
- Your time allocation may have to be strictly limited if there are a lot of submissions.
- You do not have to speak or even attend the meeting at which your submission is being taken. However, if you do not present it, it will not be read out. It will nevertheless be considered by Members.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

In the event of a fire alarm sounding, you are requested to leave the building via the nearest available signposted emergency exit and make your way to one of the assembly points around the building. Officers and councillors will be on hand to assist.

Excluding the Press and Public

Occasionally, there will be items on the agenda that cannot be debated in public for legal reasons, and these will be highlighted on the agenda as appropriate. In these circumstances, the public and press will be asked to leave the room and the Panel will go into Private Session.

Recording of Meetings

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We would ask that, as far as possible, members of the public are not filmed unless they are playing an active role such as speaking within a meeting and there may be occasions when speaking members of the public request not to be filmed.

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**Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel
Tuesday 27th June 2023 at 10.30am
The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton.**

Present:

Local Authority and Independent Member Representatives:

Councillor Andy Wait (Bath and North-East Somerset), Councillor Ann Morgan (Bath and North-East Somerset), Councillor Asher Craig (Bristol City Council), Councillor Jonathan Hucker (Bristol City Council), Richard Brown (Independent Member), Gary Davies (Independent Member), Julie Knight (Independent Member and Vice-Chair), Councillor Peter Crew (North Somerset Council), Councillor Steve Hogg (North Somerset Council), Councillor Brian Bolt (Somerset Council), Councillor Nicola Clark (Somerset Council), Councillor Heather Shearer (Somerset Council and Chair), Councillor Federica Smith-Roberts (Somerset Council), Councillor Martin Wale (Somerset Council), Councillor Raj Sood (South Gloucestershire Council), Councillor John Bradbury (South Gloucestershire Council).

Officers Present:

| | |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Patricia Jones | Panel Lead Officer |
| Claire Dicken | Clerk/Democratic Services Officer |
| Jonathan Hallows | Administrative Support |

Police and Crime Commissioner and Support Staff:

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Mark Shelford | Police and Crime Commissioner |
| Alice Ripley | Chief of Staff |
| Inspector Stuart King | Commissioner's Staff Officer |
| Joanna Coulon | Scrutiny and Performance Manager |
| Sally Fox | Director of Performance and Accountability |
| Niamh Byrne | Head of Communications and Engagement |
| Ben Valentine | Senior Performance and Governance Manager |

1. Apologies for Absence

None

2. Election of Chair

The Lead Officer sought nominations for Chair. Councillor Asher Craig nominated Somerset Councillor Heather Shearer. This was seconded by Councillor Jonathan Hucker. There were no other nominations and on being put to the vote, unanimously,

RESOLVED:

That Somerset Councillor Heather Shearer be elected as Chair of the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel for the municipal year 2023/24.

3. Election of Vice-Chair

The Lead Officer sought nominations for Vice-Chair. Independent Member Julie Knight was duly nominated and seconded. There were no other nominations and on being put to the vote, unanimously,

RESOLVED:

That Julie Knight, Independent Member be elected as Vice-Chair of the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel for the municipal year 2023/24.

4. Public Question Time

None.

5. Declarations of Interest

None.

6. Minutes of the meeting held on 29th March 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 29th March 2023 were approved as a correct record of the meeting.

7. Matters Arising

A list of actions following the previous meeting had been circulated. There were no queries or matters arising.

8. Chair's Business

The Chair thanked the Panel for electing her. She said she was looking forward to serving the Panel for another year.

9. Panel Membership 2023/24

The Lead Officer introduced the report which invited the Panel to note the new membership notified to the Host Authority by the Constituent Authorities for 2023/24.

It was reported that nominations had been sought where required and the appointments put forward by the component authorities rendered the political allocation of seats on the Panel as follows:

South Gloucestershire – 1 Labour 1 Liberal Democrat
North Somerset – 1 Independent 1 Conservative
Bath and North-East Somerset – 2 Liberal Democrats
Somerset – 3 Liberal Democrats 2 Conservatives
Bristol – 1 Labour 1 Conservative 1 Green

The Lead Officer advised the Panel that the nominations received were entirely in line with the political balance assessment emerging from the recent elections and the Somerset unitary transition.

Members noted Bristol City Council (BCC) was yet to nominate a Member from the Green Group. The Lead Officer would continue to liaise with BCC for a nomination. In the meantime, meetings of the Police and Crime Panel could proceed with the vacancy.

10. Work Programme 2023/24

The Lead Officer introduced the report and drew attention to the Panel's core statutory responsibilities and the proposals for additional scrutiny work set out in the report, which complied with Home Office expectations around proactive scrutiny.

Panel Members were invited to:-

- Discuss and agree a Work Programme for 2023/24, including the establishment of a Public Confidence Sub-Committee and a Budget Task Group
- Agree the membership for the Public Confidence-Sub Committee, the Budget Task and Finish Group and the Complaints Sub Committee
- Approve the Panel meeting dates set out in the Work Programme

The Chair reflected on Panel discussions leading up to the meeting in relation to the Police and Crime Plan, the trajectory of performance data, vetting, institutional racism, the morale of the workforce, identifying disproportionality, the recent HMICFRS inspection and the importance of establishing the Commissioner's strategy to tackle public confidence issues.

Gary Davies, Independent Member volunteered to join the Public Confidence Sub-Committee. He said it was important for the Panel to understand the strategy for improving public confidence and it was important for the Commissioner to hold the Chief Constable to account. He added that public confidence in the Police service was low nationally, but there would be an inevitable local impact following the Chief Constable's announcement that the force was institutionally racist.

Julie Knight, Independent Member also volunteered to join the Public Confidence Sub-Committee. She was concerned about the trajectory of the performance data, and she would be interested to scrutinise performance reports coming from the Constabulary. She said the morale of the Constabulary service going forward was an important factor.

Councillor Asher Craig commented that communication and engagement with the community was vital important in addressing public confidence. The Panel welcomed her suggestion for Maya Mate-Kole to provide external assurance on the work of the Public Confidence Sub-Committee. It was noted that she was

currently involved in the Avon and Somerset's Tackling Disproportionality work alongside Councillor Craig.

Councillors Brian Bolt and Nicola Clark also volunteered to join the group.

The discussion about public confidence continued. Members were interested to know more about the declaration the Chief Constable had made in relation to Institutional Racism. What methodology would be used to assess if the strategy to address the culture challenges was working and at what point would the Constabulary know it was no longer institutionally racist.

The Commissioner was invited to speak. He said the issue of addressing institutional racism would involve a change in culture which would be a complicated and lengthy process and take many years to achieve. In future, indicators such as whether parents had to warn their children about stop and searches by the Constabulary would indicate whether the service had improved.

In response to further questions, the Commissioner offered to give a wider explanation during his Update Report at Item 12.

The Panel agreed that the purpose of the Budget Task and Finish Group would be to scrutinise the quarterly outturn monitoring reports provided by the Commissioner, and to make a formal recommendation to the wider panel on the precept level. The point was made that the formation of the group had emerged from the last Precept proposal and that the Panel considered it important to make an assessment of the budgetary position at key stages across the year in order to make an informed decision on the precept proposal next year.

Volunteers were sought and it was agreed the Budget Task and Finish Group should be made up of Councillor Heather Shearer along with Councillors Jonathan Hucker (Chair), Andy Wait and Peter Crew.

The Chief of Staff informed the Panel that the OPCC officer contact for the task and finish group would be the Chief Finance Officer and it would be useful if he could have an early meeting with the Chair and notification of the meeting dates for his diary.

The Panel moved on to discuss the Complaints Sub-Committee. The Lead Officer outlined the current process of dealing with conduct complaints against the Commissioner which involved the initial delegation of handling to the Chief of Staff in the OPCC. It was emphasised that the Panel remained the final arbiter

however, and complaints escalated to the Panel were handled by Independent Member Gary Davies in consultation with the Lead Officer. The Panel noted that this provided a mechanism for filtering complaints, allowing the Complaints Sub-Committee to meet only when the nature of the complaint required a wider input.

The Panel was invited to re-establish the Complaints Sub Committee which would ideally have 4 members. Councillors Martin Wale, Federica Smith-Roberts, and Brian Bolt volunteered to join the Independent Member on the Complaints Sub-Committee.

Members agreed the proposed dates of the meetings of the Police and Crime Panel during 2023/24.

Action:

- 1. The Public Confidence Sub-Committee will be made up of Independent Members Gary Davies and Julie Knight and, Councillors Brian Bolt and Nicola Clark.**
- 2. The Budget Task and Finish Group will be made up of Councillor Heather Shearer and Councillors Jonathan Hucker (Chair), Andy Wait and Peter Crew.**
- 3. Councillor Hucker and Paul Butler (CFO) – meeting to be arranged.**
- 4. The Complaints Panel will be made up of Independent Member Gary Davies and Councillors Martin Wale, Federica Smith-Roberts and Brian Bolt.**
- 5. To proceed with the proposed dates of the meetings of the Police and Crime Panel during 2023/24.**

11. Commissioner's Annual Report 2022/23

The Commissioner presented his statutory Annual Report detailing the exercise of his functions over the past year and reflecting on the progress of the 2022-23

Police and Crime Plan objectives. It was emphasised that the report was currently in draft form and any comments and recommendations of Panel Members would be taken into account in the final version.

The Commissioner confirmed that the Constabulary had exceeded the Home Office uplift target, finishing the year with 3,393 officers. This is 266 more officers than at the end of the previous year.

The Commissioner acknowledged the enormity of the task both he and the Chief Constable faced in meeting the ongoing challenges relating to public confidence and meeting priorities within a limited budget. He emphasised that he wanted to work with the Panel, welcoming the proposal to establish Task and Finish Groups on these issues.

The Commissioner emphasised that he would hold the Chief Constable to account on all aspects of the improvement programme emerging from the HMICFRS inspection and the resulting updates and progress against actions will be reported to the Panel.

In an effort to improve, and develop leadership and culture change, the Commissioner added that visits had been undertaken to Sandhurst, Westbury and the MOD to learn best practice from a variety of organisations.

He reminded the Panel that the Annual Report was a draft and welcomed feedback from the Panel. The report will be finalised and published, with the final version brought back to the Panel at the September meeting.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

The Panel referenced the positive, albeit small, improvement in performance in relation to Rape and Sexual Violence outcomes as a result of Operation Bluestone. The grants that go to victim support organisations were also welcomed by the Panel, but further information was sought on preventative measures and education that may be taking place to tackle misogyny and violence against women and girls.

The Commissioner agreed that education was vitally important for working towards the prevention of crimes such as violence against women and girls, misuse of drugs and violence caused by drugs. All require a strong community response that this behaviour is not acceptable. This is an important aspect of the work of the Violence Reduction Units across the Force area.

The Commissioner reiterated his desire for research into effective education strategies from age 4 and confirmed that he had requested work to enable messaging to be targeted in an age-appropriate way.

The Commissioner said it was important for women and girls to know what help was available. He gave the example of the initiative run last summer where pharmacies provided a safe space for victims to be able to access support.

The Panel emphasised it was equally important to educate boys and men not to become abusers, as well as informing victims on how they could escape abuse.

The Commissioner was invited to comment on any plans to provide improved training for Police officers on violence against women and girls. The Panel was advised that the Bluestone approach was providing different results and women were now more likely to remain engaged with their cases. The Panel made the point that Bluestone was only one aspect - harassment, stalking and domestic abuse were day to day activities for the wider force and outcomes for the totality of recorded crime remained very low. Were there any plans to roll out a better training model for all officers?

The attention of the Panel was drawn to a major piece of work from last year. 'Domestic Abuse Matters' training had been rolled out to over 2,300 front line officers and staff with a view to providing insight into the complexities of relationships and behaviours to improve the response to domestic abuse.

The Panel noted that domestic abuse was not always reported and that positive outcomes for victims who did report domestic abuse was low.

The Commissioner agreed it was traumatic for anyone to suffer an attack of a sexual nature. Operation Bluestone involves a victim-centred approach. He said as a result of Operation Bluestone, officers had received a great deal of training on best practice in relation to investigating and prosecuting rape and serious sexual offences which included hard-hitting messages.

The Panel asked what assurance measures were in place to enable the Commissioner to be confident that tangible progress was being made.

The Commissioner had recently visited the College of Policing. He said it had been interesting to learn how new officers were being trained to prepare files for prosecution.

With regard to the prevention of drug-related crime and improved drug testing in custody suites, the Panel noted 465 people had tested positive for opiates after their arrest. The Panel requested the number that had taken up the Constabulary's offer of treatment and it was agreed that this would be provided.

The Panel sought further information on the DPCC's day to day role and responsibilities and progress achieved and requested that this was included in the Annual Report.

The Panel invited the Commissioner to comment on the robustness of vetting procedures and whether he intended to make any improvements. The Commissioner said that vetting of officers and staff was extremely important, and had been the subject of a recent HMIC report. A national programme has recently taken place to check all employees against the Police National Database. Any matches were sent the local force. The Constabulary's Professional standards department have been working through these matches and appropriate action is being taken in relation to the employees. It was confirmed that all new officers have been checked against a national database.

With reference to the glossary at page 106, the Panel noted that public confidence was measured by a question in the local survey. The Commissioner was asked if he had confidence in the way in which data was gathered.

He explained a cohort of members of the public were selected at random from across the Avon and Somerset area to be surveyed four times per year each year and their perceptions were compared year on year. The Panel recommended that the survey should not involve the same sample group each year and should be sufficiently representative of all community groups. It was suggested that 750 (as noted in the report) appeared a relatively small number to gauge such an important statistic. It was clarified that this sample size is statistically significant. However, it was acknowledged that the diversity of the respondents could be improved.

The Panel asked if stop and search data included explanations as to why the stop and search took place. The Commissioner confirmed that stop and search data included full details of the rationale for the stop. The Panel asked if stop and search remained primarily intelligence led and if so, to what extent this impacted on the data/disproportionality in ethnicity. The Commissioner clarified the power is used in both an intelligence-led way and an officer-led way. Intelligence-led stop and searches provided better outcomes. The Independent Scrutiny of Police Powers Panel scrutinises these issues.

Members queried the response to 999 and 101 calls. Members were concerned that the 11.4% of the 101 calls being abandoned was representative of an exponential curve. The Commissioner said this was an enduring problem and may be related to the high number of callers who were not actually reporting a crime but seeking support that was better delivered by other agencies. He explained the triage system that was in place for calls, including a Mental Health triage service. The control room was constantly connected to monitors recording their statistics in clear sight of call handlers and they were constantly trying to improve.

Members were further concerned that a quarter of 999 calls requiring immediate response were not attended to within 15/20 minutes and the trend seemed to be getting worse. The Panel made the point that this was a public confidence issue and the Commissioner emphasised that the Chief Constable was alert to his concerns.

The Director of Performance and Accountability explained challenges around recruitment to the control room. Staff were required to be on-site and the pandemic and the emerging practice of working from home had impacted on recruitment to this particular strand of the service. There was now a focus on recruitment to the control room.

Members further queried what measures the Constabulary was employing to address the carbon emissions. The target of achieving 30% electrification of the fleet by 2027 was welcomed but the Panel sought clarification of the intention to reduce the number of diesel cars by swapping to petrol. Why not switch to hybrid now given the government's deadline to phase out all petrol and diesel cars by 2030?

The Commissioner suggested the infrastructure may not be ready by 2030 for the service to be wholly reliant on electric or hybrid vehicles and therefore, the Constabulary needed to be guided by operational requirements. He supported the use of hybrid vehicles. The Panel urged caution as car companies had also started phasing out petrol and diesel cars and moving towards hybrid and electric models in anticipation of the 2030 deadline.

The Chair and Vice Chair offered to assist with "de-jargoning" parts of the report for the benefit of the public/accessibility.

Members welcomed the expansion of Bluestone resources but expressed concern that this was being repeatedly cited as "significant progress" along with the

positive outcome increase from 4.7 to 8%. It was suggested that the annual report is revised to reflect the Commissioner's statement to the Panel that this outcome is not good enough on the basis that it is coming from a low starting point. The Panel commented that the report highlighted challenges and areas for improvement without detailing precisely how those areas might be improved.

Given the financial challenges with the report predicting a 15m shortfall in 3 years, the Panel considered the allocation of 80 staff to identify, and record missed crime to be a significant use of resources (4,851 additional crimes in 12 months that would otherwise have been unrecorded with 1,421 being domestic abuse crimes). The Panel took the view that the most efficient and effective course would be to ensure that they are recorded at the outset and hope that the recent Domestic Abuse training helps to reduce the number of unrecorded Domestic Abuse cases.

With regard to data quality and the Home Office requirements, the Commissioner explained sometimes crimes were reported to the police, along with reports of historic crimes which had not been reported to them at the time.

In response to queries about managing demand, the Commissioner accepted that neighbourhood officers were still being required to respond to 999 calls but planning was a key focus and where neighbourhood officers were asked to respond, it would be within their area. The point was made that summer was the busiest period demand wise. The Panel shared anecdotal reports of their experience of officer abstraction from neighbourhood teams.

The Panel noted that throughout 2022/23, the Internal Audit function completed 9 substantive audits. It was further noted that 7 of the audits resulted in a reasonable assurance opinion and 3 in a limited assurance opinion, amounting to 10. The Commissioner explained the reason for the anomaly and agreed to send further information about the audits to the Panel after the meeting.

The Panel noted that recent accounts for year ending 2023 detailed a £3.7m underspend, which implied £3.7m of non-recurring items. There appeared to not be a complete income/expenditure account. Additionally, there was a note of a transfer of reserves totalling £3.7m and the Panel asked if this was the other side of the same transaction.

The Commissioner further agreed to provide an answer outside of the meeting.

The Panel suggested the annual report would benefit from additional statistical information demonstrating progress against the Police and Crime Plan as some measures set out in the Police and Crime Plan were not reflected in the Annual Report. The Commissioner was asked if this indicated a shift in priorities and if there were any plans to refresh the plan.

The Commissioner agreed to update the Panel with performance outcomes against the measures set out in the Police and Crime Plan and review the draft Annual Report to reflect this focus.

In response to the Panel's question around levels of officer retention, the Commissioner explained that most leavers were due to retirement in line with forecasts. He was comfortable that officers were not leaving the service in unacceptably high numbers for other reasons. In the most recent month for example, turnover of officers was at 7.5% and consistent with the previous year.

The Panel felt the report had not been very clear about the reason for the reduction of PCSOs. The Commissioner explained that many PCSOs went on to be recruited as Police Officers.

He added that with regard to savings, they needed to be considered carefully and to be long sighted, for example when considering sale of police estate.

The Commissioner gave examples of ways in which the service had tried to boost morale. This included a family fun day for the police and fire services and looking into minimising parking charges for officers at Police stations.

Members agreed that the report was well set out and readability had improved. However, there was some jargon within it which could hold back the general public from fully understanding it.

Actions:

- 1. The resulting updates and progress against actions emerging from the PEEL Inspection Improvement Programme to be made available to the Panel.**
- 2. Chair and Vice Chair offered to assist with "de-jargning" parts of the report for the benefit of the public/accessibility.**
- 3. Further information on the DPCC's day to day role and responsibilities and progress achieved to be included in the Annual Report.**

- 4. The Panel recommended that the report is revised to reflect the Commissioner's statement to the Panel that the Bluestone positive outcome rate is not good enough.**
- 5. The Panel recommended that the report be revised in line with the comments that it highlighted challenges and areas for improvement without detailing precisely how those areas might be improved.**
- 6. The Commissioner agreed to confirm the number of those who had taken up the offer of treatment for drug use following their arrest and positive test for drugs.**
- 7. The Commissioner agreed to send the Panel detail of the 10 internal audits.**
- 8. The Commissioner agreed to update the Panel with performance outcomes against the measures set out in the Police and Crime Plan and review the draft Annual Report to reflect this focus.**

12. Commissioner's Update Report

The Commissioner introduced the report, setting out key governance and scrutiny activities and OPCC/national business updates since the last meeting.

The Commissioner discussed the Chief Constable's recent announcement in relation to the Constabulary and institutional racism. He read out the definition of institutional racism as stated in the Macpherson Report: the collective failure of an organisation to provide a service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racial stereotyping.

He reported that the statement was necessary to rebuild trust and that in order to address this problem, there needed to be a change in culture. He believed this process would take a number of years and emphasised that he was fully supportive of the Chief Constable and her courageous work. He said the process for change had started 18 months ago and all the agencies involved were on a journey.

The Identifying Disproportionality Report had indicated under-representation from Black, Asian and other ethnic minority people. The first step had been to involve the communities. This had already begun to have an impact shown in the recruitment of officers from under-represented groups. However, as the workforce has expanded, overall, this has not translated into greater diversity and the current figure of 3.6% of the workforce should be closer to 9.2% to reflect the current BAME population as shown in the 2021 Census.

He talked about the perception of the Constabulary by minority communities and the statistical evidence and lived experiences that now demanded progress. He said the Constabulary was determined to address the problem and this is core to tackling crime and upholding the law.

The Commissioner continued to give further updates:-

It was noted that further discussions around the improvement programme and the work of Assistant Chief Constable Will White emerging from the HMICFRS inspection, would take place at the annual planning meeting on 18th July 2023.

He confirmed that local Police and Crime Plans (Community Safety Plans) were operational in 3 areas. He further confirmed that the OPCC Community Engagement and Stakeholder Manager was now in post.

Members were encouraged to pass on ideas for local initiatives that could be included in the Community Payback scheme.

The Panel was advised that a user-friendly guide for nominations for Gallantry Awards was under development. These awards can be given to the bravest Police Officers who deserve national recognition and the initiative was intended to help obtain that recognition and boost morale.

The Commissioner reported that he was making good progress with his national fraud portfolio and with work underway to ensure that reporting systems were more accessible. The Constabulary's handling of cybercrime had been recognised as good practice and forces from across the country had been asking for advice.

The Head of Communications and Engagement advised that the OPCC had won a regional award for its volunteer recruitment campaign.

During the discussion the following points were made:

The Panel acknowledged the importance of tackling racial disproportionality in the criminal justice system and growing a culture that addressed the behaviours in the workforce that fall within the definition of institutional racism. The Commissioner was advised that the main consideration for the Panel was leadership, the strategy for getting there and the pace of change.

There was general agreement that under-represented people in the workforce were over-represented in the criminal justice system, and this needed to be reversed.

Some Panel members said experience had shown it was still difficult for black people to become Police Officers.

Cllr Asher Craig spoke about her own lived experience and thanked the Commissioner for the Identifying Disproportionality report. She acknowledged that there would never be a point at which work will be complete, but in the meantime we all need to work hard to address the issues. A good indicator would be to see numbers going in a different direction from the current over-representation in the criminal justice system and under-representation in recruitment. She reflected on the collective failures of the Constabulary and Bristol City Council in relation to Bijan Ebrahimi. Failures in people and systems led to him not being identified as a target for racist abuse and ultimately led to his death in 2013. Attention was drawn to a recent incident in Bristol involving a 14-year-old black child who was taken into custody without any apparent recognition of his injuries. It was felt an obvious safeguarding issue had been overlooked.

Cllr Craig added that the Chief Constable had her backing and respect and that she would continue to work with her to take the necessary work forward.

The Commissioner was invited to consider making his strategy to tackle racism and his support of the Chief Constable, front and centre in the Annual Report as this strong and important message was not currently reflected.

More generally, it was recognised that the Chief Constable's recent announcement would have a variety of audiences and the message was likely to be welcomed by some and give others cause for concern. The Panel recommended the general public would benefit from some positive proactive publicity to help with their understanding of the strategy and sensitivities behind the approach of the Commissioner and Chief Constable. It was important for the public to see that there was a clear path to work towards overcoming this in the years to come.

It was emphasised that the Commissioner and the Panel would need requisite assurances at key stages that progress was being made.

It was suggested that positive examples needed to be publicised to show when Police Officers had done good work and had a good relationship with the

community. The Gallantry Awards initiative was welcomed as one way to engender the historical warmth the public held for the service.

The Head of Communications and Engagement informed the Panel that the approach was centred around two complex and multifaceted workstreams – one a national directive through the Police Race Action Plan and another local programme of work emerging from the Avon and Somerset Identifying Disproportionality Report.

The Commissioner confirmed that two Forces had declared themselves to be institutionally racist, including Avon and Somerset Police. In some cases, the Chief Constables had rejected the suggestion that their force was institutionally racist.

The Commissioner invited the Panel and the Councils they represented, to support him and the Chief Constable in their efforts to change their culture.

With regard to a query regarding the Community Speedwatch Scheme, the Commissioner clarified that the involvement of the public was to add value and not to replace the work being undertaken by the Constabulary. The work of the volunteers helped inform the police where there were problems with speeding and where to target enforcement.

Action:

- 1. Discussions around the improvement programme and the work of Asst. Chief Constable Will White emerging from the HMICFRS inspection, to take place at the annual planning meeting on 18th July 2023.**
- 2. The Commissioner was invited to consider making his strategy to tackle racism and his support of the Chief Constable, front and centre in the Annual Report.**
- 3. The Panel recommended that the general public would benefit from some positive proactive publicity to help with their understanding of the strategy to tackle racism and the sensitivities behind the approach of the Commissioner and Chief Constable.**

13. Performance Summary/National Police and Crime Measures

The Panel noted the performance data provided for Quarter ending March 2023 against the Government's National Police and Crime measures.

The Panel asked if the targeted efforts to disrupt drug supplies/activities commencing in 2020 had achieved the anticipated outcomes. The Commissioner provided assurances that Operation Scorpion was having a positive effect.

14. Standing Complaints Report

The Panel noted a report from the Chief of Staff, providing a rolling summary of complaints made against the Commissioner.

There had been no new complaints recorded against the Commissioner since the last meeting of the Police and Crime Panel.

The complaint review manager had handled 600 reviews up until the end of May 2023. In total 20% of reviews have been upheld, 68% have not been upheld and 12% had been recorded as void.

The OPCC had received and logged 4 new complaints against the Chief Constable since the last meeting of the Police and Crime Panel.

An update on Operation Meadow was provided.

15. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday, 28th September 2023 at 10.30 am, Council Offices, Deane House, Taunton

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| PCC Cover Note |
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| Assurance Report: Avon and Somerset Police Crime Prevention |
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Preventing and Fighting Crime is the first priority in my Police and Crime Plan. My vision has always been 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. The plan supports the police to do this through focusing on strengthening partnership working, greater visibility, better engagement within communities, early intervention, reducing reoffending and improving the outcomes and support for victims and witnesses of crime.

The Chief Constable has committed to pursuing those who commit the most crime, present the most significant harm and are the most corrosive to our communities. This assurance report seeks to provide an overview of the collective work ongoing and planned to achieve this as well as demonstrating how national strategy is being adopted and embedded locally. My team worked with representatives from the police to scope a report that focused primarily on:

- What do we mean by crime prevention? What is included and what is not included in this term?
- What is our overarching approach to crime prevention?
- What real examples do we have of primary, secondary and tertiary crime prevention work taking place?
- What evidence do we have that these practices are working?
- What plans are there for crime prevention work across policing as a totality, rather than just within Neighbourhood policing?
- What gaps or limitations are there that would need to be overcome to implement these plans?
- What further partnership support would benefit crime prevention work in Avon and Somerset and how can the Police and Crime Commissioner support this?

This report has been considered by the police through their Constabulary Management Board and by my team and I through the Governance and Scrutiny Board.

Crime prevention is not solely the responsibility of the police force; it's a collective effort that involves law enforcement, community safety partnerships, local authorities, community organisations and most importantly our residents. I continue to work with the police to identify areas where I can use my convening role to bring together agencies to share best practice, drive innovation and problem solve. This report seeks to highlight those opportunities. I would also welcome any further suggestions from panel members of where I can use my role to bring partners together. Only by working together efficiently and effectively can we make a substantial impact on reducing crime and improving the quality of life for everyone.

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| MEETING: Constabulary Management Board | DATE: August 2023 | AGENDA NO: 2.2 | |
| DEPARTMENT: Neighbourhood and Partners Directorate | AUTHOR: Hannah Hyde | BUSINESS LEAD: C/Supt Elizabeth Hughes | COG SPONSOR: |
| NAME OF PAPER: Crime Prevention Assurance Report | PURPOSE OF THE PAPER: Assurance | OPEN SESSION | |
| Report Commissioned By: Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner | | | |
| Version control: | | | |

| Indicate by highlighting below which PEEL question (and PCP measure/s) this assurance topic covers | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| 1. How good is the force's service for victims of crime? - Increase reporting - Victim satisfaction - Supporting victims - Crime recording - Complaints - Scrutiny performance and learning | 2. How good is the force at engaging with the people it serves and treating them fairly, appropriately and respectfully? - Increase reporting - Community engagement - Public confidence - Feelings of safety - Public engagement - Disproportionality | 3. How good is the force at preventing and deterring crime and ASB and vulnerability? - Reduce crime and ASB - Neighbourhood crime and ASB - Road safety - Visible policing | 4. How good is the force at responding to the public? - Partnership working - Demand management - Responding to calls for service - Disproportionality - Use of Police Powers - Complaints - Scrutiny, performance and learning | 5. How good is the force at investigating crime? - Increase positive outcomes - Fraud and Cyber Crime - Criminal Justice System - Crime Recording - Use of Police Powers |
| 6. How good is the force at protecting vulnerable people? - Vulnerable people - VAWG - Disproportionality | 7. How good is the force at managing offenders and suspects? - Reduce reoffending - Criminal Justice System - Disproportionality | 8. How good is the force at disrupting serious and organised crime? - Drug crime and serious violence - Fraud and Cyber Crime | 9. How good is the force at building, developing and looking after its workforce and encouraging an ethical, lawful and inclusive workplace? - Citizens in Policing - Workforce morale - Recruiting officers - Workforce representation | 10. How good is the force at planning and managing its organisation efficiently and making sure it achieves value for money, now and in the future? - Environmental impact - Capability - Demand management - Data information - Scrutiny, performance and learning - Partnership working |

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Crime Prevention is a vast topic, and for Avon and Somerset is inclusive of activity that prevents and reduces crime and the harm it can cause.
- Avon and Somerset will be aligning a local Crime Prevention Delivery Plan with the NPCC National Crime Prevention Strategy and the Constabulary's five-year strategic plan.
- The report includes real examples of Primary, Secondary and Tertiary crime prevention activity currently undertaken by the Constabulary.
- There are three considerations as a result of this report:
 1. There is currently no crime prevention (Designing Out Crime) input in the PCSO initial training, and there should be consideration for this to be added.
 2. There should be consideration to utilise the Qlik DA RFG (Recency Frequency Gravity) app to target the management of serial DA perpetrators to manage reoffending and harm caused.
 3. Consider adding a section onto Problem Solving Plan (PSP) initial and review Niche templates to encourage sharing of PSPs with directorates such as Response.

We feel moderately assured about the Force performance in relation to our approach to Crime Prevention. We have good initiatives taking place, however there are some gaps in being able to evaluate some of them to demonstrate their effectiveness at this stage. We also know we have more work to do in terms of creating a plan, identifying actions for our gaps work to improve our problem-solving policing processes and improve training for Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPT).



2. PURPOSE

To provide assurance regarding the Constabulary's approach to Crime Prevention.

Background and Context

Crime prevention is an expansive topic which spans across policing and is at the core of what we do. Typically, when we talk about crime prevention, we traditionally think of activity aimed at preventing crime occurring in the first place. This is just one of several blocks of the HMICFRS 'Reducing Crime' narrative, as detailed in this year Force Management Statement for Reducing Crime. Crime prevention for Avon and Somerset is inclusive of all practices with the aim of preventing and reducing crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). Due to this very large scale, it is not possible to include all activity within this report, and therefore we will focus on specific examples of primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention practices.

The National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) Coordination Committee has recently published a national strategy and plan which defines the aim of crime prevention as:

"Fewer victims, fewer offences, and less demand on policing, achieved by addressing underlying causes and using partnership orientated problem solving".

Under the new thematic leadership of C/Supt Elizabeth Hughes, this will be replicated into a local delivery plan for Avon and Somerset Constabulary, focussing on the same themes as the national strategy ([Appendix 1](#)):

- Cultural Change
- Reduced Harm
- Reduced Offending
- Reducing demand through evidence-based problem-solving approaches.

There is a strong ambition for wider cultural change across the organisation to maximise the opportunities to prevent public harm and reduce demand through problem solving approaches, as well as tackling the causes and opportunities that facilitate offending. This will be in line with and reflect the Chief Constable's Stepping Stones and longer-term Strategic Imperatives ([Appendix 2](#)).

In the OPCC Police and Crime Plan 2021-2025, priority one is focussed on preventing crime, demonstrating the importance of crime prevention practice within the communities we serve. It identifies that addressing the causes and not just the symptom of offending is crucial in achieving reduced harm and offending¹. Whilst we have strong examples of preventative work, the force understands that there is a need to further embed and reinforce the approach of crime prevention in Avon and Somerset. This is highlighted by two AFIs from the PEEL report. Below are the AFIs, and what work is being undertaken in these areas to contribute to our crime prevention practice:

The constabulary should consistently evaluate and share effective problem-solving practice.

Best practice to assess and improve the effectiveness of problem-solving to understand how the learning can be taken and shared force wide is being explored by an Improvement Consultant and Evidence Based Policing Team sergeant.

- An evaluation process has been designed by Alecto Shyne the Evidence based Policing Team Inspector. This attributes a financial saving to the closed PSP. An PSP evaluation assurance paper will be completed by a Sgt in the Evidence based Policing Team over the next 3 months.
- Dip Sampling of Supervisor Reviews across various Occurrence types are taking place monthly within the NH&P Directorate. A form is completed via SharePoint that feeds into a Qlik app (due to go live shortly). It will collate all Supervisor Review dip sampling activity across the force to monitor performance.
- Problem-solving training for Neighbourhood Supervisors is being delivered to improve scrutiny, add value to their reviews and ensure the continued use objectives that are SMART throughout the plans, and is due to be completed by October 2023.

The constabulary needs to ensure that neighbourhood policing officers have access to structured training.

- Three PSP training packages consisting of best practice scenario-based inputs were developed in 2022 and has been delivered to 300 NPT staff so far over the last 18 months.
- The College of Policing and the NPCC are developing a Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) training curriculum which is due to be in place in a year. In the interim, Avon and Somerset have been identified

¹ Avon & Somerset Police & Crime Plan 2021-2025 [AS-Police-Crime-Plan-2021-2025-HR-Spreads.pdf \(avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk\)](#)

as a pathfinder force to improve NPT training. It has been agreed Neighbourhoods are first in line to have a 'one stop' hub developed using the capability in Microsoft 365. It will be a straightforward tool for CPD, professionalising the NPT syllabus, helping plan and record training, and capturing examples of good practice.²

PEEL Questions

HMICFRS PEEL Q3. 'How good is the force at preventing and deterring crime and ASB and vulnerability' is the central question relating to crime prevention. It directly questions our capability in prevention and deterrence. Work towards this is especially visible in Neighbourhood and Partnerships Directorate (NH&P Directorate). This includes examples such as Neighbourhood Officer's use of PSPs, the Early Intervention Team's work with partner agencies and the Design Out Crime team are key when we assess ourselves against this question.

Due to the large scope of the crime prevention topic, there are other PEEL questions which are also relevant. These include:

- Q2. How good is the force at engaging with the people it serves and treating them fairly, appropriately, and respectfully?
- Q6. How good is the force at protecting vulnerable people?
- Q7. How good is the force at managing offenders and suspects?

It is beneficial to mention these as they have relevance when it comes to the impact crime prevention activity has. This work is also most visible in the NH&P Directorate. Whilst a lot of crime prevention work is evident here, other directorates such as Investigations have the Cyber Protect team who have been doing proactive crime prevention webinars on staying safe online.

3. AREA OF ASSURANCE

3.1. To what extent are we assured that we are using crime prevention practices and how does it contribute to crime prevention?

Specific examples of Avon and Somerset Police's crime prevention work will be grouped into the following:

- Primary Crime Prevention.
- Secondary Crime Prevention.
- Tertiary Crime Prevention.

Primary Crime Prevention

*"Preventing and minimising the risk of harm to individuals through a focus on large populations."*³

- **Trauma-Informed Practice**

Avon and Somerset are one of few police forces who started the journey to become a trauma-informed organisation. It is public health approach, to enable staff to have the knowledge and skill to recognise and respond in a compassionate way, preventing further harm and supports the recovery of individuals affected by adverse experiences⁴. This is force-wide project which will be delivered in four stages based on the six principles of the practice ([Appendix 3](#)). There are monthly meetings with the pillar leads, and a steering group attended by leads from every directorate and chaired by Chief Constable Sarah Crew.

The priority is to get staff upskilled on the front line (Response, Neighbourhood teams, and Custody) which is then followed up with other staff depending on their role. Another is for groups with lived experience to co-produce the work and a third-party organisation to assist with specialist advice for the specific workstreams.

Due to being one of the first law enforcement bodies to do this there is limited learning we can take from other forces, and it will also take time to embed (4 years). It is therefore too early to have evidence showing this practice working locally, but it is a significant step towards positive cultural change, and a self-assessment and performance framework is in development to assess this as the project progresses. There are also multiple pieces of research to suggest that this approach can lead to better outcomes for both those effected by adverse experiences and trauma and the rest of society by reducing harm experienced, reduce crime rates, and increase public confidence⁵.

² NHP Digital Academy DLM 25.04.2023.

³ Merseyside Police Prevention Strategy 2022-2024 [Prevention Strategy .pdf](#)

⁴ Trauma-informed System [Trauma-Informed System \(bristol safeguarding.org\)](#)

⁵ Trauma-informed System [Trauma-Informed System \(bristol safeguarding.org\)](#)

- **Designing Out Crime Officers (DOCOs)**

The DOCOs are qualified professionals who use Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) to support the design of spaces with the aim of preventing Neighbourhood crimes and ASB for the population living there. Secured by Design (SBD) is an official police security initiative where the DOCOs work with housing associations, builders, and local authorities to ensure required standard of the security is adhered to. DOCO advice at a new development in Lyde Green has reduced the likelihood of burglaries with 50 recorded in the past two years compared to 178 over the same period in Bradley Stoke. Nationally, data shows that building to SBD security standards reduces the likelihood of being a victim of a burglary by 53%⁶. They also offer security standards advice around vehicles, gardens, bikes, marine, rural, and cyber.⁷



They work on a force wide scale and are available to give advice to NPT and do follow ups with victims from call into us. The requests are recorded on spreadsheets (see below). South Gloucester figures are significantly different as there is a dedicated DOCO who purely focuses on crime reduction following an incident or a call from NPT for guidance. Force wide in the same period the amount of burglaries, vehicle offences, theft of bicycles and criminal damage is 36,847. Whilst it cannot be assumed that all of these would be suitable for a DOCO referral, it suggests that NPTs could utilise this asset more and an input from them should be considered in the PCSO's initial training. They are already part of the Local Tasking Meeting (LTM) which is a platform for identifying problem solving opportunities, and they are linked to the Neighbourhoods and Partnerships Team Room on Pocketbook, signposting officers to their local DOCOs details.

| Area | Requests for DOCO advice from NPT and victim follow up calls 01/01/2023 – 07/08/2023 |
|-----------------------|---|
| South Gloucestershire | 167 |
| Bristol | 24 |
| West Somerset | 49 |
| BANES | 37 |
| East Somerset | 54 |
| North Somerset | 20 |

Case Study: Planning applications for BT Street hubs

BT Street Hubs provide tools including free Wi-Fi, power to phones for members of the public and a 999 button. The DOCOs work has prevented 15 out of 20 installations in the Avon and Somerset area by identifying the high potential for increased crime and ASB. Through DOCOs liaising with other forces who have these hubs installed, they were able to show that the installation would likely cause these issues to occur. The London Metropolitan Police had an increase of hoax calls, and Thames Valley Police had CCTV showing the Hub being used by drug dealers using the free 30 second call service it provides. By preventing installation, it has reduced the opportunity for ASB and crime to occur.

- **Cyber Protect – VAWG Webinars**

There are two types of monthly webinars running for Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). The first is open for anyone to join with the aim to empower and educate women and girls about staying safe online and is part of the wider VAWG strategy. The second focused on technology in the home and how this can be used to by a perpetrator as a form of harassment and/or abuse, and due to its sensitive nature is invite only. Content of these include recognising safety concerns online and what to do if you come across them, and managing personal information online. The second includes similar content, but tailored to what can be experienced online in an abusive (ex-)relationship such as the use of smart devices in the home.

The evaluation of whether this works and what impact it has is through looking at the changing behaviours of those attending, such as increased confidence to go online safely. This is collected through surveys sent to attendees, with 88.3% between April 2022 to April 2023 responding that they were likely to positively change their online behaviours following a session from the team.

⁶ Neighbourhood crime: Situational crime prevention interventions (college.police.uk)

⁷ Secured by design [Secured by Design - Crime Prevention & Security Advice](#)

These sessions are available force-wide, with 336 attendees to the 'Online Safety for Women and Girls' sessions between February 2023 and July 2023. They have now just been made accessible beyond Avon and Somerset in the whole South West region, and a recorded version will be added to YouTube soon, indicating that it is a proactive prevention activity that is working well and having a positive impact on attendees.

Secondary Crime Prevention

*"Targeting those individuals at a high risk of offending, to divert them from involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour."*⁸

- **Early Intervention Team (EIT) – Violence Reduction Unit**

The EIT have a central role in the Violence Reduction Units (VRUs), working closely with Local Authorities, partner agencies and the public to prevent crime, reduce harm and build confidence in policing. There are five Local Authorities, and within each the VRUs have developed organically within that local authority, utilising a wide range of proactive, preventative, and targeted interventions. The EIT Handbook⁹ outlines their role and how it links to the rest of the organisation currently. Geographical areas have differences in their approach, but all use a universal multi-agency model, prioritising under 25-year-olds.

The number of individuals engaged with is reported to the Home Office. This relies on coordinators in Local Authorities providing data on the number of young people identified, discussed, and offered interventions. There is currently no other framework for recording data for the VRU. A VRU Qlik app is being developed to fill this gap and understand factors such as risks, harm scores and occurrences linked to individuals or locations. This should help the Units in their daily work and help indicate whether VRU activity is working over time.

Qualitative feedback from Local Authorities has been sought to indicate the **impact** Avon and Somerset Police have in VRUs. Two responded:

- Both highlight the strong working relationship between all staff, including police.
- Officers and police staff show the seriousness of the work the units do, but also provides a chance for the community to see police from a different angle and build positive relationships.
- There is seamless sharing of knowledge, contacts, and opportunities, and collaborating in this way is vital in maximising the impact and efficiency when working to reduce violence.
- Police are key when VRU react to a critical incident such as knife crime related deaths.

The work of the VRU is already on a force-wide scale, and some intervention work has been used in multiple local authority areas. For example, 'Blunt Truth' is an input in schools which started in Bristol involved both Police and NHS to deliver it. This was then replicated in North Somerset using Army Medics instead of the NHS due to availability. However, there limits to the scalability due to the capacity of the EITs, being 60% resourced since COVID.

Case Study: Wheels (South Gloucester)

Wheels is a six-week programme where young people in their early/ mid-teens learn various vehicle maintenance skills, and at the end of the programme have a go-karting session. This involves both police and partners. On the most recent course, four young people started and completed it. They were all out of education and causing issues in the community, and by the end of the six weeks three were back in school. One went missing frequently and this also stopped after the intervention. Another course has been funded due to this success.

- **Drive Programme**

Drive is a multi-agency perpetrator behaviour change programme for domestic abusers that was introduced in Force in April 2021. It has scaled up, starting in South Gloucestershire (funded by the OPCC, South Gloucestershire Council and the National Lottery) and now rolled out in North Somerset and Bristol. Drive challenges and supports perpetrators to change and works with partner agencies (including police and social services) to disrupt abuse experienced by victims.¹⁰ This method has a trauma informed approach, providing a programme for perpetrators to reduce offending and harm caused to victims and any children in the family.

⁸ Merseyside Police Prevention Strategy 2022-2024 [Prevention Strategy .pdf](#)

⁹ [Early Intervention Team Handbook 2021 \(3\).pdf](#)

¹⁰ CMB GSB Assurance – Domestic Abuse July 2023

The University of Bristol also undertook an independent evaluation of the project and concluded that there was a reduction in abuse and risk, and a reduction of perpetrators going to MARAC and a reduction in police involvement because of Drive intervention.¹¹ There is also a Qlik app for Drive to show the number of offenders engaged and not engaged, and the rate of reoffending. With the roll out of the programme further, there is ongoing work to establish its validity as an intervention.



Drive referrals are selected through MARAC meetings and there is one police SPOC in this programme currently. In MARAC, perpetrators are brought who have come to notice recently, presenting an immediate risk to the victim but does not always bring serial offenders to the forefront like a MATAC type of meeting does. There is a Qlik App that scores DA perpetrators risk, giving them an overall gravity score, which is an algorithm developed from other forces (considers past two years of offending, recency, frequency, and victims).¹² This not currently used routinely when referring into the programme or in other DA offender management. It isn't accessible by partners, but police could use it to bring perpetrators of highest risk to be considered for referral.

Tertiary Crime Prevention

*"Reducing or preventing reoccurring problems by tackling the vulnerability of victims or locations, or by reducing the motivations of offenders to readdress the situation."*¹³

- **Project ADDER**

ADDER is a Home Office funded project that takes a holistic approach to tackling drug misuse, drug related deaths and crime. It is specifically for areas that suffer from high levels of drug related harms, Bristol being one. The initiatives in ADDER do have the ability to be scaled up beyond Bristol, but there is no ability to do this unless additional funding was allocated.



The funding goes towards initiatives such as:

- Commission of St Giles Trust to mentor young people.
- BE Project inputs in schools.¹⁴
- Bristol Robins Foundation.¹⁵

Returns are collected and sent to the Home Office; however, these are regarding arrests rather than in relation to the crime prevention initiatives. Therefore, evaluating the impact and whether ADDER is working is qualitative data through verbal feedback, numbers engaged and using Qlik to look at locations or people to see if there are increases/ decreases in offences as the intervention is often specific and direct. The positive impact of ADDER was shared November last year internally on Pocketbook linked below.¹⁶

- **Neighbourhood Policing Teams– Problem Orientated Policing (POP)**

Problem Solving is a key part of the NPT, and central to the PCSOs initial training. There is an escalation process in place through Local Tasking Meetings (LTM) if more force support is required, outlined in the Force Management Statement for Reducing Crime 2023. There are currently 63 live PSPs in force (August 2023), and they are opened using professional judgement and quantitative data from Qlik using the problem-solving app. The SARA (Scanning, Analysis, Response, Assess) model has been embedded, with Niche templates used to guide OICs and Supervisors using it throughout the plan.

The College of Policing has shown that POP can have a strong impact on crime, and evidence suggests it can reduce crime and reoffending¹⁷. In force, regular supervisor reviews should be completed throughout in company with the OIC (monitored by Qlik), and when a PSP is closed it must be evaluated by the OIC and Supervisor with closure templates. NPT do occasionally share live PSPs with other directorates when appropriate, using the Intel Portal to add information to Response briefings and adding storm information markers to people and locations. It is also never NPT alone involved in PSPs, they will often working with other teams in the organisation relevant to

¹¹ [The Drive Project – The Drive Partnership](#)

¹² [Offender Management App - Domestic Abuse RFG Scores | Sheet - Qlik Sense](#)

¹³ Merseyside Police Prevention Strategy 2022-2024 [Prevention Strategy .pdf](#)

¹⁴ BE Project [Project ADDER – The BE project. Drug and alcohol education delivered by Joanna Mallinson](#)

¹⁵ Bristol Robins Foundation [ABOUT US - Bristol City FC \(bcfc.co.uk\)](#)

¹⁶ [Project ADDER conference shares successes and strengthens partnership working - Pocketbook \(pocketbooksite.com\)](#)

¹⁷ [Problem-oriented policing | College of Policing](#)

the problem such as ASB, Intel, Licensing and Rural teams. When closed, whether a PSP has worked or not depends on what aims were set about what good looks like in that specific plan.

Assurance was completed on two PSPs in Spring 2023¹⁸, both showing initial positive impact (reduction in reported crime, reduction in financial cost and demand). However, there is no local framework to evaluate a PSP beyond its closure to assess long term effectiveness in preventing crime, ASB and/or vulnerability. As highlighted in section one, best practice is being explored including dip sampling to monitor problem-solving performance on Qlik and an evaluation process looking at the financial saving following a closed PSP, and further training for NPT staff is in progress.

- **LSAVI (Licensing Security and Vulnerability Initiative)**

This is a national Police Crime Prevention Initiatives (PCPI) supported accreditation for alcohol venues, showing they have achieved the required standard of safety measures supporting night time economy and violence against women and girls work and objectives¹⁹. Measures include:

- Responsible drinking
- Drugs misuse
- Preventing violent behaviour
- Safeguarding customers
- Improving physical security (CCTV, lighting)
- Preventing thefts.

Motion, the biggest venue in Bristol, has become accredited and others are hoped to follow this example. To become accredited, venues self-assess on the LSAVI website and then submitted the application with supporting documentation. As well as receiving guidance needed to meet these measures, it also includes a guidance section on counter terrorism which is not assessed.

Motion was LSAVI accredited in June 2023, therefore it is still new and too early to assess its full impact as a Crime Prevention initiative. On the Crime and Intelligence app on Qlik, Motion is currently second in the top crime locations over the last 12 months with 26 crimes in The Dings and St Phillips Marsh policing area²⁰. As time passes, this Qlik app can continue to be utilised to assess the LSAVIs long-term impact, along with the local knowledge of NPT, licensing officers and owners of the premises to add context to the data. For example, reports could increase before they decrease due to improved crime and ASB reporting processes, not necessarily due to an increase in crime, and officers and staff can add this context and understanding.

3.2. To what extent are we planning crime prevention work for the future?

Crime Prevention and reduction needs to be inherent across the organisation and not just considered a skill for the Neighbourhoods Directorate which therefore creating a dependency on them. Whilst there is preventative work going on in numerous directorates, it doesn't always get recognised as such and this will become an area of focus.

Right Care, Right Person

Right Care, Right Person is a National Partnership Agreement which demonstrates a preventative and problem-solving approach being taken by Police on a force-wide, multiagency scale. We have signed up to this in Avon and Somerset. Its aim is to reduce demand on the constabulary and reduce the potential for harm for those coming into contact with the police and on the community. Engagement is underway with partners to develop these practices, with a clear commitment to collectively providing the best service to the public.

Widening the scope for crime prevention will require cultural change through training, including force-wide trauma-informed training being developed. C/Supt Elizabeth Hughes' intention is to link preventative themes to the Constabulary's five-year strategic plan ([Appendix 2](#)) and the PCC's Police and Crime Plan. Activity in this area will be mapped in September/October 2023. This exercise will also identify gaps so that we can be ready for bids/grants such as the Safer Streets work in relation to VAWG. Learning and best practice will be sought and taken from other forces to strengthen this approach over the next year.

¹⁸ Spring 2023 PSP qualitative review

¹⁹ [Home \(licensingavi.com\)](https://www.home.gov.uk/government/organisations/licensing-aviation)

²⁰ [Crime and Intelligence App - Crime Summary - including Fraud | Sheet - Qlik Sense](#) accessed 11/08/2023 16:20

Gaps and Limitations

The Early Intervention Team's aims are outlined in the EIT Handbook 2021-22 as:

- To work closely with the Local Authority VRU coordinators to identify and reduce the risk associated with serious violence.
- Provide a platform for information sharing around individuals or groups who have been identified as presenting a risk (escalating and ongoing) linked to violence.
- As part of the VRU, to coordinate a multiagency response to serious violence. Not investigative.
- Prioritises under 25-year-olds, with a focus on 10–15-year-olds to divert away from the criminal Justice System.

Whilst there are multiple examples of good work happening across the force by the EIT (mini police groups, launching Caring Dad's project, and working closely with partners such as SARI) it is difficult to evidence that the above aims set are being fully met. One of the reasons for this is due to gap in the evidence base available, and this is in the process of being filled by the VRU app being developed. The effectiveness is also impacted due to being 60% resourced since COVID, and therefore unable to work at full capacity. Feedback from a local authority echoed this concern around having and retaining police staff, noting the effect of losing a Police officer from their VRU is significant not only because it means less resource to utilise, but because building trust and rapport with young people they work with takes time.

