

# Public Agenda Pack



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



**Date: Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

**Time: 10.30am**

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

## **Membership:**

Councillor Andy Wait	Bath & North East Somerset
Councillor Ann Morgan	Bath & 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
Councillor Peter Crew	North Somerset Council
Vacancy	North Somerset Council
Councillor Brian Bolt	Somerset Council
Councillor Nicola Clark	Somerset Council
Councillor Heather Shearer	Somerset Council
Councillor Federica Smith-Roberts	Somerset Council
Councillor Martin Wale	Somerset Council
Councillor Raj Sood	South Gloucestershire Council
Councillor John Bradbury	South Gloucestershire Council

## **Contact Officer:**

**Patricia Jones**

07855 284506

[patricia.jones@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:patricia.jones@somerset.gov.uk)

Somerset Council

County Hall, Taunton

TA1 4DY

Issued by the Proper Officer on Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024

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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

**Public Guidance Notes contained in Agenda Annexe** 5 - 8

**Click here to join the online meeting** 9 - 10

**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 12pm on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March. Questions must be received no later than 3 clear working days before the meeting (5pm on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024).

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 1st February 2024 (Pages 11 - 28)**

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 **Business Crime Report (Pages 29 - 36)**

Assurance report setting out challenges and new strategic approach devised to improve Business Crime in Avon and Somerset.

8 **Commissioner's Update Report (Pages 37 - 48)**

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

9 **Performance Report (Pages 49 - 62)**

To consider and discuss the latest performance information.

10 **Standing Complaints Report (Pages 63 - 66)**

To provide the Panel with an overview of all complaints.

11 **Work Programme (Pages 67 - 70)**

To note the current work programme.

12 **Panel Costs Report (Pages 71 - 76)**

Members are invited to consider the end of year budget information.

13 **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting is 27<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 10am in the Deane House, Taunton.

## **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](http://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](mailto:democraticservices@somerset.gov.uk) or [Patricia.Jones@somerset.gov.uk](mailto: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

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### 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.

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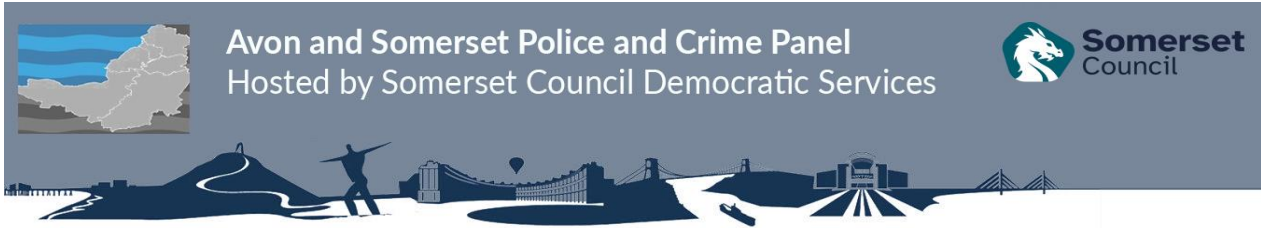
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## Minutes of the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024, 10.30am

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

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### 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), Gary Davies (Independent Member), Julie Knight (Independent Member), Richard Brown (Independent Member), Councillor Peter Crew (North Somerset Council), Councillor Stuart Davies (North Somerset Council), Councillor Brian Bolt (Somerset Council), Councillor Heather Shearer (Somerset Council and Chair), Councillor Federica Smith-Roberts (Somerset Council), Councillor Martin Wale (Somerset Council), Councillor Nicola Clark (Somerset Council), Councillor Raj Sood (South Gloucestershire Council), Councillor John Bradbury (South Gloucestershire Council)

#### Host Authority Officers Present:

Patricia Jones	Panel Lead Officer
Pippa Triffitt	Clerk/Democratic Services Officer
Joshua Barrett	Senior Democratic Services Officer

#### Police and Crime Commissioner and Support Staff:

Mark Shelford	Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
Sarah Crew	Chief Constable (CC)
Jon Reilly	Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)
Alice Ripley	Chief of Staff
Paul Butler	Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
Inspector Stuart King	Commissioner's Staff Officer
Joanna Coulon	Scrutiny and Performance Manager
Ben Valentine	Senior Performance and Governance Manager
Neil Bennett	Director of Communications and Engagement
Niamh Byrne	Head of Communications and Engagement

## **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lisa Stone.

## **2. Public Question Time**

The Chair drew attention to the statement and questions submitted by Mr Colin Barker and Mr David Redgewell which had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. It was noted that the responses prepared by the Constabulary and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) would be provided to them.

## **3. Declarations of Interest**

None.

## **4. Minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2023.**

The minutes were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting.

## **5. Matters Arising**

The Chair highlighted the Action Sheet provided by the OPCC which was circulated to the Panel members in advance of the meeting. At the previous meeting, the Panel had requested for the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) to share a graphic showing the breakdown in Council Tax bands across the force area. In response, the CFO had provided a table showing the breakdown in Council Tax bands across all the local authorities in England and Wales, including the five unitary authorities in the force area. He explained this was the most meaningful way of conveying the information requested by the Panel.

## **6. Chair's Business**

The Chair welcomed Chief Constable Sarah Crew and Deputy Chief Constable Jon Reilly to the Panel meeting.

## **7. Chief Constable's Presentation**

The Chair invited Chief Constable Sarah Crew to present the item.

The Chief Constable (CC) introduced the presentation, stating that Avon and Somerset were on track to deliver their goal of outstanding policing for everyone, and that significant advances were being made in navigating the force towards this destination. However, the journey was challenging and progress could not be taken for granted. It was acknowledged that strengthening the public's trust in the police would take time and the Panel played an important part in supporting the Commissioner in holding the force to account.

The force's 5-year plan to achieve outstanding policing would continue throughout 2024. The upcoming year would also include national and PCC elections and the continued pressures of interest rates and inflation, all of which would bring changes to the force. 2024 was also Avon and Somerset's golden anniversary, and the force looked forward to the next 50 years of serving the community.

The Panel was advised that the force's mission, values, vision, and strategy were all underpinned by the Police and Crime Plan. The CC provided an update on the Plan's four main priorities:

- **Priority 1 – Preventing and Fighting Crime**
  - The success of Operation Bluestone (under the banner of Operation Soteria) had been nationally recognised and had become the blueprint for every force in England and Wales. It focused on improving the outcomes for victims of rape and other serious sexual offences. There had been a 246% increase in charges since 2021 and the lessons learnt could be applied across offences included under the banner of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).
  - Over the previous 5 months, Avon and Somerset had worked with neighbouring forces to complete 3 regionally coordinated drug operations (Operation Scorpion). 83 people had been arrested in Avon and Somerset, and £3.5 million of drugs were taken off the streets.
  - The force had conducted almost 2,500 anti-social behaviour interventions. This work coincided with Operation Hemlock which targeted anti-social behaviour related to e-bikes and e-scooters. This led to 28 arrests and a 35% reduction in reports of anti-social behaviour.
  - 2,600 drink/drug drivers were charged, and 1,800 uninsured vehicles were seized.
  