DCI Larisa Hunt, lead of the EIT, is planning to update the EIT Handbook to have more consistency across the different Local Authority Areas and refocus on a higher threshold to intervene at a higher level. The police, partners and community have unfortunately seen multiple fatal incidents involving young people and serious violence, and this refocus is aimed at providing intervention in this area. This is to maximise their impact, concentrating on using police powers and work with partners around the safeguarding element.

Even with these identified gaps/ limitation, Avon and Somerset Police have been reviewed to assess our readiness for the Serious Violence Duty²¹ which went live January 2023. The review against the themes such as Collaboration, Review and Response Strategy has shown we are already in a good position to comply with this, rated as 'Ready and Engaged' and aiming for 'Mature with Best Practice' rating.

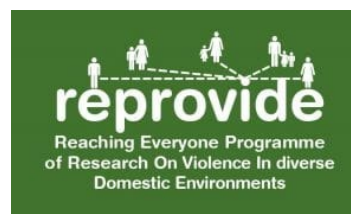
Partnership and Police and Crime Commissioner Support

• **Anti-Social Behaviour**

Having sufficient support from Local Authority partners is key to our ASB teams' response, and this is an area the PCC could provide support²². Local Authorities in Bristol and North Somerset already provide support, and others are in progress. This support would give ASB teams within the police more capacity to deal with higher level ASB issues, such as Community Protection Notices and Criminal Behaviour Orders, and providing support to the NPT with PSPs.

• **DA Perpetrators**

The Reprovide Programme²³ is a University of Bristol research programme with funding from Bristol City Council. It is looking at the effectiveness of group work in a behaviour change programme in intimate relationships looking to help men who are worried about their behaviour towards a female partner and help them stop this behaviour. It is 23 weeks long and delivered by professionals with some 1:1 work including CBT, and looking at the cause, triggers, and intentions behind actions. Female partners are also included in the research. It can take up to 40 people. Whilst this is still research, the findings from this study will help support the evidence already there, with the potential of preventing significant harm and escalation of offending. This could be something for the PCC consider keeping track of and supporting in the future.



²¹ [Serious Violence Duty - Statutory Guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

²² [Anti-social Behaviour Action Plan \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

²³ [The Reprovide Programme – Help to change your behaviour in intimate relationships \(bristol.ac.uk\)](https://bristol.ac.uk)

4. Next Steps

Activities to be considered for inclusion on the Crime Prevention Delivery Plan:

1. Including a Crime Prevention (DOCO) input in PCSO initial Training

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Specific | <i>Include an input from one of the Designing Out Crime Officers during the PCSOs initial training programme. To ensure PCSOs are aware of crime prevention principles and how they can utilise the DOCU when working in their community.</i> |
| Measurable | <i>Have a benchmark of referrals made and their outcomes, and then review in 6 months and then 12 months after input has started being delivered to see if referrals to DOCOs increase.</i> |
| Achievable | <i>The Designing Out Crime Unit, Learning, supported by the Performance and Assurance Team.</i> |
| Realistic | <i>It is realistic – Input would take minimal time within the training programme to deliver and is important to the PCSO role.</i> <i>Contingency – A pack with information and guidance of how to refer is shared with PCSOs during initial training.</i> |
| Timely | <i>Long term action – 12 months.</i> |

2. Use the DA RFG Qlik app to assess serial perpetrators of DA to ensure the right cases get the appropriate intervention/ referrals.

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Specific | <i>Use the DA RFG Qlik app which uses analytics to give gravity scores to serial DA perpetrators when referring serial DA perpetrators for interventions such as Drive to prevent further harm and offending.</i> |
| Measurable | <i>Using Qlik App for DA RFG Scores (list of high-risk perpetrators) to monitor changes in risk scores at regular intervals (quarterly) over 12 months.</i> <i>Learning could be taken from other forces who use a MATAC (Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination) type structure where this analytics is used.</i> |
| Achievable | <i>DA cohort in integrated Offender Management supported by Performance and Assurance Team.</i> |
| Realistic | <i>Could entail an alteration in ways of working.</i> <i>Contingency – Have one or two officers within IOM to maintain an overview of the DA risk list and target and manage the right cases with highest gravity scores/ highest increases.</i> |
| Timely | <i>Long term action – 12 months.</i> |

3. Add section onto PSP Niche templates to remind OICs and supervisors to share PSPs with other directorates.

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Specific | <i>Add a section onto the initial PSP template and PSP review template for OIC and supervisor to share PSP with other directorates such as Response if appropriate to encourage sharing the problem solving.</i> |
| Measurable | <i>Include in the review dip sampling already being carried out.</i> |
| Achievable | <i>Neighbourhood Directorate and Evidence based Policing Team.</i> |

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Realistic | <i>It is realistic – an addition to the template already in place.</i> <i>Contingency – highlight in Supervisor PSP training.</i> |
| Timely | <i>Short term action – 3 months.</i> |

AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

28 SEPTEMBER 2023

COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE REPORT

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide the Police and Crime Panel with a summary of PCC and OPCC activities since the last meeting to discharge statutory duties and support delivery of the Police and Crime Plan. The report has been reformatted to align with the four Police and Crime Plan priorities and to include enhanced information on key decisions and national developments.

Police and Crime Plan Delivery

Priority 1

- **MVAWG:** awarded £1,193,923 from MoJ Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Services Fund 2023-25; positive impact of the new SV Therapies Service including £100k OPCC investment.
- **Drug Crime:** all five Combatting Drugs Partnerships in delivery phase; national support in place for Bristol in response to performance issues.
- **Serious Violence:** update on external review of governance, new appointments, local delivery and work to develop the Serious Violence Duty.
- **ASB/Neighbourhood:** 2 partnership proposals submitted for Home Office Safer Streets Fund Round 5 to combat ASB in Bristol, Bath City Centre, Weston-Super-Mare, Bridgwater and Taunton; 3rd bid submitted to tackle VAWG in the Night Time Economy in A&S; updates on PCC Grant allocation and small grants funds, including the new Preventing Victims Fund.
- **Fraud & Cyber Crime:** PCC resource pack, Cold Call Ban consultation, fraud business card development, development of key performance indicators.

Priority 2

- **Engagement:** update on PCC / DPCC engagement activity, National Rural Crime Awareness Week, and new series of PCC Councillor Forum events.
- **Victims:** awarded £68,966.84 in Ministry of Justice uplift funding; victim voice and needs assessment work commissioned; update on Victims Bill.
- **Criminal Justice:** update on Local Criminal Justice Board activity, performance challenges, Victims Code of Practice compliance work and restorative justice referrals.
- **Reducing Reoffending:** update on recruitment and service mobilisation following successful Ministry of Justice funding bids; new Chair for the Reducing Reoffending Board.

Priority 3

- **Recruitment:** high level police officer recruitment and leaver figures.
- **Estates:** development of Estates Strategic Plan, acquisition for new police station in Minehead, long-term lease agreed for Bath city centre.
- **Leadership:** Constabulary Target Team Leadership Model launched; PCC good practice visit to Westbury; feedback from PCC visits to police bases.

Priority 4

- **Inequality & Disproportionality:** recruitment of A&S Independent Scrutiny Board to oversee delivery of Identifying Disproportionality programme; update on national Police Race Action Plan, publication of National Independent Scrutiny and Oversight Board Annual Report, citing A&S as best practice.
- **PCC Scrutiny Panels:** Updates on learning from scrutiny work, including Identifying Disproportionality pilot to scrutinise cases that did go to court. Training of new volunteers following recent campaign. Welcome Panel support to promote volunteering with the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme.

- **Complaints & Contacts:** new iCase system (case management for complaints) is now anticipated in November 2023. Ongoing issues in retrieving management information due to interim ways of working. Contacts team is now back to full capacity, including recruitment of new team member. Current themes: Illegal fox hunting, police response to illegal encampments and institutional racism.

Governance & Accountability: overview of PCC oversight boards and links to recent minutes; links to recent HMICFRS inspection reports and PCC responses; overview of progress against PEEL Areas for Improvement.

Key Decisions: enhanced information on key decisions. Summary of latest decisions: a) ANPR system in Bristol; b) New Police Station for Minehead.

National Updates: new section highlighting national developments in policy and legislation. Highlights the launch of the government Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan, and *Right Care Right Person* model whereby police are involved in mental health incidents only where necessary.

Police and Crime Plan Delivery

Performance against Police and Crime Plan delivery can be found in the PCC Quarterly Performance Report, which is presented to the Police and Crime Panel and published on the OPCC website.

OPCC activity to support delivery of the Police and Crime Plan is set out below:

Priority 1 – Preventing and Fighting Crime

Male Violence Against Women & Girls

On 13 August the Deputy PCC attended the Bristol Women’s Commission to update on the OPCC’s work to tackle male violence against women and girls. She talked about OPCC victim services commissioning as part of the sexual violence and domestic abuse pathways, partnership work to expand DRIVE to Bristol and North Somerset and the PCC’s role in holding the Chief Constable to account on this important matter.

In terms of national work, in July the OPCC presented at the national Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) Commissioner’s network on the Bluestone ISVAs secured with MOJ funding in Avon and Somerset, as other PCCs look to roll out Soteria’s National Operating Model for RASSO.

The OPCC was pleased to receive notification from the MOJ that the area has been awarded £1,193,923 from the Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Services Fund 2023-25. This will go to members of the SV Alliance to complement the local contract already in place as well as enhance links with the ISVA service. While a reduction compared to the sum of known grants from the previous fund, the area was allocated more than the original population-based formula, due to both the strength of the bid and the DPCC highlighting the impact of the reduction for Avon and Somerset to the Minister of State for Justice.

Further to this and as reported in the PCC’s letter to the Panel responding to Annual Report recommendations, the OPCC can report the positive impact of the new SV Therapies Service which launched in April 2023 and the improved waiting times. Moreover, the OPCC can share that it has been able to make a contribution of £100k to support efforts by commissioners to reduce the impact of the significant funding reductions across the system over the last year.

Drug Crime

All five local Combating Drugs Partnerships are progressing at different rates but have now completed all milestones set by the Joint Combating Drugs Unit. All 5 partnerships presented updates to the PCC in May which was deemed useful by all and so will be repeated in 6-12 months' time. Partnerships are now in the delivery phase, and we are confident that they are making good progress.

At the last meeting of the Combating Drugs Partnership for Bristol the Director of Public Health made partners aware that their performance regarding access to and completion of treatment has always been poor and has worsened in the last few years. National colleagues have recognised that Bristol are increasingly spending more but getting worse outcomes. As a result, Bristol has been identified as an area for additional support from the Office for Health Inequalities and Disparities (OHID) and the national team. The focus for support relates to numbers in treatment, continuity of care for prison leavers, and drug related deaths.

The PCC is meeting with every Director of Public Health and Senior Responsible Officer of the partnerships over the next 6 months.

Serious Violence

Independent review and Governance: the review undertaken by Crest Advisory has now concluded, with a set of recommendations that have been agreed by the partnership to carry forward, some as immediate action and some for future planning and consideration. The most significant change is the recruitment of a VRP Director to lead strategic direction, develop a robust performance framework approach and work to drive implementation of the Duty, holding partners to account and driving collaborative sustainability. Supporting this role will be a new Partnerships and Engagement Manager, working to build and embed the partnership, working to achieve mandated requirements and developing approaches to meaningfully consult and engage on the work of the VRP. These new roles will be funded from the Home Office grant funding, alongside the continuing roles of VRP Support Officer, Communications Officer and Evaluation and Impact Lead.

Work is ongoing to strengthen governance and collaboration. Transition is underway to a revised meeting structure and leadership function. The key development is the introduction of an Executive level Board (A&S Serious Violence Reduction Partnership Board) that has been signed up to across Duty holders and will provide high level governance and strategic direction. A Serious Violence Delivery Group will sit beneath this, where the response and action will be delivered.

Delivery: This funding year interventions that are being delivered at local authority level include mentoring, detached youth work, education inclusion-based approaches, therapeutic based interventions such as CBT and Play therapy, Sports based interventions and a number of education prevention sessions, which are tailored to needs. £600,000 is allocated from local authority-allocated funds of £1.16million this year on interventions.

Building approaches to evaluate this work has been challenging, due to some of the providers being small organisations, where resources are extremely limited to develop robust monitoring processes. The hub Evaluation and Impact lead will be working this year on supporting Local Authorities and their providers to develop theories of change and outcome monitoring, to be able to achieve better insights to impact. An independent evaluation partner has been appointed for the remainder of the funding period, to support robust and independent evaluation.

Engagement: One of the VRP strategic priorities is developing meaningful engagement and utilising this to shape local responses, the spoke VRP's have been working hard to implement this priority:

- **North Somerset:** have recently led on research into Youth Insights of Violence. This research, and its findings, will shape understanding and response to youth violence going forward, by integrating young people's voices into decision making. They are continually building upon engagement with young people, this quarter reaching over 1,000 students through primary and secondary pop-up shops, engagement workshops and Q&A sessions as well as partnership awareness delivery within schools and colleges across the district.
- **Somerset:** A youth survey regarding ASB was carried out as part of ASB week. The Youth Participation Officer has involved young people in the design of a consultation regarding young people's views on violence and violence prevention.
South Gloucestershire: During Q1 the first partnership community engagement day was introduced in one of the known hotspots, which involved the Police Early Intervention Team, Councils Community Safety Team, Neighbourhood teams and VCSE partners including SARI.
- **B&NES:** are co-producing a training film on serious violence and exploitation, using local individuals (played by local actors) with lived experience, this is being supported by social care teams. This training resource will be available for professionals, community children and young adults. The film will capture the voice of the child, parent and community and aims to be a vital training resource.
- **Bristol:** An action plan is in development for 23/24 which includes ideas from community organisations, parents and young people. A community engagement plan will be developed for 23/24 in partnership with key community organisations. This will give young people and parents a voice in how services are designed and delivered, including the function of the Violence Reduction Unit.

Duty and strategic developments: One of the first tasks undertaken by duty holders has been to review and refresh the Serious Violence definition. This has now been agreed, and a supporting document has been written to further explain the definition and how it is used. Agreeing to one definition has the benefit that partners have a common understanding of what serious violence is. It helps to plan, develop and navigate the opportunities to tackle the issues together with partners across the pathway. Importantly, this will allow the VRP to have a consistent approach in what is being measured as serious violence, leading to a clearer view of the impact.

Joint Definition of Serious Violence:

The A&S VRP embraces a priority focus on the prevention and reduction of public space violence for under 25's (children and young people); including homicide, attempted homicide, robbery, wounding, grievous bodily harm, knife and gun crime, alcohol and drug related violence and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as county lines and modern slavery.

We also recognise and commit to supporting a joined-up response to existing partnership work to tackle serious violence across the whole pathway and in the broadest sense, including domestic abuse, rape and serious sexual offences and violence against women and girls more generally.

Partners have also agreed that with the Duty requirements in mind, a data working group must be set up, and this has been approved. Analysts and data controllers from across the duty holders, will meet to develop data sharing principles, develop a shared performance framework and drive a culture of evaluation. These are significant developments for the partnership and will be driven

further by the recruitment of the Director to ensure these developments are embedded and drive system change.

Neighbourhood Crime & ASB

Safer Streets 5

The OPCC have successfully submitted 2 proposals under the Safer Streets 5 funding envelope that aim to combat ASB in Bristol, Bath City Centre, Weston-super-mare, Bridgwater and Taunton. The proposals include strong partnership working between Local Authorities, Police and Business Improvement Districts.

Alongside these two proposals, a 3rd has been submitted to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls in the Night Time Economies across Avon & Somerset. This proposal focuses on the expansion of Bristol's Women's Safety Charter alongside targeted bystander training and establishing a VAWG champions' network. This is in response to continued evidence of the threat to women and girls in the nighttime economy and is a partnership of police, Community Safety Partnerships, the OPCC and specialist agencies.

Police and Crime Grant

The Police and Crime Commissioner has continued the Police and Crime Grant, now established as a three-year settlement (until 2025). The grant is provided to Community Safety Partnerships via Local Authorities and is focused on community safety projects. Projects are varied across the area but are all focused on improving community safety with a focus on prevention and meeting the priorities of the Police and Crime Plan, and local level CSP plans. The funding provided is calculated on a population-based formula and the OPCC works alongside the community safety partnership leads to ensure that funding meets hyper-local level need. A review is undertaken bi-annually to ensure good performance against set outcomes.

See below for the amounts provided by local authority area:

| Community Safety Partnership | 22-25 annual funding |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Bristol | £267,019.00 |
| Somerset | £220,784.00 |
| South Gloucestershire | £94,784.00 |
| North Somerset | £89,029.00 |
| B&NES | £68,025.00 |

The Crime Commissioner's Prevention Fund

The OPCC has set up the Commissioner's Crime Prevention Fund to help create safer communities. It is run as a partnership between the OPCC, Somerset Community Foundation (SCF) and Quartet Community Foundation (QCF). Groups can apply for a grant of between £1,000 to £5,000 to run a project: in a particular neighbourhood so that everyone benefits from reduced crime and antisocial behaviour, or for a specific group of people who are at higher risk of being the victims or perpetrators of crime and antisocial behaviour.

A total of £177,971.00 was distributed in the fund's launch year 2022/23 to 42 local organisations for a range of activities.

The Preventing Victims Fund

The Preventing Victims Fund is a new fund that launched in August 2023. This fund is being delivered in partnership between the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), Somerset Community Foundation and the Quartet Community Foundation.

The Preventing Victims Fund aims to complement groups providing services to victims of crime, enabling them to explore different approaches that could *prevent people from becoming victims in the first place*.

Groups which are and are not currently commissioned by the OPCC can apply for a grant of up to £20,000 and application is open to any organisation that already supports victims. The fund opened in August 2023 for expressions of interest with over 20 received. Grants will be made following an expert panel assessment in November 2023.

Fraud & Cybercrime

National Portfolio

All PCCs received a resource pack including materials from the APCC General meeting. The resource pack included good practice examples of Fraud Protect initiatives and information on how to use data to hold their Chief Constables to account in the response to fraud. Many of the good practice materials were developed within Avon and Somerset, and are now accessible via the national Knowledge Hub site. The Knowledge Hub site continues to be uploaded with useful fraud protect and prevent materials including, local initiatives, national best advice and communication campaign materials.

The PCC and ECC deputy leads are formulating a response to the government's consultation on a ban on 'cold calling', which is aimed at protecting the public from scam calls and progressing the government fraud strategy objectives. The OPCC team have liaised with partners to develop an informed response and make recommendations on how the ban could be taken further and implemented effectively.

Communications & Awareness

OPCC have been supporting the development of fraud protect materials translated into Chinese for the community of international students, who face an increased risk of fraud, living in A&S. The initiative will launch in September, to coincide with students going and returning to university.

Fraud communication campaigns are disseminated frequently via OPCC and Constabulary comms channels, including social media, Nextdoor, mailing lists and website stories. Recent communications have included Take 5 week, a holiday scam campaign and raising awareness around call blockers.

An OPCC branded fraud 'business card' has been produced including information on what to do if you receive a fraudulent text or email. This is being distributed to further raise awareness of fraud, and provides a template for other OPCCs to produce similar initiatives. Disseminated at July APCC General Meeting and available on Knowledge Hub.

The PCC will engage in further awareness raising opportunities during September including a radio interview on BBC John Darvall show and the SWCRC conference.

Avon and Somerset Multi Agency Approach to Fraud

The Multi agency victims of fraud working group has met three times. TOR and strategic objectives have been confirmed. The group will begin to work towards developing a consistent communications strategy and pooling resources to focus on enhancing a response to doorstep crime specifically.

Priority 2 – Engaging, Supporting and Working with Communities, Victims and Partner Organisations

Public engagement

Discussions have taken place with representatives from Community Interest Companies involved in the support for communities in Bristol East following the murder of Eddie Kinuthia in Bristol East as a result of serious youth violence. Multi-agency meetings co-ordinated by the Mayor's Office and Bristol City Council have been held to strengthen joint working between detached youth workers and the Violence Reduction Partnership spoke in Bristol (Safer Options). PCC engagement visits are being arranged to discuss and feedback concerns to the VRP hub and ensure effective and joined up delivery of interventions.

The Deputy PCC's engagement on local community issues with policing concerns currently includes:

- Community policing and young people in Barton Hill, particularly among the Somali community – reassurance and information on how to navigate reporting policing concerns and talking to young people was shared from attendees including Desmond Brown and members of the Police Outreach Team
- Bristol Bus Boycott anniversary ceremonial gatherings – Marking a significant milestone in race relations. Supporting social media and communications was carried out to talk about current work to progress racial equality in the context of criminal justice
- Bristol Women in Business Charter events – of which the PCC is a signatory - on recruiting for difference. The OPCC will be part of discussions and take learning back to the organisation
- Bristol Women's Commission meeting with a special focus on Male Violence Against Women and Girls and partnership working with police. Deputy PCC gave update on all the current work ongoing within the office.

National Rural Crime Awareness Week (September 18th) - Joint activity and communications with the Constabulary and national agencies will highlight the national week of awareness but also work of the Constabulary Rural Affairs Unit and the OPCC to tackle rural crime and support those more isolated and vulnerable communities.

The first in the new series of PCC Councillor Forum events have been held. A total of nine events will be held between September and November across the Force area. Events will feature an overview of the Police and Crime Plan priorities, an overview of the Violence Reduction Partnership, and an operational update from the relevant Neighbourhood Policing Team. Local Councillors will be given an opportunity to ask questions and discuss concerns with the PCC and their policing team. Forward dates have been circulated to Panel Members.

Supporting victims of crime and ASB

The OPCC was awarded £68,966.84 in uplift funding under its formula-based grant from the MOJ over the summer for the 23/24 financial year. The population formula-based grant funds the core

suite of all crime/ASB services. Disappointingly this was a reduction compared to the 22/23 uplift. Allocations were made according to an assessment of demand while focusing on continuity of services.

| Provider | 23/24 Uplift Grant Funding |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| VOCAS | £26,100 |
| Young Victim Service | £42,866.84 |
| TOTAL | £68,966.84 |

The Victim Services Recommissioning Board met in July and received updates from the project team. The OPCC is pleased to share that TONIC have been appointed to conduct both the Avon and Somerset Needs Assessment and Victim Voice work for the OPCC. The Needs Assessment work is now underway. Service providers, both commissioned by the OPCC and externally will have the opportunity to feed in. The next board in the autumn will take a draft Commissioning Intentions for sign off ahead of consultation with stakeholders.

The OPCC continue to engage with work nationally to prepare for the Victims and Prisoners Bill, including supporting national discussions regarding the allocation of resources to support the Commissioning Duty to Collaborate. We understand that the Report Stage is likely to take place mid-November and so Royal Assent may be expected in 2024 before coming into force in 2025.

The Criminal Justice System

The A&S Local Criminal Justice Board (ASCJB), chaired by the PCC met on the 20th June. The board focused on the progress made on the recommendations from the Identifying Disproportionality report assigned to each key stakeholder and agreeing the work to be taken forward.

The PCC has met with the new Head of Crime for the South West, Damian McCleave and has discussed the potential of a magistrate attending the board going forward. This opportunity is being explored within HMCTS.

The MOJ issued a call for evidence on 'Open Justice', this opportunity was shared with LCJB partners. The OPCC will be responding to questions that are relevant in terms of knowledge, this has also been shared with our LCJB commissioned victim services lead to input feedback on behalf of victims.

Reducing Reoffending

The Reducing Reoffending Board has a new chair, Supt. James Turner, whose first board meeting as chair will take place in September.

The OPCC was successful with its bid to the Ministry of Justice to fund The Nelson Trust to recruit a dedicated post to establish a whole systems approach in line with the Concordat on Women in or at Risk of Contact with the Criminal Justice System. Recruitment has been successful for the strategic post and they began in role at the end of July 23. This post will restore the gender responsive board and create a strategy for this work. This funding is available until March 2025.

The OPCC was successful with its bid to the Home Office for funding for perpetrator programmes. The incumbent provider in South Gloucestershire was successful in the procurement process and is currently mobilising to expand delivery across Bristol and North Somerset as well as continuing in

South Glos until March 2025. Mobilisation has gone extremely well, and are starting to accept new referrals from 1st August with the first DA Perpetrator (DAP) Panel sitting on 8th August.

Priority 3 – Leading the Police to be Efficient and Effective

Standing updates as requested by the Panel:

Recruiting Officers

Following completion of Uplift recruitment, high level information on officer recruitment is as follows. The first table shows police officer vacancy variance in relation to authorised establishment levels and national targets.

| Month | Total Vacancy FTE |
|---------|-------------------|
| Aug 22 | -113.04 |
| Sept 22 | -89.67 |
| Oct 22 | -19.95 |
| Nov 22 | -35.58 |
| Jan 23 | 37.58 |
| Feb 23 | 29.44 |
| Mar 23 | 103.64 |
| Apr 23 | 92.86 |
| May 23 | 67.52 |
| Jun 23 | 86.79 |
| Jul 23 | 74.54 |

| Leavers | | |
|--------------------|---------|---------|
| | July 22 | July 23 |
| Headcount in month | 19 | 14 |

| Reasons for leaving (figures shown as a % of leavers for July 23) | |
|--|-------|
| Resignation | 71.4% |
| Retirement | 14.3% |
| Transfer to another Force | 14.3% |

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

Estates Update

In August the Governance and Scrutiny Board approved the purchase of the Seahorse Centre to provide a new Police Station for Minehead, along with the marketing and eventual disposal of the existing Minehead Police Station on Townsend Road. It is anticipated that an outline business case will be presented in Quarter 3 this year.

August also saw completion of the acquisition on a long lease of Plymouth House in Bath. This will provide a visible, central police station appropriate to the City. An outline business case will be presented in early 2024.

Leadership:

Following the PCC’s key decision in June 2023 to invest in acceleration of the Leadership Academy, the Constabulary has rolled out a new management course with the aim to improve team leadership at Avon and Somerset Police. Team leadership skills are recognised as having a powerful effect on the overall performance and culture of the organisation. The programme develops the clear standards for the five highest priority team leadership skills in Avon and Somerset’s new Target Team Leadership Model and is aligned with the College of Policing’s new first line leader curriculum. It is in addition to the current requirements related to the National Police Promotion Framework and extends to both officers and staff. It largely replaces the optional current provision for first line leaders in the Leadership Academy to provide a focussed programme at scale. The programme has offerings through the lifecycle of a team leader’s journey, from early experience prior to taking on

any role (Acting Ready), becoming a team leader for the first time (Core programme) and the ongoing development of those already in post (annual requirement).

The PCC is continuing visits to other organisations to learn from good practice in leadership and recruitment models. His most recent visit was to Westbury on 31 August to learn about the Army Officer Selection Board.

The PCC continues to visit police bases on a regular basis to hear directly from officers and staff and support wellbeing and morale. Issues discussed during recent visits include demand management during the summer period (Operation Hibiscus) and potential offered by capability such as police drones.

Priority 4 – Increasing the Legitimacy of, and Public Confidence in, the Police and Criminal Justice System

Inequality and Disproportionality

The OPCC continues to support the wider multi agency response to the recommendations from the Report on Identifying Disproportionality in the A&S Criminal Justice System. Of the six recommendations involving the OPCC, four have been implemented, including all of those solely within OPCC remit. The multi-agency Steering Committee is now established to look at wider progress, co-led by Chief Constable Sarah Crew and Deputy Mayor Cllr Asher Craig, meeting every six weeks.

The most significant milestone has been the agreement and recruitment of the Independent Community Scrutiny Board. Desmond Brown and Maya Mata-Kole have now been appointed as interim Chair and Deputy Chair and applications for board positions have now closed with a high application rate. Sifting and suitability interviews will be progressed over the coming weeks. This is the primary element of community engagement with this work and the Board will be instrumental in holding agencies to account in their delivery of the recommendations over the coming months. Work is now progressing in relation to assigning ownership of the work pillars, alongside drawing together a multi-agency communications strategy with an appropriate resource to drive this forward.

Another area of progress is the work being led by ACC Will White in response to the National Police Chiefs Council and College of Policing's [Police Race Action Plan](#). The [National Independent Scrutiny and Oversight Board](#) released their first [annual report, with a foreword highlighting](#) the pathfinder work of Avon and Somerset Police as well as the public statement of institutional racism by Chief Constable Sarah Crew. Whilst the report refers to pockets of best practice, it is clear that there is much more to be done nationally and that consistent leadership, commitment and resource is needed to take this work forward and achieve tangible changes in the experiences of people of black heritage.

Use of Police Powers – PCC Scrutiny Panels/Independent Custody Visiting Scheme

Independent Scrutiny of Police Complaints Panel (ISPCP) & Independent Scrutiny of Police Powers Panel (ISoPPP)

Following the recent success of the OPCC Volunteer Recruitment Campaign the ISPCP has increased from 6 to 12 members and the ISoPPP from 8 to 17 members. Training has been completed for the ISPCP at HQ and was well received. The ISoPPP held operational training around the use of police

powers at the Wilfred Fuller Operational Training Centre in Clevedon and an online training session on how to provide feedback from scrutiny sessions facilitated by the OPCC. Both panels look forward to welcoming the new panel members at the next quarterly meetings in September.

The ISOPPP are trialling a new and efficient way to record feedback from scrutiny sessions by using an online form created by the OPCC. This is with the aim of improving and maximising the scrutiny provided by panel members and reducing the administrative burden on the OPCC. Training was put in to place and the form has been well received. Training on the use of the form is being rolled out to OPCC Assurance and Scrutiny staff and it will be rolled out to the ISPCP next quarter.

The ISPCP will focus on reviewing closed police complaints relating to the handling of or damage to property. There will be the opportunity to pose questions to the Property Lead from Avon and Somerset Constabulary. The panel continue to review a number of Discrimination complaint cases as part of their ongoing commitment to assist PSD with this particular area of police complaints. Alongside a newly appointed Scrutiny and Assurance Manager who commenced in June, a new Contacts and Scrutiny Officer is now in place having commenced on the 7th August. This takes the team back up to full capacity.

Quarterly reports relating to both panels can be found located on the website [Volunteering overview | OPCC for Avon and Somerset \(avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/volunteering-overview)

Out of Court Disposals Scrutiny Panel

The Out of Court Disposals Scrutiny Panel met on 14 June to pilot scrutiny of cases that *did* go to court, but may have been suitable for an out of court disposal. This was in response to recommendation 30 of the Identifying Disproportionality report: *for the OPCC to set up a scrutiny framework that scrutinises cases that have been charged, but may have been eligible for an OoCD, rather than reviewing only cases that have resulted in an OoCD.* The Panel scrutinised 30 cases: 24 were considered appropriate, 4 appropriate with observations, and 1 inappropriate.

The Panel identified:

- Common theme around the need to record the fact that an OoCD was considered and the rationale for the decision not to offer an OoCD in the Enquiry Log in order to demonstrate that an OoCD had been considered where appropriate.
- Issues in duplicate PNC records leading to issues in establishing eligibility for an OoCD.
- Discussed information available to defendants to explain what OoCDs are, eligibility, and the impact of what is said at interview and its impact on outcomes available.

Learning to inform future scrutiny arrangements included:

- The need for further work to enhance filters to ensure appropriate case selection. If there is no automated way to do this, an additional step needs to be built into the preparation process for a manual trawl has resource implications.
- The OoCD Scrutiny Panel work programme currently has limited capacity for new standing items, however this situation is likely to change in the near future with the introduction of the new Two Tier Plus framework which is expected to remove the current requirement for annual scrutiny of Conditional Cautions as a requirement of dispensation from the DPP. This will become known when final guidance is published in late 2023.
- There is a strong willingness of the Panel to take on this area of work, and a view that looking at outcomes from the reverse position is complementary and will further enhance scrutiny of OoCDs.

Public consultation on the draft Code of Practice for Diversionary and Community Cautions has now been published. OPCC and Constabulary leads are coordinating a response. Consultation runs until 13 October 2023 and can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/diversionary-and-community-cautions-draft-code-of-practice> Proposed changes will inform the future work programme and capacity of the Panel to take on additional areas of scrutiny.

The Panel will meet in September to review youth cases with a focus on Knife Possession including Outcome 22. This will inform a current review of Force policy to ensure consistency across the Force area in youth cases.

Independent Custody Visiting Scheme

Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) have continued to conduct weekly, unannounced paired visits at each of the 3 Custody Units to check on detainees' rights, entitlements and wellbeing. Four new ICVs are in the process of being onboarded with one additional ICV currently being vetted, and a training day is scheduled later in September. Further ICVs are still required so the recruitment campaign will remain ongoing. Support from Panel Members would be welcome in promoting this volunteering opportunity.

ICVs have continued to feed back concerns regarding the provision of health care providers on site and the lack of HCPs in custody. This is causing delays with detainees receiving medication and treatment. This has been raised by OPCC staff with ASC and as a result a 'Gold Group' has been set up between ASP and Mitie and attended by OPCC staff. Mitie have reassured that recruitment is in process to fill vacancies and it is hoped in future the situation will improve. ICVs continue to feed back and monitor.

ICV Panel Meetings are scheduled for early/mid October.

Additional information about the Scheme can be found at the following link:

[The Independent Custody Visiting Scheme | OPCC for Avon and Somerset \(avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk)

Contacts/Complaints Oversight

The OPCC continues to monitor contacts coming in from local residents, raising complaints and issues at the most appropriate level within the Constabulary. The team also identifies trends and themes from contacts as well as the PCC and DPCC's engagement to assist the PCC in holding the Chief Constable to account through the Performance and Accountability Board.

Local residents continue to contact the PCC around the police response to illegal encampments and the PCC is continuing work in the local community to improve dialogue between partner agencies. Following the Chief Constable's statement on institutional racism the PCC received many contacts relating to this issue.

Go live of the new iCase management system is expected in November.

| |
|--------------------------------------|
| Governance and Accountability |
|--------------------------------------|

Oversight Boards

The PCC has set up two Boards with the aim to:

- Hold the Chief Constable to account for delivery of policing that is efficient and effective;
- Enable the PCC and Chief Constable to openly and publicly demonstrate accountability, transparency and value for money over police functions, decisions and national publications and inspections;
- Demonstrate progress made against the policing and crime objectives set out in the Police and Crime Plan;
- To further support the requirements of the Specified Information Order by enabling the PCC to openly hold the Chief Constable to account in relation to performance against the National Crime and Policing Measures.

The **Performance and Accountability Board (PAB)** is broadcast live on a monthly basis, and focuses on the PCC holding the Chief Constable to account with the aim to increase public confidence, transparency and engagement. Reports and broadcasts of PAB meetings held since the last Panel meeting can be found at the following links:

<https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/0.-Agenda-11th-July-2023-Performance-and-Accountability-Board.pdf>

<https://youtu.be/rAp-rH3Dfbl>

<https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/30th-Aug-PAB-papers.pdf>

The **Governance and Scrutiny Board (GSB)** takes place on a monthly basis, and is a forum for formal decision making by the PCC, and for the PCC to scrutinise the work, performance, key projects and budget of the Force and other partners. Minutes of GSB meetings held since the last Panel meeting can be found at the following link:

<https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/17th-July-2023-Governance-and-Scrutiny-Board-Minutes.pdf>

HMICFRS – PCC responses

Since last reported, [PCC responses to three HMICFRS reports have been published:](#)

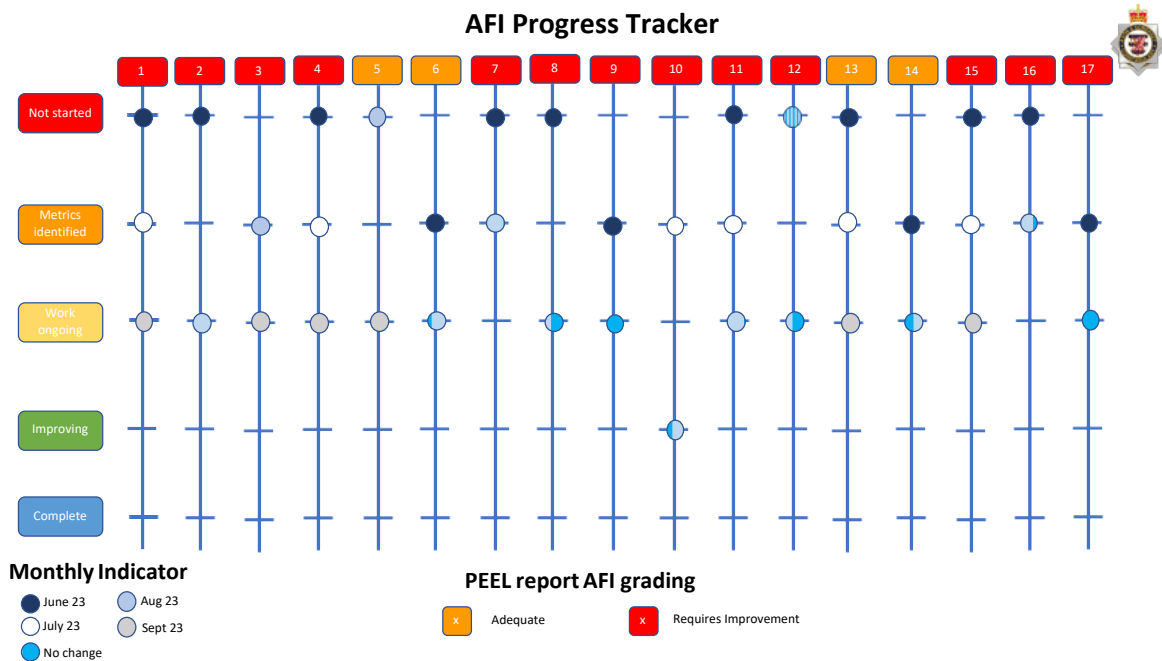
- State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2022
- Police performance: Getting a grip
- An inspection of how effective police forces are in the deployment of firearms

Since last reported four new reports have been published which require responses:

- [Management of terrorist offenders in the wake of terrorist attacks](#)
- [Homicide prevention: An inspection of the police contribution to the prevention of homicide](#)
- [Race and Policing: A review of the police service’s leadership and governance arrangements for race-related matters](#)
- [Race and policing: An inspection of race disparity in police criminal justice decision-making](#)

PEEL Areas for Improvement (AFIs)

The following chart shows progress against the Areas for Improvement identified in the most recent Avon and Somerset PEEL Inspection. The numbers relate to the list of AFIs set out below the table.



The Constabulary...

- Needs to improve the accuracy of recording rape crimes and incidents of rape
- Needs to improve its recording of crimes which involve vulnerable victims
- Needs to improve how it records crime when antisocial behaviour is reported
- Needs to improve how it records equality data
- Should consistently evaluate and share effective problem-solving practice
- Needs to ensure that neighbourhood policing officers have access to structured training
- Should respond to calls for service within its published time frames based on the prioritisation given to the call. Where delays occur, the rationale should be recorded, and victims should be updated
- Should reduce the number of abandoned 101 calls
- Should make sure that repeat and vulnerable callers are routinely identified
- Should introduce effective processes for timely allocation of crimes of rape and other serious sexual offences to reduce the backlog
- Should make sure that an auditable record is kept if a victim withdraws their support for an investigation, and whether an evidence-led prosecution is considered in all such cases
- Needs to improve the quality assurance and supervision of investigations
- Should ensure that risk assessments are effectively supervised, quality assured, and checked for compliance
- Should reduce the backlog of applications waiting to be processed
- Should reduce the time taken to conduct visits and risk assessments on registered sex offenders
- Should ensure its enforcement action against offenders accessing indecent images of children is robust and conducted in a timely manner
- Should ensure it has the capacity and capability to manage demand in the internet child abuse team (ICAT) and ensure backlogs are subject to a review process.

Key Decisions

The Commissioner is under a statutory obligation under the terms of the Specified Information Order to publish a record of decisions of significant public interest. The Governance and Scrutiny Board (GSB) is the forum for formal decision making by the PCC. Links to minutes can be found in

the Governance and Accountability section above. Decisions are published on the Commissioner’s website at the following link: [Decisions log | OPCC for Avon and Somerset \(avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/decisions-log/)

Key decisions since the last Panel meeting are as follows:

| Date | Summary of Decision | Link to Decision Notice |
|---------------|--|--|
| 13 June 2023 | <p>Replacement of ANPR Cameras in Bristol:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide capital funding of £228,322 to replace ANPR cameras in the City of Bristol. To provide revenue funding for electricity, SIM / data of £15,500 for year 1, and electricity, SIM / data, and camera maintenance contract from year 2 onwards of £36,593. | <p>https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/2023_004- Replacement-Bristol-ANPR-cameras_signed.pdf</p> |
| 9 August 2023 | <p>New Minehead Police Station:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchase of the Seahorse Centre at £400k to provide a new Police Station for Minehead. The marketing and eventual disposal of the existing Minehead Police Station on Townsend Road. The start-up of a new project to deliver the new Minehead Police Station. | <p>https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/2023_005-Minehead-Acquisition_signed.pdf</p> |

National Updates

Anti-Social Behaviour

An Anti-Social Behaviour action plan was released by the Home Office earlier this year. [Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115442/anti-social-behaviour-action-plan-2022-2025.pdf)

The plan responds to national feedback that ASB is the main reason people do not feel safe in their area. Last year, 35% of people reported witnessing anti-social behaviour in the crime survey for England & Wales (CESW, 2022). National polling in January 2023 found that 54% of the public do not think the police take ASB seriously enough and 68% believe the police have given up altogether in terms of solving ‘lower-level’ crimes.

The action plan emphasizes the need for swift justice and the strengthening of immediate justice for perpetrators and on the spot fines. Offenders must serve a punishment within 48 hours: for example: litter picking, cleaning graffiti etc. and fines will increase to £1,000 from £500. A focus on cracking down on illegal drugs, encouraging orderly behaviour, increasing hotspot policing, tackling empty shops, providing access to green spaces (facilitated through the provision of funds to improve spaces) and an increase of youth service hours for young people all feature in the plan.

The PCC has been active in conveying the message that ASB is a serious issue and undertaking necessary scrutiny and oversight of the police response to ASB. Alongside bringing this message to local level engagements, the PCC is a keynote speaker at the Bristol City Council ASB Summit in

September. The OPCC also submitted a detailed consultation response to the government's call for information to inform the ASB action plan to reflect local level concerns in the national conversation.

Mental Health

In July the government announced a collective agreement and national commitment for NHS England to work to end inappropriate and avoidable involvement of police in responding to incidents involving people with mental health needs. The national partnership agreement highlights that the police should only be involved for as long as it is necessary, and in conjunction with health and/or social care services.

Alongside the agreement, national guidance has been published on a recommended model of working called 'Right Care, Right Person', originally developed by Humberside Police. The model aims to implement the national partnership agreement approach to involving police in mental health incidents, only when it is necessary to do so. Avon and Somerset Constabulary have analysed the model and considered where there are appropriate adaptations required to the local-level response, and how elements of the Right Care Right Person can be utilised to improve the Avon and Somerset approach. The existing model in Avon and Somerset Constabulary focuses on a co-operative and collaborative approach between the police and local mental health partners to ensure that the right teams are deployed in response to mental health. The PCC will continue to scrutinise and monitor local implementation of the Right Care, Right Person approach.

Contact Officer:

Alice Ripley, Chief of Staff
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Avon and Somerset



**AVON &
SOMERSET**
POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER

Performance Report

Quarter ending June 2023 (Q1 2023/24)

Action Fraud – is the UK’s national reporting centre for fraud and cybercrime where victims should report fraud if they have been scammed, defrauded or experienced cyber crime in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Active citizenship – this is measured through the local police and crime survey and is when people have done/taken part in the following activities: volunteered for the police, taken part in Watch schemes (e.g. Neighbourhood Watch) or they have taken part in police webchats or other police or council Neighbourhood Meetings or forums.

ASP – Avon and Somerset Police

Charge – the formal accusation of an offence, put to a suspect after an initial investigation; this is the start of the prosecution and they will then have to appear at court. [The police can make the decision to charge in less serious offences where the case would be dealt with at Magistrates Court.](#)

Cyber dependent crime – these are offences that can only be committed using a computer, computer networks or other form of information communications technology.

CPS – [Crown Prosecution Service.](#)

Domestic abuse – [is where a person is abusive towards another, they are personally connected and are 16 years of age or older.](#)

HMCTS – His Majesty’s Courts and Tribunals Service

ISVAs – Independent Sexual Violence Advisers

MSG – [Most similar groups.](#) These are groups of police forces that have been found to be the most similar to each other based on an analysis of demographic, social and economic characteristics which relate to crime. They are designated by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS). The forces ‘most similar’ to Avon & Somerset are Derbyshire, Essex, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Kent, Staffordshire and Sussex.

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

Patrol – the department of Avon and Somerset Police which has most uniformed officers; these officers attend more incidents than any other department.

Project Bluestone – is the 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.

Serious violence – defined nationally these are offences that result in the death of a person, “endanger life” or “wounding offences”.

National Police and Crime Measures

(Priorities for Policing)

Contribution of Avon and Somerset Police

Reduce Murder and Other Homicide

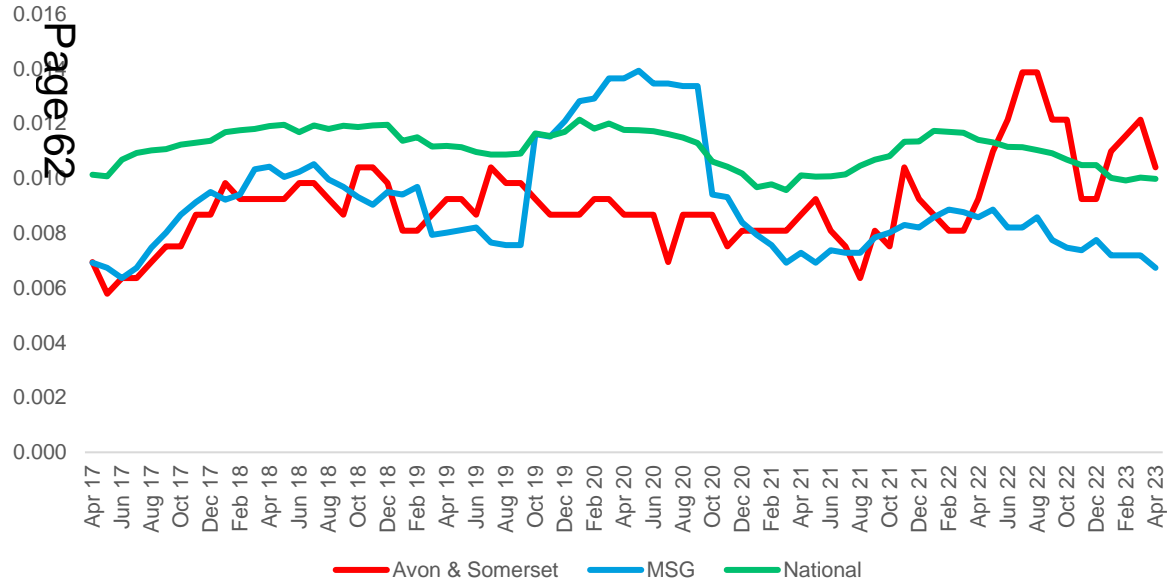
Measures Summary

| Local Measures | Trend | Benchmark |
|-----------------------------------|--------|-------------------------------------|
| Police recorded Homicide offences | Stable | 8th/8 MSG (above MSG average rates) |

Planned Action to Drive Performance

1. Implementation of homicide suppression plan, to minimise the risk of serious violence and homicide in Avon and Somerset.
2. Ongoing communication with other forces and partners to scope and identify good practice in the prevention and reduction of homicide offences.
3. Ongoing delivery of stalking training and awareness inputs, that will include an input on Stalking Protection Orders, to be delivered to call handlers throughout 2023.
4. Development of refreshed sudden death procedural guidance, ensuring the thorough completion of investigative actions at the scene of every sudden death, and the early identification of any associated criminality.
5. Ongoing review of the force's Risk to Life or Threats of Serious Harm procedure to ensure the force responds adequately to protect those at risk of serious harm or death.
6. Funding from the Proceeds of Crime Act to be used to support an anti-knife crime campaign run by a local community group in St Pauls, Bristol.

Homicide - 12 Month Rolling Rates per 1000 Residents



Comments

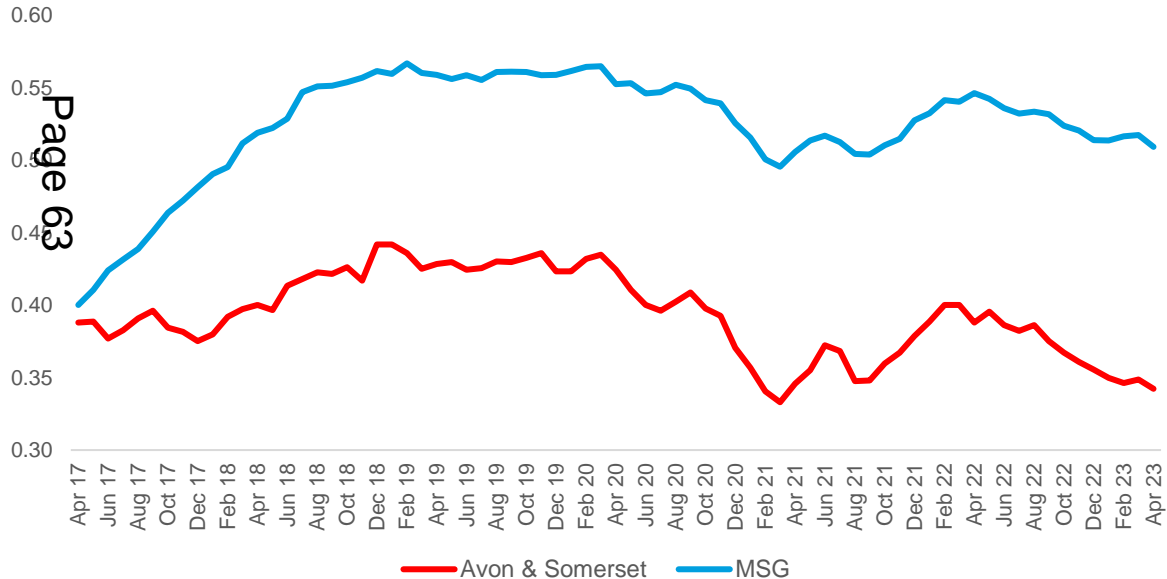
1. Historically there are have been low levels of homicide within Avon and Somerset. However, between January-March 2023 there were 7 recorded Homicides across Avon and Somerset. This volume accounts for the recent noted increase in rate per 1000 residents.

Reduce Serious Violence

Measures Summary

| Local Measures | Trend | Benchmark |
|---|--------|-------------------------------------|
| Police recorded serious violence offences | Stable | 3rd/8 MSG (below MSG average rates) |

Serious Violence - 12 Month Rolling Rates per 1000 Residents



Planned Action to Drive Performance

1. Continue to embed Serious Violence Duty.
2. Establish new tasking group, comprising local and regional specialist teams to identify and look at top OCGs, Drugs Lines, Serious Violence and persons at risk, including development of a new mapping process.
3. New community knife bins and bleed kit programme that sign posts people to their local Violence Reduction Partnership.
4. Improve Command and Control systems to identify habitual knife carriers in order to increase intelligence and target offenders.
5. Increased disruptions of OCGs and County Lines and exploitation in line with the 4P Plan – Pursue, Prepare, Prevent, Protect.
6. Improvements to processes and development of a performance framework within the Early Intervention Team and VRUs to improve outcomes for children involved in serious youth violence.
7. Reduce harm through the use of advanced bleed kits (and training) - these will be installed in response vehicles and provided to night-time economy stakeholders (e.g. door staff, street pastors).

Comments

1. ASP benchmark well against the MSG group of forces, based on rates of serious violence per 1000 residents.

Disrupt Drugs Supply and County Lines

Measures Summary

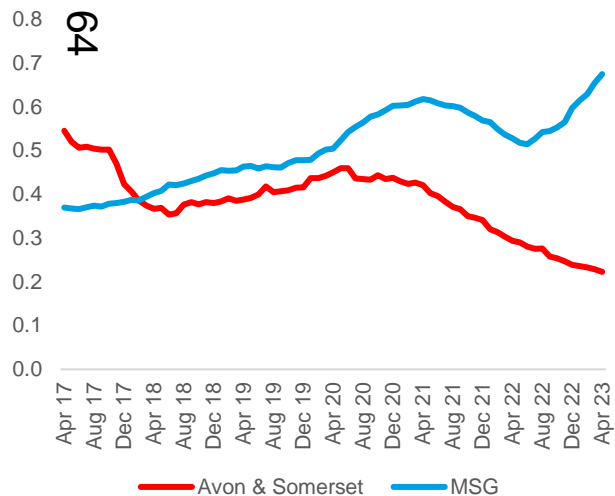
| Local Measures | Trend | Benchmark |
|---|------------|-------------------------------------|
| Police recorded drug trafficking offences | Reducing | 8th/8 MSG (below MSG average rates) |
| Number of all drugs disruptions | Increasing | Not available |
| Number of county lines disrupted | Increasing | Not available |

Planned Action to Drive Performance

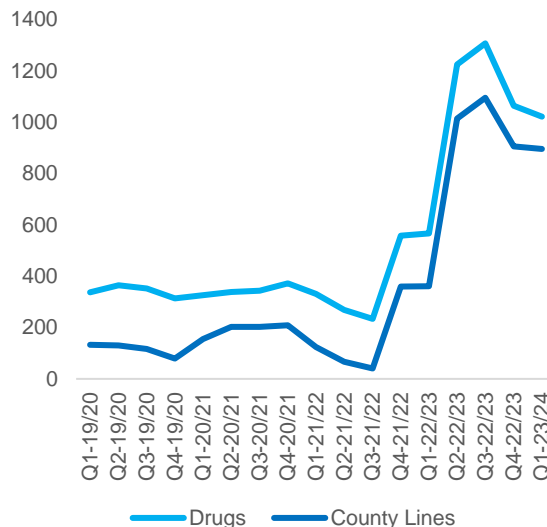
1. Development of local enforcement plans within the Combatting Drugs Partnerships, including needs analysis and problem profiles to inform activity.
2. Continuation of proactive work with charity 'Parents against criminal exploitation' and parents/children to raise awareness and highlight current trends in drugs supply and County Lines.
3. Somerset Youth Offending Team early engagement of children who have been in custody, through an on-call youth support worker provision to maximise early disruption opportunities (reachable moments).
4. Engagement with approx. 500 children in a Somerset secondary school educating children on the dangers of knife crime and links with drugs and County Lines.
5. Improvements to communication between police forces to effectively target criminality and protect trafficked people.

Page 64

Drug Trafficking Crime -
12 Month Rolling Rates per 1000
Residents



Drugs and County Lines Disruptions -
12 Month Rolling Rates



Comments

1. The force has a lower rate of drug trafficking offences per 1000 residents, compared to the MSG forces and this gap has been growing since mid 2020. This may indicate less proactive identification of the offending.
2. The significant increase in recorded disruptions is driven by intensification as part of Operation Scorpion (South West Regional drugs operation).

Reduce Neighbourhood Crime

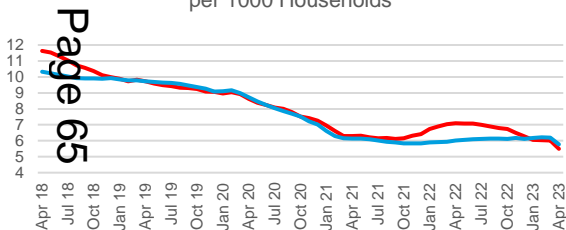
Measures Summary

| Local Measures | Trend | Benchmark |
|--|----------|--|
| Police recorded residential burglary offences | Reducing | 3rd/8 MSG (below MSG average rates) |
| Police recorded vehicle crime offences | Reducing | 5th/8 MSG (similar to MSG average rates) |
| Police recorded personal robbery offences | Stable | 6th/8 MSG (above MSG average rates) |
| Police recorded theft from the person offences | Reducing | 2nd/8 MSG (below MSG average rates) |

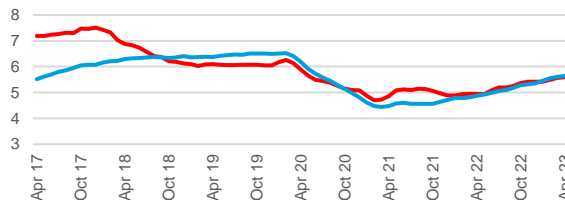
Planned Action to Drive Performance

1. Develop an evidence-based evaluation methodology for Problem Solving Plans to ensure learning and best practice is identified and shared accordingly.
2. Develop a Neighbourhood specific Digital Academy for training, Continued Professional Development, Organisational Learning and a Continuous Improvement Suggestion Scheme structured around the six pillars of Neighbourhood Policing: Engagement, Problem Solving, Safeguarding, Offender Management, Responding and Investigating.
3. Develop a performance framework for Op Remedy (proactive Neighbourhood Crime team).
4. Continued focus on Investigative Standards and File Quality through refresher training and increased scrutiny of performance data to drive improvements in the quality and timeliness of Supervisor Reviews, Victim Contact, and File and Data Quality.

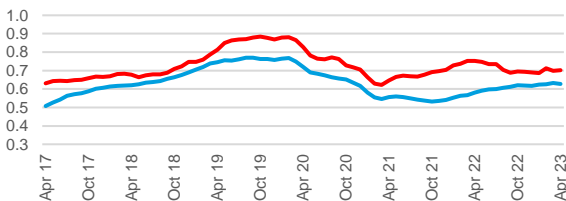
Residential Burglary - 12 Month Rolling Rates per 1000 Households



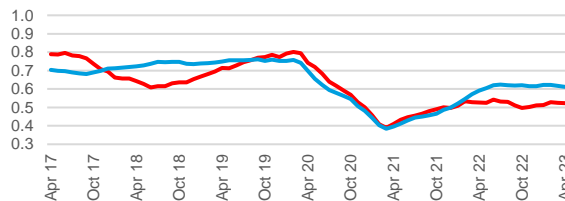
Vehicle Offences - 12 Month Rolling Rates per 1000 Residents



Personal Robbery - 12 Month Rolling Rates per 1000 Residents



Theft from the person - 12 Month Rolling Rates per 1000 Residents



Comments

1. Recorded neighbourhood crimes saw large reductions during the COVID-19 lockdown periods. Robbery offences remained more stable and the number of robberies in Bristol continues to cause ASP to have slightly higher levels than our MSG.

Tackle Cybercrime

Measures Summary

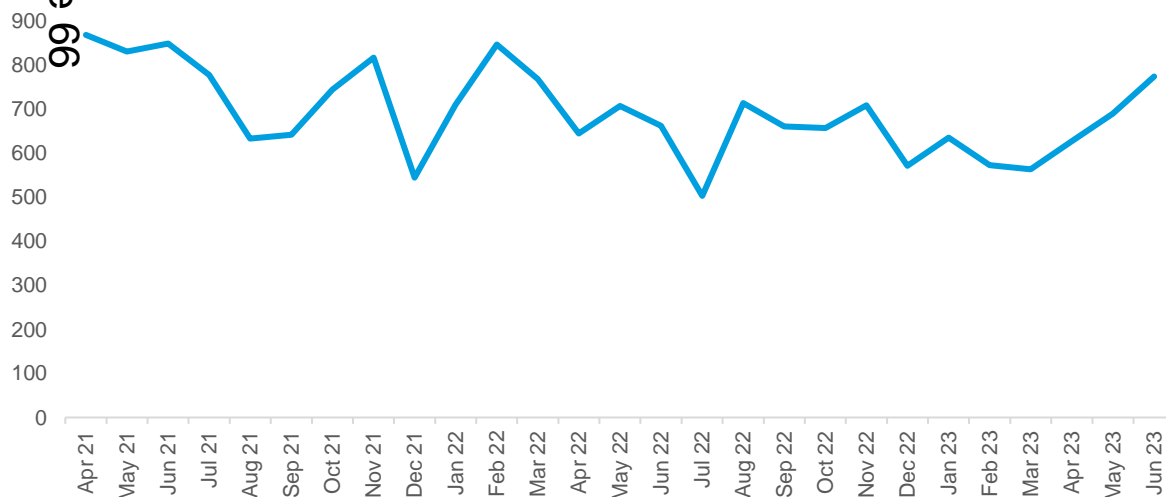
| Local Measures | Trend | Benchmark |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| Investigate 100% of all cyber dependant crime disseminated to forces | Stable (100%) | Not available |
| Provide 100% of all cyber dependant crime victims with specialist advice | Stable (100%) | Not available |
| Action Fraud Offences | Stable | Not available |

Planned Action to Drive Performance

1. Ongoing promotion of fraud-awareness, linking to national campaigns, to increase public understanding of offending methods and to deliver appropriate crime prevention advice.
2. Engagement in the launch of a national database of Cyber volunteers to ensure that specialist skills are available across police forces and Regional Organised Crime Units when required. This includes the recruitment of a Fraud volunteer with specific industry expertise in forensic accounting.
3. Dedicated Cryptocurrency Continued Professional Development and use of Suspicious Activity Reports to target criminal use of crypto funds.
4. Development of Cyber escape room - an interactive cyber awareness workshop.

Page 66

Action Fraud offences disseminated to Avon and Somerset Police



Comments

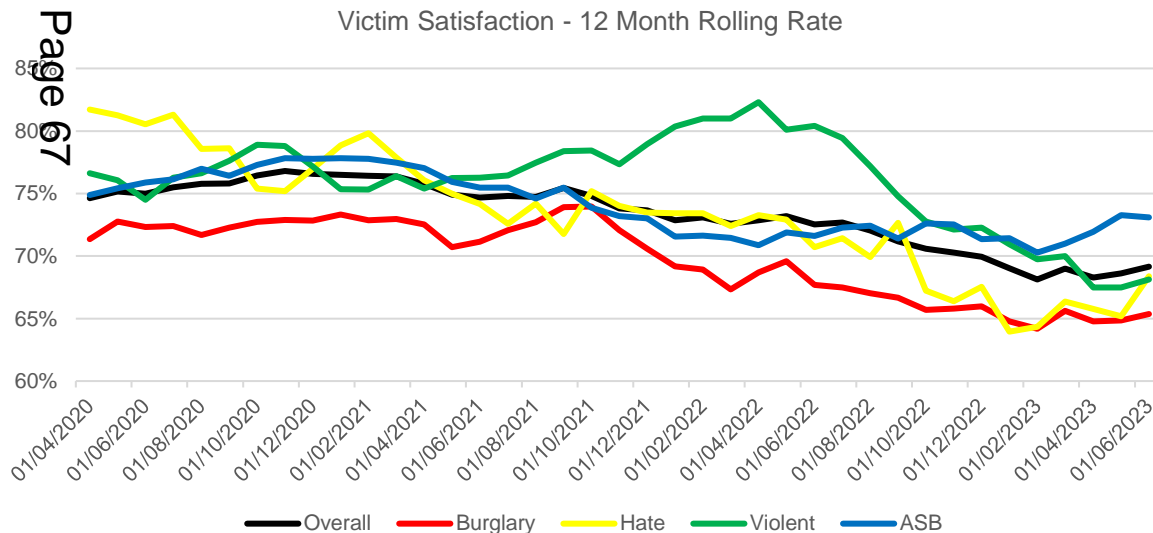
1. There is no local measurement similar to the national measures, which focus on 'Confidence in the law enforcement response to cyber crime' and 'the percentage of businesses experiencing a cyber breach or attack'. Both of these measures are captured at a national level.

Improve Victim Satisfaction, with a Focus on Victims of Domestic Abuse

Measures Summary

| Local Measures | Trend | Benchmark |
|-------------------------------------|----------|---------------|
| Overall victim satisfaction rate | Reducing | Not available |
| Burglary victim satisfaction | Reducing | Not available |
| Hate crime victim satisfaction rate | Reducing | Not available |
| Violent crime victim satisfaction | Stable | Not available |
| ASB victim satisfaction rate | Reducing | Not available |

Victim Satisfaction - 12 Month Rolling Rate



Planned Action to Drive Performance

1. Implementation of local [violence against women and girls framework](#) (which includes domestic abuse).
2. New victim information packs to ensure that victims of crime are provided with relevant information, guidance and support.
3. Ongoing work to review and make improvements to the management and enforcement of all protective orders to evaluate their effectiveness and ensure breaches are robustly dealt with.
4. Joint working with CPS and other partners to improve understanding of post-charge processes to support victims.
5. Ongoing analysis of cases closed because the victim declines to prosecute - to provide greater insight into victims' reasons for withdrawing to identify any areas for improvement.
6. Improvements to the accessibility and service provision of ISVAs in police premises to enable closer working with police and improved services to victims.
7. Expansion of the DRIVE programme for DA perpetrators, aimed at challenging and supporting perpetrators of domestic abuse offences and reducing reoffending.

Comments

1. Dwelling burglary shows higher satisfaction levels than all burglary (78.6% vs 53.3%).
2. There is no domestic abuse victim satisfaction survey currently in place in Avon and Somerset.

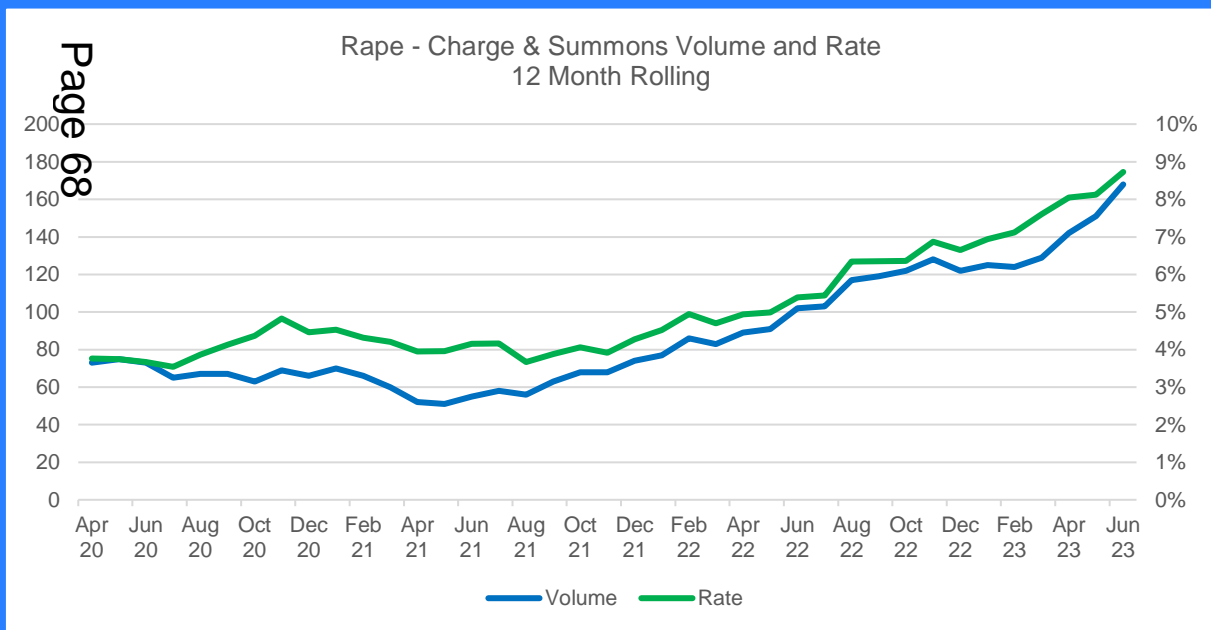
Better Criminal Justice Outcomes for Rape Cases

Measures Summary

| Local Measures | Trend | Benchmark |
|----------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------|
| Charge volumes for rape offences | Increasing | Not available |
| Charge rate for rape offences | Increasing | 2nd/8 MSG (above MSG average rates) |

Planned Action to Drive Performance

1. Rollout of the first National Operating Model for rape investigations, based on the findings and learning from Op Soteria and Avon and Somerset's Project Bluestone dedicated to the investigation of rape and serious sexual offences (RASSO) using specialist investigators.
2. Detailed work to expedite RASSO crime allocation following our 2021/22 PEEL Inspection and a specific AFI relating to the timely allocation of RASSO offences.
3. Explore options around the use of Specialist Engagement Officers for marginalised / disadvantaged communities.
4. Promotion of the revised Victim Engagement Survey to provide feedback to police and partners of victims' experience of their end-to-end journey.
5. Testing of a new Rape Data tool for sharing of information between police and CPS to improve timely access to information.
6. Continued joint training with CPS and ISVAs to improve the joined up approach to support victims through the Criminal Justice System..



Comments

1. There has been a recent and sustained increase in both the volume of police charges and the rate.

Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Plan 2021-2025

Contribution of Avon and Somerset Police* Priority 2 – Engaging, supporting and working with communities, victims and partner organisations

Page 69

*The national measures in the previous section also align with the local plan as shown below.

| National measures | Local areas of focus |
|--|---|
| Improve Victim Satisfaction, with a Focus on Victims of Domestic Abuse | Supporting victims of crime and anti-social behaviour |

Measures Summary

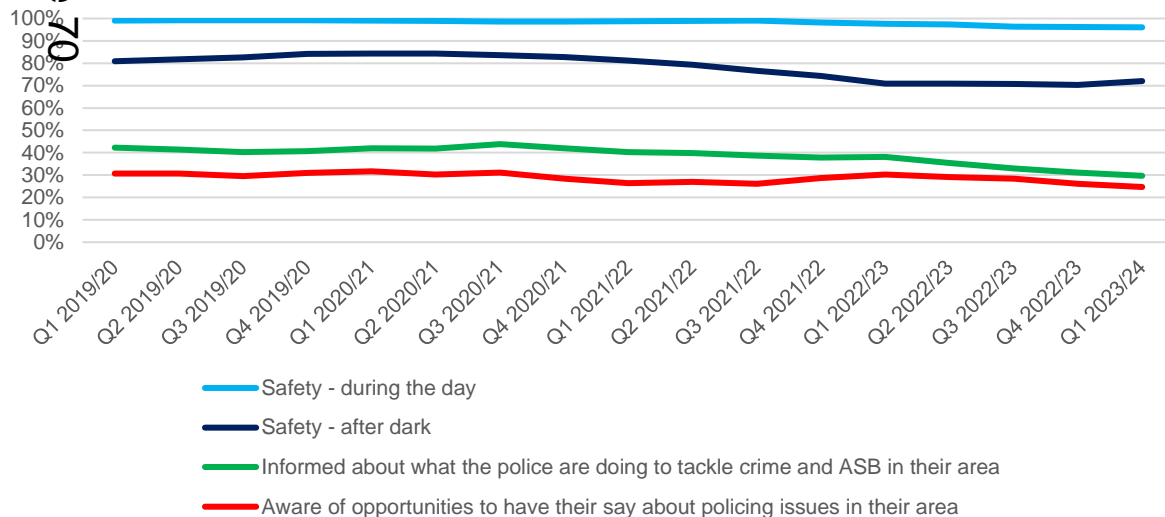
| Local Measures | Trend | Benchmark |
|---|----------|---------------|
| Perceived safety – during the day | Stable | Not available |
| Perceived safety – after dark | Stable | Not available |
| Public feel informed on local policing | Reducing | Not available |
| Public are aware of opportunities to have their say on local policing | Reducing | Not available |

Planned Action to Drive Performance

1. Inviting people to join an engagement network for ASP Race Matters work – either to be actively involved or simply informed on the things that ASP are doing to become anti-racist. Will be able to invite the people within this network to engage in consultation forums/workshops.
2. Analyse and take forward findings from the ASP survey of Black heritage communities and how to improve communication and confidence within these communities.
3. A Community Confidence Group for people from a Black heritage background has been established in Bristol. Themes will be identified by the group for discussion during the upcoming meetings in addition a young person's Independent Advisory Group which is now in place with work ongoing to increase the membership of this group.
4. Cultural Awareness Workshops are running monthly with staff visiting sites across Bristol to engage with key communities.

Page 70

Safety and Engagement - 12 Month Rolling Rates



Comments

1. Feelings of safety during the day remain high at over 96%. Feelings of safety after dark are lower and fluctuate more but with a more notable reduction in the last two years.
2. People feeling informed about policing or aware of opportunities to have their say about policing have seen a more consistent reduction over a number of years.

Special Constables and Citizens in Policing

Measures Summary

| Local Measures | Trend | Benchmark |
|---------------------------------------|----------|---------------|
| Special Constable duty hours | Stable | Not available |
| Public involved in active citizenship | Reducing | Not available |

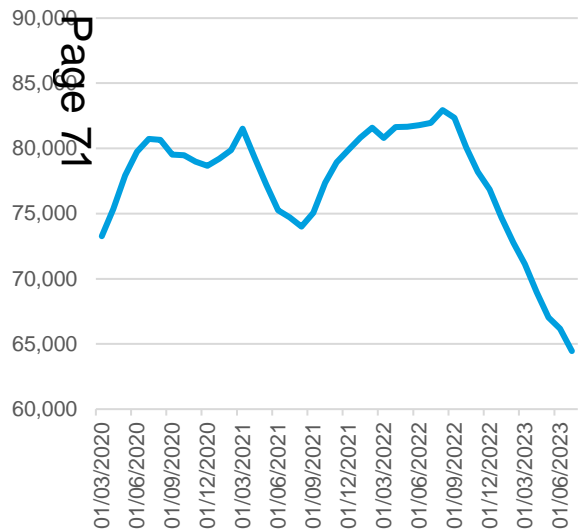
Planned Action to Drive Performance

1. Ensure the implementation of the Citizens in Policing Strategy and supporting delivery plans to improve the experience of our volunteers.
2. Review and refine activity to attract career specials to strengthen the quality and longevity of the Special Constabulary.
3. Support the organisation to explore new opportunities for Police Support Volunteers involvement, particularly in relation to capacity and additional services.
4. Enhance the support of Police Cadets and Mini Police programmes to ensure safe and consistent provision.

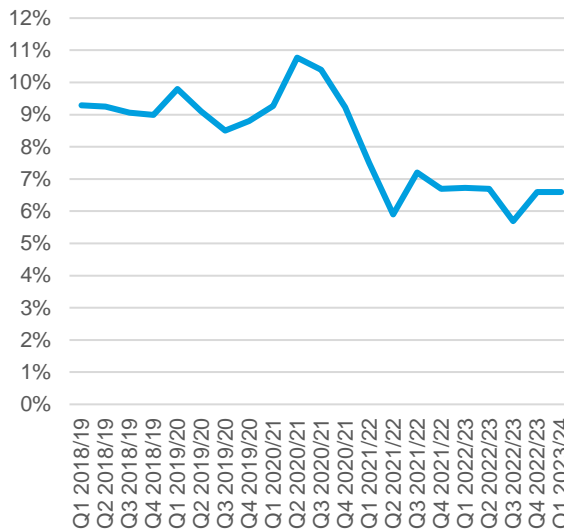
Comments

1. ASP are managing a reduction in the number of Specials but instead focusing on the development and contribution of those who have volunteered. While the average number of hours per Special is stable the reduction in numbers has caused the total contribution to decrease.
2. The pandemic had a negative effect on active citizenship which was to be expected as a number of meetings and forums were paused. However, this has not recovered after the removal of social restrictions.

Special Constables Duty Hours
- 12 Month Rolling Total



Active Citizenship -
12 Month Rolling Rate



The Criminal Justice System

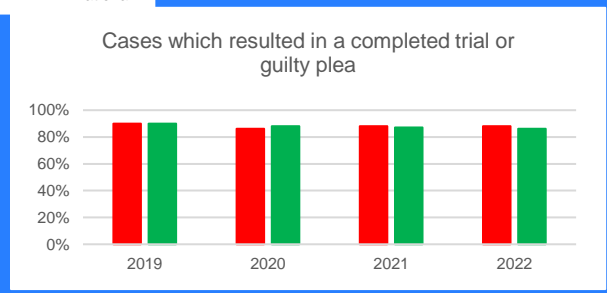
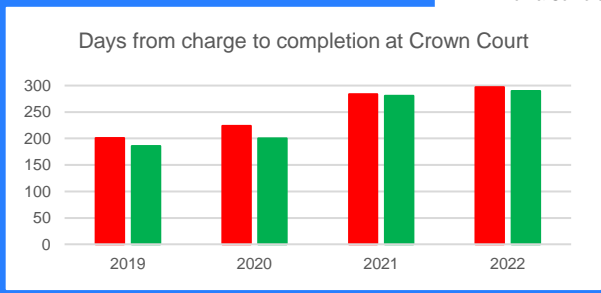
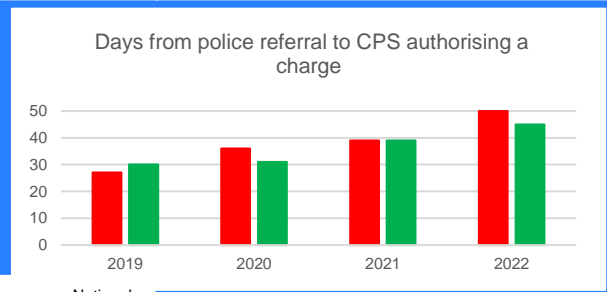
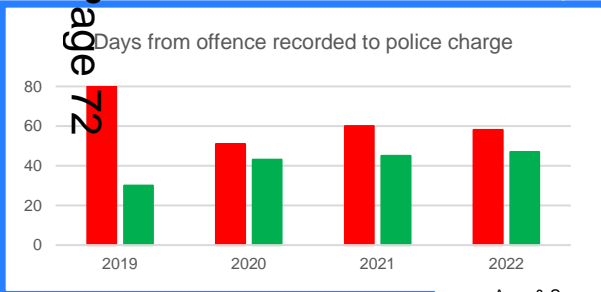
Measures Summary

| Local Measures | Trend | Benchmark |
|--|------------|---|
| Days from offence recorded to police charge (victim-based cases) | Stable | 3rd/8 MSG (lower than MSG average rates) |
| Days from police referral to CPS authorising a charge | Increasing | 6th/8 MSG (higher than MSG average rates) |
| Days from charge to completion at Crown Court | Increasing | 4th/8 MSG (higher than MSG average rates) |
| Cases which resulted in a completed trial or guilty plea | Stable | 4th/8 MSG (similar to MSG average rates) |

Planned Action to Drive Performance

1. Review of ASP's Criminal Justice Department new ways of working that were implemented in January 2023. The aim is to further refine the new processes.
2. Op Holmes is providing Chief Officer Direction to improve investigative standards and is supported by senior leaders and departments from across the force working together.
3. Engaging with current national reviews (JOIM review & Ministry of Justice/HMCTS Criminal Justice System Efficiency Project) and planned joint inspections on case building and effective communication and relationships with our partners.

Page 72



Comments

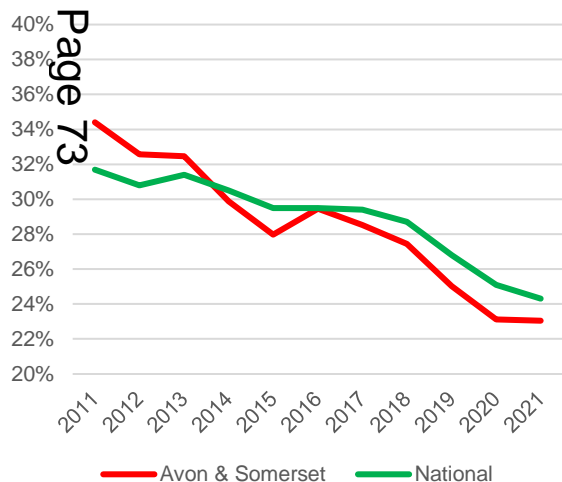
1. While the time to charge (for a police decision) is longer for ASP compared to national; this has reduced from 2019 to 2022 and is lower than the MSG average.
2. The CPS South West time to authorise a charge is longer than the national and MSG levels.
3. Mean days for Crown Court finalisation has also increased but is very similar to MSG levels.

Reducing Reoffending

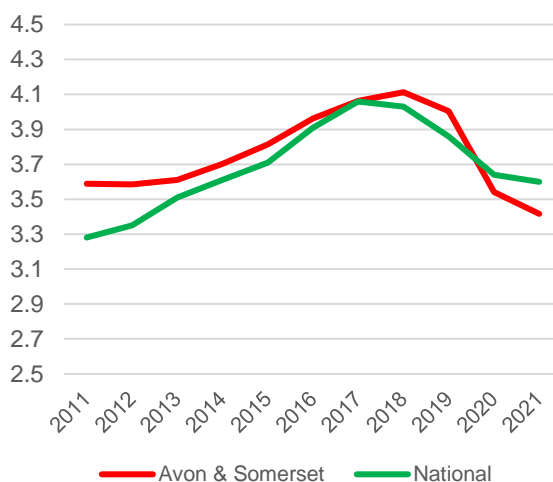
Measures Summary

| Local Measures | Trend | Benchmark |
|---|----------|-----------------------------------|
| Proportion of offenders who reoffend | Reducing | -1.3% points compared to national |
| Average number of reoffences per reoffender | Stable | -0.2 compared to national |

Proportion of Offenders who Reoffend
- Year Ending September



Average Reoffences per Reoffender
- Year Ending September



Planned Action to Drive Performance

1. Embedding of new offender managers in Integrated Offender Management (IOM) which has grown through the Uplift programme; and new ways of working from the national IOM Strategy.
2. IOM are working closely with Operation Soteria / Bluestone to develop plans to identify and disrupt persons of interest in Rape and Serious Sexual Offences cases. This work will ensure that each suspect or perpetrator has a bespoke plan to manage their risk of reoffending should they meet the agreed partnership thresholds for inclusion into a Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangement or High Harm teams, or through their effective management within Operation Bluestone.

Comments

1. The proportion of offenders who reoffend has decreased nationally but the decrease in Avon and Somerset has been even greater and the local levels have been lower than national for the last five years.
2. The average number of reoffences has also decreased since 2018 and Avon and Somerset now have fewer reoffences than the national rate.

Collaboration and Partnership Working

Measures Summary

There are no numerical measures that can sufficiently capture or represent the breadth of work that is achieved in collaboration or partnership with other policing agencies or other organisations.

There is a South West Police Collaboration Board which is attended by the PCCs, Chief Constables, the regional Assistant Chief Constable and other representatives. This provides oversight and assurance against these strategic regional collaborations.

Avon and Somerset Police also provide thematic assurance reports which are jointly commissioned by the Office of the PCC. These reports are overseen through the PCC's Governance and Scrutiny Board. These reports include assurance on partnership working in relation to the specific theme.

Planned Action to Drive Performance

1. A number of improvements already identified throughout this report rely on partnership working.
2. Working with health and other partners to develop a [Right Care, Right Person](#) approach in Avon and Somerset.
3. Working with the Local Safeguarding Boards to develop an improved model for Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences.
4. Strengthening the Operation Encompass model with Local Safeguarding Boards and education settings to improve information sharing for vulnerable children.
5. Work with HMCTS to improve the effectiveness of Special Measures (which support victims when their case is going to trial) in both Magistrates and Crown Court is ongoing.
6. Develop information sharing agreements with GPs within the Somerset Local Authority Area.
7. Trial a joint funded position with Somerset Children Social Care to improve the information and referrals made between Police & Social Care.
8. As part of B&NES VAWG strategy, the local team is collaborating with British Transport Police, Bath Rugby and the Bath Business Improvement District (BiD) to launch the Speak Up, Interrupt campaign. The campaign is aimed at encouraging individuals to be upstanding in support of victims of harassment by challenging inappropriate behaviour.

AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

28 September 2023

REPORT OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF

COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER AND COMPLAINT REVIEW UPDATE

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To provide members of Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel with oversight of all complaints made against Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner for scrutiny of the initial handling by the Chief of Staff Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner's Office.

BACKGROUND

2. Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel (the Panel) is the Appropriate Authority to handle complaints against the conduct of 'Relevant Office Holders', being Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) according to statutory regulations of the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012 and as referred to in the Police Reform and Social Responsibilities Act 2011, section 31 and schedule 7.
3. However, the initial handling, which includes categorisation, recording decision-making, referral of criminal allegations to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC), disapplication decision-making, and responding to the complainant in the first instance, has been delegated by the Panel to the Chief of Staff in the Office of Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner, with scrutiny and oversight of all complaints and any escalation for informal resolution, remaining with the Panel.

SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

4. There have been three new complaints recorded against PCC Mark Shelford since the last meeting of the Police and Crime Panel.
5. Complaint number 90 was received on 29/08/23. The complaint allegations centre around the PCC's handling of a complaint review and the outcome. The complainant submitted considerable background information relating to previous complaints against police which was reviewed. No evidence relating to the allegations was identified as part of the review and the complainant was provided with an explanation around the outcome and findings. An outcome letter was sent on 29/08/23.
6. Complaint number 91 was received via the IOPC and allegations related to published material by the Conservative Party. The complaint was handled by the Panel and no personal conduct issues were identified.

7. Complaint number 92 was received on 31/08/23. Allegations relate to the fact that the PCC has not responded to an online form within the stipulated aim of 20 working days. The original substantive matter is in hand and has been raised at a senior level within Avon and Somerset police via the Staff Office. An update, apology and explanation will be provided to the complainant.
8. All complaints to date have had Panel oversight, including those solely handled by the PCC's Chief of Staff. All electronic complaint files are available at the PCC's office for viewing by the Panel, if requested. The document retention period is in accordance with the published Record Retention Policy, and this is currently six years.

COMPLAINT REVIEW UPDATE

9. The complaint review process allows the PCC to independently scrutinise the outcome of complaints (upon application by an involved party). The process determines whether the complaint was handled lawfully and correctly.
10. The complaint review manager has handled 652 reviews up until 11th September 2023. In total 19% of reviews have been upheld, 69% have not been upheld and 12% have been recorded as void.

RECORDED COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

11. The OPCC has received and logged 4 new complaints against the Chief Constable since the last meeting of the Police and Crime Panel. All complaints have been assessed and after fact finding it was established that allegations relate to the actions of officers acting under delegated authority and not the personal conduct of the Chief Constable. None of the complaints received have been recorded under Schedule 3 of the Police Reform Act 2002.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

12. There are no equality implications arising from the handling of complaints against Avon and Somerset PCC. The protected characteristics of complainants are not necessarily known, and all complaints are logged and published in an open and transparent manner.

RECOMMENDATIONS

13. Members are asked to review and comment on this complaints report and to advise of any recommendations or requests for informal resolution through the statutory process of escalating complaints against the PCC to the Panel.

Alice Ripley – Chief of Staff

COMPLAINTS and CONDUCT MATTERS AGAINST AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER AND DEPUTY PCC

REPORT TO: AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Date: 28 September 2023

| No. | Date rcvd / log no. | Summary of complaint or allegation | Recorded? | Handled by | Outcome | Live or Closed |
|---|---------------------|--|-----------|-------------|---|----------------|
| COMPLAINTS and CONDUCT MATTERS AGAINST AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER MARK SHELFORD | | | | | | |
| 85. | 06/03/2023 | Complaint against PCC Shelford and former PCC Mountstevens in relation to their involvement in harassment against the complainant by the police. | Yes | COS & Panel | Resolved by means of explanation and disapplication. Escalated to the Panel. Decision upheld and outcome letter sent 15/03/2023 | Closed |
| 86. | 27/02/2023 | Dissatisfaction with PCC's views on classification on drugs at the recent Conservative Party Conference. | Yes | COS & Panel | Resolved by means of explanation. Escalated to the Panel and outcome letter sent 31/05/2023 | Closed |
| 88. | 15/05/2023 | FOR INFO ONLY - Potential PCC complaint made directly to Somerset Council | Yes | Panel | Not a complaint against the PCC but dissatisfaction with ASP. Explanation provided by Panel 31/05/2023. | Closed |
| 89. | 15/04/2023 | Complaint regarding 101 answer times. Holds the PCC responsible for the poor service. | Yes | COS | In progress, will be resolved by means of explanation. Does not relate to the personal conduct of the PCC. | Live |
| 90. | 29/08/23 | Complaint against PCC Mark Shelford in relation to outcome of a previous PCC complaint review. | Yes | COS | Resolved by means of explanation. Letter sent 29/08/23 | Closed |
| 91. | 17/07/23 | Complaint received via IOPC relating to Conservative Party activity | Yes | Panel | Resolved by means of explanation as not relating to personal conduct matter. | Closed |
| 92. | 31/08/23 | Complaint by former officer against PCC for delay in responding to contact outside of the stipulated aim of 20 working days. | Yes | COS | Substantive matter raised with ASP and in hand. Will be resolved by apology, update and means of explanation. | Live |

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Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel

28th September 2023

Title: Governance Review Report

1. Purpose of Report

The Panel is invited to:

- Note the finalised Panel Operating Arrangements (Appendix A)
- Consider and approve the proposed amendments to the Panel Rules of Procedure (Appendix B)

2. Summary

Panel Operating Arrangements

The Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel operates within a governance framework agreed by the Constituent Authorities in 2012. These arrangements were overseen by a Joint Selection Committee of the Avon and Somerset Council Leaders in 2012. The Panel Operating Arrangements document emerging from these discussions was agreed on 11th June 2012 and adopted by the Panel on 31st October 2012.

Under its terms, there is a requirement for the document to be reviewed every 2 years to ensure the Panel runs as effectively as possible and continues to fulfil its statutory functions. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 states that in the case of a multi-authority Police area, the constituent authorities must agree to the making or modification of the Panel's Operating Arrangements, and that each Panel member must comply with these arrangements.

The 2023 review coincided with the required amendments to membership following Somerset's unitary transition and the local elections on 4th May 2023.

Attached as Appendix 1 is the now finalised Panel Operating Arrangements which has been endorsed by the constituent authorities. The Panel was briefed on the proposed amendments prior to consultation and the final document is submitted for information only. The next review will be March 2025.

Rules of Procedure

Attached as Appendix B to this report are the rules that guide how business is conducted and ensure that the Panel meets its statutory requirements.

Unlike the Operating Arrangements, the Panel can determine and make changes to the Rules of Procedure. They were last reviewed on 31st March 2021.

3. Conclusion

Over time and based on experience in the intervening period, various amendments have been incorporated into these documents. The Panel is invited to note the finalised Panel Operating Arrangements and consider if any further amendments are required to the Rules of Procedure at this time.

Patricia Jones

Governance Specialist
Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel
Patricia.Jones@somerset.gov.uk



Panel Operating Arrangements

The Panel Operating Arrangements were originally agreed by the Leaders Joint Selection Committee on 11th June 2012.

They were further reviewed in 2018, 2020 and 2021 to reflect the formation of Somerset West and Taunton Council (following the merge of West Somerset Council and Taunton Deane Borough Council) and to address amendments required to membership as a result of the pandemic and postponement of the PCC elections.

On 1 April 2023, following the implementation of the Somerset Structural Changes Order 2022, the existing five councils in Somerset were replaced by a single unitary council named Somerset Council. This reduces the number of councils in the Avon and Somerset force area from 9 to 5.

This document is agreed on behalf of the following Constituent Authorities:-

Bath and North East Somerset
Bristol City Council
North Somerset Council
Somerset Council
South Gloucestershire Council

In this document:-

- the above 5 Authorities are referred to singularly as 'the Authority' and together as 'the Constituent Authorities'
- the 'Panel' is the Police and Crime Panel for the Avon and Somerset Police Constabulary force area
- the Lead Officer is the Panel's dedicated strategic officer lead and scrutiny and complaints officer
- the "clerk" is the administrative support to the Panel

- the 'Host Authority' is the Council responsible for providing the necessary officer support to enable the Panel to fulfil its statutory responsibilities
- the 'Act' is the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011
- the "Panel Operating Arrangements' are the arrangements for the establishment and maintenance of a Police and Crime Panel
- the "Rules of Procedure" are the rules which determine how the Panel will carry out its key functions pursuant to Schedule 6 paragraph 25 of the Act. This document should be read in conjunction with the Panel's [Rules of Procedure](#)

1. Background

- 1.1** Avon and Somerset is a multi-authority Police area as defined in Schedule 1 of the Police Act 1996. The Constituent Authorities must agree to the making and modification of the Panel Arrangements. If the Constituent Authorities are not able to agree the Panel Arrangements, the Secretary of State is able to establish a Police and Crime Panel for the Police Area.
- 1.2** The Panel Operating Arrangements document will normally be reviewed by the Panel and referred to the Constituent Authorities every 2 years (next review to take place in March 2025). If any changes are recommended to the contents, these will be submitted to the Authorities for approval. The agreed document will then be presented to the Panel for information at its next scheduled meeting. The document may be reviewed and amended in the intervening period subject to any statutory changes and guidance that impact on the operation of the Panel.
- 1.3** Each Authority and Panel Member must comply with the Panel Arrangements.
- 1.4** The Act provides for the election of a Police and Crime Commissioner ('the Commissioner') for the Avon and Somerset Police area and the establishment and maintenance of a Police and Crime Panel.
- 1.5** The functions of the Panel are to be exercised with a view to supporting the effective exercise of the functions of the Commissioner.
- 1.6** The Panel is a strategic Joint Partnership and scrutiny body with responsibility for scrutinising and supporting the Commissioner and promoting openness in the transaction of Police business in the Avon and Somerset force area.

1.7 The Panel must have regard, in addition to any statutory requirements, to any advice and protocols issued by the Home Secretary in respect of the role of the Commissioner, the Chief Constable and the Panel.

1.8 The Panel is a Joint Committee of the Constituent Authorities and is subject to the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972, the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, and any related secondary legislation.

2. Functions and Terms of Reference

2.1 The overarching role of the Panel is to scrutinise the work of the Commissioner in the discharge of the Commissioner's functions and in order to support the effective exercise of those functions.

2.2 The Panel can only exercise functions as conferred by the Act.

2.3 The Panel is a statutory consultee on the development of the **Police and Crime Plan** and must:-

- review the draft Police and Crime Plan (and any variation to it); and
- report and/or make recommendations on the draft Plan which the Commissioner must take into account.

2.4 The Panel must comment upon the Annual Report of the Commissioner and for that purpose must put questions to the Commissioner at a public meeting. The Panel may make a report or recommendation (as necessary) to the Commissioner on the Annual Report.

2.5 The Panel must hold **Confirmatory Hearings in respect of proposed senior appointments** made by the Commissioner. This includes the posts of the Chief Executive Officer/Chief of Staff, the Chief Finance Officer and any Deputy Commissioner in accordance with the requirements set out in Schedule 1 of the Act. The Panel will review the appointments and make a report and/or recommendations to the Commissioner.

- 2.6** The Panel must hold a **Confirmatory Hearing in respect of the appointment of the Chief Constable**. The Panel has the right of veto for the appointment of the Chief Constable in accordance with the Act and Regulations.
- 2.7** The Panel must review the **Precept** proposed by the Commissioner in accordance with the requirements set out in Schedule 5 of the Act and will have a right of veto in respect of the Precept in accordance with the Act and Regulations made thereafter.
- 2.8** The right of veto will require a **two-thirds majority of the whole Panel membership at the time when the decision is made** to vote in favour of making that decision.
- 2.9** The Panel may appoint an Acting Commissioner if necessary. The Panel's [Mid Term Vacancy Protocol](#) sets out the agreed process for making the appointment.
- 2.10** The Panel may suspend the Commissioner if he/she is charged with an offence carrying a maximum term of imprisonment exceeding two years.
- 2.11** If the Commissioner exercises the power to call for the resignation of a Chief Constable pursuant to Section 38(3) of the Act, the Panel must hold a scrutiny hearing in private before making any recommendation on the proposal. The Panel may consult the Chief Inspector of Constabulary and may consider representations from the Commissioner and the Chief Constable on the proposed removal.
- 2.12** The Panel may carry out in-depth reviews into the work of the Commissioner. This work may be delegated to a Sub-Committee or Task Group.
- 2.13** The Panel may require the Commissioner or a staff member of the OPCC to attend the Panel to answer questions in circumstances provided for by the Act.
- 2.14** The Panel may require the Commissioner to respond in writing to a report or recommendation of the Panel.
- 2.15** The Panel will have any other powers and duties set out in the Act or Regulations made in accordance with the Act.

Note: The detail behind how the Panel will carry out the key functions listed above is contained in the Rules of Procedure.

3. Membership

Elected Members

- 3.1** The minimum number of elected members of the Panel will be 10, with each of the Constituent Authorities having at least 2 members.
- 3.2** Appointment of elected Members to the Panel shall be made by each of the Constituent Authorities in accordance with their own procedures. All such appointments shall be notified to the Host Authority no later than 25th May in each year. In making appointments to the Panel, the Constituent Authorities shall have regard to the requirement in the Act that appointments shall be made with a view to ensuring that the 'balanced appointment objective' is met so far as is reasonably practicable.
- 3.3** The balanced appointment objective requires that the Panel should (when taken together), and as far as is reasonably practicable:
- represent all parts of the Police area;
 - represent the political make-up of the Authorities (when taken together);
 - have the skills, knowledge and experience necessary for the Panel to discharge its functions effectively.
- 3.4** In the event that an Authority does not appoint a member in accordance with these requirements, the Secretary of State will appoint a member from the Authority to the Panel in accordance with the Act.
- 3.5** A Panel should keep the membership under review and consider whether a variation in numbers by co-opting additional elected members would assist in meeting the balanced appointment objective. The Panel shall not co-opt an elected member unless all of the members of the Panel agree to the co-option.
- 3.6** The Panel will continue to comprise of 14 elected members. Each of the 5 constituent authorities will be allocated 2 Appointed Member seats. Bristol City Council will retain an additional co-opted seat based on its population size and comparatively high crime levels. Somerset will be allocated the remaining 3 seats on a co-opted basis and in doing so will retain its current numerical representation.

*(*Guidance - Councils with Elected Mayors are under a duty to nominate the Mayor or delegate the role to another elected member in accordance with Schedule 6, paragraph 33 of the PRSR Act 2011).*

- 3.7** There will be no ad hoc substitute members at meetings. A long-term substitution may be considered appropriate by the Constituent Authorities if a member is unable to attend meetings over a protracted period and subject to appropriate training.

Term of Office

- 3.8** The term of office of elected members shall be the same as that of the Commissioner – a 4 year term unless a Panel member ceases to be an elected Member, or is removed from the Panel by their Authority. Members are entitled to be re-appointed for a maximum of two consecutive 4 year terms of office provided that the balanced appointment objective is met by that re-appointment.
- 3.9** The Constituent Authorities will maintain a mechanism at all times to enable the membership to be reviewed following any change in the Appointed or Co-opted elected membership agreed by the Panel and following any significant change in the political balance on the Authorities following relevant elections.

Resignation and removal of elected members on the Panel

- 3.10** An Authority may decide in accordance with its procedures to remove its Member from the Panel at any time and upon doing so shall give written notice to the clerk.
- 3.11** A member may resign from the Panel at any time by giving notice to the appointing Authority who will in turn, give written notice to the clerk.
- 3.12** In both cases, the Authority shall immediately take steps to nominate and appoint an alternative member to the Panel.
- 3.13** Subject to the provisions of Section 85 Local Government Act 1972, any member failing to attend a meeting of the Panel for a period of six months ceases to be a member of the Panel unless within that period the member's absence is approved by the Panel. The clerk to the Panel will monitor absences and unless approval for any absence is given by the Chair, the Panel will report

the failure to attend in order that it may declare a vacancy and notify the relevant constituent Council.

Independent Co-opted Members

3.14 The Panel will normally consist of 3 non-political Independent Members. The Panel will at all times maintain a minimum of 2 in accordance with Schedule 6 Part 2 Section 4(3) of the Act.

3.15 The following may not be an Independent Member:-

- anyone under 18 years old
- the Commissioner for the Police area
- a member of staff in the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
- a member of civilian staff in the Avon and Somerset Constabulary
- a Police officer in the Avon and Somerset Constabulary
- a member of Parliament;
- a member of the National Assembly for Wales;
- a member of the Scottish Parliament;
- a member of the European Parliament;
- a member of a Local Authority within the Avon and Somerset Police area.

3.16 An Independent Co-opted Member shall be appointed for a 4 year term and can be re-appointed for a maximum of two consecutive 4 year terms of office provided that the balanced appointment objective is met by that re-appointment. The appointment of an Independent Co-opted Member shall be reviewed on completion of the first 4 year term.

3.17 The appointment of Independent Members will be conducted in accordance with the following principles:

- a) The appointment will be made on merit of candidates whose skills, experience and qualities are considered best to ensure the effective functioning of the Panel.
- b) The selection process must be fair, objective, impartial and consistently applied to all candidates who will be assessed against the same pre-determined criteria.
- c) The selection process will be conducted transparently with information about the requirements for the appointment and the process being publicly advertised.

d) The selection process will endeavour to encourage applications from candidates which reflect the breadth of communities in the Avon and Somerset force area and will welcome applications from all eligible people irrespective of gender, ethnic origin, religious belief, sexual orientation, disability, age or other factors.

3.18 Costs of the recruitment process shall be met from within the existing budget approved by the Panel as set out in section 5.

3.19 A co-opted Member of the Panel may resign from the Panel by giving written notice to the Chair and the Clerk.

3.20 The Panel may at any time terminate the appointment of an Independent Member by notice in writing with immediate effect if at least two-thirds of Panel Members vote in favour of the decision for the reasons set out below:-

- if absent from the Panel for more than 3 formal meetings without the consent of the Panel
- if convicted of a criminal offence but not automatically disqualified
- if deemed to be incapacitated by illness or is otherwise unable to unfit to discharge the functions of an Independent Member
- if the appointment no longer achieves the Balanced Appointment Objective
- if following an investigation by the Monitoring Officer of the host authority, a member has been found to have acted contrary to the Nolan Principles or any of the provisions of the members code of conduct of the host authority.

4. Host Authority

4.1 The Panel shall agree a Host Authority for the Panel, to provide such scrutiny, legal, financial, administrative and other support as is reasonably required to enable the Panel to undertake its functions within the resources agreed by the Panel.

4.2 Somerset Council shall continue to act as the Host Authority until at least May 2025, and will provide/organise the necessary support arrangements to enable the Panel to fulfil its statutory responsibilities.

4.3 The Host Authority will give 6 months notice of its intention to resign to enable a new Host Authority to be identified.

5. Budget and Panel Costs

5.1 The Home Office funding for the Panel is to be paid to the Host Authority. These funds are to be used to support the democratic, legal, scrutiny and

administrative costs of the Panel, and for paying members' allowances.

- 5.2** The Panel may consider how any additional costs are to be met and each local authority may be invited to consider a request for additional funding. In 2022/23 a collective indemnity mechanism of £5k per annum was agreed with each of the component authorities for the foreseeable future.

6. Allowances and Expenses

- 6.1** All Panel Members can claim from the Panel budget for travel and carer expenses incurred in undertaking approved duties up to a maximum amount of £920 annually. This will be paid in the form of an allowance in two parts and in arrears.

The Constituent Authorities may choose to provide an additional allowance to members sitting on the Panel to bring allowances fully into line with figures arrived at for other committees by the relevant independent remuneration panel. This is a matter for the appointing authority.

7. Promotion of the Panel

- 7.1** The Panel shall be promoted and supported by the Host Authority, Lead Officer and clerk by way of:-

- a dedicated website of the Host Authority (with appropriate links to other relevant websites) including information about the role and work of the Panel, Panel Membership, all non-confidential Panel and sub-committee meeting papers, press releases and other publications. All reports and recommendations made, with responses from the Commissioner will be published.
- media and communications support provided by the Corporate Communications Team, including the issuing of press release where required.
- the webcasting of formal Panel Meetings
- information on the respective Authority websites about the work of the Panel and links to the main web-pages.
- clerking support to be provided for all public Panel meetings. This includes sending out agendas, minutes and providing procedural advice.
- legal advice where required for the Panel to carry out its duties effectively.

- 7.2** The costs of the promotion work identified above will be met by the annual budget and approved by the Panel.
- 7.3** Support and guidance including training and specialist expertise as necessary shall be provided to the Panel members in support of its functions. This shall be organised by the Host Authority and will include briefing/training sessions and written briefing notes.
- 7.4** The Host Authority shall prepare and maintain in consultation with the OPCC, the following protocols:-
- Working Protocol - setting out the respective functions of the Panel and the Commissioner with a view to establishing a set of principles and processes to ensure an effective and constructive working relationship;
 - Complaints Protocol - to facilitate the expeditious handling of complaints;
 - Communications Protocol - a basis for all communications between the Panel and the OPCC and the media; and
 - Mid Term Vacancy Protocol

8. Validity of Proceedings

- 8.1** The validity of the proceedings of the Panel shall not be affected by a vacancy in the Membership of the Panel or a defect in appointment.
- 8.2** The conduct of the Panel and the content of these arrangements shall be subject to the legislative provisions in the Act and any Regulations made in accordance with the Act, and in the event of any conflict between the Act or Regulations, and these arrangements, the requirements of the legislation will prevail.

9. Rules of Procedure

The Panel shall determine its Rules of Procedure which shall include arrangements in relation to:-

- the appointment and removal of the Chair and Vice-Chair
- the formation of sub-committees and task groups
- the making of decisions
- arrangements for convening meetings
- the circulation of information.