- **Priority 2 – Engaging, Supporting, and Working with Communities, Victims, and Partner Organisations**
  - Work targeting anti-social behaviour related to e-bikes and e-scooters was in response to local demand and recognised nationally.

- 7,000 people were involved in Farm Watch and Horse Watch schemes.
  - 26,000 teachers/parents/staff were educated by the police on child exploitation.
  - 2,000 vulnerable people were supported by the Be Home Safe Scheme.
  - However, there were still challenges that required attention. For example, it was reported that only 72% of the public felt safe at night.
- **Priority 3 – Leading the Police to be Efficient and Effective**
    - The force had achieved its recruitment targets for officers. However, this growth in numbers did come with challenges.
    - The investment in the uplift was paying off: more police constable degree apprenticeship officers were graduating, and the direct entry degree programme holders were now becoming accredited detectives.
    - Recent workplace surveys had given encouraging results in terms of wellbeing and satisfaction levels. The force compared well with similar sectors, but more work was needed to maintain morale.
    - The force was on track to meet their numerical targets for accredited detectives which was a significant achievement.
  - **Priority 4 – Increasing the Legitimacy of, and Public Confidence in, the Police and Criminal Justice System**
    - It was acknowledged that improvements were needed in terms of workplace representation. Progress was being made to address disproportionality and the force was committed to reporting back to communities later in the year on the work connected to the National Police Race Action Plan.
    - The force was focused on understanding and responding to the fragile relationship between the police and public nationally. Transparency was one of their strategic imperatives, reflected in the recent Channel 4 documentary. It was necessary to show the intent to deal with complaints, the scrutiny the force was under, and demonstrate the need for reform of the police misconduct system.

Other key points made in the presentation are summarised below:

- Nationally, the force was performing well in terms of the Police and Crime Plan. It was not identified as an outlier of concern on any national outcome measures included as part of the Home Office's 'Early Warning System'.

- The latest HMICFRS PEEL Inspection was published at the end of March 2023. Avon and Somerset compared strongly with other forces, particularly considering how comparatively underfunded it was. However, there were several areas which required improvement, namely investigating crime, recording data about crime, responding to the public, and managing offenders.
- The Inspectorate had a new regime which considered performance against a system of victim outcomes. This reflected the growing focus on positive outcomes for the public. The force compared relatively well nationally in terms of bringing justice to victims through charges and summons rates.
- The Inspectorate was due to return this September. There was much to be proud of, but it was acknowledged there was significant room for improvement as the inspection process was rigorous.
- In terms of demands on the force in 2023:
  - The number of 999 calls increased by 13% on the previous year and the number continued to rise.
  - Digital methods of contact were rising e.g. the number of digital forms submitted had increased by 18%.
  - Mental health related incidents were levelling off and the force was improving its response to mental health incidents.
  - Overall crime numbers continued to increase; this was partly driven by improved crime recording.
  - Shoplifting and robbery numbers had risen, which was expected during a cost-of-living crisis.
  - The number of serious sexual and violent crimes had risen by 9%.
  - However, arrests had increased by 10% and rape charges had increased by 68%. The focus on perpetrators through the Operation Bluestone model was paying off.
  - The number of anti-social behaviour incidents had decreased by 4%.
  - Dwelling burglary victim satisfaction remained high at 80%.
  - Public confidence stood at 68%; nationally the force came 20<sup>th</sup> out of 43.
- The Areas for Improvement (AFI) provided by the Inspectorate were critical challenges to overcome. Failure to tackle these could result in a poor overall assessment.
- Avon and Somerset's AFIs were crime data integrity, protecting vulnerable residents, responding to the public, and investigative standards. The issues in these areas were being addressed with urgency

to provide a purposeful response. It was expected that most of the focus areas would be resolved before the Inspectorate returned in September.

- Taken together, these areas presented a challenge, particularly in the face of issues such as officer inexperience, budgetary pressures, and low levels of public trust and confidence. All forces faced such issues, but the CC was confident there was an appropriate strategy to overcome these challenges.
- Avon and Somerset's strategy was launched in September 2023. The strategy was fed by the force's values, supported by its 5 strategic imperatives, underpinned by the Police and Crime Plan, and would ultimately lead to the vision of outstanding policing for everyone.
- The force needed staff engagement across the board; the officers could not achieve this goal alone. The CC shared [this video](#) which reflected this ongoing collaborative work.
- The strategy relied on producing a balanced set of outcomes:
  - **Public** – these described how the residents will see, feel, and experience changes in policing.
  - **Organisational** – these described how individuals in the force would underpin the success of the strategy through their work.
  - **People** – these described how individuals in the force would feel supported, equipped, and included as they served their community.
  - **Finance** – these described how the force would plan and use scarce resources to reach the destination of outstanding policing.
- There were four mechanisms for delivering these outcomes:
  - **Change portfolio** – the portfolio of 8 Change Programmes would drive the transformation work over the next 5 years.
  - **Continuous improvement** – the force needed to be enhancing and growing continuously.
  - **Business as usual** – the force needed to support its teams every day in facing their daily challenges.
  - **Leadership development** – this was vital to putting the strategy into action and turning vision into reality.
- It was important that Avon and Somerset had the appropriate ethical and inclusive culture to achieve higher levels of public trust and confidence. It was leadership that built and maintained such a culture; it could rebuild pride and morale, but also confront issues that required change. The workforce was highly educated but inexperienced; leadership therefore



continued to be a focus for 2024 as leaders were needed to nurture and develop the skills of the workforce.

- The need for a culture change was demonstrated by the declining levels of public confidence in Avon and Somerset. There was a small window of opportunity to redress this trend.
- Officer numbers were rapidly increasing. They were given a difficult target but ultimately overachieved; by the end of March 2023, the force had 99 more officers than their target of 456.
- The growing pains associated with this uplift had been prolonged due to the rapid growth. Over 40% of the officers had less than 5 years' experience. The peak of the influx of new officers had passed, but there was a long tail. Developing the capabilities of the leaders was therefore a primary objective.
- The Target Leadership Model (TLM) had been signed off a year before and it set out what leaders should be aiming for in their own practice of leadership. It was a progressive model and was rooted in the force's values and reflected in the strategic imperatives.
- The First Line Leaders programme developed from the idea that new police constables needed first line leaders to build high performing teams. This programme was dedicated to future, new, and existing leaders, as well as those in an acting capacity. A similar programme was being developed for middle leaders in the organisation. Furthermore, the top 50 leaders in the organisation had been marshalled into a strategic leadership group. The force welcomed investment in new police officers and would continue to invest in their leaders in so far as the finances would permit. The CC shared [this video](#) on this topic.
- However, the force faced a significant financial challenge as Avon and Somerset received well below the average funding per head of the population when compared to other forces nationally. Overall, the organisation received £53 million less than the national average and £113 million less compared to other force areas that contained major cities. If the Metropolitan force was removed from the calculations, Avon and Somerset still received £50 million less than other force areas with major cities.
- The MTFP showed the organisation's revenue position over the next five years. There was a long-term deficit forecast which would require further savings. Savings had already been identified and made, but even with a Precept proposal of £13.00, there would still be tough financial decisions

to make. However, the figures in the Report were based on a £10.00 increase.