10. Recording of Public Meetings

Public Meetings of the Panel will be recorded in line with Somerset County Council's policies and procedures.



Panel Rules of Procedure

The Panel Rules of Procedure were originally agreed by the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel on 31st October 2012 and have subsequently been reviewed at intervals. They were last reviewed and agreed on 28th September 2023.

This document was is agreed on behalf of the following Authorities:-

Bath & North East Somerset
Bristol City Council
North Somerset Council
Somerset Council
South Gloucestershire Council

In this document:-

- the above 5 Authorities are referred to singularly as 'the Authority' and together as 'the Authorities'
- the 'Panel' is the Police and Crime Panel for the Avon and Somerset Police area
- the Lead Officer is the Panel's dedicated strategic officer lead and scrutiny/complaints officer
- the Clerk provides the administrative support to the Panel
- the 'Host Authority' is the Authority which provides administrative and other specialist support to the Panel at the relevant time
- the 'Act' is the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

- the “Panel Operating Arrangements’ is the document which sets out a framework for the Panel’s operation as agreed by all 5 Authorities
- the “Rules” are the rules as set out in this Rules of Procedure document

General

1.1 The Rules are made by the Panel pursuant to Schedule 6, paragraph 25 of the Act. The Panel will operate in accordance with the Rules. The Rules should be read and considered in conjunction with the [Panel Operating Arrangements](#).

1.2 The Rules will normally be reviewed once every four years.

The Rules shall not be amended unless notification of a proposed amendment is received by the clerk not less than fifteen working days prior to a Panel meeting and a report on the implications of the amendment has been considered by the Panel. The amendment must be agreed by three quarters of the voting Membership of the Panel.

1.3 No amendment may be considered by the Panel which does not comply with the Act, relevant Regulations or statutory guidance. If there is any conflict in interpretation between these Rules and the Act or Regulations made under the Act, the Act and Regulations will prevail. The Monitoring Officer of the Host Authority will have the final ruling as to the interpretation of legal requirements, these Rules and the Panel Arrangements Document.

1.4 Where the Rules do not explicitly address an issue, the Standing Orders from the Host Authority will apply.

1.5 All Panel members will be subject to a Member Code of Conduct which for elected members will be those of their own Council. Independent Co-opted Members will be subject to the Code of Conduct of the Host Authority/Nolan Principles.

2. Chair and Vice Chair of the Panel

- 2.1** The Chair of the Panel will be elected at the Panel's AGM, normally in June of each year, or in an election year where there have been changes in political proportionality on component councils, at the first meeting of the Panel following the appointment of members to it by the Constituent Authorities. The Chair will be drawn from amongst the Elected or Independent Members sitting on the Panel and nominations will be sought in advance by the Clerk.
- 2.2** The Vice-Chair will be elected at the AGM and will be drawn from amongst the Elected or Independent Members sitting on the Panel and nominations will be sought in advance by the clerk.
- 2.3** In the event of the resignation of the Chair or removal of the Chair, a new Chair will be appointed at the next meeting and will be drawn from amongst the Elected or Independent Members sitting on the Panel. The same provision will apply to the post of Vice-Chair.
- 2.4** The Chair may be removed by agreement of a majority of the whole Membership of the Panel and in that event the Panel will appoint a replacement Chair.

3. Meetings of the Panel

- 3.1** There shall be a minimum of five ordinary meetings of the Panel held in public in each municipal year. In addition, Extraordinary Meetings may be called on an ad-hoc basis.
- 3.2** An Extraordinary Meeting may be called by the Chair or by four members of the Panel by giving notice in writing to the Host Authority lead officer. The Monitoring Officer of the Host Authority may also call an Extraordinary Meeting.
- 3.3** Any request for an Extraordinary Meeting must specify the particular item of business to be dealt with. The item of business must fall within the statutory functions of the Panel. After receipt of such a request, the Host Authority will arrange for the Extraordinary Meeting to take place within 35 days of the receipt of the request. No other business may be conducted at the meeting unless the Panel otherwise resolve.

- 3.4** In addition to formal meetings, appropriate training/briefing sessions will be arranged for Panel members as necessary.
- 3.5** The Panel shall decide the dates, times and venues for its meetings.
- 3.6** Ordinary meetings of the Panel will:-
- receive any declarations of interest from members
 - approve the minutes of the last meeting
 - consider reports from officers and Panel Members
- 3.7** All meetings of the Panel will be held in public unless otherwise specified elsewhere in these procedure rules, and unless the reports or recommendations within the reports are marked as “confidential” or “exempt” and “not for publication” as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

4. Attendance Register

- 4.1** Attendance will be recorded by the clerk at each meeting and a record of attendance across the year will be submitted to the last meeting of the year.

5. Minutes

- 5.1** The minutes of the business considered, and any decisions reached at each meeting of the Panel shall be published on the Panel website and a copy sent to each member with the summons to attend the next meeting of the Panel. Members will be kept informed on actions emerging from the minutes in the intervening period as appropriate by the Lead Officer.
- 5.2** No motion or discussion shall take place upon the minutes except upon their accuracy and any question of their accuracy shall be raised by motion. If no such question is raised, or if it is raised then as soon as it has been disposed of, the Chair shall sign the minutes.

6. Public Question Time

- 6.1** Members of the public who reside or work in the Avon and Somerset Force area may submit a statement or petition or ask a maximum of two questions at a Panel meeting. Statements and questions must relate to matters which fall within the Panel's statutory functions and responsibilities.
- 6.2** A maximum of 30 minutes will be allocated for this purpose at the start of each meeting of the Panel and each question or statement shall be allowed a maximum of 2 minutes. Statements and questions must be directed to the Chair. Members of the public may not take direct part in the debate unless invited by the Chair to do so.
- 6.3** Depending on the volume of Public Question Time items, the time allocated on the agenda for consideration may be varied by the Chair with the Panel's consent.
- 6.4** Statements must be received by the Host Authority no later than 12.00 noon on the working day prior to the Panel's meeting.
- 6.5** Questions and petitions must be received by the Host Authority no later than 3 clear working days before the meeting. This is to allow time for a response to be formulated. Questions will be limited to 2 per person/organisation. A response will be given either as a direct oral answer or a written reply after the meeting.
- 6.6** A questioner will be entitled to ask one supplementary question per question submitted after receiving a response.
- 6.7** Statements and questions that fall outside the Panel's statutory functions and responsibilities will not be taken and will be forwarded where appropriate to the Responsible Authority for response.

7. Quorum

- 7.1** A formal meeting of the Panel cannot take place unless at least one third of the Panel membership is present. Currently this means a minimum of 6 members.

8 Work Programme

- 8.1** The Panel will be responsible for setting its own work programme. In setting the work programme the Panel will take into account:-
- its functions and responsibilities as set out in the Act
 - the priorities defined by the Commissioner
 - the view of members
 - the resources available to support the delivery of the work programme.
- 8.2** The work programme must cover the functions described in the Terms of Reference for the Panel.

9. Sub-Committees and Task Groups

- 9.1** The Panel may set up a sub-committee or task group to undertake specified functions of the Panel. The Panel will appoint a Lead Panel Member of the sub-committee or task group who will report back to the Panel.

Sub-Committees

The role of a sub-committee is to carry out delegated Panel functions, excluding special functions which may not be discharged by a sub-committee (these are specified in the Act). Sub-committees may formally take decisions as delegated to them by the Panel.

A Complaints Sub-Committee established on 30th October 2014 carries out delegated functions of the Panel associated with the complaints handling process and the informal resolution of complaints. The sub-committee decides on the most suitable course of action to assist with the informal resolution of the complaint.

An individual Panel Lead Member leads and maintains an overview on complaints that are escalated to the Panel with advice, guidance and

support provided by the Lead Officer. This provides a filter for the less serious complaints and ensures that meetings of the sub-committee are only held when necessary. The complaints handling process and information supplied by the OPCC has been aligned for this purpose and reflects the decisions taken by the Panel following consideration of an officer report on 8th December 2019.

Task Groups

The role of a task group is to undertake time-limited investigations into particular issues, such as a scrutiny topic review. They are informal working groups, and as such have no decision-making power. Task Groups should report back upon the completion of their work with a report and recommendations to the Panel.

- 9.2** The work to be undertaken by a sub-committee or task group will be agreed by the Panel or if necessary, by the Chair. Membership will be confined to members of the Panel and if possible, should include at least one Independent Member. In determining membership, the Panel insofar as practicable, shall have regard to the skills and expertise of the Panel Members. Size will be determined on a case by case basis when the Panel agrees the scope of the work to be undertaken.

10 Agenda items

- 10.1** The Panel agenda will be issued to Panel Members at least 5 clear days before the meeting. It will also be published on the Host Authority 's website and the Panel's website.
- 10.2** Any member of the Panel shall be entitled to place items on Panel agendas which are relevant to the Panel's functions. Members' requests for matters to be included shall be submitted in writing/e-mail and received by the Host Authority at least 15 working days before the next ordinary meeting of the Panel, failing which they shall not be submitted to the meeting without the express direction of the Chair.
- 10.3** Items requested by members of the Panel should not have been considered previously by the Panel, in the last 6 months.

11. Conduct of Meetings

Motions

- 11.1** No motion or amendment other than a motion for the reception or adoption of a report, or for the adoption of a recommendation contained in a report, shall, after the proposer has spoken in support be discussed or proceeded with unless it has been seconded.

Motions during debate

- 11.2** When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except for the following:-
- a. to amend the motion
 - b. to postpone consideration of the motion
 - c. to adjourn the meeting
 - d. to adjourn the debate
 - e. to proceed to the next business
 - f. that the question be now put
 - g. that a member be not further heard
 - h. that a member do leave the meeting
 - i. that the subject of debate be referred back for further consideration
- 11.3** Where a motion is moved or seconded 'that the question be now put', 'that the debate now be adjourned', 'that the Panel proceed to the next business', or 'that the Panel be now adjourned', the Chair if, of the opinion, that the question before the meeting has been sufficiently discussed, will put that motion to the vote. If it is carried, the question before the meeting shall be put to the vote, or the subject of debate shall be deemed to be disposed of for the day or the meeting shall stand adjourned, as the case may be.
- 11.4** A second motion concerning the same question before the meeting 'that the question be now put', 'that the debate be now adjourned', 'that the Panel proceed to the next business' or 'that the Panel be now adjourned' shall not be made within a period of fifteen minutes unless it be made by the Chair.

Amendments

11.5 An amendment shall be relevant to the motion and shall be either:

- (a) to leave out words;
- (b) to leave out words and insert or add others;
- (C)to insert or add words;

11.6 But such omission or insertion of words shall not have the effect of introducing a new proposal into or of negating the motion before the Panel.

11.7 If an amendment is rejected, other amendments may be moved on the original motion. If an amendment is carried, the motion as amended shall take the place of the original motion and shall be the motion upon which any further amendment may be moved.

11.8 A further amendment shall not be moved until the Panel has disposed of every amendment previously moved.

Alterations or Withdrawal of Motion or Amendment

11.9 A proposer of a motion may, with the concurrence of the seconder and the consent of the Panel, alter the motion if the alteration is such that it could properly be effected by an amendment of the motion. A proposer of an amendment may, with the like concurrence and consent, alter the amendment if the amendment as altered could properly have been moved in that form as an amendment. The altered motion or amendment shall if required by the Chair be reduced in writing and handed to the Chair before the consent of the Panel to the alteration is sought.

11.10 A proposer of a motion or of an amendment may, with the concurrence of the seconder and the consent of the Panel, withdraw the motion or amendment which he or she has proposed, and no member shall speak upon it after the proposer has thus asked permission for its withdrawal, unless such permission shall have been refused.

11.11 The giving or refusal of consent by the Panel to the alteration or withdrawal of a motion or amendment shall be signified without discussion.

Speech by Secunder

- 11.12** A member, when seconding a motion or amendment, may if then declaring the intention to do so, reserve their speech until a later period of the debate.

Members to Address the Chair

- 11.13** A member when speaking shall address the Chair. If two or more members wish to speak, the Chair shall decide the order in which they shall speak.
- 11.14** Whenever the Chair intervenes during a debate, a member then speaking and the Panel shall be silent.

Rights of Speech

- 11.15** A member may speak on any motion or amendment or on any report at such time as it is actually before the Panel, but Members' remarks shall be strictly confined to the subject matter under discussion or to an explanation or a question of order.
- 11.16** Where a report contains a recommendation that has been moved, a member may speak for or against such recommendation or move either an amendment to such recommendation or that the paragraph be referred back for further consideration.
- 11.17** Where a report does not contain a recommendation, a member may move that the paragraph be referred back for further consideration provided that the decision, as reported in the paragraph, has not been finally implemented.

Length of Speeches

- 11.18** No speech shall exceed five minutes except by consent of the Panel.

Conduct of Members

- 11.19** A member shall not impute motives or use offensive expressions to or about any other member.
- 11.20** If any member, in the opinion of the Chair, persistently disregards the ruling of the Chair, or behaves irregularly, improperly, or offensively, or wilfully obstructs the business of the Panel, or uses tedious repetition or unbecoming language, the Chair or any other member may move "that

the member named be not further heard", and such motion if seconded shall be put and determined without discussion.

- 11.21** If the member named continues the misconduct after a motion under paragraph 11.21 has been carried, the Chair shall either:(a) move "that the member named do leave the meeting" (in which case the motion shall be put and determined without seconding or discussion); or (b) adjourn the meeting of the Panel for such a period as the Chair shall consider expedient.

Points of order and Explanations

- 11.22** A point of order shall relate only to an alleged breach of these Procedure Rules or statutory provision, and the member raising it shall specify the Procedure Rule or statutory provision and the way in which it has been broken. A personal explanation shall be confined to some material part of a former speech by the member which may appear to have been misunderstood in the present debate.
- 11.23** The ruling of the Chair on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall not be open to discussion.

Voting

- 11.24** Voting will be on a one member one vote basis, and any matter shall be decided by simple majority unless a two thirds majority is required by law. This is required in the case of a veto of the proposed precept or veto of the Chief Constable appointment.

In the case of an equal number of votes the Chair of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

General Disturbances

- 11.25** If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings at any meeting, the Chair shall give a warning. If the interruption continues the Chair shall order the person's removal from the room. In case of general disturbance the Chair shall adjourn the meeting until order has been restored.

12. Reports of the Panel

12.1 Where the Panel makes a report to the Commissioner, it will publish the report or recommendations on its website and send copies to each of the Authorities if this is considered appropriate by the Chair.

12.2 The Panel must by notice in writing, require the Commissioner as appropriate, within one month of the date on which it receives the report or recommendations to:-

- consider the report or recommendations
- respond to the Panel indicating what (if any) action the Commissioner proposes to take
- where the Panel has published the report or recommendations, publish the response
- where the Panel has provided a copy of the report or recommendations to a member, provide a copy of the response to the member.

12.3 The publication of reports or recommendations is subject to the exclusion of any exempt or confidential information as defined in the rules on access to information in the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

12.4 If the Panel cannot unanimously agree on one single final report to the Commissioner, then one separate (minority) report may be prepared and submitted for consideration along with the majority report.

13. The Commissioner and others giving account

13.1 The Panel may scrutinise and review decisions made or actions taken in connection with the Commissioner's role. As well as reviewing documentation, in fulfilling its scrutiny role it may require the Commissioner, and members of that commissioner's staff, to attend before the Panel (at reasonable notice) to answer any questions which appear to the Panel to be necessary in order to carry out its functions provided that such questions shall not:

- (a) Relate to advice provided to the Commissioner by his/her staff; or
- (b) In the view of the Commissioner
 - be against the interests of national safety
 - jeopardise the safety of any person; or,

- prejudice the prevention or detection of crime, the apprehension or prosecution of offenders, or the administration of justice; or
- be prohibited by any other enactment.

13.2 Where the Commissioner, or a member of the Commissioner's staff, is required to attend the Panel under this provision, the Chair will inform them in writing giving notice of the item, and where practical, 15 working days notice of the meeting. This will detail whether any supporting information is necessary for the Panel. Where it is necessary to provide such information, sufficient time will be given to allow the information to be provided.

13.3 The Commissioner will normally attend all meetings of the Panel in line with his or her responsibilities. Where, in exceptional circumstances, the Commissioner is unable to attend on the required date, an alternative date for attendance may be arranged following consultation with the Chair of the Panel.

13.4 If the Panel requires the Commissioner to attend a meeting, the Panel may (at reasonable notice) request the Chief Constable or the Chief Executive (as appropriate) to attend on the same occasion to answer any questions which appears to the Panel to be necessary in order for it to carry out its functions.

14. Attendance by others

14.1 The Panel may invite people other than those referred to above to address it, discuss issues of local concern and/or answer questions. It may for example, wish to hear from residents, experts, stakeholders, councillors who are not members of the Panel and officers in other parts of the public sector and may invite such people to attend.

15. Senior Appointments

15.1. The Panel has powers to review the Commissioner's proposed appointments of Chief Constable, Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer and Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner(DPCC). The Panel is required to hold public Confirmatory Hearings for these posts.

15.2 Any such hearing will be held at the next available meeting of the Panel or at an Extraordinary Meeting if timescales require it.

- 15.3** With regards to the appointment of the Chief Constable, the Panel is required to hold a hearing within the period of three weeks from the day on which the Panel receives notification on the proposed appointment from the Commissioner.
- 15.4** Confirmatory hearings will be held in public, where the candidate is requested to appear for the purpose of answering questions relating to the appointment.
- 15.5** Following this hearing, the Panel is required to review the proposed appointment and make a report to the Commissioner on the appointment.
- 15.6** For a confirmatory hearing for the proposed appointment of the Chief Constable, in addition to the requirement to review and report, the Panel is required to make a recommendation on the appointment and has the power to veto the appointment.
- 15.7** Having considered the appointment of a Chief Constable, the Panel will be asked to either:
- a) support the appointment without qualification or comment;
 - b) support the appointment with associated recommendations, or
 - c) veto the appointment of the Chief Constable (*a two thirds majority of the full membership is required, not two thirds of those members present*).
- 15.8** If the Panel vetoes the appointment of the candidate, the report to the Commissioner must confirm the veto and the reasons for it.

Appointment of an Acting Commissioner

- 15.9** In accordance with Section 62 of the Act, the Panel must appoint a person to act as Commissioner if:
- a) no person holds the office of Commissioner
 - b) the Commissioner is incapacitated, or
 - c) the Commissioner is suspended.

The Panel has an agreed [Mid Term Vacancy Protocol](#)

15.10 The Panel may appoint a person as Acting Commissioner only if the person is a member of the Commissioner's staff at the time of the appointment. The Policing and Crime Act 2017 (Part 5) has amended the primary legislation and extends the term of office of DPCCs so that in the event of a PCC vacancy occurring (through death or resignation), the DPCC term no longer ends when the former PCC ceases to hold office. This enables a DPCC to be appointed by the Panel as the Acting PCC pending the outcome of a by-election.

15.11 In appointing a person as Acting Commissioner in a case where the Commissioner is incapacitated, the Panel must have regard to any representations made by the Commissioner in relation to the appointment.

15.12 The appointment of an Acting Commissioner ceases to have effect upon the occurrence of the earliest of these events:

- a) the election of a person as Commissioner;
- b) the termination of the appointment by the Panel or the resignation of the Acting Commissioner;
- c) if the Commissioner ceases to be incapacitated; or
- d) in a case where the Acting Commissioner is appointed because the Commissioner is suspended, the Commissioner ceasing to be suspended.

Proposed Precept

15.13 The Commissioner will notify the Panel of the precept which the Commissioner is proposing to issue for the financial year. The Panel must review the proposed precept and make a report including recommendations.

15.14 Having considered the precept, the Panel will either:

- a) support the precept without qualification or comment;
- b) support the precept and make recommendations, or
- c) veto the proposed precept (by the required majority of at least two thirds of the persons who are members of the Panel at the time when the decision is made).

15.15 If the Panel vetoes the proposed precept, the report to the Commissioner must confirm the veto and the reasons for it. The Panel will require a response to the report and any such recommendations.

Complaints

15.16 The Panel is responsible for handling non-criminal complaints against the Commissioner and criminal complaints and conduct matters that are referred back to the Panel by the Independent Office for Police Conduct. Arrangements for the Panel's role in complaints handling are set out in the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012, accompanying Home Office guidance and the Panel's related Complaints Protocol.

15.17 Serious complaints which involve allegations against the Commissioner which may amount to a criminal offence must be referred by the Panel to the Independent Office for Police Conduct.

15.18 Non-criminal complaints in relation to the Commissioner or any Acting Commissioner will be dealt with under the Panel's complaints procedure and in accordance with the informal resolution process set out in the Regulations and guidance.

15.19 A Panel may suspend the Commissioner if it appears to the Panel that:-

- a) the Commissioner has been charged in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man with an offence; and
- b) the offence is one which carries a maximum term of imprisonment exceeding two years.

15.20 The suspension of the Commissioner ceases to have effect upon the occurrence of the earliest of these events:-

- a) the charge(s) being dropped;
- b) the Commissioner being acquitted of the offence;
- c) the Commissioner being convicted of the offence but not being disqualified under Section 66 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act by virtue of the conviction; or
- d) the termination of the suspension by the Panel.

- 15.21** In this section references to an offence which carries a maximum term of imprisonment exceeding two years are references to:
- a) an offence which carries such a maximum term in the case of a person who has attained the age of 18 years, or
 - b) an offence for which, in the case of such a person, the sentence is fixed by law as life imprisonment.

Annual Report of the Commissioner

- 15.22** The Commissioner must produce an Annual Report about the exercise of his/her functions in the last financial year and progress in meeting Police and crime objectives in the year. The report must be submitted to the Panel for consideration.
- 15.23** The Panel must comment upon the Annual Report of the Commissioner, and for that purpose must:
- a) arrange for a public meeting of the Panel to be held as soon as practicable after the Panel receives the Annual Report;
 - b) require the Commissioner to attend the meeting to present the Annual Report and answer such questions about the Annual Report as Panel Members think appropriate; and
 - c) make a report or recommendations on the Annual Report to the Commissioner

Police and Crime Plan

- 15.24** The Panel is a statutory consultee on the development of the Police and Crime Plan and will receive all versions or variations of the plan.
- 15.25** The Panel must:
- a) hold a public meeting to review the draft Police and Crime Plan (or a variation to it); and
 - b) report or make recommendations on the draft Plan which the Commissioner must take into account.

Suspension and Removal of the Chief Constable

- 15.26** The Panel will receive notification if the Commissioner suspends the Chief Constable.
- 15.27** The Commissioner must also notify the Panel in writing of the proposal to call upon the Chief Constable to retire or resign together with a copy of the reasons given to the Chief Constable in relation to that proposal.
- 15.28** The Panel may seek the views of Chief Inspector of Constabulary in writing on the Commissioner's proposal to call on Chief Constable to resign.
- 15.29** The Commissioner must provide the Panel with a copy of any representations from the Chief Constable about the proposal to call for the resignation or retirement.
- 15.30** The Commissioner must have regard to the views of Chief Inspector of Constabulary and if still proposing to call upon the Chief Constable to resign, the Commissioner must notify the Panel accordingly (the 'further notification').
- 15.31** The Panel must make a recommendation as to whether the Commissioner should call for the Chief Constable to resign (and give notification of it to the Commissioner within 6 weeks of receiving notification under paragraph 14(2) of Schedule 8) (Schedule 8, paragraphs 15(2) and (3)). Before making any recommendation, the Panel may consult the Chief Inspector of Constabulary, and must hold a scrutiny meeting.
- 15.32** The scrutiny hearing which must be held by the Panel is a Panel meeting in private to which the Commissioner and the Chief Constable are entitled to attend to make representations in relation to the proposal to call upon the Chief Constable to retire or resign.
- 15.33** The Commissioner must consider the Panel's recommendation, and accept or reject it (Schedule 8, paragraph 16(1)). The Commissioner must notify the Panel of her decision.
- 15.34** The Panel must publish its recommendation in accordance with Schedule 8, paragraph 15(5).
- 15.35** The Commissioner may not call upon the Chief Constable to retire or resign until the end of the scrutiny process which will occur:

- (a) at the end of six weeks from the Panel having received notification, if the Panel has not by then given the Commissioner a recommendation on the proposal; or
- (b) the Commissioner notifies the Panel of a decision about whether the Panel's recommendations in relation to resignation or retirement is accepted.

15.36 In calculating the six week period, the post-election period is ignored.

May 2023 amends

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Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel

28th September 2023

Panel Annual Report 2022/23

1. Summary

Attached is a draft of the Panel's Annual Report 2022/23.

In the interests of the Panel's budget, a decision was taken not to commission the corporate design team to produce a format for the report.

One aim of the Annual Report is to inform the public of the Panel's role and responsibilities, and the Panel should therefore consider if the draft is fit for purpose in this respect.

Obvious distribution includes local authority websites, newsletters and the Panel website.

2. Recommendation

Panel members are invited to review the draft and highlight any amendments or additions they wish to make to the content.

Patricia Jones

Lead Officer

Patricia.Jones@somerset.gov.uk

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Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel
Hosted by Somerset Council Democratic Services



Annual Report

April 2022–
March 2023

*Providing effective Scrutiny and Support to the
Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner*



Table of Contents

| | Page |
|---|------|
| Members of the Panel _____ | 3 |
| Chair’s Introduction _____ | 4 |
| Roles and Responsibilities _____ | 6 |
| Key Activities _____ | 8 |
| Proactive Scrutiny/Inquiry Day _____ | 11 |
| Reflections of Panel Members _____ | 15 |
| Challenges ahead and looking to the future _____ | 19 |

Members of the Panel

Each of the Local Authorities in the Avon and Somerset Police area must be represented on the Panel by at least one elected councillor member. It is the responsibility of each authority to ensure that the member appointed has the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience for their role on the Panel. The overall composition of all Police and Crime Panels should form a “balanced appointment” objective which takes account of, as far as is practical, both political and geographical proportionality. Reaching the balanced appointment objective is a collective responsibility of the component authorities and the Panel itself.

In 2022/23 Somerset County Council and the Somerset District Councils each had 1 seat. The former Avon Unitary Councils (Bristol, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire and Bath and North East Somerset) were allocated 2 seats. Bristol was allocated an additional third seat in 2012 based on the city’s population size and comparatively high crime levels.

They are joined by three Independent Co-opted Members, recruited through a competitive selection process, who have the same voting rights as the Local Authority Panel Members. In total there were 16 Panel Members in 2021/22:-

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Bath and North East Somerset | Cllrs Alastair Singleton and Andy Wait |
| Bristol City Council | Cllrs Asher Craig, Jonathan Hucker and Lisa Stone |
| Mendip District Council | Vacancy |
| North Somerset Council | Cllrs Richard Westwood (Vice-Chair) and Peter Crew |
| Sedgemoor District Council | Cllr Janet Keen |
| Somerset County Council | Cllr Heather Shearer (Chair) |
| Somerset West and Taunton | Cllr Chris Booth |
| South Gloucestershire Council | Cllrs Franklin Owusu-Antwi and Patricia Trull |
| South Somerset District | Cllr Nicola Clark |
| Independent Member | Richard Brown |
| Independent Member | Julie Knight |
| Independent Member | Gary Davies |

Contact the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel:-

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 Governance Specialist
 County Hall, Taunton, TA1 4DY
 Email: Patricia.Jones@somerset.gov.uk

Chair's Introduction

I am pleased to introduce the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel's Annual Report for 2022/23 and reflect on the Panel's challenges and achievements over the last year. Outside of the four-yearly election cycle, the Panel continues to provide the key scrutiny and accountability mechanism for the decisions and activities undertaken by the Police and Crime Commissioner.



The challenges facing the Police are as multi-faceted and complex as ever, and the national picture, particularly the elements oozing out of London, do not make matters any easier. Put simply, the service is facing rising demand from the public and it is a challenge to keep up. A variety of factors are at play including limited resources, an inexperienced workforce and a lack of clarity about the role of the Police in today's society. The number of 999 callers requesting support better delivered by other agencies is an enduring problem.

The Public must have confidence in the Police service, it is pivotal to the Policing model in this country which relies on the public's consent and trust. In recent years there has been a marked decline in public confidence and satisfaction in Policing. The Panel welcomed the Commissioner's recognition in his Police and Crime Plan that there are people and communities in Avon and Somerset who have lost confidence in the Police service and that this needs to change.

Crime recording requires improvement to ensure victims receive an appropriate level of service in areas including rape, vulnerable victims and anti-social behaviour. Numerous surveys have demonstrated that almost half of women have lost trust in the Police and the courts system in the wake of high-profile examples of Police misconduct and following their experience as a victim of violence.

The Constabulary also requires improvement when responding to the public. These present challenges for the Commissioner whose job it is to provide an effective and efficient Police service and hold the Chief Constable to account. It is important for the public to see that there is a clear pathway for overcoming these challenges in the years to come and that is why the role of the Commissioner and the scrutiny carried out by the Panel is so important.

Our job is to support and scrutinise the Commissioner. In 2022/23 outside of our core

responsibilities, the Panel's proactive scrutiny included Identifying Disproportionality in the Criminal Justice System, Rural Crime, an Inquiry Day on the OPCC role in Commissioning and Partnerships, Green Strategy and Integrated Offender Management. It was a robust work programme and I am pleased with our contribution to the accountability mechanism for strategic Policing.

What remains very clear to the Panel from their work carried out throughout the year is that Police officers and support staff are very much in the front line and continue to carry out their duties to the best of their abilities for residents across Avon and Somerset.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "H Shearer".

Heather Shearer, Chair.

Roles and Responsibilities

In each Police area, there is an elected Police and Crime Commissioner. The role of the Commissioner is to be the voice of the public and to hold the Chief Constable to account. The Commissioner is responsible for setting the strategic objectives of the Constabulary and deciding how funding for local policing and crime reduction activity is allocated. Mark Shelford was elected on 6th May 2021. It is worthy of note that this term of office will run for three years rather than the usual four year term due to the postponement of the PCC election in May 2020. The next election takes place on 4th May 2024.

The purpose of the Police and Crime Panel is to support and challenge the Commissioner's work and the decisions he takes. The Panel is made up of Councillors from the 5 Local Authorities in the force area and 3 Independent Panel Members who bring a variety of skills and experience to the role. Somerset County Council currently acts as the Host Authority for the Panel and is responsible for its administrative and officer support arrangements.

The Commissioner's plans and objectives are set out in a document called the Police and Crime Plan. This is the most important document any Police and Crime Commissioner will produce during their term of office. The Commissioner is required by law to consult the Panel on the plan and other duties connected to his role. A summary of the Panel's core responsibilities is set out below :-

- Review the objectives set out in the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan and monitor performance against his priorities
- Scrutinise and vote on the Commissioner's proposed Council Tax Precept
- Hold a Confirmatory Hearing for the Commissioner's proposed appointment of a Chief Constable and other senior officers. (The Panel has the ability to veto the Chief Constable appointment if this is considered necessary).
- Resolve complaints that relate to the Commissioner's conduct
- Scrutinise decisions the Commissioner makes in connection with the

discharge of his functions and make reports and recommendations to the Commissioner in relation to the discharge of those functions.

The Panel's primary function is to support and scrutinise the Commissioner, but it is important to remember that the Panel does not hold the Chief Constable to account. If the Panel has a particular issue of concern, for example an increase in violent crime or a perceived deterioration in neighbourhood safety, the Panel's role is to establish how the Commissioner is addressing this at a strategic level for the benefit of the public. In turn, the Chief Constable, Sarah Crew, has responsibility for implementation of the Police and Crime Plan and for day to day operational matters in our communities. She is accountable to the Commissioner.

In carrying out the above duties, it is essential for the Panel to stay well informed on policy and issues affecting Policing and the Panel has dedicated officer support and appropriate developmental training to assist with this.

Key Activities

Precept Proposal

One of the Panel's core duties is to annually scrutinise the Commissioner's proposed Council Tax Precept - the money collected from council tax specifically for Policing. As representatives of the tax payers of Avon and Somerset, the Panel's focus must be value for money that will deliver outstanding performance whilst also recognising the continuing financial pressures faced by our residents following years of austerity and the significant impact of the pandemic.

The Government's continued use of an inequitable funding formula disadvantages this Police area creating an on-going financial dilemma, and the increased performance expectations set out by the Home Office require the Commissioner and Chief Constable to translate often hastily issued government decrees into workable everyday policing.

An inexperienced and growing workforce does not entirely bridge the gap between demand and resources and yet service delivery is not only required to be maintained, but improved upon in terms of operational capacity and capability.

When considering the Commissioner's Precept proposal, the Panel must be satisfied that the increase will deliver an efficient and effective Policing service. As in previous years, we were required to reconcile the effect of the increase against the hardship faced by the vulnerable in our communities, and balance this against the increasingly complex demands of modern policing and the funding needed to deliver this.

It remains a time of great uncertainty, but the Panel was ultimately satisfied that a Precept increase was justifiable at this time and should be supported. The Panel's formal review of the proposal can be found here [Precept Review Report](#).

In 2023/24, to retain oversight and ensure that Panel Members make a tangible, practical contribution to the budget and Precept-setting processes, the Panel will form a Budget Task Group. This aligns with the Panel's proposal following the last Precept to develop a mechanism that will enable members to make an assessment throughout the year of the effectiveness of the Precept investment.

Recruitment and Retention

The Panel represents the residents of Avon and Somerset and understands that all communities want a low crime environment where people can feel safe and secure.

Recruitment falls under the Commissioner's Priority 3 – Leading the Police to be efficient

and effective. The Panel continues to retain oversight of Police officer and PCSO numbers by way of a timeline report to each of our meetings on recruitment progress and levels achieved. At the end of 2022/23, there were 3,393 officers in post and 275 more officers than at the end of the previous year. Running parallel to officer uplift, we note the plans to rebuild investigations, develop leaders and lead a cultural that will instill confidence in our communities.

Given the need for training and development, the Panel understands that the full benefits from the uplift in staff will not be immediately realised and is reassured to hear that officer uplift will continue throughout 2023/24.

Complaints

The Panel is required to resolve complaints from the public that relate to the Commissioner's personal conduct. The Panel delegates responsibility for the initial handling and recording functions to the Monitoring Officer in the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). The Panel remains the final arbiter at all times with an individual Panel Member taking the lead on complaints and advice, guidance and support provided by the Panel's Lead Officer. More serious complaints are referred and managed through the Panels Complaints sub-committee . The lead member provides a filter for the less serious complaints and ensures that meetings of the complaints sub-committee are only held when necessary. The complaints handling process and background information the Panel requires from the OPCC, has been aligned for this purpose for a number of years.

In practical terms, the Panel's objectives are clear and that is to ensure recording obligations are adhered to, delays avoided and appropriate resolutions to complaints reached as soon as possible.

A joint Panel and OPCC complaints process briefing was held in November 2022 to ensure that all Panel members were sighted on the day to day activities of the handling process.

A copy of the Panel's Complaints Protocol can be found here [Complaints Protocol](#)

Performance Monitoring

National Crime and Policing Measures - Police forces are now ranked in league tables according to their success in cutting serious crime. Forces are now measured according to their effectiveness in combatting six types of crime including homicide, serious violence, the supply of drugs, Neighbourhood crime, cyber crime and improving satisfaction for victims.

This links to the Specified Information Order which places a duty on PCCs to publish certain information within specified timeframes, to ensure the public have the information they need to hold their Commissioner to account at the ballot box. The Home Office now requires PCCs to provide Panels with a narrative on force performance against the Government's crime measures mentioned above. The Panel was helpfully consulted by the OPCC on the format for the presentation of the performance data and has been receiving reports since December 2021.

New Governance Arrangements – in May 2022, the Commissioner introduced new governance arrangements which enables the Panel and the public to see him publicly holding the Chief Constable to account to increase public confidence and transparency. This takes place in the form of a Performance and Accountability Board which a public meeting held via Facebook. The Panel welcomes the introduction of a public meeting and looks forward to giving the Commissioner feedback on the format as this year progresses.

Proactive Scrutiny

This work tends to take place outside of the core meeting cycle and provides opportunity for greater insight and inform the broader role of a Panel Member. It can also enable Members to draw on their knowledge and expertise and contribute to the work of the Commissioner in key areas of business.

Identifying Disproportionality in the Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice System

In response to the Government's Lammy Review in 2017 which looked at discrimination within Policing and the Criminal Justice system in the UK, a local Lammy Review Sub-Group was set up in 2018 to address disparity in Avon and Somerset.

The Panel requested an update on this review that aimed to bring together regional Criminal Justice Partners to proactively address issues of disproportionality and produce a data picture of the journey of Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities through the Criminal Justice System. Based on the findings and recommendations of the emerging report [Identifying Disproportionality in the Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice System](#), we learnt that leaders across Avon and Somerset had formed a new Tackling Disproportionality Action Group for the purposes of creating a multi-agency programme to tackle disproportionality.

The Commissioner gave us assurances that this piece of work was a catalyst for change and that he aimed to effect change by ensuring the recommendations were implemented, and efforts thus far become everyday business. As part of the strategy, Chief Constable Sarah Crew is leading a strategy sub-group of the Criminal Justice Board to ensure the action plan remains on track.

In the context of producing a data picture of the journey of BAME people through the Criminal Justice System, the Panel suggested that collaboration and benchmarking of current data across partner agencies is critical. In response, we heard that obtaining a complete data picture was a current focus in proactively tackling disparity in outcomes for BAME people and in monitoring success. Moving beyond statistical data is of course important and Panel Members feel that it is possible to glean equally important insights and feedback from qualitative data around lived experiences and everyday realities - for example Stop and search.

It is our view that allowing minority communities access to power and wider employment spaces is integral to progress.

The Panel sought further information around racial disparity in sentencing and asked if this was connected in any way to the quality of legal representation. This data was not available, however we understood that Youth Offending Team (YOT) reports almost certainly impacted sentencing.

This prompted a discussion around the reduction in YOT funding and whether there was a correlation between this and the ability of YOTs to provide sentencing reports and

support offenders to move away from the crime. The Panel was advised that increased funding was unlikely to make a difference as the focus was not on the right issues- the animosity and mistrust prevalent amongst Black boys towards the Police was based primarily on their personal experiences and largely their experience of stop and search.

Black communities are described as over-policed and under-protected and it is important to address the policy around stop and search in the context of drug searches. The importance of Leadership and intelligence led Policing in achieving the right tactical outcomes should not be under-estimated and we therefore posed the question - how can the leadership be influenced to bring about positive change?

The Commissioner provided assurances that the Chief Constable was creating the right values and culture for the force by ensuring their agreed strategy and principles were hardwired into the leadership. A new operational Leadership Programme would prepare officers before they were promoted into first line manager roles.

The Panel suggested it would be useful to establish if ethnicity factored in the low literacy abilities evident amongst prisoners and we learnt that there was evidence of this. High school exclusion rates of Black boys and girls are frequently found to be unwarranted, creating disaffection with the education system and learning. This accentuates the importance of getting upstream, before someone is incarcerated.

Accessing education data is an historic challenge. The data is available but is not being shared consistently or effectively and government intervention is likely required to move this on. Evidently, academies in the same trust experience issues around information sharing.

The purpose of sharing data is not to expose or identify racism but about ensuring that children have the same opportunities and better outcomes in the future. It is very disappointing if the absence of local accountability is hampering progress.

Green Strategy/Sustainability Presentation

All councils in the force area have declared a climate emergency and in line with ever greater public awareness of environmental issues and potential impact on the environment, the carbon footprint of the force must be regarded a key issue.

In March 2022, the Commissioner gave assurances that every opportunity to reduce the environmental impact of the service and promote sustainability in its widest sense, was being taken through the estate's strategy, procurement decisions, commissioned

services, community engagement and partnership working. Underpinning it all, is the aim to ensure an efficient and effective policing service.

Later in the year, the Commissioner facilitated a presentation for the Panel from the Constabulary's Sustainability lead which enabled the Panel to discuss the approach to date and plans for the future. Further information can be found here [Green Strategy~Sustainability Presentation](#)

Integrated Offender Management

The Panel requested a follow up report on Integrated Offender Management (IOM), a strategy designed to bring a cross-agency response to crime and reoffending threats faced by local communities. Its aim is for the Police and the Probation Service to prioritise and manage the most prolific and problematic offenders with the support of other partner agencies through the commissioning of services (including Local Authorities).

We were keen to see if progress had been made, particularly in relation to referral pathways. The Panel's scrutiny of IOM can be found here [Integrated Offender Management](#).

Rural Crime

Historically, Panel Members representing rural areas were keen to know more about the strategy to tackle rural crime and this report was requested as an assurance piece by the Panel.

To improve engagement with rural areas, the Panel recommended following up on surveys one month later to establish how communications from the Police and crime prevention advice has made any material difference. The hope is that this will demonstrate victim care and establish if the advice has helped in preventing victims being repeatedly targeted.

The Panel highlighted the importance of Police attendance at Parish and Town Council Meetings. The aspiration to improve the level of service and communication is welcomed and we hope the new Local Community Network has the desired effect of developing a network of communications with rural communities across the whole of Avon and Somerset in a manner which meets the needs of the communities.

We drew attention to social deprivation in rural areas and the connection between this and crimes against the person. The Commissioner agreed that rural deprivation should

be a focus for politicians and weight brought to bear on crimes that are hidden/unseen. The levels of domestic abuse are extremely high in both urban and rural areas and needed to be addressed by enforcement, charities and education.

The Panel discussed the criminalisation of hunting and lack of Police enforcement and suggested the Police needed to do more given offences were being committed. The Commissioner assured the Panel that in accordance with strategic policy, enforcement action will be taken against all illegal hunting if it is reported.

Reflections of Panel Members

Jonathan Hucker (Bristol City Council)



Having been elected to Bristol City Council in May 2021, my first two years as a representative on the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel has been an interesting and enlightening experience. The power of the Panel is limited to a few specific areas. We are invited to comment on the PCC's draft

Police and Crime Plan and have an opportunity to provide input to it before it is finalised. We confirm senior appointments within the OPCC and have a right of veto over the appointment of the Chief Constable.

We are also consulted on the annual Police precept and have a right to veto the PCC's proposal. The first consultation on the Budget in November 2022 was led by the OPCC Chief Finance Officer in the form of a presentation followed by member questions. This was followed by scrutiny of the Budget and Draft Medium Term Financial Plan in December 2022. The formal review and approval of the Budget and precept proposal took place in February 2023. The Panel has agreed to set up a Budget Task Group to provide close scrutiny of emerging financial results to inform our deliberations on the Budget and precept setting process for 2024/25.

Although the Panel's powers are limited and specific, the Panel does carry influence beyond those powers. In overseeing the work of the PCC, the collective opinion of the Panel does carry weight and is considered by the PCC. Until recently the PCC and the Panel had a constructive and mutually respectful relationship.

Panel membership consists of people from across Avon and Somerset (i.e. the historic County of Somerset, plus South Gloucestershire), which is a large and diverse area. Both urban and rural communities are represented. Panel membership consists of elected Councillors from each local authority, together with independent members. The composition of the Councillor membership is based on political proportionality and deliberations of the Panel are usually non-partisan and mutually respectful. At the time of writing there is a vacancy for a Green Party representative from the City of Bristol.

Panel meetings often include briefings on a variety of relevant topics, including operational matters by senior officers. As an elected Councillor, I have found that these briefings have provided me with a valuable insight into how our communities are policed. This has strengthened the relationship I have with the neighbourhood police team in my ward, and I continue to meet and work with them on emerging issues. I have communicated the messages I have received from these meetings to my constituents. I believe my membership of the Panel has helped me to serve my constituents more effectively.

The Panel has had another very busy year. We received the results of the latest assessment by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS). The results presented a mixed picture, with the force requiring improvement in responding to the public, investigating crime, managing offenders and crime recording. There were no areas for which an inadequate rating was given. The good news is that the force was rated as outstanding in engaging and treating the public with fairness and respect. It is difficult to reconcile this finding with the declaration by the PCC that the Avon and Somerset force is institutionally racist. Avon and Somerset are the only force in England and Wales to have made such a declaration. This came as a surprise to me, especially as in the two years that I have been on the Panel the PCC had never once indicated that this was an issue. I have asked him to provide the evidence for this, but so far I have not received a response with any meaningful content.

Cllrs Alastair Singleton and Andy Wait (Bath and North East Somerset)

The last year has been a mixture of change and the bedding in of the changes made in the previous twelve months. Our last report recorded both the election of Mark Shelford to the role of Police and Crime Commissioner (PPC) and also a new Chief Constable in Sarah Crew. Both have now had time to appreciate the tasks they have taken on. To that end, the PPC has appointed a Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, Claire Hiscott. Claire has little to do with the Panel, but is able to take some of the workload from the PCC, so giving him more time for strategic thinking. Sarah is a most caring Police officer, with her emphasis on victim support as well as being a nationally recognised authority on rape crime. She is also brave, making a public statement a few months ago that Avon and Somerset Police was institutionally racist. Quite a comment, and one that requires swift action in order to regain public support as this is not where we want to be.

The major change for the Panel was caused by the local elections in May when some members chose to stand down. This is particularly sad in B&NES as Alastair Singleton did not seek re-election and has been replaced by Ann Morgan. Although all those who left the Panel served with distinction and many for several years, a name that stands out from the list of absentees is Richard Westwood who was the Deputy Chair of the Panel in the last term. He always spoke candidly and was very skilful at the task of scrutiny. He will be sorely missed by the new Panel.

One of our great dilemmas is deciding which matters are operational – and therefore beyond our remit - and what is strategic – which is not. Our job is to scrutinise the work of the PPC. His job, in turn, is to scrutinise Avon and Somerset Police. In many of our meetings, it is difficult to be precise as to when strategy ends, and operational matters begin. A good example of this difficulty is scrutiny of the Constabulary's accounts. It could be argued that this is operational and nothing to do with the Panel. However, one of the main powers is retain oversight of the overall draft Policing budget and its proposed allocation and to consider any increase in the Policing Precept. It is clear that in order to do that, the Panel needs access to accurate financial information throughout the year.

Fortunately, the Panel is blessed with some members who can add up and take away, so we have formed a new Task Group whose job is to scrutinise the Constabulary accounts of Avon and Somerset Police across the year, so that when the PCC asks for a rise in the percept - which they have done every year since the PCC role was created - the Panel will be in a far better position to agree with or challenge the increase.

The roles of the Police and Crime Panel, the Police service and the PCC are evolving. Our task is to seek clarity and transparency so that the general public can have confidence in all three parts.

Julie Knight (Independent Member)

I am one of 3 non-political independent members and I'm now entering my third year as the recently elected Vice Chair. 2021/22 was a busy year for the Panel as the Commissioner developed his Police and Crime Plan that we

reviewed, and he appointed to several senior positions. This included the Chief Constable, Chief Executive Officer, Chief Finance Officer and Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner and these necessitated public Confirmation hearings by the Panel. With the Plan and key posts established for 2022/23, I was particularly interested to see progress on the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan and the Commissioners vision of putting the emphasis back on preventing crime.

The Plan is clear that 'prevention work is one of the main functions of Neighbourhood Policing'. I have asked how Neighbourhood Policing is fulfilling this function when officers are seemingly abstracted for extended periods due to high demand over the summer period. We're due to receive a report to the Panel in September's meeting that I'm keen to see.

Throughout the year, the Commissioner has updated us on progress and challenges. The new governance structure to deliver the recommendations from the 'Identifying Disproportionality in the Criminal Justice System' report seems impressive. It really needed to be, especially following the Chief Constable's recent declaration that Avon and Somerset Police is institutionally racist in accordance with Baroness Casey's Review criteria. The Identifying Disproportionality report was commissioned in 2018 and whilst I felt that advancement seemed slow to establish, I hope that the necessary improvements are progressed with pace to start creating a fairer system for all.

I was delighted to hear that much more would be done to feedback to communities about what the Police is doing to tackle issues in their neighbourhood as this has an impact on public confidence. When asked what the biggest challenge for policing is during my interview for a place on the Panel back in 2021, I said confidence in policing. Last November, Councillor Nicola Clark and I took part in the annual national conference for Police and Crime Panel members. It focused on the growing concerns about confidence in policing following several high profiles cases with some very insightful presentations. A clear message was one that the police can only do their job effectively if they have the trust and confidence of the public. Rightly, it's reflected in the Commissioners foreword in his Plan, stating that 'Legitimacy and confidence are the backbone of our model of policing by consent, without which it does not work.' I wholeheartedly agree.

The seemingly steep decline in public confidence over the past 2 years as measured by the Constabulary and reported in March's Panel meeting is deeply concerning. Whilst the Commissioner assures that the whole Police and Crime Plan is about raising confidence, I believe that the plan is very broad and covers most aspects of policing so

it's all a priority. When there are so many priorities, what is a priority? Given that backdrop, the Panel is setting up a Public Confidence Sub Committee and I look forward to being involved. This will give us the opportunity to specifically focus on key areas as a part of our support and challenge function to the Commissioner.

The Panel's membership had been fairly consistent since I joined. This new year sees 7 new members, all councillors from different areas so we can welcome a wealth of different expertise and special interests as we move forward.

Challenges ahead and looking to the future

Work Programme

As the Commissioner's primary "checks and balance" in between elections, the Panel is aware of its important role in challenging and supporting the Commissioner on your behalf. Our shared objective for the future is to influence and impact positively on the decisions that matter.

The Panel has a work programme that is reviewed every 4-6 weeks as part of the agenda planning process with the Commissioner. As would be expected, the work programme covers the statutory responsibilities of the Panel, alongside other key issues which the Panel wishes to scrutinise. The Chief Constable attends a Panel meeting at least once each year to provide an update on key issues.

Below are some of the work areas the Panel will be reviewing as part of our Work Programme for 2023/24:-

- review of the Commissioner’s Annual Report
- scrutiny of meaningful performance reports and data
- presentation on Crime Prevention and progress against the Police and Crime Plan
- monitoring of the strategy to recruit, train, retain and lead a workforce which reflects the communities it serves
- consideration of a formal report on the Estates Strategy
- scrutiny of the Commissioner’s Precept proposal and oversight of the draft Policing budget and its proposed allocation
- to retain oversight and ensure that Panel Members make a tangible, practical contribution to the budget and Precept-setting processes, the Panel will form a Budget Task Group. This aligns with the Panel’s proposal following the last Precept to develop a mechanism that will enable members to make an assessment throughout the year of the effectiveness of the Precept investment.

Public Confidence

Public confidence has been on a downward trend in recent years. Trust is not only based on the competence of the Police in tackling different crimes, but also on how the public perceive that they are treated by the Police.

The Chief Constable’s recent announcement that the force is institutionally racist undoubtedly reached a variety of audiences. The message is likely to be welcomed by some and give others cause for concern. The Commissioner has assured the Panel that he fully supports the Chief Constable and has confidence in her leadership and ability to change the culture, and we understand that a culture change is not something that happens overnight.

The Panel recommends that the public will benefit from positive proactive publicity to help with their understanding of the strategy and sensitivities behind the approach of the Commissioner and the Chief Constable. It is important for the public to see that there is a clear pathway for overcoming these challenges in the years to come.

To get some insight into the Commissioner’s strategic understanding of serious violence across Avon and Somerset in the context of Domestic Abuse and Rape and Serious Sexual Offences, the Panel held an Inquiry Day last year. This year we will continue to maintain oversight of performance. We welcome the specialism afforded by Operation

Bluestone and its specially trained officers, however a positive outcome increase from 4.7% to 8% does not represent significant progress and we will continue to monitor performance and outcomes of the Bluestone approach.

In January 2023, the Home Office announced that all Police forces must check their workforce against national databases to mitigate against the risk of important information on an individual being missed on their employment. We will continue to seek assurances from the Commissioner that he is satisfied that Avon and Somerset is compliant with this requirement and has appropriate vetting mechanisms in place that the public can have confidence in.

The Panel will form a Public Confidence Sub-Committee in 23/24 to support and challenge the Commissioner as he responds to the decline in public confidence and the areas for improvement emerging from the last inspection of the force by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services. His strategy to proactively improve public confidence, maintain the reputation of the force and importantly, to communicate this to the public, is key in our opinion.

Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel 28th September 2023

Title of Report: Panel Funding and Expenditure Report

RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is invited to consider the budget information and decide the value of the contribution from the component authorities in 2024/25.

1. Purpose of Report

Since 2012, the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel has accepted a grant from the Home Office to meet the running costs of the Panel. The purpose of this report is to report on actual costs and to ensure the Panel has an understanding of how the finance arrangements work in practice.

This report is also published in accordance with the Home Office grant agreement that requires Panels to "publish, as a minimum on their website, details of expenditure incurred".

2. Background

The Home Office provides a limited grant to each Local Authority acting as the Host Authority to cover administrative and specialised support to the Panel and Member expenses. The maximum annual sum payable to a Panel is £53,300 for running costs and up to £920 per member for expenses (£15,640 for a 17 member Panel). The Home Office consolidates the grant and expenses payments into one single payment to provide Panels with increased flexibility on how to spend their grant. The maximum amount payable to Avon and Somerset PCP is £68,940 and maximum funding has been claimed since 2012; this level of funding has not increased since the inception of Police and Crime Panels.

3. Contingency

The Panel's running costs have exceeded the grant funding for a number of years. Earlier in the 2022/23 financial year, a collective annual indemnity mechanism of £5k was agreed with the component authorities and all of the councils made the requisite contribution of £5k towards the Host Authority's deficit. It was not necessary to invoke the indemnity mechanism in 2023/24 because of the Panel's surplus funds of £19.7k

which are held in reserve. It is anticipated that this amount plus the grant funding of £68,940 will help the Panel to meet its budget in 2023/24.

4. Financial Year 2024/25

The estimates for 2024/25 show that to ask for a £5k contribution would not allow the Panel to break even. Panel members are asked to consider whether a £6k commitment should be sought through each Council's budget processes in order to cover our costs. It will be necessary to put the Councils on notice of this by the end of October 2023 so that they can include the sum in their budget processes.

5. Transparency

Details of Member expenses for the 2022/23 financial year can be found at:-
<http://www.avonandsomersetpoliceandcrimepanel.org.uk/publications/>

6. Appendices

Both show outturn at 31st March 2023 and estimates for the current year and 24/25. These estimates include a cost for overhead support and a 5% increase on salaries for each year which have not yet been determined – Appendix 1 based on a £5k contribution and Appendix 2 based on a £6k contribution.

Patricia Jones

Lead Officer

Patricia.Jones@somerset.gov.uk

Panel Funding and Expenditure Report: Item 12; Appendix 1

| | Actuals 22/23 | Est 23/34 | Est 24/25 |
|--|----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| <u>Staff Costs</u> | | | |
| Governance Specialist - GR9 - (1.0FTE including on-costs) ¹ | 53,709 | 56,394 | 59,214 |
| Monitoring Officer, Finance Support, Website overheads ² | 10,210 | 10,210 | 10,210 |
| Democratic Services Officer G12 ¹ | 6,200 | 6,510 | 6,836 |
| Apprenticeship Levy | 277 | 277 | 277 |
| <u>Other in year costs</u> | | | |
| Staff mileage costs - PJ | 390 | 390 | 390 |
| Catering for meetings | 370 | 370 | 370 |
| Telephony - Mobile/Landline charges | 206 | 206 | 206 |
| Frontline Consulting Training day for PCP Panel | 1,215 | 1,215 | 1,215 |
| Frontline Consuling SV Development Day Report | 405 | 405 | 405 |
| National Conference (for two places) | 1,400 | 1,400 | 1,400 |
| <hr/> Administrative Cost of PCP | <hr/> 74,382 | <hr/> 77,377 | <hr/> 80,523 |
| Members Allowances ³ | 14,720 | 14,720 | 15,640 |
| Members Allowances NI | 172 | 172 | 172 |
| <hr/> Total cost of support to Police Crime Panel | <hr/> 89,274 | <hr/> 92,269 | <hr/> 96,335 |
| <u>Funding sources</u> | | | |
| HOME OFFICE grant funding (maximum) | 68,940 | 68,940 | 68,940 |
| Agreed in year contribution ⁴ | 40,000 | 0 | 25,000 |
| <hr/> Shortfall / -Surplus in funding of PCP Support <hr/> | <hr/> -19,666 <hr/> | <hr/> 23,329 <hr/> | <hr/> 2,395 <hr/> |

Notes:

1. Staff costs assumes - 5% increase for 23/24 to be determined
2. Level of cross charge for overheads to be confirmed
3. Assumes 16 members x £920 for 22/23 and 23/24, then 17 members in 24/25
4. Based on 8 LAs in 22/23; none in 23/24 0 LAs; 5 LAs from 24/25

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Panel Funding and Expenditure Report: Item 12; Appendix 2

| | Actuals 22/23 | Est 23/34 | Est 24/25 |
|--|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| <u>Staff Costs</u> | | | |
| Governance Specialist - GR9 - (1.0FTE including on-costs) ¹ | 53,709 | 56,394 | 59,214 |
| Monitoring Officer, Finance Support, Website overheads ² | 10,210 | 10,210 | 10,210 |
| Democratic Services Officer G12 ¹ | 6,200 | 6,510 | 6,836 |
| Apprenticeship Levy | 277 | 277 | 277 |
| <u>Other in year costs</u> | | | |
| Staff mileage costs - PJ | 390 | 390 | 390 |
| Catering for meetings | 370 | 370 | 370 |
| Telephony - Mobile/Landline charges | 206 | 206 | 206 |
| Frontline Consulting Training day for PCP Panel | 1,215 | 1,215 | 1,215 |
| Frontline Consuling SV Development Day Report | 405 | 405 | 405 |
| National Conference (for two places) | 1,400 | 1,400 | 1,400 |
| <hr/> Administrative Cost of PCP | <hr/> 74,382 | <hr/> 77,377 | <hr/> 80,523 |
| Members Allowances ³ | 14,720 | 14,720 | 15,640 |
| Members Allowances NI | 172 | 172 | 172 |
| <hr/> Total cost of support to Police Crime Panel | <hr/> 89,274 | <hr/> 92,269 | <hr/> 96,335 |
| <u>Funding sources</u> | | | |
| HOME OFFICE grant funding (maximum) | 68,940 | 68,940 | 68,940 |
| Agreed in year contribution ⁴ | 40,000 | 0 | 30,000 |
| <hr/> Shortfall / -Surplus in funding of PCP Support <hr/> | <hr/> -19,666 <hr/> | <hr/> 23,329 <hr/> | <hr/> -2,605 <hr/> |

Notes:

1. Staff costs assumes - 5% increase for 23/24 to be determined
2. Level of cross charge for overheads to be confirmed
3. Assumes 16 members x £920 for 22/23 and 23/24, then 17 members in 24/25
4. Based on 8 x £5 in 22/23; none in 23/24 0 LAs; 5 £6k from 24/25

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Panel Work Programme 2023/2024

| Date PCP Meeting | Business (does not include standing items, see end of document) | Notes |
|--|---|--|
| <p><u>Annual General Meeting</u></p> <p>27th June Deane House</p> | <p>PCC Annual Report Host Authority/Membership Report Work Programme Report – for Panel discussion/approval</p> | |
| <p>28th September Deane House</p> | <p>Crime Prevention Assurance Report – Progress against the Police and Crime Plan Panel Annual Report Panel Operating Arrangements/Panel Rules of Procedure Panel Costs Report PCC Election 2024 - update</p> | |
| <p>22nd November at 12.30pm</p> | <p>Consultation on the Budget led by the OPCC Chief Finance Officer Paul Butler in</p> | <p>The Budget briefing must be attended by all Panel Members. It provides opportunity for the Panel to consider the OPCC's planning assumptions and forecasts ahead of the draft</p> |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| (Private briefing Police Headquarters) | the form of a presentation followed by member questions. | Medium-Term Financial Plan which will be presented to the Panel on 8th December. Final report/Precept Proposal 1st February 24. |
| 8 th December Deane House | Scrutiny of the Budget/Draft Medium Term Financial Plan | |
| 1 st February Deane House | Formal Review of the Budget and Precept Proposal Chief Constable Presentation | |
| 15 th February (back-up Precept date) Deane House | | If there is a veto, the Commissioner must respond to the Panel and publish his response, including the revised precept, by 15th February. The Panel must review the revised precept and make a second report to the Commissioner by 22nd February |
| 20 th March Deane House | Equality and Diversity Update | |

Standing reports to each meeting:-

- Commissioner's Update Report – report on PCC activities/key decisions. Standing updates on Fire Governance, Estates, and Recruitment/Retention including Staff wellbeing.
- Work Programme – fluid and presented for noting or approval following amendment
- Performance Monitoring Reports - the Specified Information Order places a duty on PCCs to publish certain information within specified timeframes, to ensure the public have the information they need to hold their Commissioner to account at the ballot box. The Home Office has amended the Specified Information Order to require PCCs to provide a narrative on force performance against the Government's crime measures and HMICFRS force performance reports. The Panel has been receiving reports since December 2021.
- Complaints Report – Monitoring arrangements for dealing with complaints against the Commissioner

Reports of the Budget Task Group and Public Confidence Sub-Committee – dates TBC

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**ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE AVON AND SOMERSET
POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023

CONTENTS:

- 1. Introduction and Foreword**
- 2. Statutory Duties**
- 3. Performance against the Police and Crime Plan**
- 4. Annexes**

Published September 2023 (Version 2)

1. Introduction and Foreword

Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) have a [legal duty](#) to publish an annual report covering two topics:

- the exercise of the PCC's functions, and
- the progress which has been made in meeting the police and crime objectives in the Police and Crime Plan.

The PCC is responsible for the totality of policing and it is the role of the PCC to be the voice of the people. Key duties of the role are to:

- secure an efficient and effective local police force
- appoint the Chief Constable, hold them to account for running the force, and if necessary dismiss them
- set the police and crime objectives through a police and crime plan
- set the force budget and determine the precept
- contribute to the national and international policing capabilities set out by the Home Secretary
- bring together community safety and criminal justice partners, to make sure local priorities are joined up

This is the annual report of the Avon and Somerset PCC which covers the financial year 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. Throughout this report you will see how the PCC has fulfilled these duties and how they link to delivery of the Police and Crime Plan.

It is important to note that as well as this report an Annual Governance Statement is written as part of the Annual Statement of Accounts. To gain a different and fuller insight into how the governance framework helped discharge the PCC's duties the reports should be read together.



"This report covers my second year of service as the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner.

In the last year my team have been reshaped to ensure they are supporting me in the best way and are helping deliver my Police and Crime Plan.

Avon and Somerset Police have also been working really hard in the last year to ensure that the communities of Avon and Somerset are safer for all. There have been a number of significant achievements including surpassing the target for police officer recruitment and significantly improving outcomes for rape victims.

However, I recognise that there is more to do to rebuild public confidence in policing, which is critical to the Peelian Principle of policing by consent. I have confidence that the Chief Constable is leading by example in Avon and Somerset, and strong leadership is needed at all levels to change the culture and improve performance. I will continue to be transparent in how I hold the Chief Constable to account for delivering efficient, effective and legitimate policing."

Mark Shelford – Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner

As this is an annual report it aims to focus on significant achievements, developments or improvements within the last year rather than describing in general terms how policing and crime services are being delivered.

However, it is important to show just how much work Avon and Somerset Police are doing every day which helps achieve the objectives of the Police and Crime Plan.

| A single day in Avon and Somerset Police | | | |
|---|---|-------------|--|
| 386 | recorded crimes | 871 | 999 calls |
| 60 | domestic abuse crimes | 1786 | 101 calls |
| 5 | rapes | 824 | incidents |
| 36 | offences of violence with injury | 191 | anti-social behaviour (ASB) incidents |
| 242 | victims | 134 | calls relating to concern for safety |
| 111 | suspects/offenders | 18 | missing people |
| 4 | assaults on officers/staff | 17 | road traffic collisions |

The figures in this table are calculated based on the total crimes/incidents/calls for the year 2022/23 divided by the 365 days of the year.

2. Performance Against the Police and Crime Plan

Priority 1 – Preventing and fighting crime

Key activity and achievement during 2022-23

- The biggest success in this pillar over the last year has been the continued expansion and development of Operation Bluestone – the specialist team that deal with Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO). The benefit of this can be seen in the positive outcomes achieved in rape cases: the number of positive outcomes in the last year has increased to 143 (from 83) and the positive outcome rate increased to 8% (from 4.7%). While this improvement is significant, the rate is still low and the PCC has made clear he wants to see sustained improvement in outcomes for victims of these horrendous offences.
- OPCC support for joint bids with Local Authorities helped to secure just under £1.4m Home Office Safer Streets 4 funding, for workshops to challenge attitudes and awareness campaigns in Somerset and North Somerset, and interventions to tackle ASB and increase feelings of safety in Bath & North East Somerset.
- The OPCC has established a new Sexual Assault and Abuse Strategy Board, led by the Deputy PCC. This Board will help address the increasing amount of victim support required which is putting pressure on services. The Board will also help the support the response to the Serious Violence Duty and Victims and Prisoner Bill which will widen PCC commissioning duties in this area.
- An important part of preventing drug-related crime is to help drug users end their addiction. The Constabulary have improved drug testing in custody suites, those arrested for acquisitive and drug related crime will be tested for opiates with treatment offered to those who test positive as well as supporting sentencing at court. In the last year 819 people have been tested after their arrest with 465 positive test results.
- The new Strategic Policing Requirement includes fraud as a recognised harm and the requirement to better protect victims with a suitable level of support as would be expected in all other crime types. The importance of the role of PCCs and local responses to fraud is now recognised in the Government's Fraud Strategy.
- Following a well-received article in the Financial Times highlighting the need for a more unified national structure to turn the tide on the surge in fraud, in June 2022, the PCC gave evidence at the House of Lords Select Committee inquiry into Fraud and the Justice System. The inquiry sought to examine the ability of the criminal justice system to effectively prosecute fraud cases, and plans to tackle rising instances of fraud. The PCC's evidence has been used to inform the report detailing how further training and resource is required to improve pursue and protect activity within local forces.
- Community SpeedWatch continues to grow and 2022-2023 was again a record year with regards to driver education. 148 active schemes generated more than 53,000 warning letters for drivers observed in excess of the speed limit. The force currently has 1,756 volunteers registered to conduct SpeedWatch across Avon and Somerset.
- 2022-2023 also represented a record year for processing public reports of road risk with supporting video evidence (e.g. dashcam). There were 6,200 submissions, which is a 58% increase on the previous year. The Constabulary continue to lead this area nationally and the work done in force is informing direction and best practice nationally.

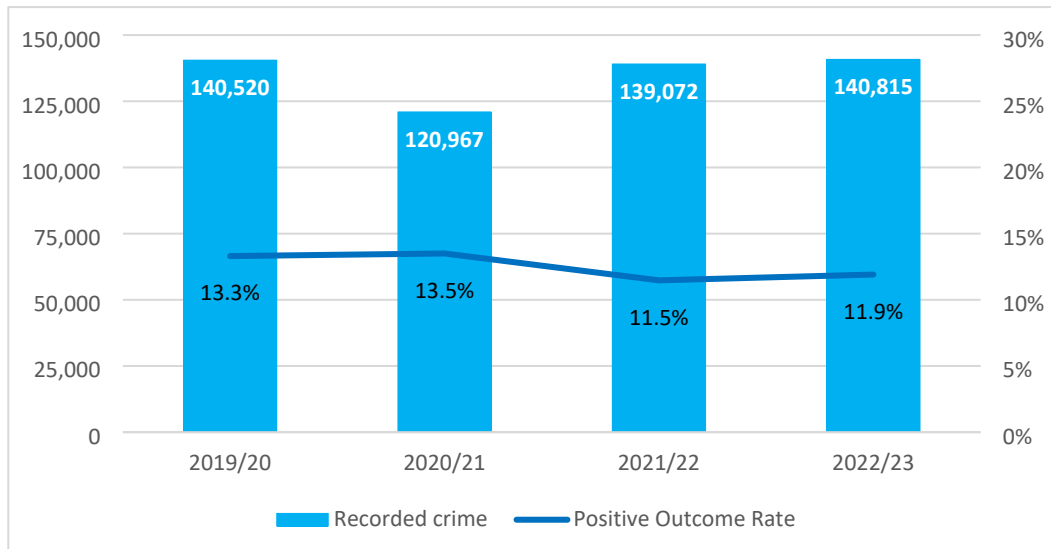


Figure 1: Avon and Somerset Police recorded crime and positive outcome rate for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23.

Recorded crime and positive outcome rates are important to consider across the whole of priority one. There is variation seen across different crime types which will be explored more below.

As seen nationally, recorded crime reduced significantly in 2020/21 as a result of the pandemic and lockdown restrictions. In the last year recorded crime was slightly higher than the year before the pandemic. It should be noted that part of this recent increase is due to better crime recording which is discussed later in this report.

There has been an increase in the positive outcome rate in the most recent year, compared to the last year, but this is still lower than the two years before that.

Based on the Crime Survey for England and Wales an estimated 50.3% of people aged 16 and over in Avon and Somerset agree that the police and local council are dealing with the anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter in the local area; this is compared to 49.8% nationally.

Reducing crime assessment

The constabulary effectively identifies locations, individuals and groups of people that are particularly vulnerable to victimisation and has invested in early intervention, conducting effective work with partner organisations to reduce victimisation. [...] Other factors contributing to the constabulary's ability to reduce crime are as follows:

- *The constabulary works effectively with children and young people in schools and elsewhere to deter them from offending behaviours.*
- *The constabulary works with, and seeks advice from, other emergency responders and mental health experts to help inform and improve its decision-making.*
- *The constabulary effectively uses data to analyse trends in victimisation, such as increased incidents targeting sex workers. This ongoing analysis has allowed the constabulary to increase efforts to protect this community from victimisation.*

[HMICFRS – PEEL 2021/22 – An inspection of Avon and Somerset Constabulary](#)

Commissioner's Crime Prevention Fund

The PCC has established a small grants scheme which opened at the start of 2022/23. This supports community projects and activities across Avon and Somerset that help reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. Community groups and charities have been able to apply to the fund for grants of between £1,000 - £5,000, with a total of £200,000 available. The fund is administered by the [Quartet Community Foundation](#) (for Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire) and [Somerset Community Foundation](#). In 2022/23 a total of £177,971 has been awarded. This included schemes that support youth workers, young people at risk of being targeted by gangs, women and girls at risk of exploitation, county lines and exploitation workshops, sexual violence education, mentoring and support and target hardening.

1. Vulnerable children and adults

Policing classifies vulnerability into 16 strands which are themes of crime, incidents or police work. However it has been recognised that, in order to perform well, there are things that need to be done which cut across all these themes. As a result of this a National Vulnerability Action Plan (NVAP) was launched. In June 2021, Avon and Somerset Police conducted a self-assessment and one of the priority areas identified was 'officer/staff norms'. 'Officer/staff norms' is about the behaviour and culture of the workforce so that the *"public experience an appropriate level of response from police and are always treated with dignity and respect"*. This area has become an even greater area of focus given the number of high profile police-perpetrated cases that have happened recently including David Carrick: a serving officer convicted of multiple accounts of rape and other abuse over a 20 year period. This has been brought into focus through Baroness Casey's Review of the Metropolitan Police Service. Although the report was about that particular force, it is recognised nationally that some of the issues and culture highlighted apply to other forces including Avon and Somerset.

In October 2022 the Constabulary ran an internal campaign called 'this is not who we are'. This campaign was to reinforce what is considered unacceptable behaviour and highlighted the real lived experiences of people within the organisation. The campaign generated a lot of discussion and debate, and feedback during a web chat hosted by the Deputy Chief Constable was largely positive. Their Professional Standards Department (PSD) received 3 phone calls directly after the web chat and 13 referrals to the integrity line linked to the campaign. The campaign also highlighted that people need safe spaces at work to decompress. Following engagement with a national sexual violence and safeguarding organisation called LimeCulture, the role of a Sexual Misconduct Liaison Officer has been created and will be recruited in the coming year. They will provide support to victims and witnesses of sexual misconduct with the aim that this will also improve people's confidence to report sexual misconduct and inappropriate behaviour in the workplace.

Another major piece of work from the last year was the delivery of 'Domestic Abuse Matters' training to over 2,300 front line officers and staff. This training was developed by the College of Policing and the domestic abuse charity, SafeLives, working with key stakeholders to develop a bespoke cultural change programme for police officers and staff in England and Wales. It has been designed to transform the response to domestic abuse, ensuring the voice of the victim is placed at the centre, and controlling and coercive behaviour is better understood. The programme is designed to have long-term impact: changing and challenging the attitudes, culture and behaviour of the police when responding to domestic abuse. In order to sustain and embed these ways of working going forward 71 people also had the DA Influencers training which will enable them to support colleagues and the organisation in future.

In November 2022 HMICFRS published their report '[An inspection of vetting, misconduct, and misogyny in the police service](#)'. This report contained 34 recommendations and areas for improvement for Chief Constables. The Constabulary have started work to address these recommendations which is another way in which they are addressing officer norms and culture within policing.

PCC Commissioning

The PCC commissions a number of specialist support services. These include: independent advocacy service for adult victims of crime and ASB who need additional support; children and young people advocacy service; counselling and therapeutic services for victims of child sexual abuse; specialist support for victims of child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation (the BASE service); specialist support for victims of modern slavery to enhance nationally commissioned services; Emergency Services Mental Health Triage; Liaison and Diversion Services (known as Advice and Support in Custody and Courts – supporting individuals whose offending is linked to substance and alcohol misuse); and the Appropriate Adults service, supporting and safeguarding the welfare and rights of vulnerable adults detained or interviewed by the police. The Appropriate Adult service and BASE service were recommissioned during 2022/23, with new contracts commencing on 1 April 2023. A full breakdown of commissioned services can be found at Annex 1.

2. Male violence against women and girls (VAWG) specifically domestic abuse, sexual offences, stalking and harassment

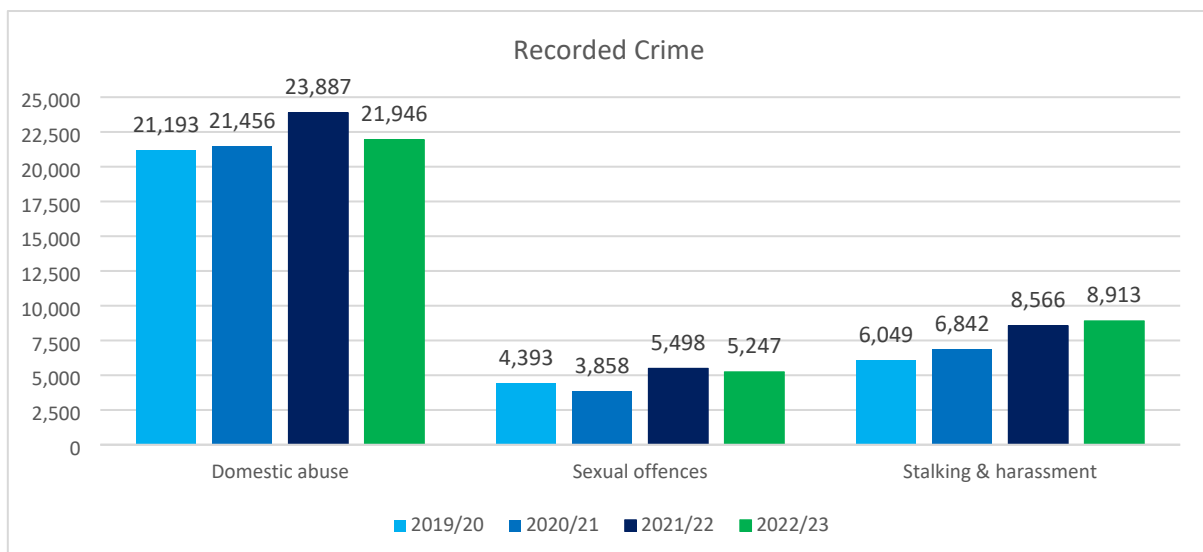


Figure 2: Avon and Somerset Police recorded crime for domestic abuse, sexual offences, stalking and harassment; for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23.

Improved crime recording processes, within Avon and Somerset Police, caused a large part of the increase in recorded crime for domestic abuse and stalking and harassment in 2021/22. There has been an 8% reduction in recorded domestic abuse crimes in the most recent year.

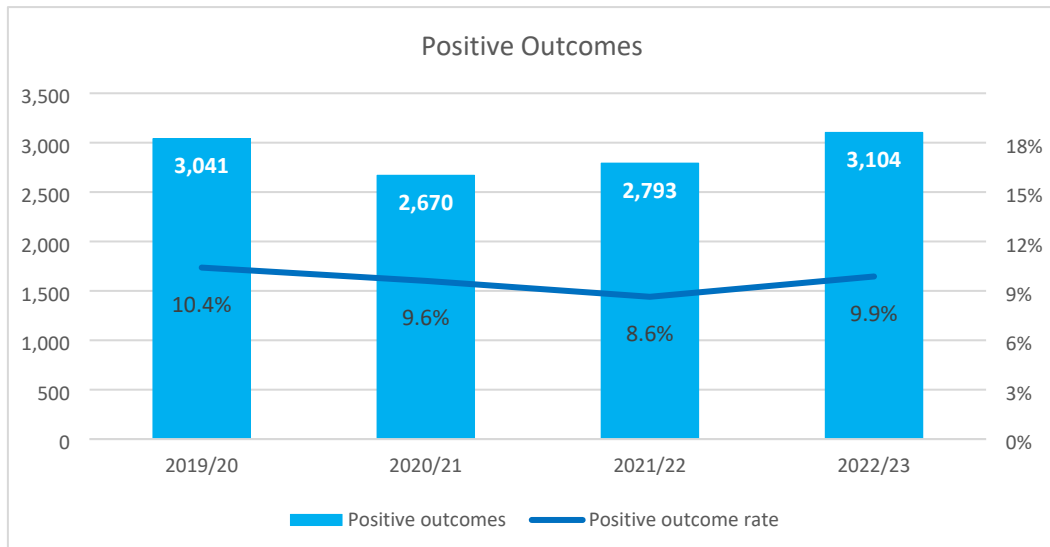


Figure 3: Avon and Somerset Police crime outcomes; combined positive outcomes (and rate) for domestic abuse, sexual offences, stalking and harassment; for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23.

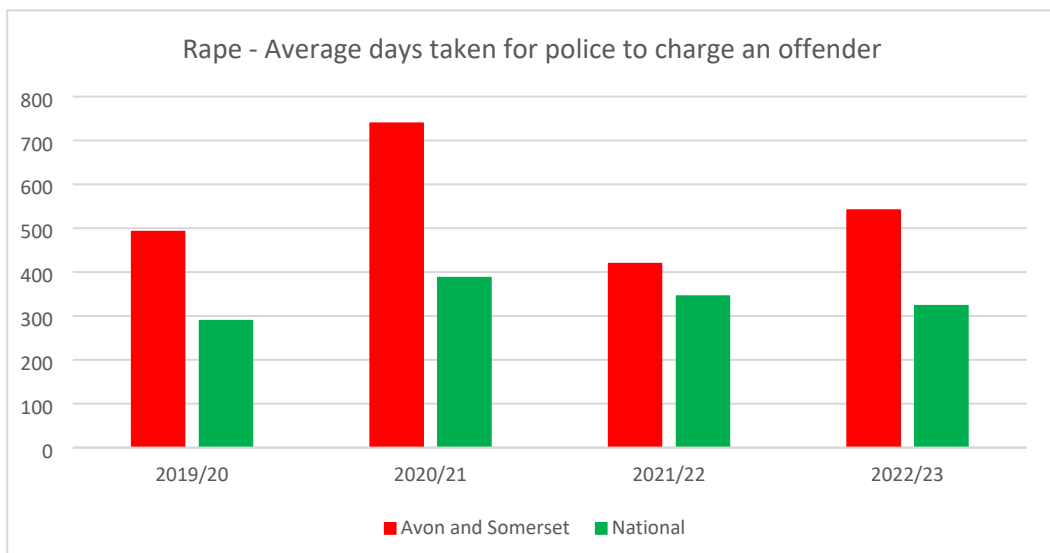


Figure 4: Avon & Somerset and national; median days from offence recorded to police charge (in adult rape cases) for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23.

The time it takes to charge an adult rape case in Avon and Somerset has increased in the most recent year and remains above the national average. It should be noted that charges in rape cases need to be authorised by the CPS and therefore they play a role in the timeliness of charging. The three police forces covered by CPS South West (including Avon and Somerset) all have longer times compared to the national average. While cases are taking longer to charge the positive outcome rate is increasing.

Avon and Somerset Police have a [VAWG Local Delivery Framework](#) which was published in March 2022. The plan aligns to the national framework and works across three pillars: below shows some of the activity against each of these pillars.

Pillar 1 – build trust and confidence

- A very important part of this pillar is changing the culture of policing – some of the work done against this was described in the previous section 1 on Vulnerable children and adults.
- As part of a national programme all police employees and volunteers have recently been checked against the Police National Database. Any matches have now been returned to the

local forces for action. The Constabulary's Professional Standards Department have started this review which is due to be completed in September 2023.

- Three additional detectives have been recruited into the Counter Corruption Unit to enable more proactive work to identify and tackle violence against women and girls by members of the workforce.
- Dr Fay Sweeting – a lecturer in psychology and a researcher of sexual misconduct and abuse of position in police officers – delivered training to first line managers and training assessors relating to 'abuse of position for a sexual purpose'.

Pillar 2 – relentless perpetrator pursuit

- The biggest success in this pillar over the last year has been the continued expansion and development of Operation Bluestone – the specialist team that deal with Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO). The benefit of this can be seen in the positive outcomes achieved in rape cases: the number of positive outcomes in the last year has increased to 143 (from 83) and the positive outcome rate increased to 8% (from 4.7%). While this improvement is significant, the rate is still low and the PCC has made clear he wants to see sustained improvement in outcomes for victims of these horrendous offences.
- The Constabulary are one of several forces that have started contributing to national work on outcomes 14 and 16 in RASSO offences. Operation Soteria academics will analyse these findings and incorporate them into the National Operating Model for RASSO.
- The Constabulary has created a 'Top 20' Domestic Abuse Perpetrators App, as well as a 'Top 100' in force. This app identifies those perpetrators who are likely to cause the most harm and this is used by local policing teams to help tackle this offending. A RASSO version of this tool is also now in development.
- The Constabulary has set up a joint scrutiny panel with the Crown Prosecution Service reviewing 'no further action' decisions in Domestic Abuse cases. Learning from these cases was provided to individuals as well as findings being collated for organisational learning.

Pillar 3 – safer spaces

- Two VAWG online safety webinars have been delivered by the Cyber Protect Officer, reaching 250 attendees across over 30 organisations. The Cyber Crime Team have also designed three distinct VAWG Cyber Safety packages for the public, which include awareness and guidance on stalking and sexting style offences. An internal package is being developed.
- The Constabulary deliver gender-based violence inputs to secondary schools.
- Created online reporting solutions for RASSO and DA offences as well as, applications the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (Clare's Law) and Child Sex Offender Disclosure Scheme (Sarah's Law).
- Promotion of the StreetSafe App, through social media and leaflet drops. This tool allows members of the public to report where they feel unsafe or have seen things that concern them, falling short of being actual crimes. Although the use is still quite low, the reporting from this tool has led to additional CCTV cameras being used in a reported location.
- Delivery of the 'Stand Up, Interrupt' campaign, working with British Transport Police, Bath Business Improvement District and Bath Rugby. The campaign is aimed at encouraging individuals to be upstanding in support of victims of harassment by challenging inappropriate behaviour. Plans are in place to link up with other big sporting events to continue this promotion.
- University Beat Managers have worked with Bristol University and UWE in the lead up to Freshers week around Op Lester (drink spiking). Overall reports of spiking have reduced, with 11 reports made in December 2022 compared to 32 reports in December 2021.

A really important aspect of any crime, but particularly these insidious types of crime is ensuring victims get proper support. You can read more about those achievements under Priority 2.

PCC Commissioning

The PCC's ability to support victims and survivors and tackle VAWG has been enhanced by success in securing additional funding, enhanced collaboration with health and local authority commissioners, and greater join up between providers to ensure provision of efficient and effective services.

The new Avon and Somerset Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) contract commenced October 2022, commissioned with NHS England and Avon and Somerset Police. This brings together forensic medical and wrap-around SARC care under one contract for the first time. The team built on previous years' bidding successes by securing additional Ministry of Justice (MoJ) funding for three Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) and three Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) posts (working with Local Authorities on the latter) over three years, as well as allocating a total of £490,000 per year in grants to Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence services.

Throughout 2022/23 the OPCC was part of work to collaborate on the commissioning on therapeutic support for survivors of sexual violence. For the first time, the OPCC, NHSE (Lead), Bristol City Council and Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire (BNSSG) Integrated Care Board pooled funding to maximise impact. The new service from April 2023 will be provided by an alliance of providers to meet the varied needs of survivors across Avon and Somerset. Support services have continued to work closely with Operation Bluestone/Soteria, to strengthen the service to victims of rape and serious sexual offences and increase confidence to report.

Demand for services supporting survivors of sexual violence in particular remain high. ISVAs have high caseloads, SARC referrals continue to rise and therapeutic services see long waiting times. In terms of therapeutic support in particular, access is further challenged by the end of a number of short term grants locally and nationally post-pandemic and changes to the national Rape Support Fund. The Deputy PCC has had a key role in leading on the work related to VAWG, including chairing a new Sexual Assault and Abuse Strategy Board to ensure oversight of key risks and issues to address these challenges, and prepare for both the Serious Violence Duty and Victims and Prisoners Bill which will widen PCC commissioning duties in this area.

More broadly, OPCC support for joint bids with local authorities helped to secure just under £1.4million Home Office Safer Streets 4 funding. This was for workshops to challenge attitudes and awareness campaigns in Somerset and North Somerset, and interventions to tackle ASB and increase feelings of safety in Bath & North East Somerset.

Domestic abuse, rape and serious sexual offences, including scrutiny of the OPCC's approach to commissioning services, was the focus of an Inquiry Day by the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel in April 2022, bringing together expert witnesses from the police, criminal justice system, victim services and OPCC to discuss the challenges and opportunities faced. The report is available on the PCP website. In addition to PCC-led commissioning, the OPCC has responded to a series of super-complaints on issues facing survivors, as well as continuing to scrutinise the approach to dealing with VAWG offences, in particular performance in rape convictions by holding the Chief Constable to account and through the PCC's role as Chair of the Local Criminal Justice Board.

3. Drug crime and serious violence

Drug crime

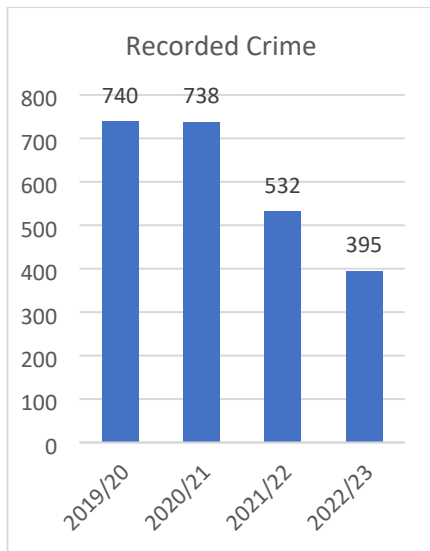


Figure 5: Avon and Somerset Police recorded **drug trafficking** crime for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23.

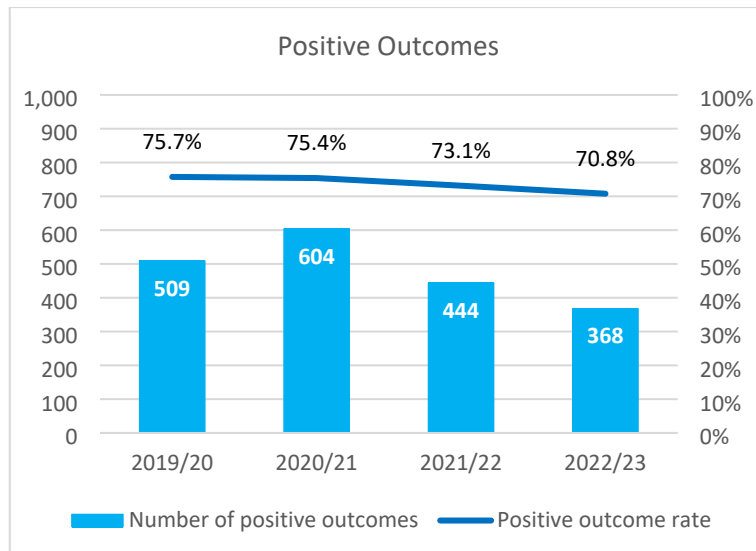


Figure 6: Avon and Somerset Police crime outcomes; positive outcomes (and rate) for **drug trafficking**; for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23.

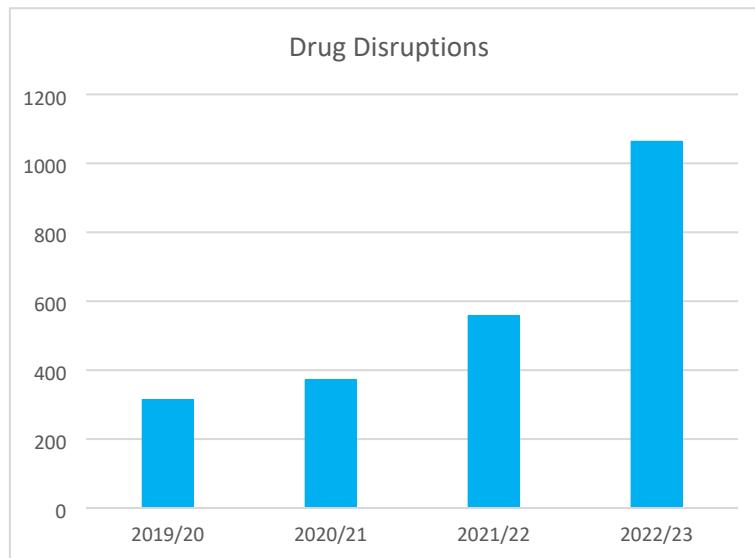


Figure 7: Avon and Somerset Police recorded drug disruptions for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23.

Unlike many crimes drug trafficking is detected more through proactive policing rather than being reported to them. In this context the reduction in drug trafficking offences in the last year would tend to indicate less proactive policing targeting drug dealing. Although this is part of the reason it is not the only reason as the complexity of the case will also have an impact e.g. an investigation into dealers higher in an Organised Crime Group’s hierarchy will take considerably more time and resource than a ‘street-level’ dealer; this cannot be easily quantified.

The Constabulary have created a drugs market team to analyse intelligence and provide them with enforcement opportunities targeting the most active drug dealers. They have also introduced specific drugs investigation posts and training officers in order to improve the positive outcome rate. Charging a higher proportion of offenders with drugs supply offences, reduces lengthy bail and ‘released under investigation’ periods, when offenders can be at heightened risk of related offences as victim or perpetrator, including serious violence.

Case Study: drug dealing in East Bristol

Intelligence work was carried out to identify the most harmful drug dealers in East Bristol. A strike week (Op Trigger) was arranged on 9 drug lines with 10 arrests made and 8 of those charged and remanded to prison for serious offences. Drugs, weapons and over £20,000 cash were seized. Some of the dealers had cuckooed vulnerable people so the Constabulary were also able to secure their properties and provide safeguarding and support for them.

The Constabulary have made increased use of their ASB powers around drug related ASB and have created specific posts to deliver this. Targeted offers of treatment and support through drug treatment providers are made to encourage problematic drug users to get help, but where this fails and impacts are created for neighbours and the community, legislation is used to close problem premises. In 2022 there were 24 drug related closure orders, resolving problems experienced by communities over many months.

Case Study: ASB related to nitrous oxide

As part of the Operation Scorpion week of action focussing on night time economy drug issues, an operation was delivered to tackle the sale and use of nitrous oxide in Bristol City Centre. This had been creating ASB and significant environmental issues. An offender was arrested for supplying nitrous oxide cannisters and charged with related offences, receiving a suspended prison sentence. Importantly, ASB legislation was then used to successfully obtain a Criminal Behaviour Order banning him from the City Centre during the evening for the next three years.

An important part of preventing drug-related crime is to help drug users end their addiction. The Constabulary have improved drug testing in custody suites, those arrested for acquisitive and drug related crime will be tested for opiates with treatment offered to those who test positive as well as supporting sentencing at court. In the last year 819 people have been tested after their arrest with 465 positive test results.

A core role of the police is to protect life. This applies to all people irrespective of why the police come into contact with them. One way this is seen with drug crime is that people who use drugs can overdose and die as a result of this. Naloxone is a fast acting antidote to opioid drug overdoses (such as from Heroin) and has the potential to save lives. The Constabulary have trained police officers and PCSOs to carry Naloxone. 210 officers are now trained and carry this across Somerset, North Somerset, Bath and North East Somerset and it has been used 7 times. This is now expanding to cover Bristol, South Gloucestershire and the custody suites.

County Lines

County Lines are a very public example of organised crime groups, dealing in drugs pushing their harm into communities. In Avon and Somerset area, there are more than 30 active lines at any time. This has been an ongoing priority for the Constabulary as can be seen in the below example.

Case Study: County Lines into Bath

Avon & Somerset launched an investigation into individuals from outside the force area that were responsible for the running of several County Lines into Bath, by exploiting children as young as 15 years old. This was a protracted investigation, but due to the dedication of the Op Remedy County Lines team and other departments the Constabulary identified the senior organiser of the line, which resulted in four defendants being charged with drug supply offences, with two co-accused

being charged with Modern Day Slavery. The investigation identified the holder had recruited children and young adults aged 15, 17 and 19 years from Luton to supply Class A drugs into cities including Bristol, Bath and Chippenham on their behalf.

Operation Scorpion is an important joint operation targeting drugs including County Lines and you can read more about this in Priority 2, below.

Serious violence

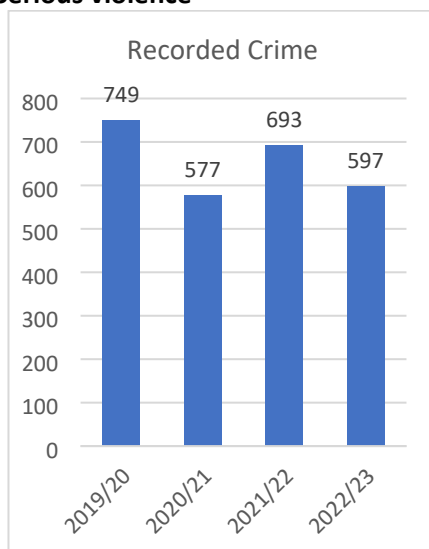


Figure 8: Avon and Somerset Police recorded **serious violence** crimes for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23.

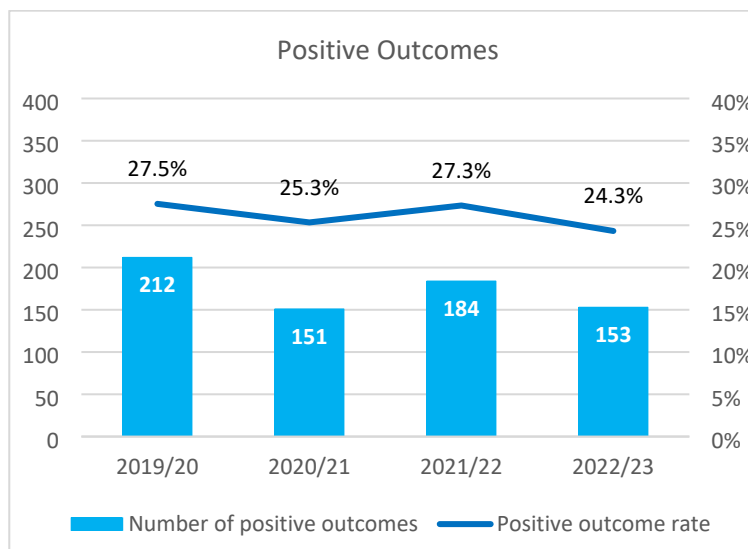


Figure 9: Avon and Somerset Police crime outcomes; positive outcomes (and rate) for **serious violence**; for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23.

N.B. this is the Home Office definition of serious violence which are offences that result in the death of a person, “endanger life” or “wounding offences”.

Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)

In recent years, serious violence has been recognised as a national problem. As part of the Home Office Serious Violence Strategy, the PCC has successfully secured funding from 2019/20 to run Violence Reduction Units (VRUs). The PCC successfully secured VRU funding for a further three years at an increased level: £2.04 million (2022/23); £1.53 million (2023/24); and £1.51 million (2024/25).

Avon and Somerset operate a hub and spoke approach. The funding is divided between the five local authority areas (the spokes) based on population and levels of serious violence. All VRUs continued to be overseen through a Strategic Governance Group (the hub), chaired by the Deputy PCC, which includes a Chief Officer from Avon and Somerset Police, local authority leaders and representatives from other partners. The sets a strategic work plan and the spokes collectively deliver against working on their own local delivery plans. A separate [VRU Annual Report is published which can be accessed on the website](#).

VRU spokes have continued to deliver on their operational function of identifying individuals at risk of serious violence and working to develop their offer alongside key partners. Some of the offers this year include; specialist 1:1 mentoring (including mentoring with lived experience), sports based interventions and coaching, youth club investment, conflict resolution, education inclusion support, detached youth work, parent support, female group work and A&E pathways.

Avon and Somerset VRU 2022/23 – working in partnership to tackle serious violence

- 21,332 young people reached through interventions.
- 16,551 young people reached through school awareness sessions.
- 861 young people were identified as at risk through VRU meetings.
- 1114 professionals have received training.
- The most common risk factors of those identified tend to be ASB, links to risky peers, exclusion or exploitation.

Whilst the broader scope of serious violence has increased by 6% from 2019 (due to increases in sexual offence recording), street based violence (excluding DA/SV and Sexual Violence) has seen decreases of around 7% in the last year. In terms of knife crime there has been an overall 9.6% decrease in serious violence where a knife crime indicator was present. There have also been year on year decreases in key indicators used by the Home Office in terms of A&S prevalence of serious violence (this include U25 admissions due to 'assault by a sharp object', homicide rates and Firearms Offences).

The 2022/23 national VRU evaluation estimated that 136,000 offences had been prevented nationally since the VRU inception, which is a system cost benefit of for every £1 spent there is a £4.10 saving. Within Avon and Somerset, appointment of an Evaluation and Impact Lead has enabled a robust approach to evaluating the effectiveness of interventions including: review of data analysis to enhance local understanding and better support targeted activities; participation in the national VRU evaluation network including contributing innovative, high impact interventions to the Youth Endowment Fund guidance; development of a Local Evaluation strategy and independent evaluation to ensure impact evaluation is robust.

The A&S Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment is now on its second issue, and has been deemed 'mature' in the recent national assessment by Crest Advisory. There was particular recognition of collaboration with the broader partnership including local authorities, probation and youth offending teams, and with a building engagement with fire and rescue, as well as health. 79 recommendations came out of this assessment which have informed priorities for the year.

January 2023 saw the launch of the new Serious Violence Duty for key partners. A Task and Finish Group was established in March 2023 to take this forward, guided by recommendations of the Joint Readiness Assessment, authored by Crest Advisory. Avon and Somerset was assessed as 'Ready and Engaged', demonstrating intent to change the local approach to tackling serious violence, especially in collaboration on information and data sharing. Whilst challenges remain in resources, with funding for the coming year reduced on 2022/23 levels, and in enhancing analysis to track individuals and better understand the impact of interventions, this assessment places Avon and Somerset in a strong position moving forward. The Avon and Somerset VRU Annual Report is published on the PCC's website.

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

Acquisitive crime

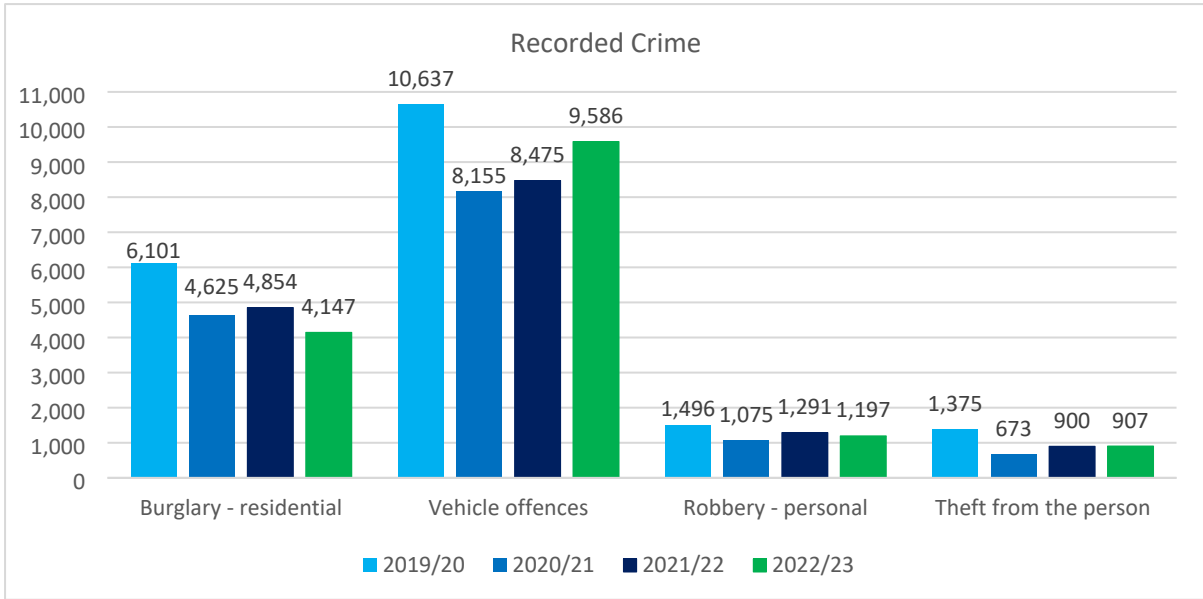


Figure 10: Avon and Somerset Police recorded crime for burglary (residential), vehicle offences, robbery (personal) and theft from the person; for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23.

There was a significant reduction in acquisitive crime as a result of the pandemic and lockdown restrictions. Broadly, these recorded crimes have not returned to pre-pandemic levels but there is significant variation across the crime types. In the last year residential burglary was 32% lower than in 2019/20. Whereas vehicle crime has shown the fastest increase and is now only 10% lower than in 2019/20.

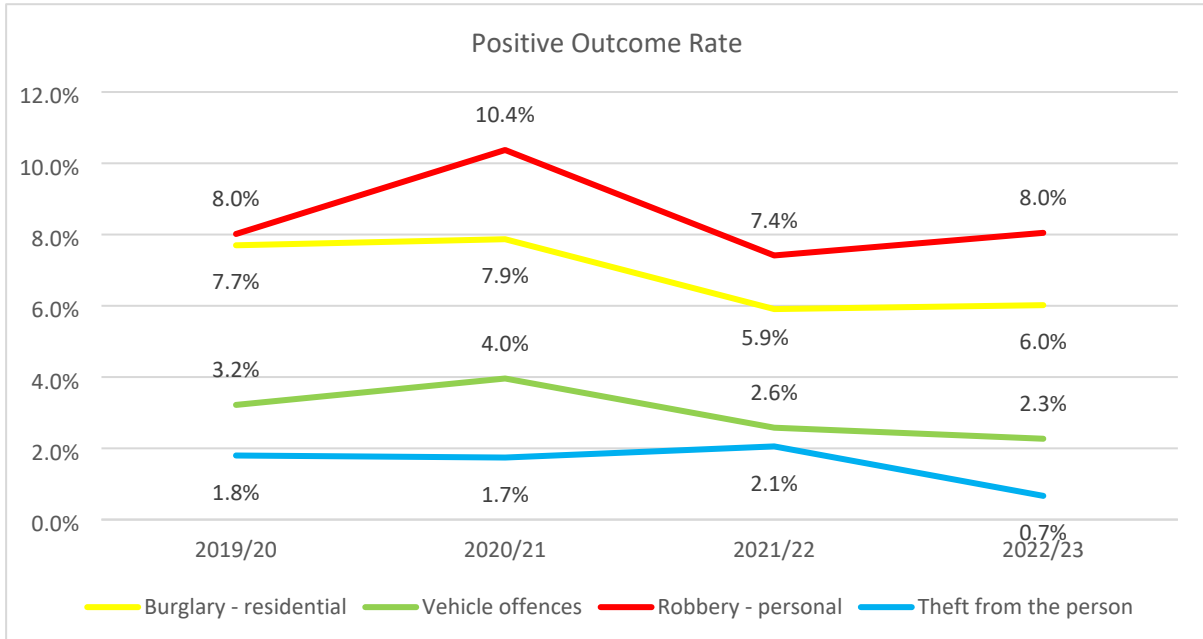


Figure 11: Avon and Somerset Police crime positive outcome rates for burglary (residential), vehicle offences, robbery (personal) and theft from the person; for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23.