- A £13.00 increase meant an extra £1.8 million in funding above the £10.00 Precept level. 80% of the budget was spent on salaries, therefore significant savings required a reduction in police staff headcount (police officer numbers were ringfenced).
- One of the planning principles was to plan sufficiently ahead to maximise the opportunity to achieve the necessary savings through natural turnover rather than redundancies.
- There would be no further recruitment of PCSOs throughout 2024/5. Avon and Somerset currently maintained higher numbers of PCSOs in comparison to other forces, but this could not be sustained. There would be a reduction in police staff investigators of around 86 people over the next 12 months.
- In January 2022, there was an audit of all police staff posts. As a result of this, 44 posts were removed through vacancy management, resulting in £2 million in savings. Natural attrition would likely see another 36 posts removed over the course of the coming year.
- The financial situation meant the force's ambitions to grow their neighbourhood, early intervention, and road safety teams had to be paused. This would have a direct impact on police visibility in communities. The force needed more funding to keep these posts viable and maintain police visibility and proactivity in the community.
- Operation Hemlock demonstrated what the force could achieve when responding to the issues identified by the communities it served. It was a force-wide response led by the Neighbourhoods Team and resulted in 28 suspects arrested, 17 community protected warnings, 3 community behaviour orders, 27 lost or stolen vehicles recovered, and a 35% reduction in anti-social behaviour reports.
- A recommendation from the Panel of an increase in the Precept by £13.00 would enable the force to deploy similar operations across the force area when required.

The Chair thanked the CC for her presentation and invited comments and questions from the Panel members.

- The Panel thanked the CC for her presentation and suggested it would have been useful to view the presentation slides in advance so they could read the figures and detailed text on the slides more easily.

- The Panel advised caution around the word ‘victim’ in the phrase ‘victim of our own success’ when discussing sexual violence. The Panel suggested that, although Operation Bluestone had improved the statistics around rape and serious sexual offences, the consequences of this success had not been anticipated, as the force was behind on its scheduled sex offender visits. The Panel therefore requested reassurance that the offenders were being effectively managed. The CC reaffirmed that Avon and Somerset had a perpetrator focus and that they were the national lead on dealing with rape and serious sexual offence cases. In terms of Operation Bluestone, the 246% increase in charging volumes was a significant achievement. The speed at which this was achieved had not been anticipated, but the force knew it needed to grow its capability to manage offenders; the uplift catered for an increase in the integrated offender management team, for example. However, nationally, the demand had outstripped the current capabilities, therefore difficult decisions were being made within the integrated offender management teams over what needed to be prioritised. The scheduled sex offender visits were mandatory therefore they would continue, utilising resources from non-statutory areas.
- The Panel mentioned the promises made to improve neighbourhood policing when the Precept was increased in 2023; there had been little tangible evidence of such improvements, and local authorities were stepping in to fill the gap. For example, Weston Town Council had increased their Precept in order to contribute to the costs of a new CCTV system which had helped target anti-social behaviour in the area. Furthermore, there had been incidents where young people on e-scooters had run through red lights and overtaken police cars and there was no response from the police. The CC conveyed her gratitude for the support received from the local authorities and reiterated that community safety was a shared partnership responsibility. E-bikes and e-scooters were presenting new problems, and the police were still learning how to respond to them. However, a collaboration between the force and the community was needed. Operation Hemlock was a good example of how innovation and the effective use of resources could help to tackle such issues.
- The Panel felt the Channel 4 documentary, *To Catch a Copper*, could act as an important motivator for change within the force as there was much to learn from the presented narratives. The Panel praised the CC for her courage in committing to such a high level of transparency and for opening the force up to scrutiny; however, it was important the CC brought the organisation along with her on this journey, and it was hoped it would serve as a step forward in improving the culture of the force. The CC informed the Panel that the Deputy Chief Constable chaired an

online meeting the morning after the first broadcast of the first episode which was attended by almost 400 force members. The attendees expressed a range of emotions, but the response was generally positive and echoed the Panel's feedback.

- The Panel recalled the lack of compassion shown for victims by officers in the documentary. With 40% of officers possessing fewer than 5 years of experience, there was an opportunity to redress these issues early in their careers. Furthermore, the documentary showcased the issue of mental health support for the officers themselves. The Panel asked what support was provided. The CC stated the force occupational health unit had been under review, and there would be a shift towards psychological support. A business case had also been approved by the Commissioner for a £500,000 investment to develop intensive support. There was a danger that the daily trauma faced by the officers could de-sensitise them, but part of the five-year plan was to ensure that the service provided by the force was trauma informed. Therefore, this was a priority and needed to be progressed further.
- In response to a statement made by the CC in the documentary, the Panel requested clarification on how her hands were tied in terms of instigating changes to the culture of the force, and asked whether there would be a communications plan and national campaigning to compensate for this. The CC stated that, as a rule, she did not chair disciplinary panels. In terms of communications, there was media interest around the remaining episodes which involved ITV news, Daily Mail interviews, and other publications. This media interest would help to stimulate discussions around the flaws in the system; namely, that the CC was held responsible for the culture of the force, yet she was not able to remove individuals when necessary. The CC added she had little control over the selection of footage and editorial of the documentary, and that the decision-making processes were not shown as much as they could have been. Furthermore, the incidents presented took place between 2017 and 2021, and many changes had been made since then in response. The PCC added that, since the CC was not permitted to do so, he had been strongly lobbying the Home Secretaries on her behalf, and advised that changes to the Police Dismissals process were forthcoming.
- The Panel asked whether the CC could campaign through her network to receive improved central funding for Somerset that would redress the current inequitable funding formula. The PCC confirmed the CC had been active on this issue, and that he had successively lobbied to receive a fully funded pay award for the force. However, Avon and Somerset required more substantial support from central government. The CC added that they had been promised a full review of the funding

formula, but no date had been given for this. She could not campaign as an individual, but she had invited the Home Office civil servant managing the formula review to the Constabulary Management Board to witness the hardships experienced by the force.

- The Panel asked how the proposed reductions in staff numbers would impact on the mission to become an outstanding police force. The CC stated their ambitions would not be realised for many more years if sufficient funding was not provided to support the workforce. Cllr Craig informed the CC that she was a member of the Safer Communities Board for the Local Government Association, and that she would raise the issue of funding at their next meeting; they could lobby central government directly. The CC thanked Cllr Craig for her offer of support.
- The Panel praised the recent investigative work that had taken place in response to the Knowle West murders. The Panel recalled the murder of Taunton resident Barnaby Webber in Nottingham and how it affected national public confidence in the police. The victim's immediate family received delayed support, and his grandparents were excluded from receiving any support. The Panel asked how confident the CC was that the partnership approaches for Avon and Somerset were of the highest quality to provide the protection that the public was seeking, how confident she was that warrants issued for the arrest of violent individuals were actively pursued until a successful arrest, and how confident she was in the wider support given to victims of such violent crime.
- The CC stated that its partnerships could always be strengthened but that the force had good relationships with its partners, and these were strengthened by lessons learnt from past cases. It had strong relationships with mental health services and these services ensured that potentially dangerous individuals with mental health issues were referred. Mistakes had been made in the past where cases were not pursued because such individuals were incorrectly deemed not criminally responsible. However, in response to this, the force was signing a new duty protocol which included all mental health trusts in the force area. They also intended to continue supporting the national programme of Right Person, Right Care. Furthermore, high-intensity users would have a Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangement (MAPPA), plus a management plan constructed through a collaboration between the force and mental health services if necessary. In terms of active dangerous offenders, the force used a combination of analytics and intelligence to track them. In terms of providing support to the family of homicide victims, this was a requirement under the victims' code of practice. All aspects of the family were included, and the force should work alongside charities and support services to support the

extended family. It was highlighted that the role of the Family Liaison Officer was started in Avon and Somerset.