Operation Remedy are a proactive team within the Constabulary which have had residential burglary and robbery among their priorities. During the last year they had to expand their remit to support the broader work of the Criminal Investigations Directorate. Although this provided the support needed at an organisational level this necessarily meant they had less capacity to focus on acquisitive crime.

This temporary situation concluded at the end of the year and Operation Remedy are now part of the neighbourhood policing teams.

Case Study: Op Swan

There were a series of high value gold burglaries identified in South Gloucestershire and Somerset. The team used CCTV and ANPR to identify suspects who would use stolen vehicles on stolen registration plates to evade capture. The group were organised and responsible for committing offences all over the UK. A joined-up approach between forces identified where the suspects were staying and were able to track their movements. Although the main suspect proved elusive the Constabulary’s investigation enabled the interception and arrest of the main suspect. The group were charged with numerous offences across the South West. Many other forces will also be investigating this group for offences in their area including over 150 dwelling burglaries in Scotland.

Case Study: knife-point robberies

In Bristol a series of robberies took place where the victims had been threatened with machetes by a group of three offenders. The offenders were quickly identified from CCTV footage. Mobile phone cell site analysis and rapid intelligence work enabled the suspects to be located. An out of hours warrant was obtained and executed by firearms officers leading to the arrest of violent offenders and seizing of key evidence within a matter hours.

Operation Remedy have existed as a number of years as a central team. Through the police officer Uplift additional officers will be used to create eight ‘local Remedy’ teams to supplement this in 2023/24. This will allow them to have a greater impact on local issues including acquisitive crime.

Hate crime

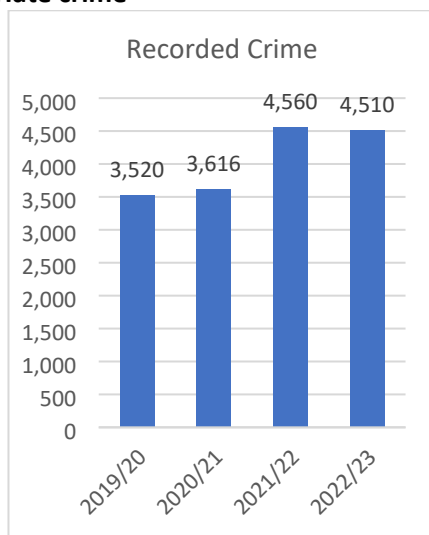


Figure 12: Avon and Somerset Police recorded hate crime for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23.

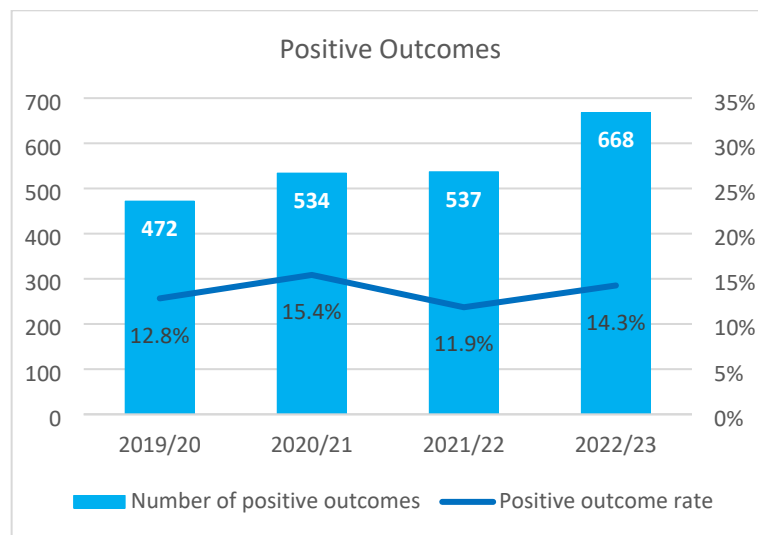


Figure 13: Avon and Somerset Police crime outcomes; positive outcomes (and rate) for hate crime; for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23.

The number of recorded hate crimes in 2022/23 were almost unchanged on the previous year. Despite this continued level of offences the positive outcome rate has improved by 2.4% points on last year.

In the last year enhanced training and support has been a key aspect of improving the police response to Hate Crime. ‘Tactical Advisers’ (TacAds) are specialist officers and staff who provide support to

colleagues on particular issues. The Hate Crime TacAds had a CPD event in October 2022. This was followed the next month by the circulation of Hate Crime ‘bite-sized’ briefing to all staff which had a particular focus on voice of the victim, lived experiences, disability hate crime and non-crime hate incidents. In order to help colleagues understand the lived experience of hate crime, testimony from officers own experiences have been shared as part of training and during National Hate Crime Awareness Week.

Prosecution levels for disability-related hate crimes remain low – this is a national issue. The Constabulary have set up a working group with the Crown Prosecution Service to better understand and problem solve outcomes around disability. To date the working group has discussed opportunities for early advice, opportunities to increase referral rates, and the importance of Victim Impact Statements. This group also draws learning from specific cases and national best practice.

Rural crime

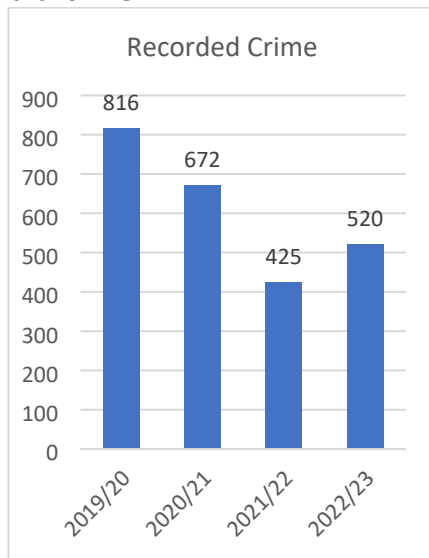


Figure 14: Avon and Somerset Police recorded rural crime for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23.

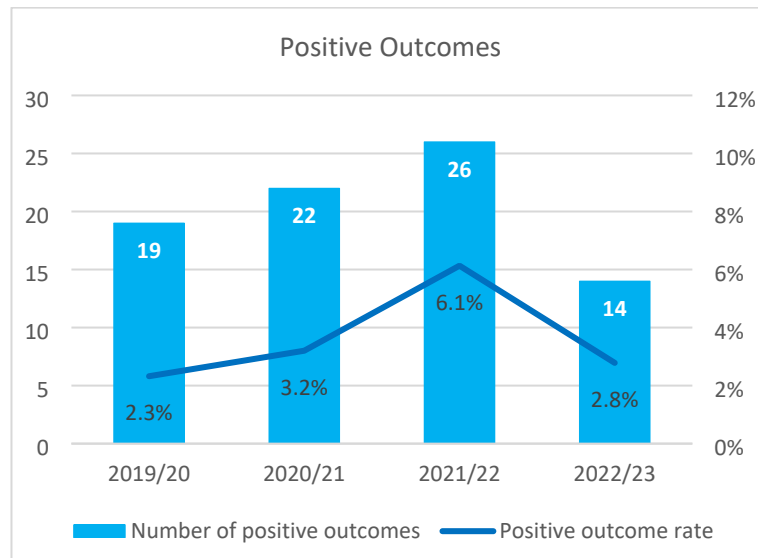


Figure 15: Avon and Somerset Police crime outcomes; positive outcomes (and rate) for rural crime; for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23.

About two thirds of rural crimes are acquisitive crimes. All acquisitive crimes reduced as a result of COVID lockdowns. However the further significant reduction in rural crime in 2021-22 is not in keeping with other crime and may have been due to some crimes not being flagged as rural when they should have been. Recorded rural crime increased in the most recent year which is similar to acquisitive crime more broadly. In the last year the positive outcome rate for rural crime has reduced to levels similar to pre-pandemic.

In the last year the Constabulary have really focused on accurate recording of rural crime and to support this the team use a daily screening process. This is where the computer finds cases based on a set of key words which could relate to rural crime. Officers then check this list for any crimes that have not been flagged properly.

The team have also been working with the other regional forces to improve their connectivity and are aiming to establish an operational policing group for rural crime. This recognises that Organised Crime Groups play a significant part in rural crime and these groups will operate across different force areas: therefore disrupting them will be more efficient with the region working closely together.

Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

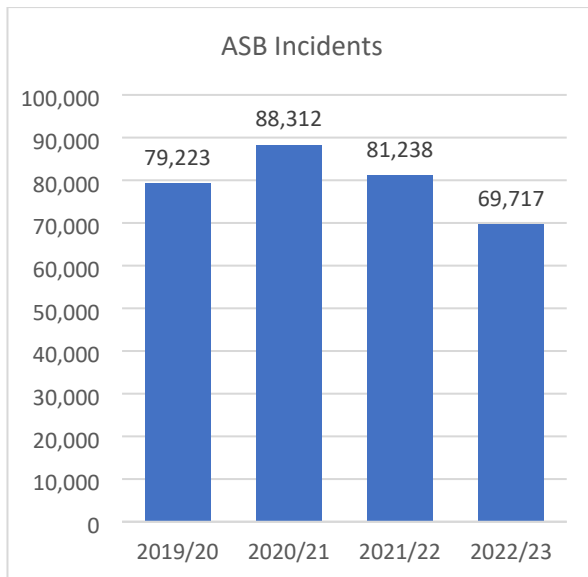


Figure 16: Avon and Somerset Police recorded ASB incidents for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23.

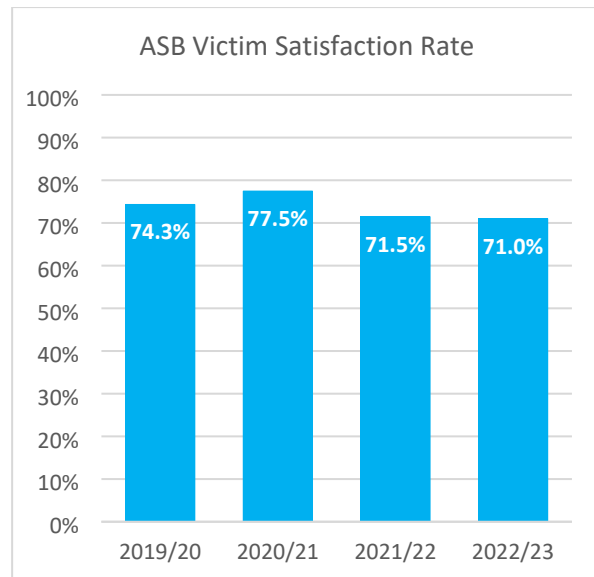


Figure 17: Avon and Somerset Police recorded ASB victim satisfaction rate for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23.

ASB incidents have decreased again in the last year and are now below pre-pandemic levels. Victim satisfaction is almost unchanged on the previous year.

Based on the Crime Survey for England and Wales an estimated 34.1% of people aged 16 and over in Avon and Somerset had experienced or witnessed ASB; this is in line with the level nationally which is 34%. However, only 2.5% of people in Avon and Somerset perceived there was a high level of ASB; compared to 7.7% nationally.

In 2022/23 the Constabulary implemented a new ASB Service Standard. This sets out an enhanced level of service for victims of ASB focussing on three key aspects:

- Protecting the most vulnerable and persistently targeted victims. These victims may only call police on the rare occasion and so do not get flagged as repeat callers. This is also a focus for policing nationally. This is achieved by the neighbourhood policing teams calling back all victims of ASB to better identify vulnerability and ensure victims are going the support they need.
- Recording crime accurately. The Constabulary acknowledge that many calls about ASB actually involve criminal offences and these are not necessarily recorded properly. This was one of the findings in the PEEL report and will be part of the action to address that.
- Bringing offenders to justice. The best way to manage and disrupt ASB offenders is through use of ASB legislation such as Community Protection Warnings and Notices and Criminal Behaviour Orders. The Constabulary have invested in ASB teams for each of the eight local policing areas to support local beat teams to deliver a multi-agency approach to disrupting offending and protecting our victims. The Constabulary work with local authorities, housing providers, support charities, and other local interested parties to progress ASB intervention. In 2022/23 the Constabulary have led or worked in partnership with other agencies to achieve 533 higher levels of ASB Interventions. These interventions have been against the most recognised high harm and persistent offenders of ASB.

Case Study: ASB in Taunton

Neighbourhood officers in Taunton saw an increase in the level of youth ASB and low level criminality. The Violence Reduction Unit identified two groups of youths that were in conflict with each other.

Neighbourhoods officers completed targeted patrols of hotspot areas, seizing multiple e-scooters and e-peds and resulting in several youth conditional cautions being issued. There was also a multi-agency task force which took part in a day of action bringing together over 50 professionals who to engaged with the target group and those on the periphery.

Following the day of action there was a decrease in reported violence and ASB. There was a lull in criminal activity, but it spiked again when the two groups joined together resulting in a targeting of the wider public with criminality escalated in frequency and severity.

The Constabulary deployed an increased number of officers to conduct targeted patrols. A strategic working group was also formed between police, youth justice, education and housing.

A key address was identified as a focal point of ASB facilitating the groups activity so a police led Closure Order was used on the property. A second address was placed under strict conditions by a joint Acceptable Behaviour Contract. A nine year old boy who had become involved with the group, was given an exit strategy resulting in a residential placement, ongoing support and direction away from the influence and behaviour.

Hundreds of incidents were linked to this group and detectives supported the investigation of these. Seven of the most prolific offenders received criminal justice outcomes and the issuing of the first youth civil ASB Injunctions in Avon and Somerset. This included two youths being charged with wounding with intent after they stabbed somebody.

This case illustrates the connection between ASB and criminality, and serious offences. The partnership approach taken has resulted in a reduction in ASB theft of mopeds, a reduction in serious violence reduction in public disorder.

Neighbourhood Policing

As a team, neighbourhood policing has a much broader role than the crime and ASB talked about above; this includes prevention, engagement and citizens in policing. Neighbourhood policing have roles which support the administration and coordination of the Watch schemes. These roles are covered throughout other areas of this plan.

5. Fraud and cybercrime

As APCC National Portfolio lead for Economic and Cyber Crime (ECC), the PCC has continued to use his voice to shape national policy, support PCCs in holding their Forces to account for their response to fraud, and improve the response to fraud at a local level, including support for victims as well as a wide range of awareness and prevention initiatives. OPCC capacity to support this area of work has been bolstered with the appointment of a fixed-term Policy and Research Manager, working closely with the APCC and the City of London Police.

2022/23 has seen success both at a national and local level. The new Strategic Policing Requirement includes fraud as a recognised harm and the requirement to better protect victims with a suitable level of support as would be expected in all other crime types. The importance of the role of PCCs and local responses to fraud is now recognised in the Government's Fraud Strategy. Membership of the Fraud

and Cyber Crime Reporting and Analysis Service (FCCRAS) Board has enabled the PCC to influence changes proposed to the Action Fraud service, ensuring changes are efficient, effective and victim focused. This includes a new website, and design and development of a new Action Fraud service, due to be launched in 2024. There is enhanced collaboration between local and national partners to better address challenges and work together through the ECC Portfolio Group and newly established Avon and Somerset Multi-agency Victims of Fraud group, bringing together police, Trading Standards services from the five local authorities and victim services. There is enhanced support for victims of fraud at a local level, with the introduction of a peer support pilot delivered by Victim Support which has to date received 53 referrals, supported 19 participants and has a current caseload of 20.

Following a well-received article in the Financial Times highlighting the need for a more unified national structure to turn the tide on the surge in fraud, in June 2022, the PCC gave evidence at the House of Lords Select Committee inquiry into Fraud and the Justice System. The inquiry sought to examine the ability of the criminal justice system to effectively prosecute fraud cases, and plans to tackle rising instances of fraud. The PCC's evidence has been used to inform the report detailing how further training and resource is required to improve pursue and protect activity within local forces.

The PCC has raised awareness of the impact of fraud and cybercrime on communities and how individuals can protect themselves through an extensive campaign including national and local media coverage and conference speeches. This includes the South West Cyber Resilience centre Webinar to highlight cybercrime to the business community, giving the keynote address to the National Fraud Safeguarding Conference, chairing the APCC event on Illegal money lending, delivering a keynote speech at the APCC General Meeting in January on how PCCs can develop the response to fraud in their Force and chairing a discussion on local fraud protect initiatives.

The PCC has engaged in an extensive programme of fraud prevention and awareness activity during 2022/23, with a focus on vulnerable people. This includes the below initiatives.

Fraud Prevention Awareness information in the form of an easy reference 'postcard' has been circulated to over 60 post code areas across Avon and Somerset, which were identified as having a high density of individuals over the age of 60 years. This equates to 156,556 households. In addition, the postcard was distributed via several other communication channels supported by statutory and non-statutory partners and is available on the OPCC website. Further media campaigns are planned.

The PCC supported Avon & Somerset Police to launch a new initiative to protect vulnerable adults from falling victim to fraud. Working with Dementia UK, Avon and Somerset Police's Fraud Protect Officers have created a telephone prompt aimed at safeguarding those living with memory loss or learning disabilities who might not recognise a fraudulent situation or person when contacted via the phone.

In November, the PCC supported Operation Emma which has a local focus on 'money muling' as recent national trends show a sharp increase in the numbers of individuals channelling fraudulent funds through their bank accounts. Op Emma is a national operation in conjunction with the NCA, ROCUs and local police forces. The operation focuses on Protect & Pursue on 'money mules' and coincides with a Black Friday and Cyber Monday online shopping fraud campaign led by the National Cyber Security Centre. Similar retail and online shopping scam communications were disseminated in the run-up to Christmas.

The PCC participated in the Junior Protect Officer to upskill police cadets with fraud and cyber protection advice to share in their local communities.

6. Road safety

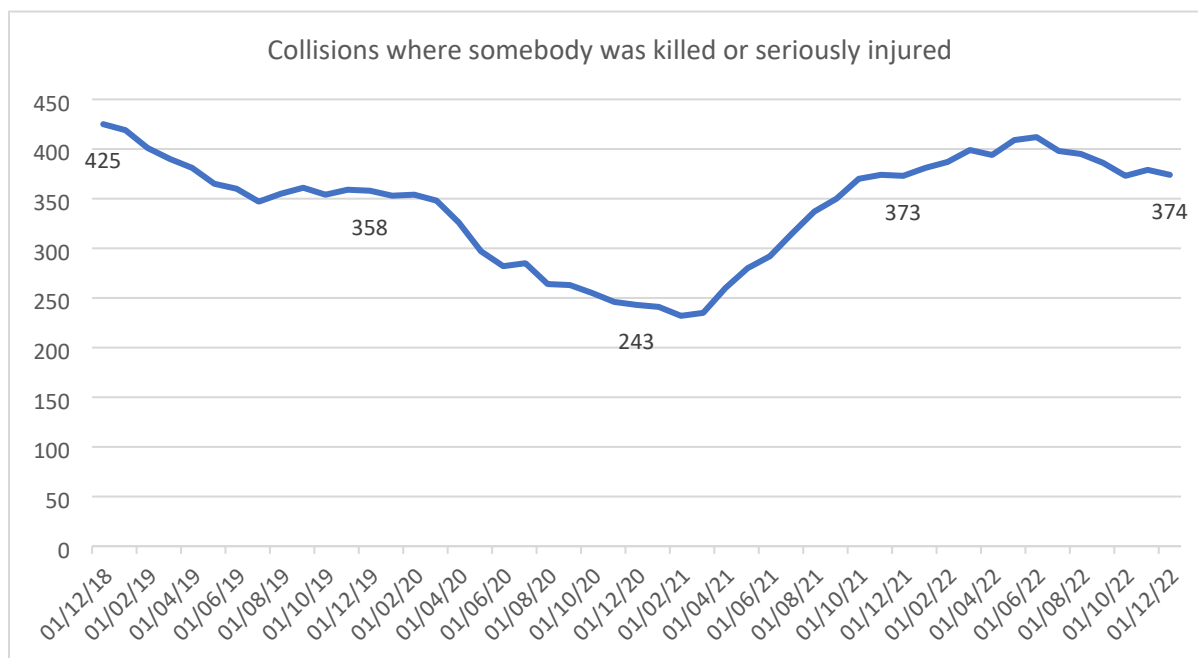


Figure 18: number of road traffic collisions in Avon and Somerset where somebody was killed or seriously injured – 12 month rolling total – for the years 2018 – 2022.

The significant reduction in 2020 from the previous year was as a result of the pandemic and lockdowns. The number of these collisions in 2022 is almost unchanged compared to 2021 and are similar to pre-pandemic levels.

Table 1: percentage of all road traffic collisions Avon and Somerset involving vulnerable road users and number of collisions resulting in death or serious injury involving vulnerable road users in Avon and Somerset; for the years 2018-2022.

| | Percentage of all collisions involving vulnerable road users | | | | Number of collisions resulting in death or serious injury involving vulnerable road users | | | |
|------|---|-------------|-----------|--------------|---|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| | Pedestrian | Pedal cycle | Motorbike | Ridden Horse | Pedestrian | Pedal cycle | Motorbike | Ridden Horse |
| 2018 | 5.9% | 6.6% | 4.2% | 0.0% | 91 | 67 | 98 | 0 |
| 2019 | 7.5% | 8.8% | 5.1% | 0.0% | 82 | 48 | 68 | 1 |
| 2020 | 7.5% | 7.9% | 6.0% | 0.0% | 51 | 31 | 66 | 0 |
| 2021 | 6.8% | 8.5% | 6.1% | 0.0% | 73 | 58 | 96 | 1 |
| 2022 | 9.7% | 9.6% | 8.3% | 0.1% | 47 | 70 | 112 | 1 |

As with other aspects of policing it is really important for road safety teams to engage with the public. In the last year they attended more than 20 high profile engagement events across Avon and Somerset. In many of these cases it was a multi-agency display alongside Somerset Road Safety, National Highways, and the fire services. Main events attended include the Bath & West Show, Bristol Harbour Festival and Truckfest.

In addition, many smaller events were run for both internal and external audiences to ensure awareness was raised around road risk. During the last year Road Safety have delivered training and

insight to corporate events, bike nights, Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) evenings, Neighbourhood Policing Team inputs schools and Mini Police days.

Community SpeedWatch continues to grow and 2022-2023 was again a record year with regards to driver education. 148 active schemes generated more than 53,000 warning letters for drivers observed in excess of the speed limit. The force currently has 1,756 volunteers registered to conduct SpeedWatch across Avon and Somerset.

2022-2023 also represented a record year for processing public reports of road risk with supporting video evidence (e.g. dashcam). There were 6,200 submissions, which is a 58% increase on the previous year. Avon and Somerset Constabulary continue to lead this area nationally and the work done in force is informing direction and best practice nationally.

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

Key activity and achievement during 2022-23

- The OPCC led a review of the Restorative Justice model in Avon and Somerset during 2022/23, working in collaboration with the police and the commissioned service provider Resolve West, to improve access and increase referrals through improved knowledge and awareness of restorative justice and its benefits.
- The future of the DRIVE domestic abuse perpetrator programme was secured in South Gloucestershire and expanded into Bristol and North Somerset following a successful joint bid to secure £1.2m. The Constabulary have been able to provide data demonstrating an impressive 74% reduction in Domestic Abuse offending in the Drive cohort between October 2022 and March 2023.
- Operation Scorpion – intensification weeks aimed at tackling illegal drugs across the South-west happened three times in the last year resulting in over 1,100 disruption activities and 7 County Lines disrupted.

1. Public engagement - particularly with underrepresented groups

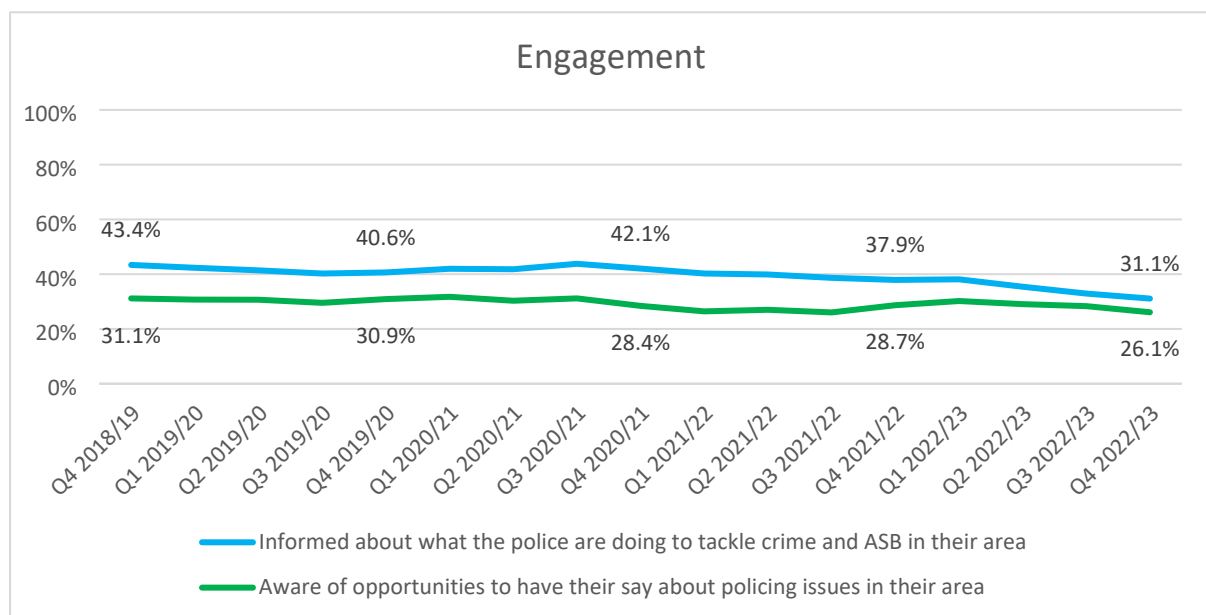


Figure 19: percentage of people that feel informed about what the police are doing to tackle crime and ASB in their area and percentage of people that are aware of opportunities to have their say about policing issues in their area – as measured through the local police and crime survey – for the years 2018/19 – 2022/23.

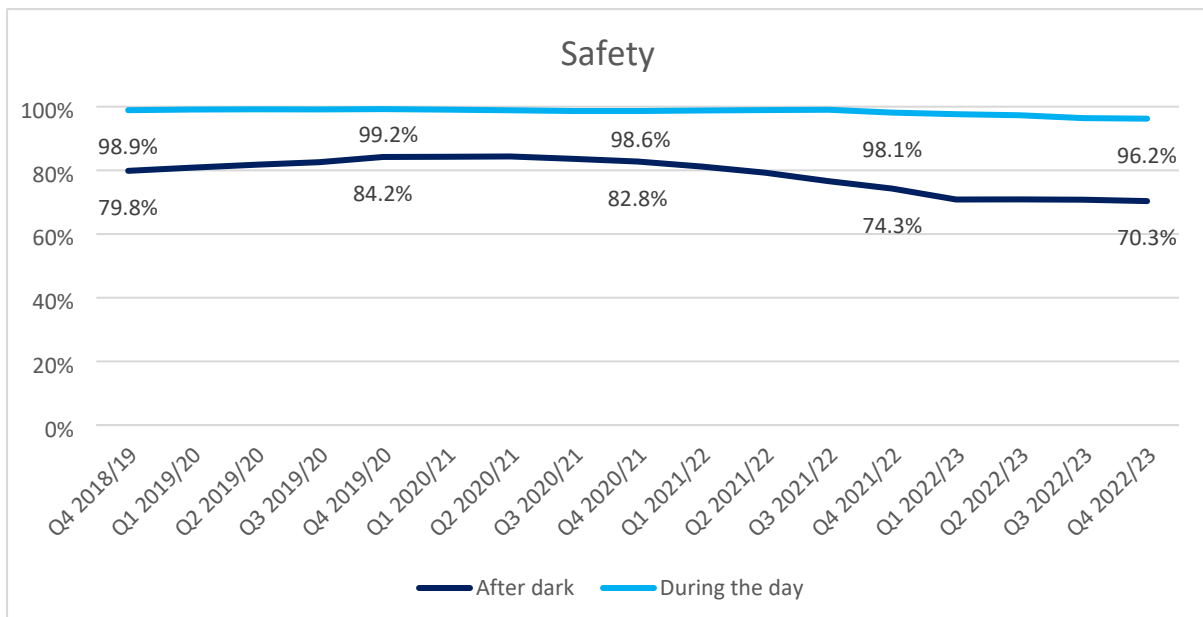


Figure 20: percentage of people that agree they feel safe in their local area – as measured through the local police and crime survey – for the years 2018/19 – 2022/23.

The Constabulary continue to engage through several key routes including Independent Advisory Groups, community/public meetings, neighbourhood 'Talk to Us' events and Watch groups such as Neighbourhood Watch, Farm Watch and Horse Watch. You will see other examples of engagement throughout this report against other areas of focus.

The PCC supported an expansion of the Constabulary Communications team, headed by a new Director of Communications and Engagement since March 2023. This role will help deliver a joined up and strategic approach to engagement with communities.

Innovative practice: The constabulary uses a range of methods to communicate with communities face-to-face and digitally

The constabulary, with other organisations including the local authority, has worked extensively with its communities to tackle crime. For example, it identified several areas where children were likely to be groomed for knife crime. It worked with schools to identify individuals who were most at risk. It then worked with the children, in partnership with Aardman Animation, asking them how they would tell somebody not to get involved with knife crime. Each school then produced a short, animated film. The constabulary ran it as a competition across the local schools. As a result, awareness of knife crime was raised. Other campaigns include fraud prevention, raising awareness of drink spiking and the 'It's not ok' campaign, which targets misogyny and its related behaviours.

[HMICFRS – PEEL 2021/22 – An inspection of Avon and Somerset Constabulary](#)

PCC as the voice of local people

The PCC carries out regular public engagement days, with 20 in the last year. In addition to these days the PCC also started a new initiative where he held nine Local Councillor Forums across Avon and Somerset. These sessions provided an opportunity for councillors to meet with local Avon and Somerset Police Neighbourhood Policing Teams to discuss issues and challenges faced by local residents. During each event, the PCC provided councillors with an overview of his Police and Crime Plan. In total 146 Councillors attended these forums which was 18% of those invited. The PCC will be holding a second round of councillor forums in the autumn of 2023.

The PCC has continued to conduct a crime survey of 3,000 local residents which gather views about experiences of crime and policing, their feelings of safety, policing priorities and confidence in the police and the PCC. The results are returned quarterly and as well as being a formal mechanism for capturing local sentiment are also used as performance management data.

The PCC has a phone line and e-mail which are available for anybody to make contact with, and every contact is listened to. Common themes of the contacts in the last year include violence against women and girls, drugs, ASB, illegal hunting, police response times, victim contact and e-scooters.

There is lots of information on the [PCC's website](#) and you can sign up for news and events. Alternatively, you can follow the PCC on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram @AandSPCC.

The PCC's website received around 242,000 page views which is a 39.8% decrease on the previous year. However the number of users and new users has increased by 1.4% and 3% respectively. At the time of writing the PCC has 13,100 followers across Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

The PCC sets the part of your council tax which goes towards funding policing (the precept). In order to get a broad range of opinion on the proposed increase to the precept a standalone consultation was run including an online survey and a stratified, randomised, postal survey. In just six weeks these surveys resulted in 3,760 responses. These results were considered by the PCC and Police and Crime Panel in, respectively, proposing and approving the £15 increase this year (for the average band D household).

2. Special Constables and citizens in policing

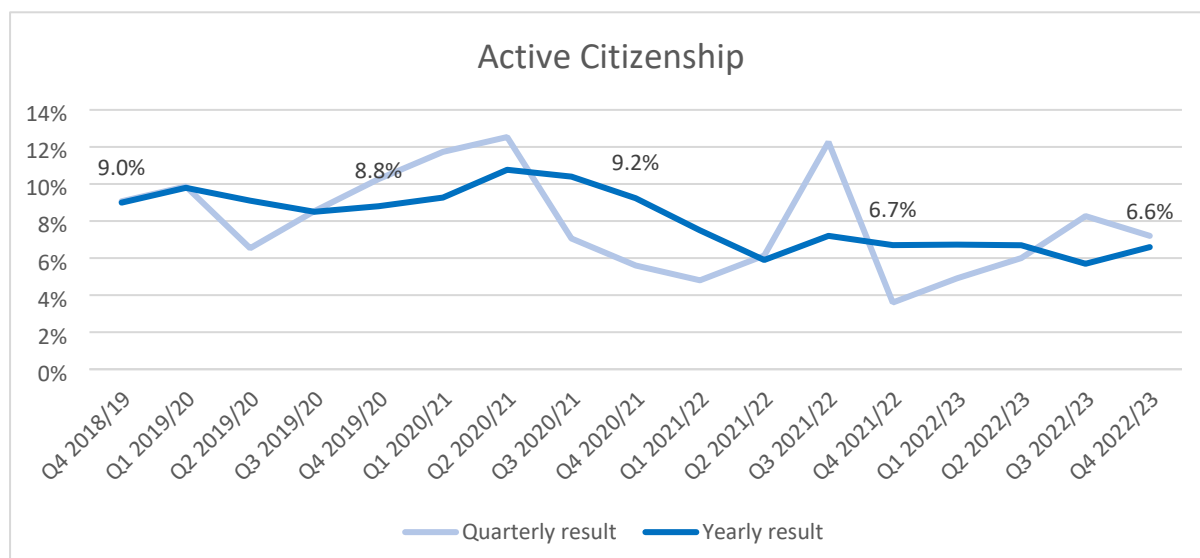


Figure 21: percentage of people engaged in active citizenship in Avon and Somerset – as measured through the local police and crime survey – for the years 2018/19 – 2022/23.

People who volunteer their time are a critical part of policing; enriching the organisation with their unique talents, skills and experiences, their ongoing contribution and commitment help deliver a better service to the public and make Avon and Somerset a safer place to live, work and visit.

The volunteers include Special Constables, who are warranted police officers with the same powers as employed police constables. They perform a range of important frontline policing duties including

responding to calls for help from the public, neighbourhood policing and patrols, roads policing duties and supporting policing operations such as our Christmas anti drink/drug drive campaign. At the start of the year there were 291 Specials and this had reduced to 245 by the end of the year. The Constabulary has focussed on the recruitment and training of new officers and needed to reduce Specials recruitment and training activities in this period. This has resulted in a significant reduction in the overall number of special constables; this is consistent with other forces regionally and nationally. This smaller number is expected to continue over the coming year and the focus is to ensure they can better support the Specials and build on the capability they add to the organisation.

Case Study: small team has a big impact

Contributing more than 1,000 duty hours in a year, Special Constables in East Somerset, led by Special Sergeant George Malin, are working closely with Yeovil Neighbourhood teams to bring much needed additional capacity. The team are offering wide-ranging support including:

- *Op Flagstaff (night-time economy) patrols over weekends in Yeovil, Chard and the Mendips;*
- *executing outstanding arrest warrants;*
- *planning and managing road traffic operations; and*
- *supporting community engagement events.*

For Op Flagstaff alone, the Somerset East team, made up of a special sergeant, a response driver and special constables, have attended 380 incidents of which there were 50 positive outcomes where members of the team collated the evidence, prepared the files, interviewed the offenders and victims and created and administered the charges.

The Yeovil Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant said “It has been a real privilege to start this journey with the Somerset East Special Constables. George and his team are a real asset to the organisation.”

Table 2: total duty hours contributed by Avon and Somerset Police Special Constables and Police Support Volunteers for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23.

| | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Special Constables | 73,273 | 81,823 | 80,345 | 71,008 |
| Police Support Volunteers | 12,934 | 8,611 | 12,387 | 14,427 |

N.B. These figures exclude volunteer cadet leaders whose hours are counted with cadet hours.

The Constabulary have a wide variety of Police Support Volunteer (PSV) roles that support the organisation in one of three ways. The first group of PSVs add resource capacity to reduce demand on paid officers and staff enabling them to focus on their core roles, this includes DVLA Invigilation Volunteers who invigilate officers under exam conditions and volunteers who foster puppies for the dog section allowing staff to concentrate on their operational duties. Last summer the Constabulary introduced Roads Policing Education Volunteers who attend public events, alongside Road Safety employees, educating the public about road safety issues.

The second group of volunteers bring valuable specialist skills and experiences that add value or benefit the organisation, examples include the Cyber Crime Support Volunteers who bring expertise from the private sector to support investigations and upskill the cyber officers and the Volunteer Chaplains who support the wellbeing of the workforce, particularly those in the most challenging roles.

The third group of volunteers offer services to the public which the force simply couldn't otherwise deliver, such as the Cadet Programme and the Community Speedwatch Data Processors. The average number of PSVs in 2022/23 was 182, this is a slight decrease on the previous year but reflects the

challenges faced across the voluntary sector, despite the slight decrease, the number of volunteered hours has increased.

Volunteer police cadets are aged 13-17, with units across Avon and Somerset, who are learning about policing, helping people in their local communities and volunteering alongside police officers and PCSOs at public events. Cadets have supported numerous policing priorities in the last year: they have participated in test purchase operations to buy alcohol and to tackle child exploitation, neighbourhood watch letter drops and bike marking. The cadets have also supported local events such as Bristol Pride, Badminton Horse Trials and the Armed Forces weekend in Weston-super-Mare. They also represented Avon & Somerset Police at events for the Queen’s Jubilee. Many cadets have learnt new skills by becoming Junior Cyber Protect Officers or by successfully completing a BTEC Level 2 in Teamwork and Personal Development in the Community. There has been a 35% increase in volunteering hours since last year which is back to pre-pandemic levels.

Mini Police is an innovative police engagement programme, aimed at children aged 8 to 11 years old, which is delivered in schools with the support of local PCSOs. The scheme provides a fun and interactive way to introduce children to a positive experience of policing and to get them involved in the local community. The scheme has grown even further this year with 58 schools involved and over 1,000 children participating in the programme. As part of the programme the children identify a social action project they would like to do and this year the children have identified some brilliant projects including collecting donations for local food banks and tackling parking issues in their local community. The Mini Police have also been sharing what they have learnt with other young people in their community.

3. Supporting victims of crime and anti-social behaviour

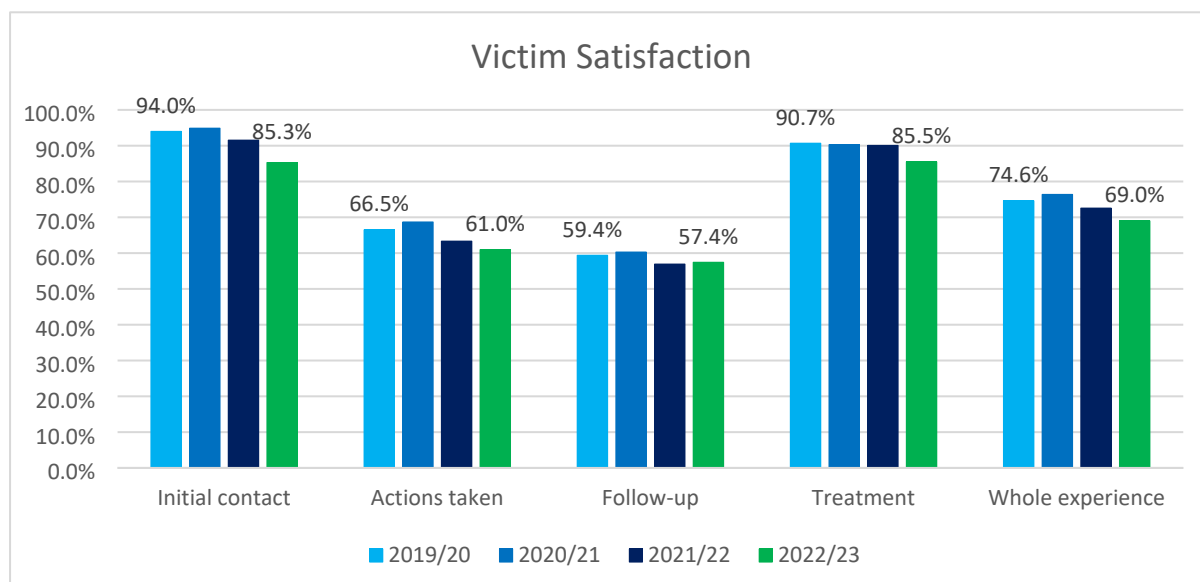


Figure 22: Avon and Somerset Police victim satisfaction for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23.

2022/23 saw a further small reduction in victims’ satisfaction with Avon and Somerset Police despite the Constabulary’s focus on victim contact and timely investigative actions.

The PCC received £4.1million Ministry of Justice (MoJ) funding for OPCC commissioned victim services in 2022/23. This was enhanced by OPCC contributions of £339,000 and partner funding of £122,000. A total of 53,511 victims were supported by OPCC services in Avon and Somerset in 2022/23, including

those who accessed support through the Lighthouse Safeguarding Unit. The number of victims accessing support services directly was 16,298. The OPCC was successful in securing £173,000 uplift in 2022/23 from the MoJ to enhance services funded from the core grant (All crime/ASB contracts and existing Child Sexual Abuse grants). Additional funding was also secured for Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence services (see VAWG section for detail). A breakdown of funding streams and commissioned services can be found in Annex 1.

Core commissioned services were extended to the full term (March 2025) and a Recommissioning Board has been established to commence work in the coming year. The MoJ Victim Funding Strategy (2022), committing to multi-year funding and setting out a simplified reporting framework, and the OPCC Commissioning Strategy developed in 2023 will guide the approach to recommissioning. The Victims and Prisoners Bill will introduce a new commissioning duty, and the new Serious Violence Duty offers opportunities to further strengthen services for victims in future commissioning.

The PCC has continued to facilitate a multi-agency group to check compliance with the Victims Code of Practice (VCOP). Themes examined during 2022/23 were: Drugs, Domestic Abuse, Rape and Serious Sexual Offences, Assault Against Emergency Workers. Key areas of focus were the quality of communication with victims, and hearing the victim’s voice in the criminal justice process, particularly through effective use of the Victim Personal Statement. A new compliance framework will be introduced in the coming year through the Victims and Prisoners Bill.

Access to Restorative Justice services is an important VCOP right. The OPCC led a review of the Restorative Justice model in Avon and Somerset during 2022/23, working in collaboration with the police and the commissioned service provider Resolve West, to improve access and increase referrals through improved knowledge and awareness of restorative justice and its benefits. Through his role in holding the Chief Constable to account and as Chair of the LCJB, the PCC continued to challenge police and partners on ensuring an efficient and effective criminal justice system and improving the experience of victims. Improving conviction rates and the experience of victims of rape and serious sexual offences has been a particular focus, tracking the impact of Operation Bluestone. The PCC has also participated with the MoJ South West Pilot to support victims engaging with Parole Hearings.

4. The criminal justice system

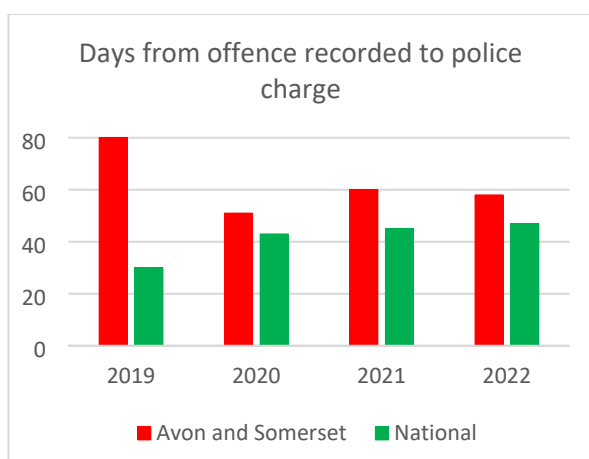


Figure 23: Avon & Somerset and national; median days from offence recorded to police charge (where there is a specific individual victim) for the years 2019 – 2022.

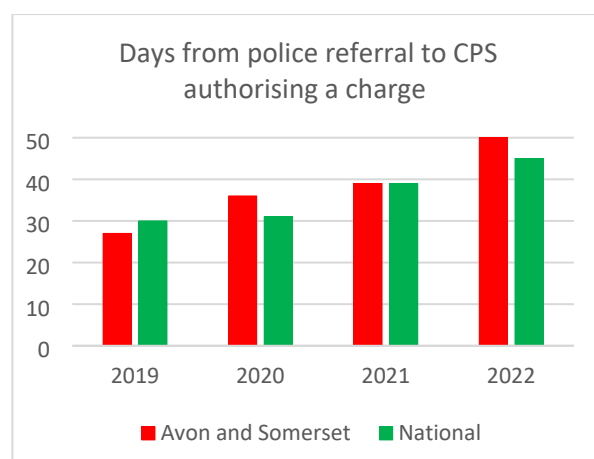


Figure 24: Avon & Somerset and national; median days from offence recorded to police charge (where there is a specific individual victim) for the years 2019 – 2022.

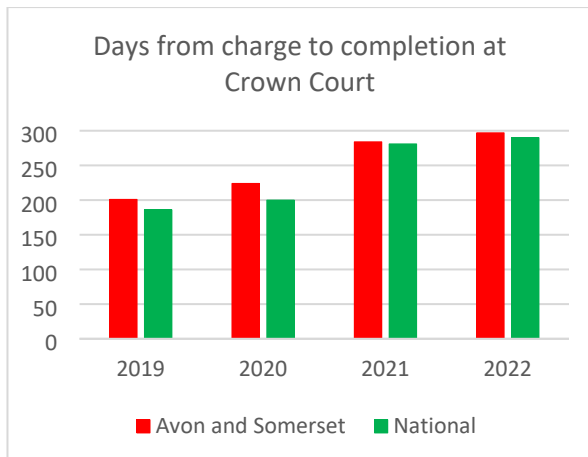


Figure 25: Avon & Somerset and national; median days from offence recorded to police charge (where there is a specific individual victim) for the years 2019 – 2022.

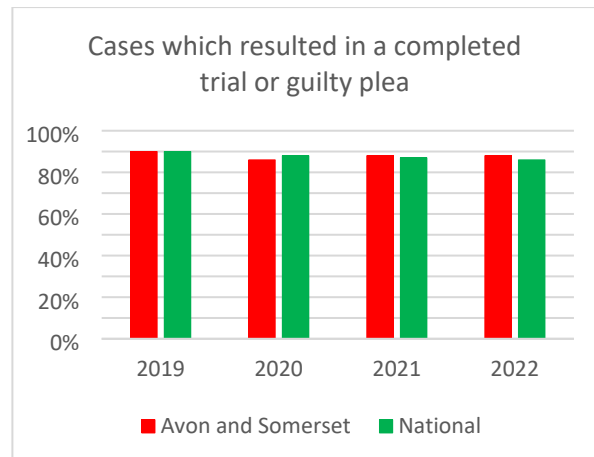


Figure 26: Avon & Somerset and national; median days from offence recorded to police charge (where there is a specific individual victim) for the years 2019 – 2022.

In the last year the Constabulary conducted an in depth review of their criminal justice process and teams which resulted in changes to both of these aspects. The refreshed teams and new ways of working went live in January 2023. The changes were to provide a 24/7 enabling service to investigating officers and teams and to rebalance administrative tasks back to the support team enabling investigators to focus on quality and important issues such as evidence and disclosure. This should also increase the speed with which cases are progressed and reduce failure demand on both the police and Crown Prosecution Service. In the first four months after the changes were implemented the administrative failure rate has decreased month on month and is now better than the national average. Administrative failure refers to files being rejected by the CPS for reasons such as missing documents or other material or where the material is not in the correct format.

As part of the Criminal Justice transformation work the Constabulary also introduced an Investigative Standards Forum, supported by an organisational action plan to support continuous improvement in investigations. Throughout the last year this has driven technological improvements, including the improvement of the Criminal Justice App, new software for the efficient and compliant redaction of digital media such as CCTV and body-worn video, and ongoing development of software to assist in the management and redaction of all case file material.

PCC's role

The PCC has a duty to work with criminal justice partners to ensure an efficient and effective criminal justice system. This duty is fulfilled both through holding the Chief Constable to account and as Chair of the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB). The LCJB brings together senior leaders from local criminal justice agencies, the judiciary, local authority youth offending services, and victim services. In addition to oversight of criminal justice performance, the LCJB provides governance for key areas of work including delivery of the Identifying Disproportionality review, the Reducing Reoffending Board, Victims Governance / Victims Code of Practice compliance, and the Out of Court Disposals Scrutiny Panel. The Board met four times in 2022/23.

The national review of the role of PCCs included the recommendation to place LCJBs on a statutory footing and defining the role of PCC as Chair and setting out the expected membership. The LCJB Business Manager moved into the OPCC Team in February 2023 in readiness for this change, strengthening support for the PCC in his role as LCJB Chair. The focus for 2022/23 has been strengthening the effectiveness of the LCJB in improving the victim journey, implementation of the Identifying Disproportionality report (see area of focus on inequality and disproportionality), and

development of a coherent local data pack to enable effective oversight, performance and demand management. This complements national performance information, including a live data dashboard, made available for the first time this year to enable members of the public to oversee criminal justice performance. Success has been seen in the impact of Operation Bluestone on Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) performance and victim experience, though this success has impacted on demand.

Court backlogs remain a challenge at a local and national level. As at April 2023 the backlog continues to rise and now stands at 876, which is 40% higher than the pre-pandemic backlog. At Crown Court level Bristol now sits at 46% above pre-pandemic levels and Taunton at 26% above. Reasons for this include a changing case mix which has seen an increase in the proportion of RASSO cases leading to lengthier, more complex trials. There has also been disruption due to a lack of Counsel (court advocates) – there has been attrition across the profession in recent years – who are trying to cover more cases per person than pre-pandemic. The local position reflects the national picture, with outstanding trials currently standing at around 49,500. In order to address the situation, 12 courtrooms are now sitting across Bristol and Taunton (the maximum number of courtrooms available in Avon and Somerset), and will continue to do so throughout 2023/24. In addition, prisoner escort and custody services have been extended at Bristol, which will enable more cases to be dealt with overall.

Timeliness in youth case outcomes is a further area in need of improvement, and out of kilter with national performance. Both issues remain under close scrutiny by the LCJB. The police Criminal Justice Department has been restructured, going live in January 2023, with the aim to drive improvements in file quality. The impact of this change will be the focus of the LCJB meeting in June. The LCJB Business Plan continues to be developed to provide a clear strategy, tightening links between the LCJB and sub-groups, and establishing Key Performance Indicators for each sub-group to monitor progress over the coming year.

5. Reducing reoffending

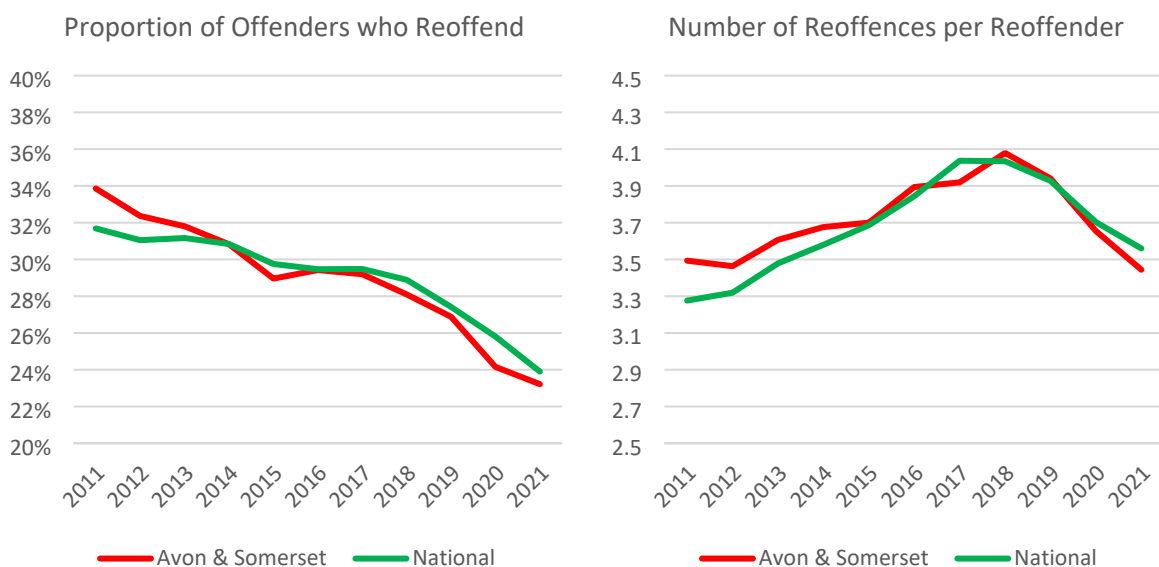


Figure 27: Proportion of offenders who reoffend and average number of reoffences per reoffender - years ending June 2011-2021.

Integrated Offender Management (IOM)

Over the last year Avon and Somerset Police Integrated Offender Management (IOM), together with partners, have continued to manage approximately 3,000 people. IOM has been embedding new ways of working following the role out of the transformation programme embedding new nationally recognised cohorts according to the national IOM strategy. Locally the cohorts include the following:

- Fixed (previously IMPACT) – Neighbourhood Crime / Serious Acquisitive Crime including robbery, burglary, theft of/from motor vehicle.
- Flex – 18–24 year olds who are in transition between Youth Offending Team and Adult Services; and Electronically Monitored offenders (GPS tag upon release from prison).
- Free (previously IRIS) – high harm and high risk sex offenders, gang members, OCG members and domestic abuse high harm cohort. This also includes the high volume cohort of sex offenders (MOSOVO).

Avon and Somerset IOM are one of six forces to trial the use of Electronic Monitoring of acquisitive crime offenders. There are currently 67 people tagged but this is expected to increase. Since the start of the pilot there have been 434 'hits' tagged offenders in close proximity to acquisitive crimes. All hits have been checked and reviewed by the IOM teams and ten have resulted in sufficient evidence for arrests and positive outcomes. Initial signs indicate this is changing behaviour but there is a national evaluation underway and there is an annual review looking at successes and best practice which can be disseminated out to other forces.

PCC's role

The key focus in 2022/23 has been the reinvigoration of the Avon & Somerset Reducing Reoffending Board, and considering and managing the future of services previously funded as a one-off through reserves.

2022/23 saw the final year of delivery for three projects funded through one-off reserves. Ready 4 Release at HMP Bristol came to an end on 31 November 2022. This project resulted in an average number of 41 fewer men being recalled to prison, with the most recent recall rate being 12% which is considerably lower than the average of 46% for the UK prison population. The percentage of men having all their needs met has risen to 68% on release which is extremely positive given the challenges. Most elements of the scheme will be fulfilled by the new Probation resettlement model and some elements are being embedded as business as usual through Prison staff. The OPCC is assured that the monitoring of these two key successes will continue so the impact continues to be evidenced.

The Court Up project entered its final year of delivery in 2022/23. Missing Link supported women attending Bristol Magistrates Court to support them through the process, ensure their pre-sentence reports included up to date relevant information, signpost to services to address identified needs and increase use of community sentences to avoid the impact and 'revolving door' of short term custodial sentences. Missing Link had great success across the life of the contract with 147 women supported, equating to an approximate cost of £816 per person. In direct response to the initial outcomes the number of women receiving a custodial sentence had reduced by 60% during the time that Court Up was in operation. Whilst a bid to the MOJ for continuation and expansion of the Court Up service was unsuccessful, another organisation was successful in securing funding for a larger scale project which does include court diversion work. Court Up ended at the end of April 2023.

The OPCC was successful in a joint bid with Nelsons Trust to secure £297,046 from the Ministry of Justice. The ambitious aim is to achieve a Whole System Approach to assess the needs of women at risk of or in contact with the justice system at the earliest opportunity and to provide a gender responsive, co-ordinated multi-agency support to divert women away from offending or reoffending.

The future of the DRIVE domestic abuse perpetrator programme was secured in South Gloucestershire and expanded into Bristol and North Somerset following a successful joint bid to secure £1.2million. This behaviour change programme for high-risk individuals has demonstrated success in reducing offences and lowering risk to victims/survivors and their families. The project started in South Gloucestershire in February 2021 and since then 221 services users have been accepted, 238 associated victims/survivors and 437 children and young people. The Constabulary have been able to provide data demonstrating an impressive 74% reduction in Domestic Abuse offending in the Drive cohort between October 2022 and March 2023.

The Avon & Somerset Reducing Reoffending Board has been reinvigorated over the past 12 months with a new chair Superintendent Steve Kendall and new Terms of Reference. The Board is focussing on three priorities, with a work programme aligned to each priority: Integrated Offender Management, Women in the Criminal Justice System and 16-25 year olds. Partnerships have continued to thrive in this space with most of the key stakeholders especially Probation Service, Local Authorities, and the Constabulary.

Ministry of Justice (MOJ) Reducing Reoffending data has been presented to Board members for the first time and partners are expected to present their own data about how they see impact in this space at future board dates. The Board will continue to provide an opportunity for key partners to share learning, best practice and consider co-commissioning opportunities.

The role of the PCC in reducing reoffending continues to develop following the national review of the role of PCCs (PCC Review Part 2). This found a clear role for PCCs to play in supporting Regional Probation Directors to deliver Community Payback schemes that visibly contribute to enhancing communities, as well as supporting the rehabilitation of offenders. National guidance has been published encouraging PCCs to champion Community Payback, canvass views on Community Payback opportunities and convene partners to leverage greater Community Payback opportunities. Proposals for local projects in the Avon and Somerset area are welcomed and can be made via the nominations process: [Nominate a Community Payback project - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/nominate-a-community-payback-project)

6. Collaboration and partnership working

South West Police and PCC Collaboration

With direction set by the five PCCs, police across the South West have combined their operational powers to tackle cross border drugs supply activities: Operation Scorpion. The five regional police services (Avon and Somerset, Dorset, Devon and Cornwall, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire), alongside their respective offices of Police and Crime Commissioners, the British Transport Police, South West Regional Organised Crime Unit (SW ROCU) and the charity Crimestoppers, set aside regional boundaries, just as criminals engaging in drugs activity do, to harness their collective power and disrupt the South West drugs market, dismantling drugs supply networks and arresting those who profit from them.

In this last year Operation Scorpion intensification weeks have taken place in July and December 2022 and March 2023 which involved the below activity.

- Over 1,100 disruption activities.
- 7 County Lines disrupted.
- 88 arrests.
- 29 warrants executed.
- Thousands of pounds worth of class A drugs and cannabis, including cannabis plants, seized.

- 325 visits and or/safeguarding checks to vulnerable people's addresses. The addresses were identified through Avon and Somerset Police's intelligence work and information shared by our partners and the public. Several people visited have been subjected to cuckooing* in the past.
- 90 educational visits to schools, youth clubs, colleges, and scouting groups to engage with young people and teachers about drug harm, exploitation and grooming; as well as other community focused engagement activities such as pop-up stands and talk to us events at local community centres.
- A significant number of intelligence reports gathered helping to better direct resources going forward and to help safeguard vulnerable people.

PCC engagement in strategic partnerships has continued through 2022/23. The PCC chairs the Local Criminal Justice Board, the Deputy PCC chairs the Strategic Violence Reduction Board, the OPCC facilitates the Reducing Reoffending Board and attends Community Safety Partnership meetings across the five Local Authorities. Community Safety Plans have been developed in the five Local Authorities to guide delivery of the Police and Crime Plan at local level, and the PCC Police and Crime Grant provides funding to the Community Safety Partnerships to deliver the PCC's priorities in local areas. Further information on these activities can be found in the relevant sections of this report and in the Funding Table at Annex 1.

A key focus for 2022/23 has been responding to changes announced by the government following the PCC Review Part 2 intended to strengthen the PCC role in partnership working and reinvigorate the local partnership landscape. The OPCC has responded to consultation on a review of Community Safety Partnerships, reinvigorated the Reducing Reoffending Board, worked with probation colleagues to take forward the new reciprocal duty to consult each other when developing priorities and encourage collaboration, and worked with criminal justice partners to enhance local criminal justice performance management following publication of national comparative scorecards, enabling greater oversight to ensure an efficient and effective criminal justice system. Avon and Somerset is well placed for Local Criminal Justice Boards to be placed on a statutory footing, with the PCC chairing the Board and with the Business Manager support function having moved into the OPCC in February 2023.

A new aspect of the PCC's role in partnership working for 2022/23 was in relation to the role of PCCs in how they can leverage local partnerships to tackle drug misuse and supply. The OPCC has worked with the five Local Authorities, in partnership with the Office of Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) to take forward the Government's 'From Harm to Hope' 10 years drugs strategy, published in June 2022 in response to Dame Carol Black's independent review of drugs.

The strategy outlines a commitment to cut crime and save lives by reducing the supply and demand for drugs and delivering a high-quality treatment and recovery system. Guidance for Local Delivery Partners (June 2022) sets out requirements for local partners, including the PCC, to deliver the strategy at a local level. The OPCC convened a summit in Summer 2022 to bring together partners to learn from each other and share best practice, and have continued to have an oversight role to work with partners to ensure effective local implementation. Senior Responsible Officers (SROs) have been identified and Combatting Drugs Partnerships have been established and are in operation in each of the five Local Authority areas. Three of the five partnerships have completed needs assessments and delivery plans to date.

The OPCC has continued to review needs assessments to ensure proportionality, escalate any barriers and act as a critical friend. The complexity of the Avon and Somerset partnership landscape presents a challenge in diluting membership across the partnership landscape, with five partnerships in operation. OPCC oversight and regular meetings of the five SROs to share learning and challenges has

helped to mitigate this. The coming year will see closer engagement of the PCC with the Combatting Drugs Partnerships to bring greater visibility and accountability to the work they are doing, and with each Director of Public Health and SRO to ensure that thinking is aligned to support delivery.

Priority 3 – Leading the police to be efficient and effective

Key activity and achievement during 2022-23

- As part of the HMICFRS PEEL assessment, the Constabulary was rated as ‘Good’ at ‘building, supporting and protecting the workforce’ and ‘strategic planning, organisational management and value for money’.
- Avon and Somerset Police finished the 2022/23 year with 3,393 officers which surpassed even the temporary Home Office target of 3,371. This is 275 more officers than at the end of the previous year.
- The Leadership Academy was also subject of a review in the last year and as a result of this it is being expanded to include a new operational leadership programme to prepare people prior to being promoted into first line manager roles, rather than after being promoted.
- Completion and implementation of a review of the OPCC Office was a key focus for 2022/23. The review and resulting restructure realigned resources and responsibilities to respond effectively and efficiently to increased demand. This was supported by development of more efficient systems and processes, particularly in relation to HR functions.
- The Constabulary are one of the best forces in the country for answering 999 calls quickly and are often ‘top of the table’ compared to other forces.
- Total carbon emissions in 2022/23 was 7,014 tonnes this is a 24% reduction on the previous year.

1. Recruiting officers

As can be seen from table 4 (below) Avon and Somerset Police finished the 2022/23 year with 3,393 officers which surpassed even the temporary Home Office target of 3,371. This is 275 more officers than at the end of the previous year.

The additional officers are being deployed in the following areas.

Criminal Investigations Directorate (CID):

- Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (Bluestone)
- Child Sexual Abuse (Ruby)
- Internet Child Abuse Team (ICAT)
- Child Exploitation (Topaz)
- Cyber-crime
- Complex Crime
- Financial Investigation Unit

Response Directorate:

- Desktop investigation (Incident Assessment Unit)
- Patrol

Enabling functions:

- Learning and development
- Professional Standards Department
- Counter-corruption Unit

Neighbourhood and Partnerships Directorate:

- Proactive policing (Operation Remedy) – including the introduction of eight **local** teams (for each of the local policing areas)
- Integrated Offender Management
- Early interventions and Violence Reduction
- Rural Affairs Team

Operational Support Directorate:

- Tactical Support Team (includes proactive roads policing, dog handling and firearms)
- Drones
- Intelligence and Tasking

This does not mean these roles will be filled by new officers and therefore these Uplift posts have not yet been filled in all cases. There is a sequencing of deployments, team moves and training across the organisation to ensure the right people are going into the right roles. The main area where the posts have not yet started being filled is in local Remedy.

2. Capability including training, wellbeing, leadership, equipment, estate, data and technology

Although there has been a more acute focus on officer numbers, due to the national Uplift targets, and the front line role they play, this should not take away from the vital role that police staff and PCSOs play in modern policing and the collective capability they bring to the organisation. Tables 2 and 3 show this growth across all three employee types in the last year.

Table 3: number of full time equivalent (FTE) Avon and Somerset employees at the start and end of 2022/23 (including career breaks).

| Full time equivalent | Start of 2022/23 | End of 2022/23 | Change | Change % |
|----------------------|------------------|----------------|--------|----------|
| Police Officers | 3056.7 | 3330.3 | 273.6 | 9.0% |
| Police Staff | 2655.5 | 2681.5 | 25.9 | 1.0% |
| PCSOs | 364.7 | 306.5 | -58.3 | -16.0% |
| Total | 6077.0 | 6318.2 | 241.3 | 4.0% |

Table 4: headcount number of Avon and Somerset employees at the start and end of 2022/23 (including career breaks).

| Headcount | Start of 2022/23 | End of 2022/23 | Growth | Growth % |
|-----------------|------------------|----------------|--------|----------|
| Police Officers | 3,127 | 3,393 | 266 | 8.5% |
| Police Staff | 2,952 | 2,966 | 14 | 0.5% |
| PCSOs | 381 | 320 | -61 | -16.0% |
| Total | 6,460 | 6,679 | 219 | 3.4% |

The number of people employed by Avon and Somerset Police has increased in the last year and this is primarily because of the increase in police officers. The reduction in PCSOs is in part a consequence of the significant police officer recruitment as many PCSOs successfully changed roles to be police officers.

Criminal Investigations Directorate (CID)

CID had no officer vacancies by the end of 2022/23. This ends many years of resourcing challenges in CID. However, it is worth noting that of the nearly 750 officers, over a fifth of these officers were still in training as part of the Degree Holder Entry Programme or Detective Now entry routes. This means although CID may have the prescribed capacity, it will still take several years from them to reach full capability.

A measure of capability is the number of accredited detectives (at Constable, Sergeant and Inspector rank). At the start of the 2022/23 year there were 386 accredited detectives and by the end of the year this had decreased to 324. Not all detectives are in CID as they may work in other roles such as offender management or Professional Standards. When looking just at CID, this decreased from 210 to 183. This decrease is not unexpected when considering turnover of officers leaving the force against the time it takes officers to become accredited: which is two years for the detective direct entry

programme (DHEP). The Constabulary are projecting it will take until September 2025 before they reach their target number of (accredited) Detective Constables.

Police staff recruitment

To improve the delivery of the police staff recruitment the Constabulary held ‘voice of the customer’ events with hiring managers to gain feedback on current processes. Following this a review was conducted of all the processes, which has identified 60 outputs which are currently being worked on. This includes setting Service Level Agreements for the team and hiring managers to speed up the recruitment process which will help continuity of services to the public and improve the candidate and hiring manager experience.

A digital talent bank has also been developed so that candidates can register their interest in working in digital, technology and data. These fields are particularly competitive especially given the lower salaries offered in the public sector.

PCSO Recruitment

The Constabulary have now re-introduced face to face events across Avon and Somerset for people who are interested in becoming a PCSO. In addition to this a pre-interview workshop has been introduced which covers the Competency Values Framework and interview techniques. These roles have also been promoted on social media with a ‘day in the life of a PCSO’ story.

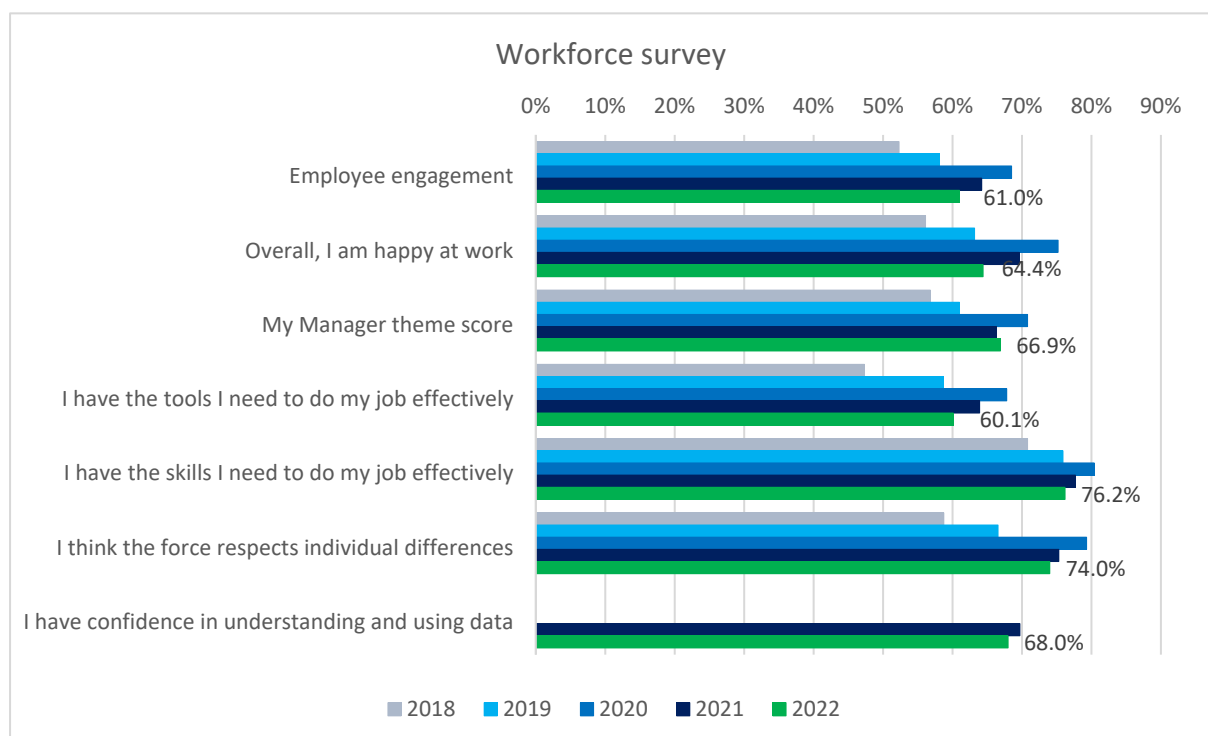


Figure 28: Avon and Somerset Police workforce survey results for the years 2018 – 2022.

Almost all measures from the workforce survey saw a decrease (at a force level) in 2022 compared to 2021; however they remained higher than in 2018 or 2019. The results were scrutinised through the most senior governance meetings and individual directorates are taking forward actions based on the results; some teams will also receive support from People and Organisational Development team.

Leadership Academy

The PCC and Chief Constable are clear on developing leaders who understand and demonstrate the force values and College of Police Competency and Values Framework (CVF) to deliver outstanding policing. There has never been a more critical time in policing to focus on the development of culture to ensure the workforce behave and act to the highest standards.

The Leadership Academy is not the only activity to change the culture of the organisation but is critical in building capability. The Constabulary values – caring, courageous, inclusive and learning – and the fundamentals of emotional intelligence at the heart of this development. Every course has been designed to enable progression and core elements include self-awareness, reflection and leadership.

In January 2023 the Constabulary fully launched the Leadership Academy Platform which is much more user-friendly. This includes a self-serve option for all ‘blue line’ leadership courses (these are the ones available to the whole workforce). This platform allows for easier tracking and reporting on views, course attendance, CPD completion and engagement. It has automated calendar invites and event reminders; colleagues are able to view their upcoming and historic development within their personalised profile page and can directly link to their Individual Performance Review; the system will automatically recommend suitable training; and it can promote courses with lower attendance and even share national events through the system. There are also automated feedback forms meaning that colleagues are asked for immediate feedback and again after a year if and how the training has impacted them in their roles.

Throughout 2022 1,160 people were trained through the Leadership Academy. From the launch of the new digital platform to the end of the year (less than three months) then were 259 people trained and 585 future bookings.

The Leadership Academy was also subject of a review in the last year and as a result of this it is being expanded to include a new operational leadership programme to prepare people prior to being promoted into first line manager roles, rather than after being promoted.

Neurodiversity

The Constabulary are trying to remove barriers for neurodivergent candidates by making some adaptations to the interview process. In addition to this a one year supported internship programme was run in the last year. This involved the recruitment of 10 people with SEND. This has received some really positive feedback from the interns and both internal and external stakeholders. Due to the success of the programme the Constabulary intend to run another scheme next year.

The latest People Survey showed that 10% of the workforce consider themselves to be neurodivergent. People who identified as neurodivergent are 10% less happy than those who are not. People who are neurodiverse may need specific support in their roles and the Constabulary are improving how they do things through training, specialist support and sharing knowledge and experiences. The Constabulary are a leading force in relation to neurodiversity awareness, and are currently working with the College of Policing to review how policing can further improve in supporting neurodiverse colleagues and community members.

The Constabulary are finding that more student officers, in the last few years, are being diagnosed with autism, ADHD, dyspraxia and, most commonly, dyslexia. However, trainers have not previously had bespoke training to support these students. There is somewhat of a hidden ‘peak’ of undiagnosed neurodivergent conditions as the understanding of this was very low until recent years, and as such most adults will have never been diagnosed in schools as they are now.

Last year the Constabulary commissioned Creased Puddle (a specialist organisation) to provide a programme for Trainers and Assessors to support their understanding of neurodiversity in the workplace to ensure they are able to train and assess all people effectively and inclusively. Although this was introduced because of student officers it has led to a greater understanding that many current officers may be neurodivergent and they will also benefit from this. It is now being rolled out to tutors and other key roles across the organisation.

“Overall, the training that I have received within Avon and Somerset constabulary has helped me to strive to being a better police officer, a better trainer and above all a better me. I genuinely feel very lucky to work for an organisation that I have found to be so accepting and supportive of Neurodiversity.”

Personal Development Unit Trainer/Assessor

Technology

Innovative practice: The constabulary has pioneered robotic process automation in policing

The constabulary has pioneered the use of robotic process automation to improve efficiency. This involves conducting tasks automatically rather than requiring manual work by an individual. The constabulary has 41 automated processes. These include pay, vetting, victim care, intelligence and the IT service desk. This practice effectively removes routine tasks from workloads.

The robotic process automation programme has been in place for three years. The constabulary is able to quantify the benefits and told us that it has effectively saved the equivalent of 73 full-time employees. These efficiency and capacity benefits are considerable.

[HMICFRS – PEEL 2021/22 – An inspection of Avon and Somerset Constabulary](#)

OPCC oversight

OPCC oversight of Constabulary capability has included a focus on ensuring systems and processes support an efficient and effective police service. Changes in 2022/23 included: major investment in new IT systems including Enterprise Resource Planning software replacement, ICASE case management system, and Office365. Contracts were agreed for the redevelopment of Trinity Road Police Station, a business case was approved for the redevelopment of Yeovil Police Station, and having invested in an Inquiry Office at Lewis House in Bath, the PCC has been proactive in pursuing opportunities to develop a new City Centre response base.

OPCC Capability

Completion and implementation of the OPCC Office Review was a key focus for 2022/23. The review and resulting restructure realigned resources and responsibilities to respond effectively and efficiently to increased demand. This was supported by development of more efficient systems and processes, particularly in relation to HR functions and the introduction of a new Applicant Tracking System to improve candidate attraction and recruitment efficiency. The OPCC restructure was complemented by analysis of training needs, development of a learning and development plan, and an increased focus on staff wellbeing to ensure appropriate support and most effective working practices in a post-Covid hybrid working environment.

3. Demand management to increase visible policing and time to fight crime

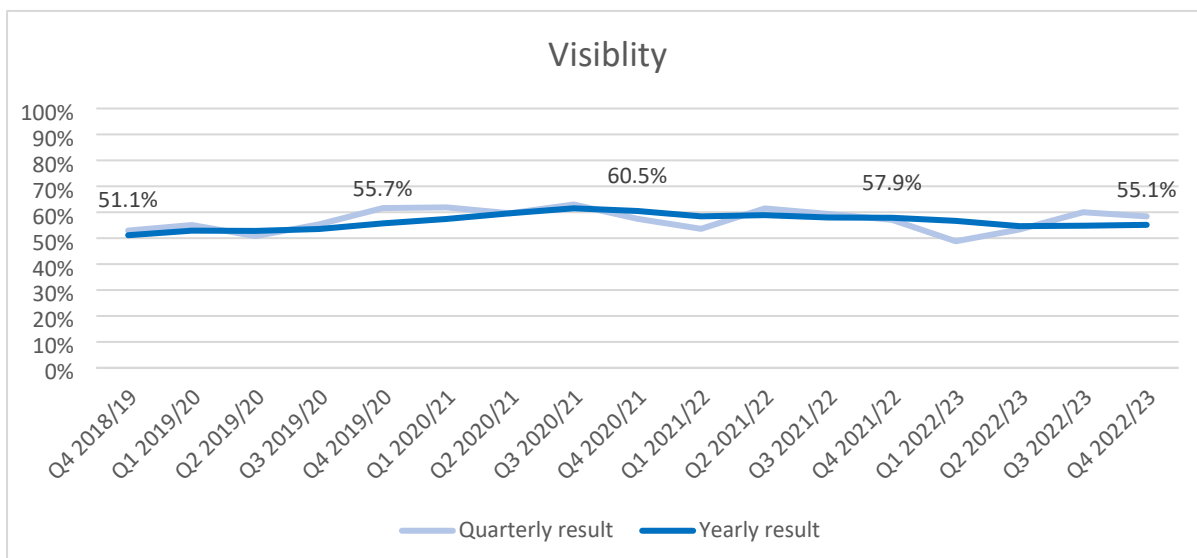


Figure 29: people who had seen a police officer or PCSO within the last month – as measured through the local police and crime survey – for the years 2018/19 – 2022/23.

As can be seen in the graph above police visibility had increased for three years peaking in 2020/21. This peaked during the first year of the pandemic which was to be expected as regular demand decreased and the police had to have a much more visible public presence enforcing COVID-19 regulations. It was also expected that in the last year – as normal demand began to increase and COVID-19 regulations were withdrawn – that visibility would reduce. It is positive that, even with this reduction the levels were still higher than before the pandemic.

The Constabulary’s ability to understand, map and respond to demand challenges continue to be a priority in order to achieve outstanding policing. Despite the increase in the precept, the financial situation over the next few years is projected to worsen. In order to save the money needed the Constabulary will have to make reductions in police staff levels. This reduction in resource makes it even more important to reduce the demand placed upon policing by pressures in other public services – to minimise time spent doing things which go beyond the policing purpose.

The Constabulary have started developing their five-year plan for how they will work towards delivering outstanding policing for everyone and the priorities of the Police and Crime Plan. One workstream that the Constabulary have starting exploring is how they can reduce non-crime demand. Humberside Police have a model called [Right Care, Right Person](#) which has helped reduce their demand so the Constabulary went to learn from this good practice. Some initial analysis of potential benefits in Avon and Somerset has been done and a full project has now started. This project is running in parallel with another project aiming to make the first point of contact process more efficient and effective.

Innovative practice: The constabulary works with, and seeks advice from, other emergency responders and mental health experts

In December 2021, the constabulary started piloting a scheme with the aim of providing a better service to those in mental health crisis.

Police control room staff based at the South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SWASFT) Mental Health Desk work with their SWASFT colleagues to make more effective decisions on how to respond to such people.

This involves ensuring there is clinician involvement in police response to incidents involving mental health concerns and more effective information sharing for vulnerable people, including those at risk of suicide or at higher risk of going missing. It also ensures that ambulance attendance is targeted at those most at need and not those where police officers would be the most appropriate response. And prompt information sharing and effective mental health support by clinicians over the phone means some calls can be resolved without physical attendance by the emergency services at all.

The scheme was piloted initially for six weeks, has been extended twice since then and was still running at the time of our inspection. It was evaluated in April 2022: the constabulary told us there had been a 70 percent increase in clinician involvement in police incidents, providing better service to those in crisis. Thirty-nine percent of incidents were resolved without needing police or ambulance attendance at all, with 25 percent not requiring police attendance and 30 percent not requiring ambulance attendance.

[HMICFRS – PEEL 2021/22 – An inspection of Avon and Somerset Constabulary](#)

Summer Demand

Every year there is a significant increase in demand for the police over the summer months. For the last two years work has been taking place to establish a whole-team approach which will spread the workload and ease the pressure on any one team.

The Constabulary have a new resource and forecasting tool which projects demand on a delay basis and this has been used to identify pressure points to better plan resourcing. This operation involves officers from neighbourhood policing and the Operational Support Directorate also responding to daily calls for service that would normally just be dealt with by Patrol. This model was used in 2022 and has been refined for use in the summer of 2023 following feedback from across the Constabulary.

4. Crime recording and response to calls for service

Crime recording

This has been given increased oversight at a strategic level with increased internal CDI audits which have been reporting into the most senior governance boards within the Constabulary and the PCC's Governance and Scrutiny Board. There has also been a new role created with a specific focus on CDI improvement.

In the last year a team, which was just being piloted, has been made permanent. This team identify and record missed crimes. In the last 12 months they have recorded 4,851 additional crimes that would otherwise have been unrecorded; this included 1,421 are domestic abuse crimes.

An action plan has been developed to address the areas for improvement identified in the PEEL report. One of the areas that has already seen progress is in the recording of rape crimes. A new system has been introduced where the computer searches for key words in the Constabulary's systems to identify where crime may not have been recorded properly. These records are then reviewed for compliance. This has already proved worthwhile in recording some missed crime and re-classifying others that had been incorrectly recorded.

Response to calls for service

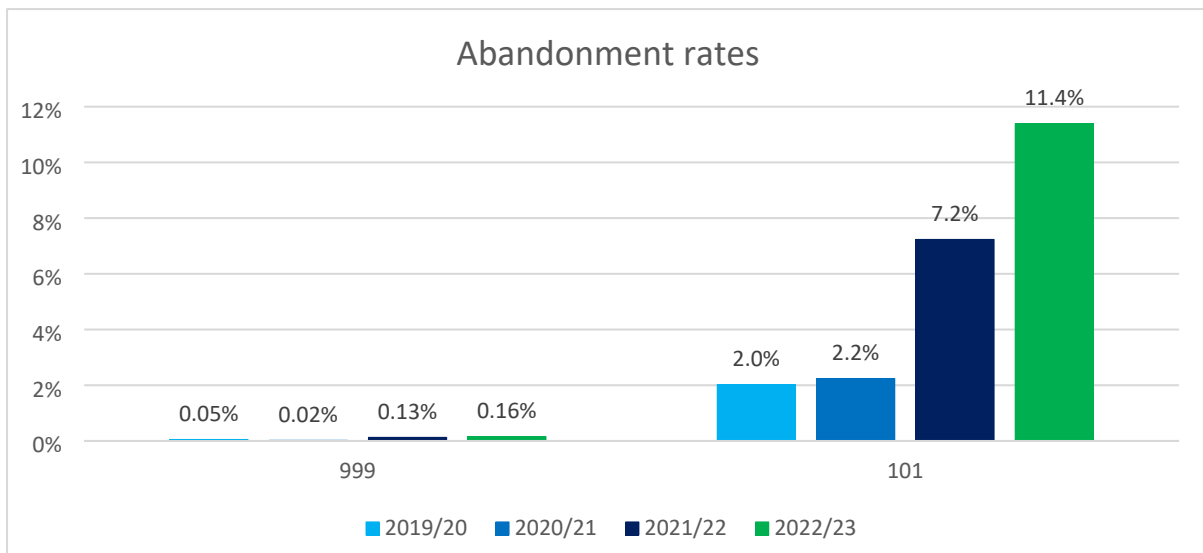


Figure 30: Avon and Somerset Police 999 and 101 abandonment rates, for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23.

The Constabulary are one of the best forces in the country for answering 999 calls quickly and are often ‘top of the table’ compared to other forces. However, there has been a significant increase in the 101 abandonment rate in the last year. The same call handlers answer 999 and 101 calls and so demand on these is linked. The overall number of calls was broadly similar in the last two years but there was a 14% increase in 999 calls and an 8% decrease in 101 calls. A portion of call handlers are ring-fenced to answer 999 calls. In addition to the increase in emergency calls the nature of them has changed over the past 2 years with a marked increase in callers in serious mental health crisis, missing people and generally more complex and longer calls to deal with.

The primary cause of this reduction in performance is due to staff shortages. A recent quote from the South West Contact Centre Recruitment Summit sums up the situation: *“Since returning to ‘business-as-usual’ after the pandemic has motivated contact centres to enable their teams to work from home, the industry has found itself amid a chronic staffing shortage that’s led to intense recruitment competition, more choice for employees, and demand for higher wages & better conditions.”* These difficulties are exacerbated in the Constabulary because unlike many call-centres they cannot offer remote working or financial incentives/bonuses.

However, it does offer the chance to make a real difference and to be part of a team that changes and saves lives – it is the unique selling point and something that aligns with many people’s values. They have refreshed and revised their recruitment strategy and have worked with Talent and Training School to agree double courses for both call handling and dispatch to address the immediate issue of large vacancy gaps. Due to the cost of living crisis and lack of applicants from the south of the force they have also opened a secondary call handling site at Express Park in Bridgwater. They have also reviewed shift patterns and offered more choice and options for staff and have focussed on wellbeing and support for the entire team.

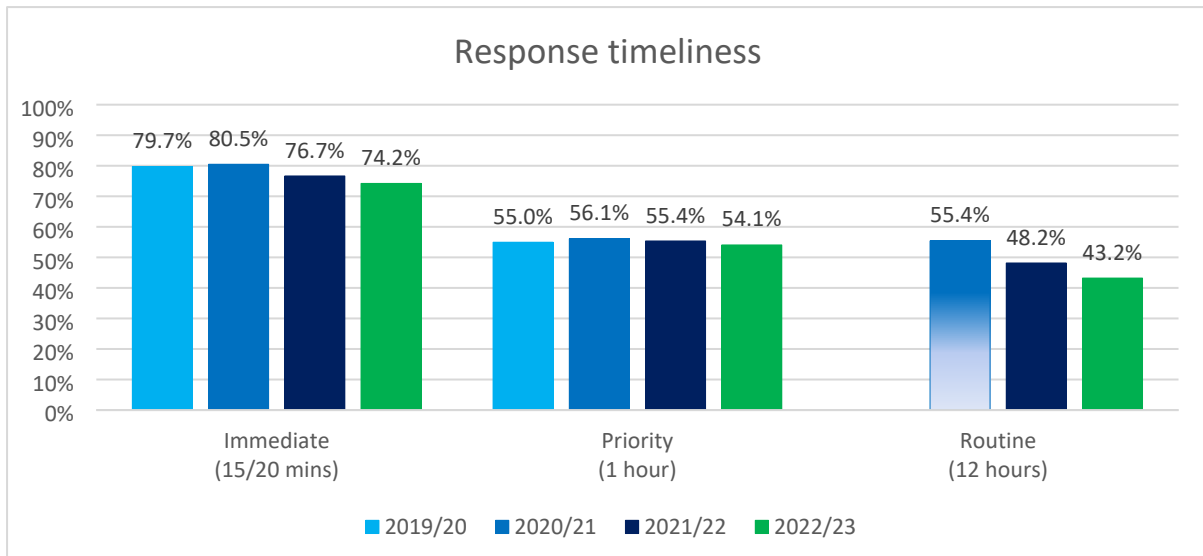


Figure 31: Avon and Somerset Police compliance with response SLAs, for calls graded 1-3, for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23. N.B. The Routine grade was only introduced from October 2020 so the 2020/21 data only represents half a year.

Response timeliness has seen another small decrease on the previous year. The ability to respond in a timely way is in part a symptom of the broader demand-resource challenges, particularly in Patrol, discussed in this report.

The key improvement which will help address response timeliness across the board is the increased number of police officers (discussed above). However most student officers start the career in Patrol and it is this team which respond to most of these calls. Therefore there are many Patrol officers still in training and being tutored which mean they cannot yet be deployed by themselves and must be ‘double crewed’. Combined with the time student officers must spend at university shows why the additional deployable resource is much less.

To respond to an ‘immediate’ call officers would usually drive ‘on blue lights’. To be able to drive ‘on blue lights’ (and above the speed limit) an officer must be ‘response driver’ trained. Without this training they must drive at the same speed and in the same way as any other driver, which clearly has an impact when trying to respond within 15 or 20 minutes. By increasing the number of driver trainers the Constabulary have been able to significantly increase the number of Patrol officers that are ‘response trained’ any by the end of the year they were in a position to start offering this training to officers in their third year of service.

One of the departments that has grown through Uplift is IAU. This team deal with desk-top investigations of crimes. The increase in staffing has allowed for a greater number of crimes to be allocated to this team to deal with and victims can often receive a phone call from an officer quicker than if they were waiting for an officer to attend in person.

The area of focus on demand management (above) should also help address this issue as it will free up capacity to respond in a timelier manner.

5. The Strategic Policing Requirement

The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) sets out those threats which, in the Home Secretary’s view, are the biggest threat to public safety and must be given due regard by PCCs when issuing or varying

Police and Crime Plans. The SPR supports PCCs as well as Chief Constables to plan, prepare and respond to these threats by clearly linking the local response to the national, highlighting the capabilities and partnerships that policing needs to ensure it can fulfil its national responsibilities.

A revised version of the SPR was published in February 2023 which provided strengthened detail around the action required from policing at the local and regional level to the critical national threats. The 2023 SPR sets out seven identified national threats. These are as follows:

- Terrorism
- Serious and Organised Crime (SOC)
- National cyber event
- Child Sexual Abuse
- Public disorder
- Civil emergencies
- Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

Given this annual report is for the year April 2022 to March 2023, it will not respond in detail to the revised SPR due to the timing of its publication. However, the PCC is confident they have given due regard to the six threat areas identified in the previous SPR in the Police and Crime Plan and in holding the Chief Constable to account. VAWG was added to the SPR in 2023 to reflect the threat it presents to public safety and confidence. This was already an area of focus within the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Plan.

In relation to the previous SPR the Constabulary conducted a self-assessment of their ability to respond to these threats. This assessment was based on the five Cs approach of assessing capacity, contribution, capability, consistency and connectivity. This self-assessment reported to and was reviewed by the Constabulary Management Board and the PCC’s Governance and Scrutiny Board. The Constabulary will be developing their response over the coming year and the OPCC will work with them to develop the oversight and assurance of this.

6. Environmental impact

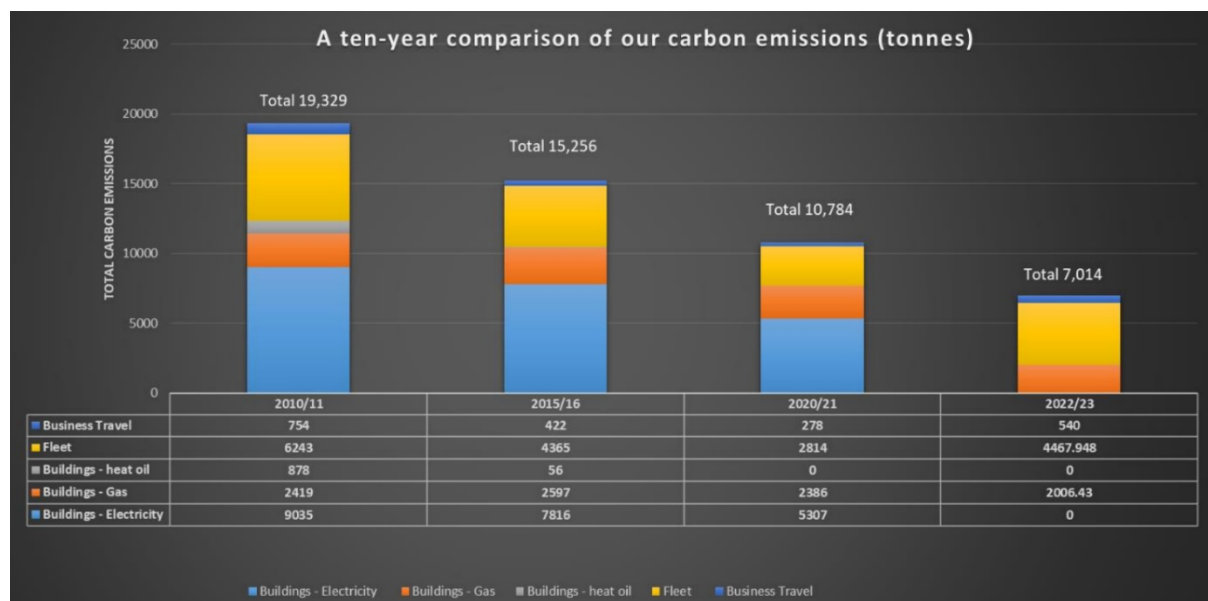


Figure 32: Avon and Somerset Police scope 1 and scope 2 carbon emissions.

Total carbon emissions in 2022/23 was 7,014 tonnes this is a 24% reduction on the previous year. It is important to note that the 0 carbon emissions from buildings electricity is because the Constabulary have changed their electricity plan so that the electricity used now comes entirely from renewable sources.

A key priority for the police is to be more visible in the community and to respond to more incidents more quickly. This will necessarily mean vehicles are used more. The medium term plan to tackle fleet emissions is to reduce the number of diesel vehicles by switching to petrol and electric vehicles; the aim is for 30% of the fleet to be electric by 2027.

Supported by a £35,000 Low Carbon Skills fund grant, the Constabulary have produced the first Decarbonisation Plan for the estate. The plan has already identified potential savings (in carbon emissions and money) which will be explored over the coming year. This planning has also put the organisation in a better position to get further sources of government funding in the future.

Consideration of a site's potential for onsite renewables, particularly solar panels, is now integral to the newly developed Standard Design Guide for police buildings in Avon and Somerset. The approved business case for the refurbishment of Broadbury Road Police Station in Bristol is an example of this where the agreed design includes the installation of solar array on the roof of the main building.

A new regional Sustainable Procurement policy has also been approved by the South West Police Procurement Service and this will help achieve a 'greener' supply chain going forward.

The full [Sustainability Annual Report can be read on the Constabulary's website](#).

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

Key activity and achievement during 2022-23

- As part of the HMICFRS PEEL assessment, the Constabulary was rated as ‘Outstanding’ at ‘engaging with and treating the public with fairness and respect’.
- However, cultural change is needed if public confidence in policing is to be rebuilt. The Chief Constable’s acknowledgement of institutional racism in summer 2023 represents an important step toward achieving this change, and the PCC is supporting the Constabulary to become a fairer organisation that provides a more equitable service.
- The OPCC have been developing the leadership, structures and funding needed to drive delivery of the recommendations from the [Identifying Disproportionality in the Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice System](#) report. Two key stakeholder events were hosted over 2022 to help shape the structure and strategic intent of the work. The OPCC supported the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) to establish a multi-agency sub-committee (Steering Committee). In March 2023 the Steering Committee held its first meeting. Membership and strategic ambitions have been defined and agreed. The committee confirmed joint funding for an Independent Scrutiny Board that will scrutinise the pace of progress and outcomes delivered through the programme.
- During 2022/23 the Constabulary were a pilot force for the College of Policing’s method of Public and Personal Safety Training; they have now fully adopted this. This annual refresher training covers the use of police powers and is based on dynamic situations and de-escalation as opposed to the previous method of training which was focussed on the specific skill in isolation. The training has recently been observed by a senior manager in the Independent Office for Police Conduct and it was highly regarded. Furthermore, independent analysis by the College of Policing has shown that since the pilot was introduced, the Constabulary has used force over 3,200 times less than the previous year.
- The Independent Scrutiny of Police Powers Panel’s review into a high-profile incident involving a black woman and child on a bus in Bedminster, launched in August, and correspondence with between the Panel Chair and Independent Office of Police Complaints has further increased awareness of the work of the PCC’s scrutiny panels. Three separate requests have been made to the Panel to review specific cases by members of the community during the past year, demonstrating confidence in the work of the scrutiny panel.
- A major focus for the year was a recruitment campaign, seeking to bring new volunteers to serve on the three PCC Scrutiny Panels and Independent Custody Visiting Scheme. The campaign was successful in attracting applications from a diverse mix and high calibre of applicants. 19 new volunteers have been appointed as a result. The campaign, delivered in collaboration with communications agency Purple Fish, has been shortlisted for a Public Relations and Communications Association Public Sector regional award. The DARE award for Public Sector recognises work by or on behalf of central government, local authorities, NHS trusts, fire authorities, police forces, executive agencies, non-departmental bodies.
- PSD have also introduced a cohort of volunteers, known as lived experience practitioners, who review complaint allegations relating to discrimination. The volunteers provide insight, based on their own experiences, and can help address emerging issues of internal and external discrimination.

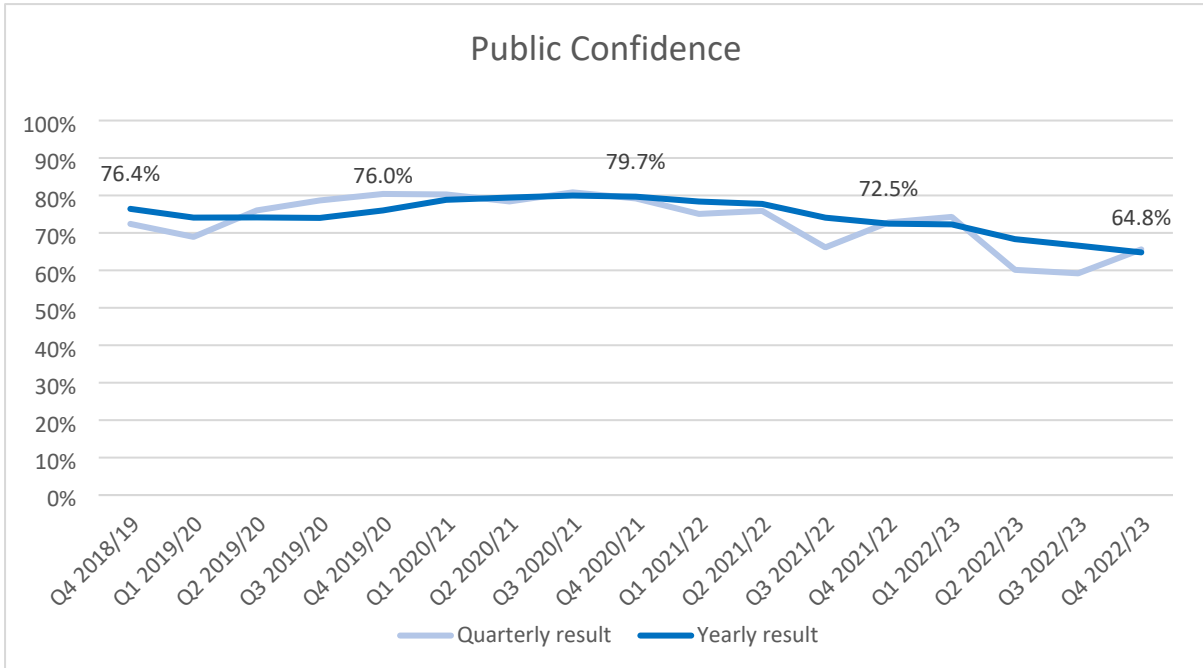


Figure 33: people that agree they have confidence in Avon and Somerset Police – as measured through the local police and crime survey – for the years 2018/19 – 2022/23.

The most recent year (2022/23) had the lowest annual result since the local survey began in 2014/15. The national Crime Survey for England and Wales shows a slightly higher estimated confidence level in Avon and Somerset Police at 70.1%. This is higher than the national level of 67.7% and places Avon and Somerset 14th out of 42 police forces.

1. Representative workforce

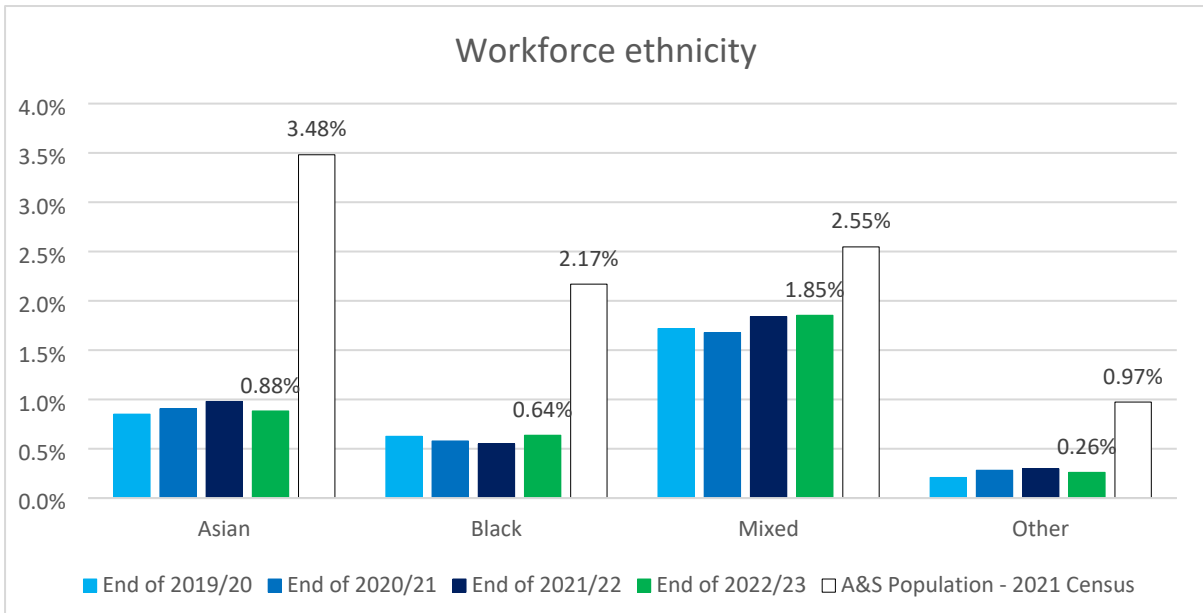


Figure 34: proportion of Avon and Somerset Police workforce whose ethnicity is Asian, Black, Mixed or Other; for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23; compared to the Avon and Somerset Population (2021 Census).

Table 5: number and proportion of Avon and Somerset Police workforce whose ethnicity is Asian, Black, Mixed or other; as at the start and end of 2022/23.

| | Asian | | Black | | Mixed | | Other | |
|---------------|--------|------|--------|------|--------|------|--------|------|
| | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % |
| 31 March 2022 | 66 | 0.98 | 37 | 0.55 | 124 | 1.84 | 20 | 0.30 |
| 31 March 2023 | 61 | 0.88 | 44 | 0.64 | 128 | 1.85 | 18 | 0.26 |

2022/23 saw a small increase of people whose ethnicity is Other than White, from 247 to 251. However as the workforce has expanded, overall this has not translated into greater diversity as a proportion which in fact reduced slightly from 3.67% to 3.63%. As can be seen above Avon and Somerset Police have particularly struggled to recruit/retain Asian people.

Safe to Say campaign

A key goal for policing is to increase representation across all protected characteristics. However, currently, there is a lack of data around the demographic make-up of forces where people choose “prefer not to say” on workforce related documents and responses. In order to address this the Safe to Say campaign was launched. The campaign explains who sees the information, what it’s used for and how it’s stored and how the data can directly help to shape policing now, and in the future, by informing the development of services and recruitment plans.

Local and national reports

To combat Institutional Racism the Constabulary are committed to implementing actions and recommendations in the local report [Identifying Disproportionality in the Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice System](#) and the national [Police Race Action Plan](#). These will be discussed more in the area of focus on *inequality and disproportionality*, but both have actions relating to the workforce.

Recruitment support

In the last year the Constabulary have increased the use of ‘Familiarisation Events’ to help engage with potential applicants to better inform people about recruitment processes and help increase candidates’ confidence when applying for roles.

The Constabulary also run a Positive Action Programme of work to support under-represented communities with their recruitment journey. The team encourage and support applicants through both Police Officer and Police Staff roles, running workshops on the application process, pre-assessments and interviews for the recruitment journey as well as signposting our internal workforce to mentoring, coaching and support.

Safe Spaces

To help promote an inclusive culture it is important people are able to discuss issues around diversity issues without fear of judgement whilst also developing new skills through shared knowledge. Over the last year the Outreach Team have provided a lot more internal support for officers and staff by way of accommodating “Safe Spaces” to have these discussions. Since 2021 the team have delivered sessions to over 500 participants across the organisation. These sessions have allowed the workforce to explore the impact of significant policing events as well as exploring their emotional impact on different communities.

Race Matters Week and Black History Month

As part of Black History Month, in October 2022, a Race Matters Roadshow was held. This was a five-day event, supported by the Outreach Team, across different police stations to facilitate conversations around race and the Police Race Action Plan, and it included a number of external, influential keynote speakers. This roadshow received broadly positive feedback.