- The Panel highlighted the focus on developing leadership in the mission to improve policing culture, and recalled the importance that was placed on this in the Precept discussions of 2022 and 2023. The Panel acknowledged that improving public confidence was a lengthy process but asked what tangible improvements had been made in the last three years, how had the leadership training evolved, what was the plan to improve public confidence in communities, and how confident was she that this could be achieved. The CC stated that leadership was a continuing investment. The Leadership Academy was award-winning and encompassed all aspects of effective leadership. Furthermore, the Fine Line Leadership program had now emerged after a year of intensive planning, during which time it had to be woven into the existing work programme. There was also the Target Leadership Model which had been constructed with the assistance of external consultants. Investment in leadership was needed to provide them with the skills and knowledge to drive the force towards its goal of outstanding policing.
- The Panel recalled the concerns of some officers in the wake of the CC's announcement that the force was institutionally racist, a statement which carried, for some, an implication that all officers in the force were racist. The CC stated that the complaints and discipline process showed that racism did exist within the force.
- The Panel queried the attrition rate of police officers within the first two years; the CC responded that it stood at around 11% and was reducing. Feedback from officers had suggested that the new recruits were not sufficiently trained in conflict management but still progressed, but that no action was taken if officers documented this concern. The Panel asked for clarification on this, and on the application process. The CC stated that progression through the force was monitored closely by assessors and that the right person for the job would be permitted to advance. She confirmed that in-person interviews for new recruits had been reintroduced after the pandemic, and that the application process was not restricted to an online application form and interview.
- The Panel requested up-to-date figures on crime against businesses, including anti-social behaviour and cybercrime. The OPCC agreed to provide these. The CC agreed that more action was needed to protect businesses, as there had been a 46% increase in shoplifting but positive outcomes stood at only 16%. The increase was due to the cost-of-living crisis, organised crime, and repeat offenders. The Panel voiced concerns over the effect the reduction in the number of PCSOs would have on this. The CC acknowledged that PCSOs were greatly valued by

communities but stated that financial realities meant difficult decisions had to be made to balance the budget. She reassured the Panel that although recruitment was being frozen, there were no plans to make redundancies.

- The Panel praised the work of Operation Bluestone and hoped it would continue to produce positive results. The Panel also commended Operation Hemlock, and asked how much it had cost. The OPCC agreed to share the figures with the panel. In terms of the number of detectives, the Panel questioned the decision to make cuts when the vacancies mentioned the previous year had since been filled. The CC differentiated between detective constables and police staff detectives. The direct entry programme had helped fill vacancies in the CID, but the financial realities meant that as the number of detective constables increased, savings needed to be made elsewhere, hence the reduction in the number of police staff detectives. It was hoped the reduction would be achieved through natural attrition.
- The Panel suggested that rectifying the lack of public confidence greatly depended on police visibility and the ability to prevent and detect crime, and asked how this would be achieved without Neighbourhood Teams at their full strength. The CC agreed that positive outcomes were needed to drive public confidence in the police. However, prevention and detection accounted for only 30% of demand; response to crime was the biggest demand. The aim to bring offenders to justice and protect the public remained the focal point and a change in the culture would assist in improving the levels of public confidence.
- The Panel asked how much better neighbourhood policing would be with the extra £1.8 million that would be generated with a Precept of £13.00. The CC confirmed that the force would invest in the Neighbourhood Teams to improve their visibility and communications network, and up to 10 more operations like Operation Hemlock would take place with the extra resources afforded by the funding.

The Chair thanked the Chief Constable for her time and for answering the Panel's questions.

#### **Actions**

- 1. The OPCC to provide up-to-date figures on crimes against business.**
- 2. The OPCC to provide the cost figures for Operation Hemlock.**

#### **8. Formal Review of the Budget and Proposed Precept**

The Chair invited the PCC to present the proposal for the Precept.

The PCC introduced the report, stating that he had intended to reset the OPCC's relationship with the Panel at the start of his term to make processes more collegiate. To that end, he had submitted the financial accounting and related documents for a £10.00 increase to the Precept but was bringing the option of a £13.00 increase to the Panel meeting; the CC's presentation showed the need for this increase and the positive outcomes expected from this extra funding. Out of respect for the Panel, the PCC wanted them to be part of the decision.

The PCC recalled that the Panel had approved a £15.00 increase on the Precept in 2023 to meet the extraordinary inflation rates. The plan now was to keep the Precept as low as possible, hence the proposal for £10.00. However, the public consultation survey suggested there was support for an increase above £10.00 across the Avon and Somerset force area. Therefore, he had agreed with the CC to bring the proposal of £13.00 to the meeting.

The Chair reminded the PCC of the limits to the Panel's statutory functions, emphasising that discussion must be restricted to the proposal provided in the Report, which was an increase of £10.00 on the Precept.

The Chair invited comments and questions from the Panel members. Below is a summary of the ensuing discussion:

- The Panel asked whether the extra staff that could be funded by a £13.00 increase were permanent and whether they could be retained with a £10.00 increase. The CFO confirmed they were permanent positions and could not be retained without a £13.00 increase.
- It was noted that the proposal of £10.00 was an increase of 3.8% and equated to an extra £6.8 million. The Home Office grant had increased by £11.8 million, which was an increase of 6%. Overall, the funding would increase by £18.6 million. Averaged out on a weighted basis, this was an increase of 5% overall, which was above the rate of inflation. Therefore, there would be an increase in funding in real terms if the proposal of £10.00 was approved.
- With a funding increase of £18.6 million, the overall increase in costs was £16.2 million, which was net of savings required. The Panel questioned whether those savings were deliverable and if they could prevent compulsory redundancies. The CFO stated they were confident the savings could be delivered. In terms of redundancies, it was hoped these could be achieved through natural turnover/attrition.
- There was an increase in the income budget of £2.5 million. The Panel questioned whether this was offset against the cost or whether it was included as income. Furthermore, the report stated there would be a



contribution of £1 million from reserves; however, this was not included in the table on Page 33 of the Report. The CFO confirmed the contribution from reserves related to two elements: the deferred prosecution model and the increased costs of training the high number of PCDA students in the short term.

- The Panel queried whether the stated job losses in the public consultation survey were genuine. Each of the scenarios in the survey produced a combination of increased income and reduced costs of £13.5 million, yet the assumption was that the average salary for a staff role was £30,000. However, it was apparent to the Panel that the actual average salary was £40,000, therefore the survey was based on incorrect assumptions. Furthermore, the survey should have been clearer that the job losses related to staff roles, rather than police officers. Ultimately, it was felt that the results of the survey should be heavily caveated. The CFO responded to state that the timing of the budget cycles and government spending announcements mean that the Precept survey was necessarily launched in advance of the MTFP and key information such as Council Tax data. The intention within the survey was to present Precept implications with posts as an indicative proxy and could only ever be a guide. Given the focus of post reductions that were identified as part of the savings plans, it was correct to say that £40,000 represented a more appropriate proxy figure for salaries. The wording of the survey introduction did reference 'police staff', but it was recognised that the public may not have appreciated that 'police staff' excluded officers. Last year, the survey had included a longer introduction that was clearer, but this year it had been made more concise due to feedback that the introductory wording was too long to expect everyone to read. It was a difficult balance, but the OPCC agreed to look at this issue again when drafting future surveys.
- The Panel acknowledged that submitting a proposal for a £13.00 increase in the lead up to the PCC elections would have been a risk. However, it was not for the Panel to make that proposal. The PCC stated he would have introduced the proposal for £13.00 before the meeting if the final results of the survey had been available. The Panel suggested the survey should have closed earlier to allow the PCC to make a considered proposal.
- The Panel expressed concern at the PCC's unorthodox approach of presenting two Precept proposals at the meeting. The proposal on the table was an increase of £10.00 as this was the proposal given in the published Report. In line with the Panel's statutory function, the decision process was not meant to be collaborative. If the PCC had wanted to submit a revised proposal based on the final survey results before the

meeting, technically this was possible in the form of a supplementary report, but this did not happen.

- The Council Tax bases across the force area were lower in comparison to other areas nationally, meaning a larger proportion of houses were below Band D. Therefore, it was suggested that an increase of £13.00 was necessary from an operational perspective to allow the force to meet public policing needs and expectations.
- The Panel acknowledged that a £13.00 increase presented the opportunity to deliver more visible policing. The force had been consistently underfunded by central government and would continue to compare poorly with other forces unless it capitalised on local funding where possible.
- However, recommendations made in relation to Precept rises in previous years had not always been met, therefore it was imperative that the force delivered on their promises this year. The public needed to see a return on the investment, particularly because Council Tax was rising across the board. Furthermore, tangible and visible improvements to combatting rural crime and more general policing in rural areas were required, particularly in relation to anti-social behaviour.
- Significant improvements to neighbourhood policing were crucial if a £13.00 rise was approved. The PCC assured the Panel that a £13.00 rise would allow for more neighbourhood team operations.
- The CFO informed the Panel that the MTFP auditors stated it was the most clear and comprehensive plan they had seen across the forces they audited.

The Chair thanked the Panel for their comments and reminded the members that the substantive motion submitted by the PCC that would be put to a vote was for an increase in the Council Tax of an average Band D equivalent dwelling by £10.00.

The Panel reflected on the two proposals that had been presented. Councillor Smith-Roberts moved to amend the published £10.00 proposed increase to £13.00 and invited the membership to consider the merits of endorsing a higher amount on the basis of operational impact and for the purpose of securing the commitments made at the meeting by the Chief Constable and the Commissioner. This was seconded by Gary Davies, Independent Member, and on being put to the vote, the amendment was carried by 7 votes to 6 (including the Chair's casting vote) with 3 abstentions.

On being put to a vote the Panel **RESOLVED** to accept the now substantive motion to increase the Policing Precept by £13.00 per annum in 2024/25 for an average Band D equivalent dwelling (7 members voting in favour, 6 against, and 2 abstentions).

The Chair advised the Commissioner that the Panel's report would contain a number of recommendations for his attention which would reflect members' considerations.

## **9. Commissioner's Update Report**

The Chair suggested deferring Item 9 to the next meeting but invited the PCC to highlight the salient points:

- The PCC expressed his condolences over the deaths of the two teenagers in Knowle West in Bristol and commended the police force for their response.
- He echoed the Panel's praise for the CC's courage in commissioning the Channel 4 documentary. It was important to maintain transparency as this would help foster public trust and confidence.
- The public also needed to be reassured that force members with criminal intent or unacceptable behaviour would be identified and removed from post. However, changes were required to the Police (Conduct) Regulations to give Chief Constables more influence in terms of sanctions and outcomes.

The Chair thanked the PCC and commended the CC and her team for their commitment to transparency.

## **10. Standing Complaints Report**

Item 10 was deferred to the next meeting.

## **11. Work Programme**

Item 11 was deferred to the next meeting.

## **12. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting was scheduled for 10:30am on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at Deane House, Taunton.

## OPCC Assurance – Business Crime

## Executive Summary

**National Definition of Business crime from College of Policing**

*"Any criminal offence where a business, or person in the course of their employment, and because of that employment, is the victim."*

This definition came into effect from 1 June. The definition only covers crimes against businesses run as a commercial enterprise because the impact of the crime may affect their sustainability as a going concern. Places of worship and public sector organisations are, therefore, excluded from the definition.

The policing minister commissioned the creation of a [retail crime action plan](#) which sets out some clear areas of focus and expectations around how individual police forces prioritise and deal with shoplifting.

The Retail Crime Action Plan, which the National Business Crime Centre was heavily involved in drafting, sets out advice to retailers on how to provide the best possible evidence for police to pursue in any case, making clear they should send CCTV footage of the whole incident and an image of the shoplifter via the digital evidence management system as quickly as possible after an offence has been committed.

Where CCTV or other digital images are secured, police will run this through the Police National Database using facial recognition technology to further aid efforts to identify and prosecute offenders – particularly prolific or potentially dangerous individuals.

The action plan outlines how police attendance at the scene for retail crime will be prioritised in circumstances where violence has been used, where a repeat or prolific offender has been detained or where evidence needs to be promptly secured. It also outlines how all reasonable lines of enquiry will be pursued to identify offenders, secure evidence, seek to recover property and ensure witnesses are identified and interviewed.

Within Avon and Somerset, through the leadership of the Business Crime thematic lead, we have created local responsible officers within neighbourhood policing teams, to improve communication between local business communities and the police. As well as this there are more proactive operations, such as working more with businesses to reduce offending through increased awareness and target hardening; but critically also identifying and apprehending the repeat offenders who are usually responsible for the bulk of the offending. We have also had a huge drive to increase trust and confidence and improve reporting, through using our QR code. These activities are part of some new initiatives which are being co-designed with our partners. Each area will co-develop an action plan for their own areas focussing on their local priorities. Finally, each Local Policing Area is producing its own response to the National Action Plan, capturing local activity to drive improvement.

## How assured are we and why?

We are not well assured that we are dealing with Business Crime. Avon and Somerset Police has recently agreed and devised a new strategic plan with partners, which will feed into the local plans. Several initiatives are being trialled with the force which will positively impact on the productivity. However, the force is going through challenges with demand and resources and this is having a huge impact on prioritising retail crime over other demands with higher levels of threat, harm and risk.