Demystifying Islam sessions

The Outreach Team have held a number of regular internal sessions around 'Demystifying Islam' and 'Discover Ramadan'. The Demystifying Islam sessions focussed on increasing understanding of Islam and the diverse Muslim communities in Avon and Somerset and included community engagement trips. The Discover Ramadan sessions focussed on why Ramadan is important, what to expect with regards to staff who were fasting and, from a policing perspective, the changes they might see in local community habits.

2. Inequality and disproportionality

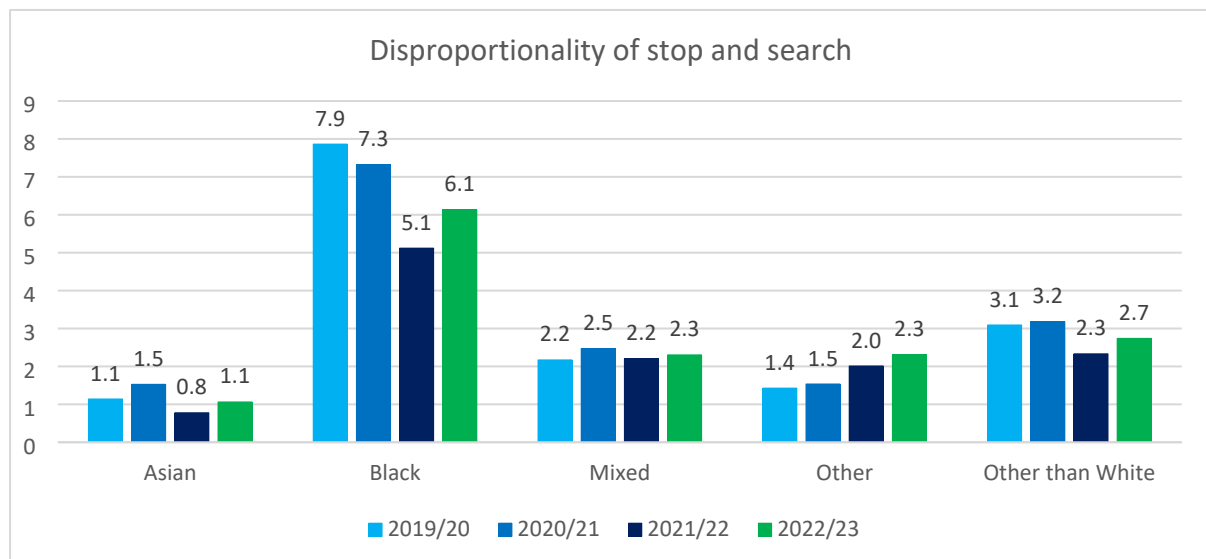


Figure 35: disproportionality of stop and search in Avon and Somerset for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23. This shows how many times more ethnic minority people were stopped and searched compared to White people.

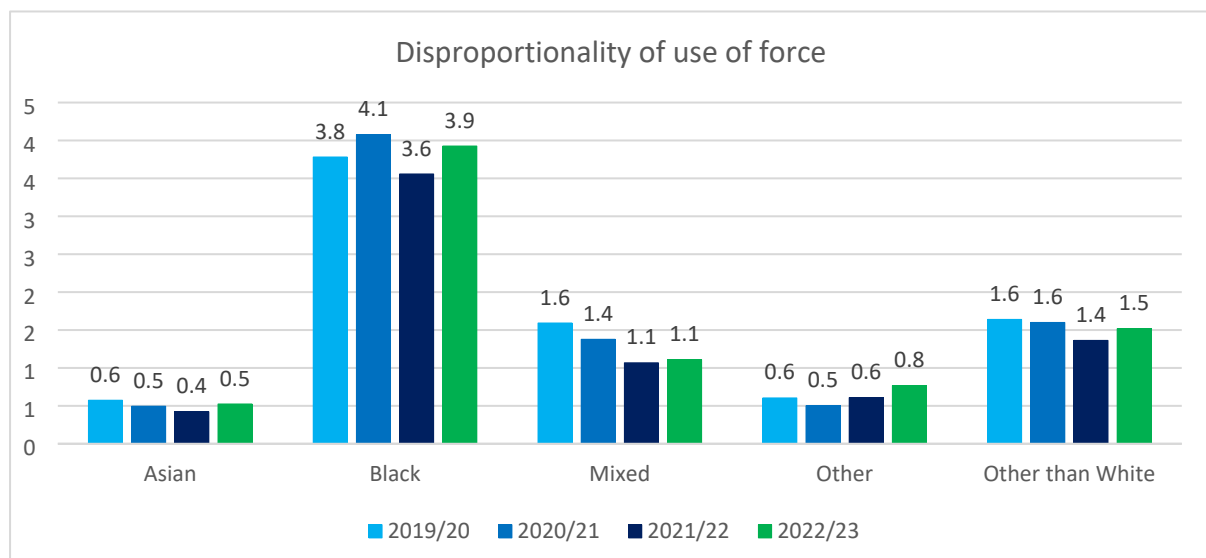


Figure 36: disproportionality of use of force in Avon and Somerset for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23. This shows how many times more ethnic minority people were subject to use of force compared to White people.

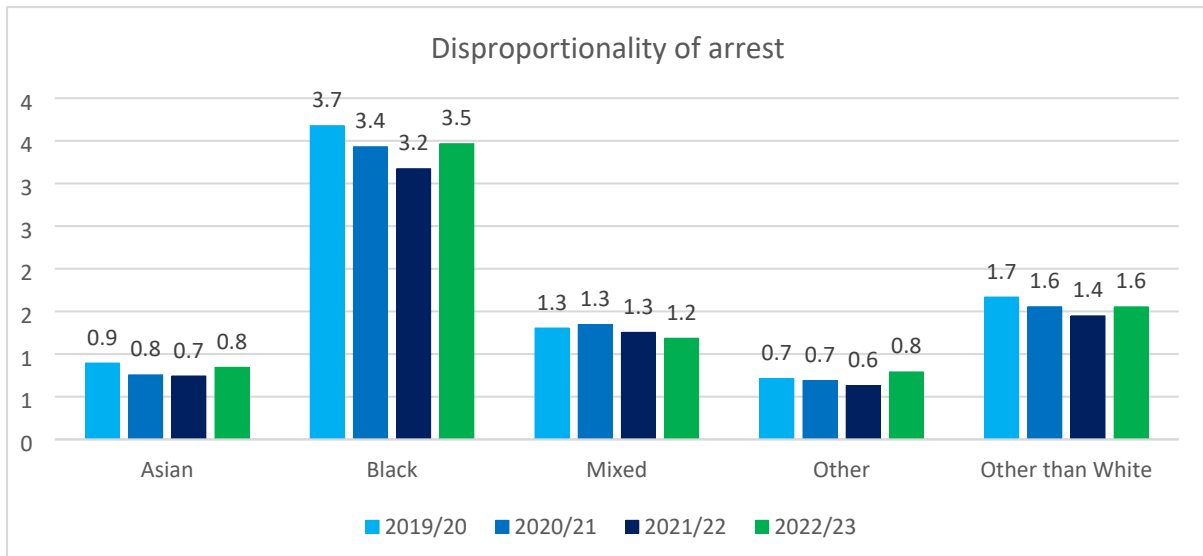


Figure 37: disproportionality of arrest by Avon and Somerset for the years 2019/20 – 2022/23. This shows how many times more ethnic minority people were arrested compared to White people.

There is still significant disproportionality in the use of stop and search and use of force by Avon and Somerset Police. Findings from an HMICFRS report showed that in 2019/20 these figures were broadly similar to national levels. Similar disproportionality can also be seen in the arrest data.

In February 2022 [Identifying Disproportionality in the Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice System](#) was published. There are 83 recommendations in total covering the police, the PCC, CPS, His Majesty's Prison & Probation Service, the Local Criminal Justice Board, youth justice and local authorities. The Constabulary had the majority of recommendations; the below list shows the recommendations for each theme that include the police even if not exclusively:

- Stop and search – 13
- Youth justice – 8
- Out of court disposals – 9
- HR – 10

In May 2022 the National Police Chiefs' Council and College of Policing released the national [Police Race Action Plan](#). This plan aims to improve outcomes for people who are Black, or of Black heritage, and has four workstreams:

1. Represented (internal culture and inclusivity)
2. Not over-policed (use of powers)
3. Involved (community engagement and relations)
4. Not under-protected against victimisation.

To combat Institutional Racism the Constabulary have brought together the response to both of these reports into one project of work (Race in Policing), which is led by Assistant Chief Constable Will White. This is governed by a monthly delivery group which reports into the Confidence and Legitimacy Committee. Each of the workstreams and themes have senior leads assigned to them. Below shows some of the progress over the last year.

- The national Our Black Workforce survey was completed by Black police officers and staff across the UK. Although the findings were only made available at a national level, they have been combined with the local people survey to provide a more holistic understanding of how the Constabulary employees are feeling/experiencing racism.
- Detailed data on police staff recruitment is now instantly accessible providing insight into the drop off points throughout the recruitment process for specific ethnic groups.

- A review has been undertaken on stop and search data and stop and search policy with a number of options for improvement provided to Chief Officers. Stakeholder engagement and consultation now required to develop the best way forward.
- The internal scrutiny team (relating to use of police powers) now has over 80 officers and members of police staff reviewing stop search and use of force incidents every quarter. A working group takes responsibility for ensuring the feedback and learning from these reviews is delivered to officers and supervisors in a meaningful and auditable way.
- Work has started with a community based multi-media and content production company to better engage with young people on the issues around stop and search (knowing rights, myth busting, building better relationships between police and young people etc).
- A Community Confidence Group has been established in Bristol. Focus of next meeting will be on the police race action plan and gathering views of the community under each of the workstreams.
- “Behind the badge” workshops running in Bristol within community settings. Talking to young people about their lived and professional experience of policing.
- Public confidence survey of Black residents is being delivered across Bristol through a local community interest company.
- Young persons’ Independent Advisory Group has been established with six meetings held to date.
- Work has started to explore a deferred prosecution model which does not require the admission of guilt on behalf of the suspect, which insight shows can be a barrier to young Black males being offered a non-prosecution outcome.
- In order to improve data quality a blog and video have been produced for officers and staff explaining why self-defined ethnicity matters, why they should not feel awkward to ask people, and why they should not assume they know somebody’s ethnicity.

PCC’s role

The focus of 2022/23 has been on putting in place the leadership, structures and funding needed to drive delivery [Identifying Disproportionality in the Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice System](#).

In response to the report PCC, as Chair of the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) sought an LCJB lead to steward this work and Chair the LCJB Multi Agency Sub-Committee (Steering Committee). Chief Constable Sarah Crew and Cllr Asher Craig (Bristol City Council) stepped forward to co-chair this work. Two key stakeholder events were hosted over 2022 to help shape the structure and strategic intent of the work led with the assistance of independent change consultancy. As the work progressed, a small Programme Team was established to start driving the programme and set up the Steering Committee. In March 2023 the Steering Committee held its first meeting. There was representation from police, OPCC, youth justice, Crown Prosecution Service, HM Prison Service, education and the local authorities. Membership and strategic ambitions have been defined and agreed.

The Steering Committee have now confirmed joint funding for an Independent Scrutiny Board that will scrutinise the pace of progress and outcomes delivered through the programme. The Board will be made up of community members all with lived experiences of the disproportionalities the report highlights. This will be chaired by Desmond Brown, and deputy chaired by Maya Mata-Kole. Work is now underway to identify and align resources with the working groups that will deliver the changes (pillars) and identify ‘pillar leads’ who will report into the Steering Committee.

Collaboration and multi-agency problem solving through the Steering Committee coupled with independent scrutiny and strong governance through the LCJB will enable tangible changes to be delivered not only in relation to the recommendations but cultural changes in how agencies work

together to use data and refine process to reduce negative impacts and outcomes for Black, Asian and ethnic minority communities.

Positive progress has been made in implementing recommendations. Of the six recommendations involving the OPCC, four have been implemented, including all of those solely within OPCC remit.

The programme has not been without its challenges in the pace of progress, securing resources and in the willingness to accept recommendations in a small number of cases. The coming year will focus on recruitment and onboarding of the Independent Scrutiny Board and implementation of the ‘pillar leads’ to lead operational delivery of recommendations.

3. Use of police powers

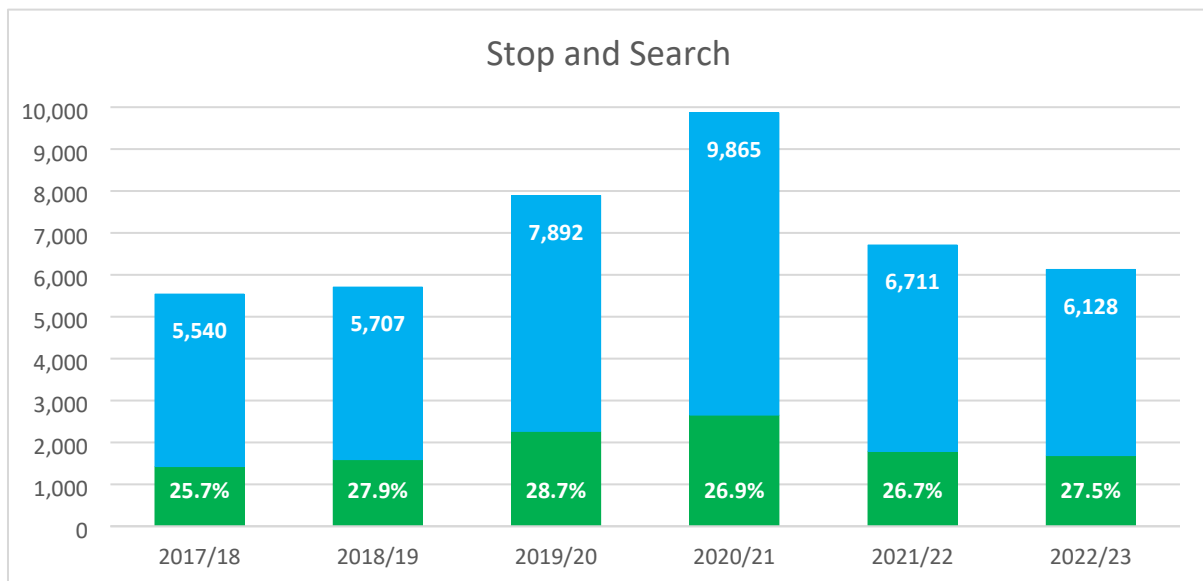


Figure 38: number of stop and searches conducted in Avon and Somerset and percentage that resulted in positive outcomes for the years 2017/18 – 2022/23.

The main focus of effort on the use of police powers has been the disproportionate use against Black and ethnic minority people (discussed above). However, it should be noted that improvements through that work will inevitably benefit all communities because at its core it’s about ensuring procedural justice and fairness for all. In the last year there have been 742 complaint allegations related to “Police powers, policies and procedures”. 605 of these were dealt with under Schedule 3 of which 7.4% were upheld.

Children and Young People in Stop Search

There have been concerns raised locally and nationally about the use of Stop and Search on children and young people. A project – jointly funded by the PCC and the Constabulary – is working with a Bristol based Community Interest Company to create online content aimed at children and young people to inform them of their rights if they or any of their friends or family are stopped and searched. It will seek to explain what a good stop search should look like as well providing them with the tools to make sure their voice can be heard if they have an experience of stop and search they feel falls below these standards.

The Constabulary have continued to work with community leaders and charitable organisations to improve youth scrutiny provision relating to the use of police powers. This work aims to give young

people, particularly those who may not have trust and confidence in the police, a means by which they can give their views on some of the stop search and use of force incidents. The first session is planned for July 2023 and will follow the same structure as the ISOPPP with feedback from this session being shared with officers in the same way. It also seeks to develop relationships with young people who may currently think twice about speaking with a police officer or member of police staff.

An Inspector in the Early Intervention Team has been appointed as a tactical lead with a focus on children and young people in stop and search; they have in depth knowledge and understanding of young people and importance of safeguarding. The tactical lead now holds a working group of officers who have volunteered to be involved in this work, with subject matter experts in dealing with young victims of crime, practitioners from uniformed teams and those involved in tackling county lines. The group are committed to ensuring safeguarding practices in stop and search and a child centred, trauma informed approach becomes standard practice for any stop search of a young person.

Training

During 2022/23 the Constabulary were a pilot force for the College of Policing's method of Public and Personal Safety Training; they have now fully adopted this. This annual refresher training covers the use of police powers and is based on dynamic situations and de-escalation as opposed to the previous method of training which was focussed on the specific skill in isolation.

The training has recently been observed by a senior manager in the Independent Office for Police Conduct and it was highly regarded. Furthermore, independent analysis by the College of Policing has shown that since the pilot was introduced, the Constabulary has used force over 3,200 times less than the previous year.

PCC's role

The Independent Scrutiny of Police Powers Panel (ISOPPP)

The ISOPPP is made up of diverse volunteers from the local community, the Panel scrutinises the use of stop and search, use of force, use of Taser and body worn video. During 2022/23 the panel met four times: in April, July, October 2022 and February 2023, and reviewed over 240 cases. Three cases were referred to the Panel for review by the community, demonstrating awareness of and confidence in the work of the PCC's scrutiny panels. The Panel's review into a high-profile incident involving a black woman and child on a bus in Bedminster, launched in August, and correspondence with between the Panel Chair and Independent Office of Police Complaints has further increased awareness of the work of the PCC's scrutiny panels. Three separate requests have been made to the Panel to review specific cases by members of the community during the past year, demonstrating confidence in the work of the scrutiny panel. [Reports are published on the PCC's website.](#)

Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) Scheme

Maintaining a local ICV scheme is a legal duty for PCCs. This scheme involves volunteers from the community making unannounced visits to police centres in Patchway, Keynsham and Bridgwater to check on the welfare of detainees in custody, the conditions in which they are held and that their rights and entitlements are being observed. A separate annual report is published on the PCC's website. A total of 27 volunteers served as custody visitors during 2022/23, and 148 visits took place. Feedback is reported to and addressed by the Force Head of Custody. Issues identified during 2022/23 included: visits being aborted due to staffing levels; ongoing lack of Local Authority (statutory) accommodation for post-charge child detainees; continued shortage of places of safety for detainees with mental health issues. Improvements in response to issues raised by custody visitors include: provision of nurses in custody (following a change of contract); supply of anti-rip blankets; modifications to the print out custody visitors receive to show the detainee arrival time, enabling visits to be prioritised. Good practice was identified including neurodiversity-friendly cells and décor at

Keynsham Custody Unit; detainees arrested on warrant being taken directly to court, assisting with capacity; 'offer culture' whereby Detention Officers Are proactive in offering healthcare practitioner visits to detainees. [Further information and the ICV Annual Report is published on the PCC's website.](#)

Out of Court Disposals Scrutiny Panel

Out of court disposals are a means of resolving an investigation without prosecution through the courts. This panel brings together magistrates, professionals from numerous criminal justice agencies and victims services who review the use of out of court disposals. During 2022/23 the panel met in June, September, December 2022 and March 2023 and reviewed 120 cases on the following themes: Disproportionality (youth cases); Hate Crime Conditional Caution cases; Assault against Emergency Workers; Domestic Abuse Conditional Cautions; and use of Community Resolutions. All Community Resolutions used in serious violence and sexual offences cases were reviewed at every meeting. Changes made as a result of issues identified by the panel include: convening a partnership including representatives of the five Youth Offending Teams to ensure a consistent approach in youth cases across the Force area; development of a Force policy on use of compensation in out of court disposals cases; launch of an updated specialist intervention for Assault against Emergency Worker cases. The Panel continues to support the Force in preparing for implementation of the new Two Tier Plus Framework, due in 2023. [Panel reports are published on the PCC's website.](#)

Volunteer Recruitment

A major focus for the year was a recruitment campaign, seeking to bring new volunteers to serve on the three PCC Scrutiny Panels and Independent Custody Visiting Scheme. The campaign was successful in attracting applications from a diverse mix and high calibre of applicants. 19 new volunteers have been appointed as a result. The campaign, delivered in collaboration with communications agency Purple Fish, has been shortlisted for a Public Relations and Communications Association Public Sector regional [DARE award](#).

4. Complaints

Complaints against the police are either handled by the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) for the more serious incidents or internally by Avon and Somerset Police through their Professional Standards Department (PSD). All police forces must adhere to a legislative framework when handling complaints. [Data about complaints can be found on the IOPC bulletin](#). This shows in Avon and Somerset there were 641 complaint allegations per 1,000 employees. This is more than the national rate of 547 but lower than the average of most similar forces at 700.

Handling complaints fairly and effectively is fundamental to a legitimate service and maintaining public confidence. PSD has developed an assurance framework which has enabled the department to understand where to focus its improvement activity on the complaint handling procedures.

A key focus of the department has been to establish a Learning Assessment Tasking Group that identifies lessons and Continued Professional Development opportunities through the outcomes of complaints and misconduct cases. The department holds quarterly meetings with stakeholders across the organisation capturing and disseminating learning, resulting in improvements to force policy, procedures, and training.

PSD have also introduced a cohort of volunteers, known as lived experience practitioners, who review complaint allegations relating to discrimination. The volunteers provide insight, based on their own experiences, and can help address emerging issues of internal and external discrimination.

PCC's role

The PCC and his office have regular meetings with the IOPC and PSD to discuss serious and complex cases, and topical issues such as vetting, misconduct and misogyny in the police service following high-profile national cases and the subsequent HMICFRS report. In addition there are a number of other workstreams outlined below.

Complaint reviews

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

Table 6: number of complaints made to Avon and Somerset Police that had a right of review to the PCC and the number of review applications received by the PCC and the outcomes of these for the years 2020/21 and 2022/23.

| | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|
| Number of complaints eligible for PCC review | 891 | 1034 | 899 |
| Number of review applications | 190 | 221 | 167 |
| % review applications upheld | 19% | 22% | 20% |
| % review applications not upheld | 66% | 69% | 68% |
| % review applications void | 14% | 9% | 13% |

This table shows that in the previous two years 21% of complaints, which were eligible for a PCC review, had reviews triggered. However, in the most recent year this decreased to 19%.

The PCC's officer provides regular feedback to the Constabulary: both individual and organisational in order to improve the complaint handling process. One of the main themes identified is the need to improve communication with complainants so they can better understand the process and the reasons for the particular findings.

Independent Scrutiny of Police Complaints Panel (ISPCP)

This panel is made up of volunteers from the local community, the Panel met in June, September, and December 2022, and March 2023. The Panel welcomed presentations from the IOPC and scrutinised themes including discreditable conduct, complaints against police call handlers, complaints from young people (16-19 years) and discrimination. Feedback was used to inform organisational learning and improvement. Reports are published on the [PCC's website](#). The Panel welcomed 5 new members following the successful volunteer recruitment campaign, taking the Panel from 6 to 11 members.

Police Appeal Tribunals

Where an officer is subject to a misconduct hearing and is dissatisfied with the result they can appeal. This appeals process is known as a Police Appeal Tribunal and is coordinated by the OPCC. During 2022/23 there were two appeals.

5. Data and information

In the last year the Constabulary processed 92% of Freedom of Information Requests within the specified timeframes and 89.8% of Subject Access Requests.

The constabulary uses data effectively to understand resources and assets it needs to meet demand

The constabulary's data is drawn from its systems to provide detailed insight. The primary way this is done is via Qlik Sense. We found that officers and staff, as well as their supervisors and managers, are accomplished in using the data to understand the demand each constabulary area is experiencing. And we found examples of it being used to manage information at all levels, from neighbourhood policing officers understanding who the registered sex offenders in their areas are, to tracking use of force and stop and search across the constabulary area.

[HMICFRS – PEEL 2021/22 – An inspection of Avon and Somerset Constabulary](#)

Avon and Somerset Data Accelerator Programme

The Data Accelerator programme was a successful bid for £1 million of funding to support the development of how data is shared across the police and local authorities. The funded programme ran from October 2021 – March 2023. The programme achieved a number of key deliverables which included:

- The establishment of secure data transfer mechanisms to allow local authorities and police to share data and receive daily updates
- A consistent framework of Information Governance documentation to support local authorities
- Training provided to analysts across the Avon and Somerset Partnership
- A suite of insight tools for safeguarding staff within schools and the police Lighthouse safeguarding unit

The programme designed and implemented a Think Family Education App (TFE) in Bristol and Somerset. TFE takes information from the local authority and police into the school environment. TFE is updated overnight so provide 'real time' information on the pupils such as their status in the safeguarding system; services they and their family are open to including contact details of lead professionals; and notifications of critical events such as domestic violence, reported missing, or having entered the youth justice system. 110 schools in Bristol are now accessing TFE and there are an average of 2,350 searches a week. It is used by Designated Safeguarding Leads and pastoral care staff to strengthen their work in terms of early intervention and prevention by enhancing their understanding of pupils lives.

The academic research alongside the implementation commented in the final report: *"The TFE had enabled staff to identify new information and promoted their ongoing awareness of and concern for their most vulnerable pupils. Staff reported benefiting from having real-time, reliable data alongside historical, contextual data when making decisions."*

6. Scrutiny, performance and learning

Constabulary scrutiny, performance and learning

The Constabulary's Integrated Performance and Quality Report (IPQR) is a monthly assessment that provides an overview of performance progress. It highlights key areas for improvement based on the Performance Control Strategy. This report is overseen and extensively discussed at the monthly Constabulary Management Board, and the PCC's Governance and Scrutiny Board. These discussions help identify necessary actions and interventions to maintain and improve performance.

Integrated Performance and Quality Framework

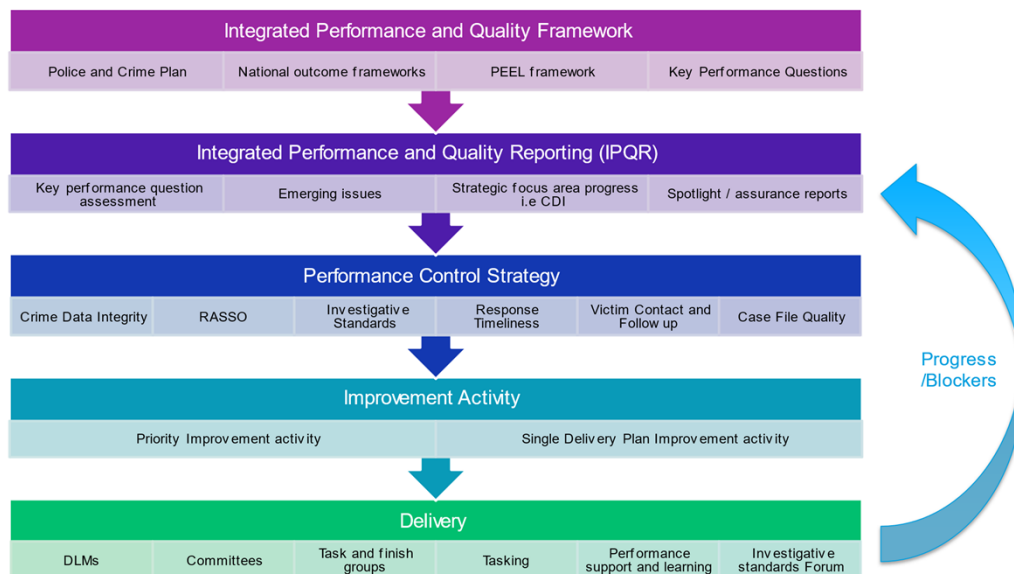


Figure 37: Avon and Somerset Police Integrated Performance and Quality Framework Overview.

To strengthen the scrutiny in this area the Constabulary have also introduced a new Performance and Learning Support Meeting which is held monthly and chaired by the Constabulary's Chief of Staff. Its purpose is to:

- Drive focus and communication of force performance priorities and required improvement activity
- Ensure a shared understanding of force performance challenges amongst tactical leads
- Provide tactical performance improvement support and learning
- Identify performance outliers – opportunities for learning
- Identify performance blockers to improvement
- Escalate complex/significant issues to CMB

Investigative Standards Forum

This is a new monthly meeting chaired by an Assistant Chief Constable and has an explicit focus on supporting performance improvements and overseeing progress against improvement plans. Its purpose is to support the constabulary to consistently deliver quality, victim centred investigations that engage with victims, starting from the first point of contact through to the finalisation of the crime report. The aim is to improve positive outcome rates, convict offenders, whilst improving victim satisfaction and prioritising meaningful investigations into high harm, high solvability cases.

Following on from assurance and staff engagement work to improve the standards of investigations and service to our victims, a new supervisor review template has been introduced to support supervisors in guiding their staff with investigations. The template was tested and then improved using feedback from supervisors. Early findings indicate there is a notable improvement in the quality of supervisor reviews between those that do and those than do not use the template.

Governance

The Constabulary commissioned an independent governance review which reported in May 2022. The findings were largely positive with a number of recommendations made, and a revised Governance Framework and ways of working have been implemented as a result. A new Performance and Learning Support Meeting was introduced (see below); and to address a gap in relation to the formal management of change activity, the Change Portfolio Committee and Design Forum have been set up.

Oversight and scrutiny arrangements in place

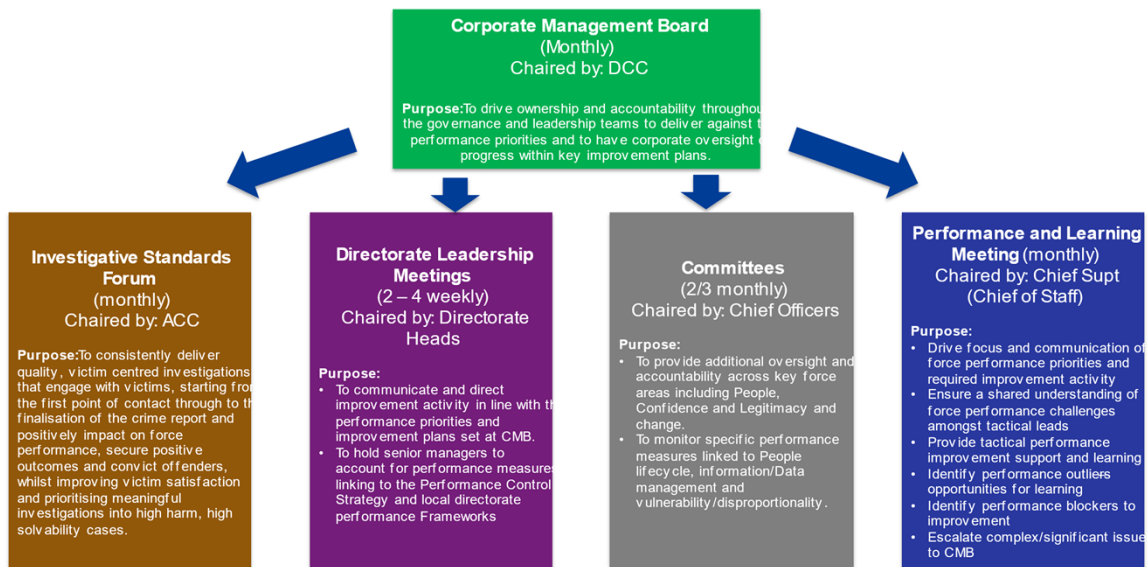


Figure 38: Avon and Somerset Police oversight and scrutiny arrangements overview.

Organisational Learning

The Constabulary has implemented a new model to provide a consistent procedure to capture and report Organisational Learning across the organisation. This is administered by the Portfolio Management Office and allows for structured and ad-hoc organisational learning feeds. A new e-form process is in place for the organisation to submit ad-hoc organisational learning. Although there is a defined process the engagement with it has been a little slow and over the coming year they will be working to increase the visibility and the quality and frequency of submissions, as well as ensuring effective sharing of learning including through briefings and training.

PCC holding the Chief Constable to account

One of the main ways in which the PCC discharges his duties to hold the Chief Constable to account has been through the Governance and Scrutiny Board, which is also the forum in which the most significant spending and other decisions are made. This has standing agenda items for performance, assurance and for both organisations to bring forward risks and issues for discussions and questions which forms an important part of the risk management process. Over the last year the GSB was reviewed and a new format began in March 2023. The meeting is now longer and is split into two distinct parts of governance and scrutiny. These changes were made to ensure there was sufficient time for all agenda items to be discussed thoroughly and to allow more time for scrutiny. [The minutes continue to be published on the PCC website.](#)

In May 2022 a new Performance and Accountability Board (PAB) was introduced. The purpose of this meeting is to manage performance and for the PCC to hold the Chief Constable to account in an open way. This board was held for 90 minutes a time in May, August and November 2022 as well as February

2023. The meetings are broadcast live online and the [recordings are also kept on the PCC's website](#). This new structure was reviewed and revised with a new format launched in March 2023. The PAB is now held on a monthly basis for 30 minutes each time and is broadcast using Facebook. The core purpose of the meeting remains the same, but the changes were made to increase public engagement with the PAB.

The PCC also has a statutory duty to [respond to reports published by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services](#) (HMICFRS) and in particular any recommendations or areas for improvement within them. There were seven responses published during 2022/23. The recommendations are usually for the Chief Constable and, in writing the response, the Constabulary must provide the PCC with an answer as to how they are responding to those recommendations. This is another important mechanism in holding the Chief Constable to account. As discussed below the PEEL report is the most significant but there have been several others and all responses are published on the website. Aside from the formal response these reports can also help shape the scrutiny and questions the PCC asks through the internal assurance process.

PCC securing an efficient and effective police force

In order to determine if Avon and Somerset Constabulary is efficient and effective the PCC takes assurance from a number of activities throughout the year:

- Externally through HMICFRS inspections, particularly PEEL.
- Independent internal audit (jointly commissioned with the Constabulary to provide a risk-led audit programme that focusses on areas of agreed risk in terms of governance and delivery).
- A rolling programme of internal assurance activity (jointly agreed between the OPCC and the Constabulary), carried out by the Constabulary. This work is reflected in reports that are reviewed at the Constabulary Management Board and the Governance and Scrutiny Board.
- OPCC-led assurance activities such as scrutiny panels.
- An Independent Custody Visitors Scheme.

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) PEEL 2021/22

Between April and October 2022, the Constabulary were inspected by HMICFRS as part of their PEEL inspection. During this time HMICFRS visited several stations and departments and spoke to a variety of officers and staff. Feedback from the inspection team was positive, with mention being made of how impressed they were with the transparency and engagement from the Constabulary and that its willingness to learn and improve was clear throughout.

In March 2023 HMICFRS published their latest PEEL report of Avon and Somerset Police. HMICFRS do not provide an overall grade for the force but instead grade different areas of policing.

| Outstanding | Good | Adequate | Requires improvement | Inadequate |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|------------|
| Treatment of the public | Developing a positive workplace | Preventing crime | Investigating crime | |

| | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Good use of resources | Protecting vulnerable people | Recording data about crime |
| | | Responding to the public |
| | | Managing offenders |

Figure 39: HMICFRS PEEL 2021/22 Avon and Somerset Police grades.

HMICFRS also provide areas for improvement (AFIs), of which there were 17 for Avon and Somerset Police:

- The constabulary needs to improve the accuracy of recording rape crimes and incidents of rape.
- The constabulary needs to improve its recording of crimes which involve vulnerable victims.
- The constabulary needs to improve how it records crime when antisocial behaviour is reported.
- The constabulary needs to improve how it records equality data.
- The constabulary should consistently evaluate and share effective problem-solving practice.
- The constabulary needs to ensure that neighbourhood policing officers have access to structured training.
- The constabulary should respond to calls for service within its published time frames based on the prioritisation given to the call. Where delays occur, the rationale should be recorded, and victims should be updated.
- The constabulary should reduce the number of abandoned 101 calls.
- The constabulary should make sure that repeat and vulnerable callers are routinely identified.
- The constabulary should introduce effective processes for timely allocation of crimes of rape and other serious sexual offences to reduce the backlog.
- The constabulary should make sure that an auditable record is kept if a victim withdraws their support for an investigation, and whether an evidence-led prosecution is considered in all such cases.
- The constabulary needs to improve the quality assurance and supervision of investigations.
- The constabulary should ensure that risk assessments are effectively supervised, quality assured, and checked for compliance.
- The constabulary should reduce the backlog of applications waiting to be processed.
- The constabulary should reduce the time taken to conduct visits and risk assessments on registered sex offenders.
- The constabulary should ensure its enforcement action against offenders accessing indecent images of children is robust and conducted in a timely manner.
- The constabulary should ensure it has the capacity and capability to manage demand in the internet child abuse team (ICAT) and ensure backlogs are subject to a review process.

The initial responses to these AFIs can be [read on the PCC's website](#).

The PEEL report is one of the most important sources of independent assurance to understand how Avon and Somerset are delivering against the Police and Crime Plan. Although improvement was assessed as required in the areas listed above, assurance was taken from the fact that most concerns identified were already known to the Chief Constable and were being addressed.

The Constabulary have created an action plan to address the findings of the report. They are working with regional forces to share best practice and find joint solutions for things that need improvement.

The Constabulary will also work with the College of Policing Evidence Based Performance Improvement programme which will provide individual support to forces. The PCC will oversee progress against this plan through the Governance and Scrutiny Board and Performance and Accountability Board.

Internal Audit

Throughout 2022/23 the Internal Audit function completed nine substantive audits, one graded follow-up review as well as contributing towards regional advisory work and conducted follow-up work on previous audits. The nine substantive audits were:

- Representative Workforce
- IT Service Desk
- Management of Evidential Property
- Key Financial Controls
- Firearms Licensing
- Reasonable Adjustments
- Policy and Procedure Management
- Detective Numbers
- Assurance Mapping

Each internal audit conducted throughout the year receives a graded assurance opinion from the auditors. The assurance levels are: none, limited, reasonable and substantial.

Six of the audits resulted in a reasonable assurance opinion and three resulted in a limited assurance opinion. The conclusion of our internal auditors was that they were able to offer a reasonable assurance annual opinion.

Each of the audits also provides recommendations for improvement which are categorised into three priority categories reflecting their importance. In total our internal auditors made 36 recommendations during 2022/23, of which:

- 21 were identified as findings that require attention, the lowest grading;
- 15 were identified as findings that are important and require the attention of management, the medium grading; and
- None were identified as findings that were fundamental requiring immediate attention.

Whilst assurance is gained from the fact that none of the findings is considered to be fundamental, it is recognised that the recommendations from the internal auditors provides a number of important actions which need to be progressed.

Financial performance

As can be seen in the [published group accounts](#), once year-end adjustments have been made, a break-even position has been achieved during 2022/23. The underlying performance showed a £3.7 million/1% underspend, of which £3.5m relates to performance against Constabulary managed budgets and £0.2m against PCC managed budgets. £0.4 million of this underspend will be carried forward for planned expenditure, £1.8 million will be put in reserve for insurance provisions and £1.4 million will be put into the capital reserve.

The outlook in the current Medium Term Financial Plan shows larger deficits than at the time of writing last year. Reserves will be used to balance year 1 but the deficit is £10 million in year 2, growing to £19 million in year 3.

These deficits will require significant savings across the medium term and it is likely hundreds of police staff posts will need to be deleted.

4. Annexes

Annex 1 – Summary of Grants Issued and Commissioned Activity in 2021/22

| Grant | Recipient | Service / Project |
|---|---|--|
| <i>Lighthouse</i> Integrated Victim Care £906,000 (approximately 21% of the total Lighthouse budget) | Avon and Somerset Police who contribute the other 79% | Victims who are vulnerable, intimidated, persistently targeted or experience serious crime are offered practical and emotional support and guided through the criminal justice process by specially-trained staff. The service has teams made up of both police staff and independent support workers and volunteers. |
| Emotional Support Service for Victims of Crime and ASB £327,670 | Victim Support | Emotional and practical support for victims of crime and ASB. |
| Adult Support Service for victims of any crime or ASB – VOCAS (Victims of Crime Advocacy Service) £254,932 | Swan Advocacy | Independent advocacy service for adult victims of crime and ASB who need additional support relating to: race, religion, sexuality, gender identity, mental health issues, learning difficulties, physical disabilities, problems associated with old age and problems associated with isolation. Adult victims can also access practical and emotional support to help them recover. |
| Children and Young People Advocacy Service – Young Victims' Service £165,000 | North Somerset Youth Offending Team | A specialist advocacy support service for victims of crime and ASB up to the age of 18 and victims of crime and ASB aged 18-25 where additional needs are identified. |
| Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA) Service £289,344 (plus £121,667 from NHSEngland) | Safelink | A service that offers advice and practical and emotional support including a safe place to talk, access to counselling, support attending Sexual Health Services and help with medical attention. They provide support for all people, irrespective of age or gender, who have been victims of rape and sexual abuse. They also can help with supporting the family and practical problems such as help with housing, benefits, and employers. |
| A Restorative Justice Service for victims of any crime or ASB £179,000 | Resolve West | A holistic approach that supports the victims, their family and communities enabling their voice to be heard and for perpetrators to have greater insight into the impact of their behaviour. The aim of the service is to empower victims to move towards closure and encourage them to explore different ways of coping. |
| Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) – The Bridge £247,481 (plus £1,235,579.50 from NHS England who are the lead commissioner and £231,500 from Avon and Somerset Police – Oct 22-Mar 23 contribution under the new contract) | University of Bristol Hospitals Trust | New contract began 1 st October 2022. Specialist medical, forensic, practical and emotional support for anyone who has been raped or sexually assaulted. Available both to those who report to the Police and those who do not. Includes specialist paediatric support. |
| Child sexual abuse support services £65,026 | Southmead Project | Counselling and therapeutic services supporting victims of child sexual abuse, both recent and historical. |

| Grant | Recipient | Service / Project |
|--|--|---|
| Child sexual abuse support services £48,213 | The Green House | Counselling and therapeutic services supporting victims of child sexual abuse, both recent and historical. |
| Child sexual abuse support services £19,009 | Somerset and Avon Rape and Sexual Abuse Support | Counselling and therapeutic services supporting victims of child sexual abuse, both recent and historical. |
| Victims of Child Sexual Exploitation £222,884 (plus £222,884 from the five top tier local authority areas) | Barnardo's | Specialist support for victims of child sexual exploitation. The service also offers consultation provision to professionals, such as social care staff, working with children and young people who have been affected. |
| PCC's reserve funding Victims of Child Criminal Exploitation £80,000 (plus £150,000 from Bristol City Council) | Barnardo's | Specialist support for victims of child criminal exploitation. The service also offers consultation provision to professionals, such as social care staff, working with children and young people who have been affected. |
| Modern Slavery Support Service £39,423 | Unseen UK | Specialist support service for victims of modern slavery before engaging in nationally commissioned services as well as the period after that support ends. Available both to those who report to the police and those who do not. |
| Emergency Services Mental Health Triage (EST) £122,064 (plus combined total of £136,110 from Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and Avon Fire and Rescue Service – BNSSG ICB is the Lead Commissioner) | Avon and Wiltshire Partnership NHS Trust (AWP) | Funding for mental health professionals to provide specialist mental health advice to the police. This service is co-located with health partners in the ambulance control room. They have access to relevant health systems, offering advice and support to police officers and partner agencies such as Avon Fire and rescue Service and South West Ambulance Service Trust with a view to ensuring suitable pathways are identified at the earliest opportunity. |
| Police and Crime Grant £739,641 | Individual grants issued to the five Community Safety Partnerships | Supporting various Community Safety projects which contribute towards delivery of the PCC's priorities. See table under Section 4 objective 4.2. |
| Liaison and Diversion Services known as Advice and Support in Custody and Courts (ASCC) £553,421 (plus over £2 million from NHS England who are the lead commissioner) | AWP and Sompar | Service supporting individuals at the point of arrest whose offending is linked to substance or alcohol misuse. |
| Appropriate Adults Service (2 operate: 'Avon' and 'Somerset') £44,200 (plus £41,500 from local authorities) | Brandon Trust and Somerset Youth Offending Service | Service to support and safeguard the welfare and rights of vulnerable adults detained or interviewed by the police. |

| Grant | Recipient | Service / Project |
|--|--|--|
| Commissioner's Victims Prevention Fund £45,000 | Somerset Community Foundation | Provides grants of between £10k – 20k to organisations supporting victims. Supports innovative, collaborative and evidence-led approaches to early intervention and/or prevention. |
| Commissioner's Community Crime Prevention Fund £200,000 | Somerset Community Foundation | Provides small grants (between £1000 - £5000) to organisations in the community as a contribution towards community safety projects to reduce crime and make local communities safer. |
| PCC's reserve fund – reducing reoffending £32,874.53 | Ready for Release – HMPPS (HMP Bristol) | Support for inmates to help them resettle back into the community on completion of their sentence. |
| PCC's reserve fund – reducing reoffending £94,794 (plus £201,438 from partners) | DRIVE – Cranstoun Ltd and Next Link | A specialist domestic abuse perpetrator programme for the most prolific and high-harm offenders. A pilot running in South Gloucestershire. |
| PCC's reserve fund – reducing reoffending £91,623.50 | Court Up – Missing Link and National Probation Service | A programme to divert women away from the short custodial sentences and build and improve networks and referral pathways across mental health, domestic abuse and sexual violence. |
| PCC's reserve fund – reducing reoffending £12,500 (plus £12,500 from Probation Service) | Julian House – Supported Accommodation | Supports those offenders deemed as being at high risk of re-offending and works in partnership with Probation, Police, Local Authorities, Mental Health, substance misuse treatment and other community partnership agencies. |
| PCC's reserve fund – reducing reoffending £15,000 (plus £45,000 from Probation Service) | 1625ip | Reducing Reoffending Coaches offering tailored 1:1 support with young people aged 16-25 from B&NES, S Glos, Bristol and North Somerset who are transitioning from youth to adult services, on probation or at risk of custody. |
| Violence Reduction Unit £1,730,001 Home Office funded | Grants issued to the five top tier local authorities | Multi-agency work, using a public health approach, to tackle serious violence. |
| Violence Reduction Unit £20,000 Home Office Funded | Second Step – Call In | OPCC contribution to collaboration to fund Central - East Bristol focused project on tackling youth drug and gang related offending |
| Violence Reduction Unit £58,976 Home Office Funded | Barnardo's – ROUTES Somerset | OPCC contribution along with Somerset CC to fund specialist relationship based support to young people experiencing or at risk of criminal exploitation. |
| Violence Reduction Unit £233,786 Home Office Funded | OPCC Centrally retained Funding | OPCC Centrally retained funding for staffing costs, data accelerator, evaluation and VRU branding/communications. |
| Serious Violence Duty £40,106.04 Home Office Funded | £21,553 OPCC Centrally retained funding £9,276 South Gloucestershire Council – Outreach Bus | OPCC Centrally retained funding contributes to staffing costs. |

| Grant | Recipient | Service / Project |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| | £9,276 Bristol City Council – Female Detached Youth Work | |
| Ministry of Justice male rape fund £20,897 | Trauma Breakthrough | Support for male victims of rape. |
| Ministry of Justice domestic abuse and sexual violence victims uplift 2022/23 funding – IDVAs & ISVAs £1,328,881 | <i>Various</i> | <i>See Annex 2</i> |
| Ministry of Justice domestic abuse and sexual violence victims uplift 2022/23 funding – community based services £490,679 | <i>Various</i> | <i>See Annex 3</i> |
| Ministry of Justice Victims Commissioning – Formula Funding Uplift 2022/23 £173,758 | <i>Various</i> | <i>See Annex 4</i> |
| Total | £8,892,091 | |

Annex 2 – Ministry of Justice domestic abuse and sexual violence victims uplift 2021/22 funding – IDVAs and ISVAs / Additional IDVAs and ISVAs Uplift

| Provider | Amount |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Julian House | £40,205.68 |
| Nextlink | £509,007 |
| Nextlink – additional uplift funding | £83,562 |
| Opoka | £29,300 |
| Southside | £66,900 |
| You Trust | £110,247 |
| Safelink | £356,343 |
| Safelink – additional uplift funding | £93,090 |
| Victim Support | £40,226 |
| Total | £1,328,881 |

Annex 3 – Ministry of Justice domestic abuse and sexual violence victims uplift 2022/23 funding – community based services

| Provider | Amount |
|---|---------|
| 1625ip | £19,000 |
| Kinergy | £36,000 |
| Mankind | £8,000 |
| Nelsons Trust | £19,000 |
| Opoka | £18,500 |
| Nextlink / Safelink | £51,622 |
| Somerset and Avon Rape and Sexual Abuse Support | £42,500 |

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Southmead Project | £28,931 |
| Southside | £21,645 |
| The Green House/Somerset Phoenix Project | £64,150 |
| Trauma Breakthrough | £20,000 |
| VANS | £38,000 |
| Victim Support | £19,625 |
| VOICES | £20,000 |
| Womankind | £22,955 |
| Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse (AAFDA) | £15,750 |
| Young Victims Service | £45,000 |
| Total | £490,679 |

Annex 4 – Ministry of Justice Victims Commissioning – Formula Funding Uplift 2022/23

| Provider | Amount |
|--|-----------------|
| Resolve West | £10,000 |
| Victim Support | £5,065 |
| Swan Advocacy – VOCAS | £18,166 |
| North Somerset Council – Young Victims Service | £31,174 |
| SARSAS | £29,583 |
| Southmead Project | £33,121 |
| The Greenhouse | £33,674 |
| OPCC Centrally retained funds contributing to staffing costs | £12,975 |
| Total | £173,758 |

Annex 5 – Glossary

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|--------------------|---|
| Active Citizenship | This is measured as the % of those surveyed that has attended or been involved with or as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Watch’ meetings such as Neighbourhood Watch, Farm Watch or Business Watch • Other police or council Neighbourhood Meetings or forums • Volunteering as a Special Constable • Volunteering in another policing or community safety related way • Community SpeedWatch • Police webchats |
| ASB | Anti-social behaviour is behaviour which causes, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person; or behaviour capable of causing nuisance or annoyance. |
| Bluestone | Avon and Somerset Police response to rape and serious sexual offences. |
| County Lines | A type of serious organised crime in which drug dealers in major cities establish networks for the supply and sale of drugs to users in towns and rural areas, typically exploiting young and/or vulnerable people to carry, store, and sell the drugs as well as being used to carry out violent attacks on behalf of the Organised Crime Group. |
| CPS | Crown Prosecution Service |
| Cuckooing | Is a practice where people take over a person’s home and use the property for some form of exploitation. |
| Cybercrime | 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 |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>committing the crime, and the target of the crime. For example developing and propagating malware for financial gain or hacking to steal.</p> <p>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.</p> |
| Disproportionality of the use of police powers | This looks at the number of people subject to the power, in each of the five ethnic groups, and then compares this to the population of that ethnic group in Avon and Somerset (based on 2011 Census data) to give a 'rate'. The disproportionality figure displayed is the ratio of how many times more a person, who is Other than White, has had the power used against them compared with White people. An important point of note about the data is that the stop and search data is current but this is being compared to population data from 2011 – in this time period the demographics of the areas will undoubtedly have changed and the actual ratio will be different. |
| Hate crime | A crime where the offender has either demonstrated or been motivated by hostility based on a person's race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or transgender identity. |
| HMICFRS | His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services |
| Local authorities | Top tier local authorities in Avon and Somerset are Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset, Somerset, South Gloucestershire. |
| OPCC | Officer of the Police and Crime Commissioner |
| PCC | Police and Crime Commissioner |
| Police Visibility | This is measured by a question in the local survey of when did you last see a police officer or a police community support officer in your local area? This is percentage of respondents that have seen an officer within the last month (or more recently). |
| Positive outcome rate | Positive outcomes are counted as Home Office defined outcomes 1-8 and 22 which are: charge/summons, cautions/conditional cautions for youths or adults, offences taken into consideration, the offender has died, penalty notice for disorder (PND), cannabis/khat warning, community resolution or diversionary, educational or intervention activity. The rate is the percentage of all outcomes which are positive. |
| Public confidence | This is measured by a question in the local survey; and is the percentage of people who have confidence in their local police. |
| RASSO | Rape and serious sexual offences |
| Rural crime | any crime 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. |
| Timeliness of attendance | <p>Calls to the police are graded based on threat harm and risk. There is a service level agreement (SLA) for each grade which states how long attendance should take (below). It is important to note that the SLAs are defined by Avon and Somerset Police, not mandatory. Timeliness is reported as the percentage of those incidents that were attended within the particular SLA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate – 15 minutes for urban areas and 20 minutes for rural areas • Priority – 1 hour • Routine – 12 hours |
| Victim satisfaction | As measured by a local telephone survey of a sample of victims of ASB, burglary, hate crime and violent crime. |

MORE INFORMATION

 For the full report and an interactive version visit www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk

Avon & Somerset Police & Crime Commissioner

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