**Background and Context**

The following crime types are used to identify business crime:

- Theft, Arson and Criminal Damage, Burglary, Robbery, Vehicle Offences, Miscellaneous Crimes Against Society, Public Order Offences, Violence Against The Person, Drug Offences and Possession of Weapons.
- A further breakdown for theft offences (Home Office descriptions): Shoplifting, Other theft, Theft - Making Off Without Payment, Theft by an employee, Theft of mail, Theft from the person, Theft in a dwelling other than from an automatic machine or metre, Theft or unauthorised taking of a pedal cycle, Theft from an automatic machine or metre.

**Conclusion**

There is positive work being done with our partners and A&S have a network of SPOCs supporting local business owners in their area as well as the Force Lead to provide a collaborative two way approach to addressing and reducing business crime. The upward trend in reporting is positive but still is not estimated to cover true levels. When arrest packages are created there is an exceptionally high positive outcome level, we just need to be better at linking offences and gathering initial evidence.

There are other areas for improvement. Business crime as a thematic may not always be seen as a priority alongside ASC other challenges; such as Vulnerability, DA and RASSO for example, however the link to trust and confidence and overall demand is recognised. Reporting avenues don't enable reporting of crime, attaching of video and completion of statements in one single process. Better reporting would enable better evidence gathering. A small uplift in staff on the volume offences team would enable better linking and targeting of repeat offenders. There are opportunities to create a business crime dashboard which will enable us to better target hotspot areas and prolific offenders. Space can be created within the Local Tasking Meeting process to prioritise and track disruption, arrests and interventions. There are further opportunities to exploit the use of PND facial recognition. We know that our positive outcome rate once we create arrest packages is high, so focusing effort on the "front-end" activity to gather and build evidence could lead to increased volumes of positive outcomes.

Data showing business crime related offences 01/03/2022 – 29/02/2024.

Total Crimes  
**41,144**

% Change Last 12M

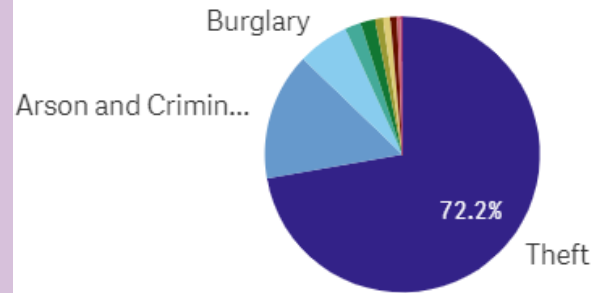
**+28.6%** +5144  
Numeric Change

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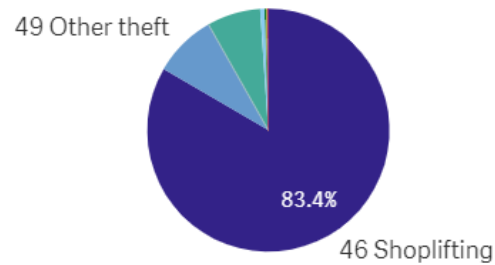
Current 12M Actual Crimes

**23,144** 18,000  
Previous 12M Actual Crimes

Offence Group Breakdown



Offence Group Breakdown



Q: To what extent are we assured we capture data well?

**Current Position:**

Data shows that in the two years 01/03/2022 – 29/02/2024 business crime accounts for a total of 41,114 crimes. The last 12 months has seen an increase in year on year reporting, from 18,000 offences to 23,144 crimes in the past 12 months. That is an increase of 28.6%.

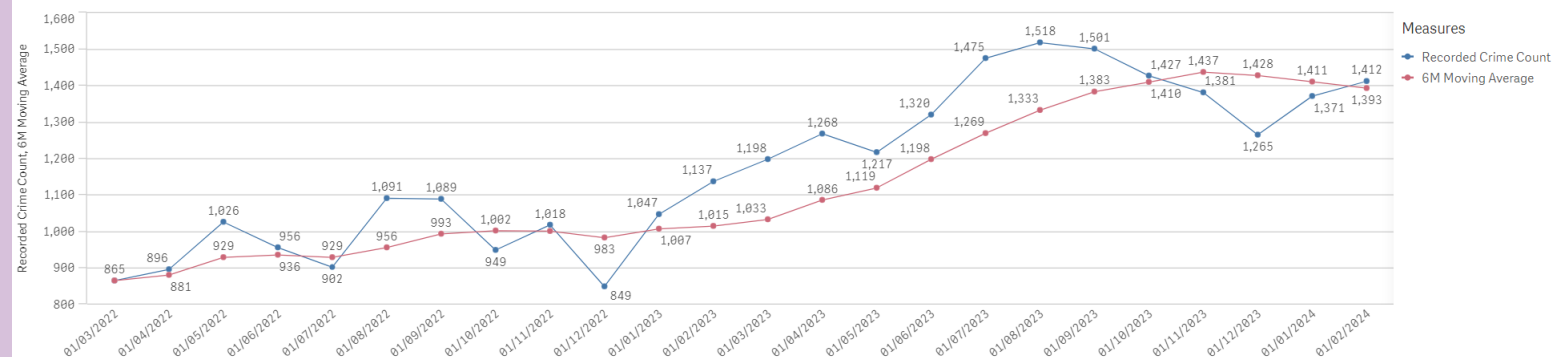
Theft offences account for almost three-quarters of all business crime, and of that figure shoplifting accounts for 83.4%. Making off without payment (often referred to as bilking and mostly comprising failure to pay for fuel) accounts for a further 7.1%.

To illustrate the impact that shoplifting and making off without payment have upon the total force figures, Avon & Somerset recorded a total 56,114 theft related offences in the same period. Business crime theft totalled 29,709 offences, so makes up **52.9%** of all force recorded theft offences.

To further illustrate this point the force recorded a total of 289,391 crimes over those two years, so business crime theft accounts for **10.2%** of the total for all crime.

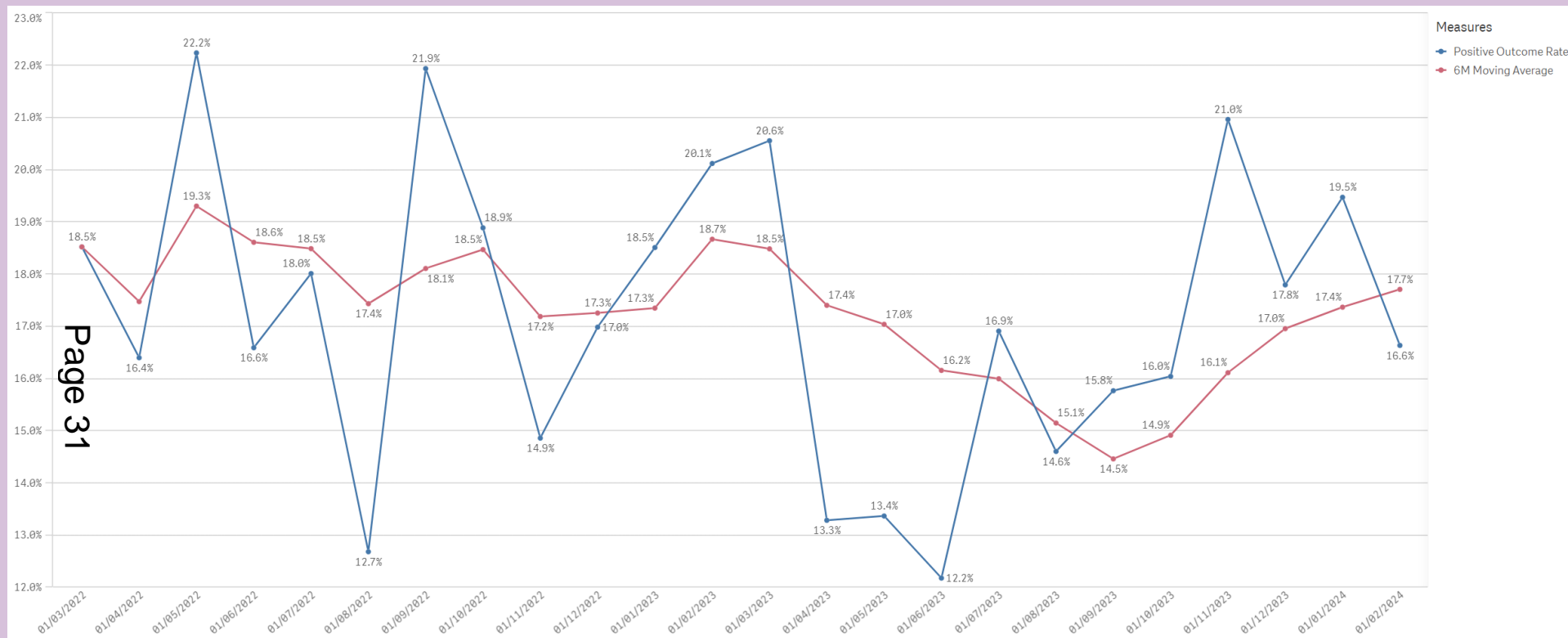
The rise in reported business related theft has been most noticeable from Jan 2023. Since that time there has been a 38% increase in the 6 month moving average.

Recorded Crime Trend (inc current month)



## Q: To what extent are we assured we identify &amp; target offenders ?

## Positive outcome rate for shoplifting



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The force has a positive outcome rate of 16.4% for shoplifting over the last year, this is a small decrease on two years ago.

A&S is ranked 34<sup>th</sup> nationally for outcome rate.

A&S is ranked 33<sup>rd</sup> for offences per 1,000 population.

In order to understand how we identify and target prolific offenders we need to understand the process for reporting business crime. Call script processes and advice on the public website will take victims of business crime through a threat, harm, risk process. If the offender has been detained then Patrol will be tasked to attend and deal in the most appropriate fashion.

If an offender has not been detained or serious harm not caused, victims are directed towards the online reporting form. This form is completed by the victim. As no niche number has been assigned at this point, it is not possible to submit a report and upload CCTV at the same time. The initial report is assessed by the enquiry office and a niche occurrence is created. Templates generate automated email responses based upon whether a suspect is named or not, and whether CCTV is available. Victims are advised of the niche reference and told to upload CCTV at [www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/cctv](http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/cctv). The wording of this email might be confusing to some, as it describes different procedures depending upon whether a suspect is named, can be identified or not. In order to improve the investigation of shoplifting the IAU have created a Volume Offender Team (VOT). This sits within IAU and consists of 5 Police Staff Investigators. Abstractions are back-filled wherever possible. Reports that are of low value with no named suspect nor any CCTV are filed. All others are tasked to VOT.

## OPCC Assurance – Business Crime

Number of shop theft occurrences handled & filed by VOT Jan - Dec 23	1270
Number of requests for CCTV evidence	1140
Number of positive uploads of CCTV	521
Number of statements supplied	52

Number of named suspect shop theft occurrences filed by VOT in Dec 2023	178
Number of requests for CCTV evidence	164
Number of positive uploads of CCTV	89
Number of statements supplied	9

Case 1, £300 theft, caught on video and reported online on 2nd Nov.
Enquiry Office reviewed the report the same day, task sent to IAU
Occurrence allocated 3 days later to Volume Offences Team. Request made the same day for store CCTV. Noted on OEL that offender has 6 pending cases at court, but crime if filed pending receipt of CCTV.
10th Nov - IOM request that the crime is reopened. Phone contact made with store, not aware of original email requesting CCTV.
20th Nov - task sent to local NH team for CCTV collection
24th Nov - suspect is in custody on a different matter, this is noted on the OEL & that there are 13 similar offences outstanding (including this one). NO ACTION TAKES PLACE WITH REGARDS TO THIS OFFENCE.
6th Dec - now outside the 28 day deadline for CCTV collection, an email chaser is sent to NH.
16th Feb - PCSO advised they had been on sick / restricted duties & CCTV had been deleted.

Case 2, reported online & sent to VOT on 3rd Nov. Links to several crimes noted
Email sent to central CCTV and to store. CCTV sent electronically the next day.
Email sent to store requesting statement & received the next day. Within 5 days of receipt the OIC had obtained CCTV and a statement, and prepared a handover pack should the suspect
24th Nov - suspect in custody, dealt with and positive outcome applied.

## Q: To what extent do we understand and target prolific offenders?

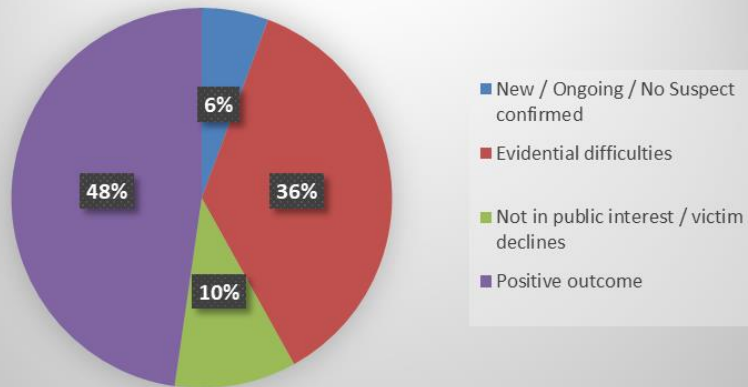
The VOT filed 1270 shoplifting and making off without payment crimes in 2023. Experience has shown that the return rate for CCTV is subject to many variables. The National Retail Crime Plan is quite clear with regards to expectations placed upon businesses to supply CCTV and statements upon request but many stores limit access to CCTV to restricted personnel, or utilise third-party security companies to manage systems. Requests for CCTV are often ignored or mislaid. DATA. Due to these issues, and a lack of time / resource to "chase up" CCTV requests, the crime is filed pending receipt. If CCTV is returned the team will assess whether it is of evidential value and can be definitively linked to the named suspect. If so an email will be sent back to the victim requesting a statement. As can be seen in the two tables there are diminishing rates of return at each stage of the process – for the period sampled, 50% of CCTV requested was not supplied, and following on from that statements were not supplied 90% of the time. Something in that process is not landing with victims and potential opportunities to gather evidence are being lost. If an identity is not known there are two staff within the VOT and 6 staff within Intel that are trained to process images against the facial recognition software within PND, and if that doesn't secure any identification then there are processes within niche to enable images to be uploaded to the "ID Sought" section of the Intelligence Portal.

If a suspect has been named, CCTV secured and of evidential value and a statement obtained then VOT will task Patrol with an arrest package. In the past 12 months the VOT have passed 822 crimes to LPA, with just under 200 offenders linked to those crimes. As of February 2024 there are 285 open shoplifting occurrences with a suspect named. Dip-sampling has been conducted and what is apparent is that there is a lack of consistency and perhaps oversight applied to shoplifting which is leading to missed opportunities to detect offences. The tables to the left detail two similar offences of shoplifting, both reported online within a few hours of each other, with the **same named suspect**. On the first occasion (red) enquiries were delayed, and there was little consideration of the fact that the suspect had been linked to multiple offences. Emails and tasks were not chased up and worryingly no action took place when the suspect was actually in custody. No record of consideration for an interview with a view to a possible TIC was even recorded. Compare this to the second job (green) where the right things were done at the right time, and the difference is obvious. An arrest pack was ready, the job was properly linked to the suspect, so when he was arrested on the different matter this job could be proceeded with and resulted in a charge.



OPCC Assurance – Business Crime

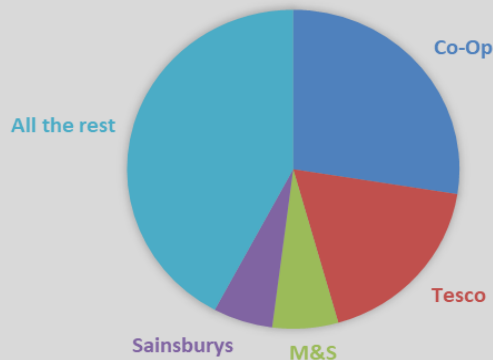
Top 25 prolific suspects - disposals



- 10: Police - formal action not in public interest
- 16: Victim declines/withdraws support - named suspect identified
- 21: Police - named suspect, investigation not in the public interest

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Stores reporting prolific suspects



Q: To what extent do we understand and target prolific offenders?

Nationally a number of retailers have collaborated to fund a dedicated resource to focus upon serious and organised crime groups targeting shops. This work is channelled through Opal under Op Pegasus. As a force, business crime and organised acquisitive crime is not currently one of our strategic priorities and as such the Intelligence Department is unlikely to be able to support detailed intelligence analysis or to conduct proactive development to identify prolific organised shoplifter gangs. Currently the strategic priorities are County Lines & Drugs Markets, Serious Violence, Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking and Child Sexual Abuse & Exploitation. Priorities are set at a force Strategic Tasking & Coordination Group meeting following completion of the strategic assessment. The latest strategic assessment has just been completed and new priorities will be decided in March at the Strategic Planning Meeting.

Every one of the 50,000 intelligence reports we receive each year is assessed against a THRIVE-P matrix (for Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigative Opportunities, Expectations and Priorities) and graded as either Red, Amber or Green by the processing team. Red intelligence is reviewed immediately by the duty Sergeant, Amber intelligence is marked for consideration of development by one of the intelligence team and Green intelligence is not usually subject to a response. Most shoplifting intelligence will be graded as GREEN, although if the intelligence indicates the existence of organised crime or relates to a specific future event it may be graded as AMBER. In the last 12 months the intelligence department received 223 intel reports which are categorised as Theft/Shops & Stalls, and 230 categorised as Theft/Handling & dealers. These reports are readily available for local policing teams to interrogate via the Crime & Intelligence App on Qlik and give the top linked people, locations etc. There's no specific current feed through Op Pegasus that the intel department are aware of.

Using Qlik data it is possible to see that the Top 25 Repeat Offenders for theft (shop) over the past 12 months have been linked to a total of 811 occurrences as suspects. Of those, 387 (47.7%) have a positive outcome. Further work exploring those occurrences that do not have a positive outcome reveals that 43 are either new or don't have any outcome applied. CPS or Police evidential difficulties account for 294 (36%). That leaves 84 where outcomes 10, 16 or 21 have been applied. This may be worthy of further scrutiny. These figures relate to our most prolific offenders, often targeting stores on multiple occasions. The suspect is often named by the store, so one may question why, having reported the matter and supplied the evidence, stores then decide not to prosecute or a decision is made that further action is not in the public interest.

Interestingly of those stores targeted by the Top 25 Repeat Offenders, Co-Op & Co-Op Southern stores account for 274 (33.7%) and Tesco / Tesco Express account for 147 (18.1%). The next largest are Marks & Spencer with 52 (6.4%), so one may question why Co-Op and Tesco are such outliers? This pattern is pretty much repeated for all victims of shop theft with Tesco highest at 13.8%, Co-Op very close with 13.7% and the third highest at just 5.7%. It would be useful to understand whether this is due to reporting processes at the two chains being stricter, or whether there is some flaw that makes them seem to be an easier target. The Volume Offender Team have strong links with Co-Op, and there is a willingness to work collaboratively to prevent and detect more offences.

## OPCC Assurance – Business Crime

### Q: To what extent do we use established good practice to inform our approach to business crime?

We use [the College of Policing APP](#) guidance with investigating business crime, supplemented by our local initiatives and practices. A new Business Crime Strategy is in the process of being developed with an aim to complete it by the end of March 2024. The strategy will link closely to the [Retail Crime Action Plan](#).

There are neighbourhood team Single Points of Contact (SPOCs) within each area. Each area is in the process of developing a local improvement plan which varies to accommodate the needs of the local businesses. This network of SPOCs provide a local picture, plan and provide the link to the Force Lead. SPOCs lead on local initiatives, using their local knowledge and experience to tailor plans. Each team works with the local businesses to encourage collaborative working within the Business Improvement Districts (BID) in the larger cities, holding regular meetings to strengthen these relationships.

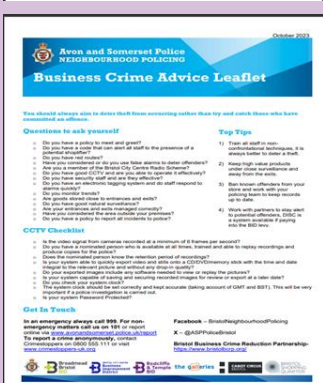
NHTs work closely with the VOT. NHT are the first point of contact for desktop investigators within IAU to call upon to go to the stores and secure the evidence in urgent cases. Some areas, such as Bristol and Bath, focus on the top 5 prolific offenders proactively through NH days of action. South Gloucestershire identify their top 3 offenders at each LTM. Decisions are then made on ownership and how to target. A new shoplifting pack has been developed for retailers – this provides them with a detailed explanation of the process, and reaffirms our commitment to tackling shoplifting. The pack is due to start formal trialling with Bristol Neighbourhood Team imminently. In the longer term, IAU are hoping to incorporate the current VOT (shoplifting process) and the IAU support team (who manage the ID Sought process and CCTV uploads) into a dedicated shoplifting team. This will be dependent on the availability of resources following the current CDI uplift.

Neighbourhood Teams actively work with ASB Coordinators to explore the use of legal orders such as Criminal Behaviour Orders, Civil Injunctions and Serious Crime Prevention Orders to disrupt and manage prolific business crime offenders. Due to the nature of current data recording we cannot isolate those orders applied as a result of business crime. We do know that ancillary tools such as Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) and Community Protection Notices (CPNs) have also been used to great effect to positively affect the behaviour of prolific offenders, e.g a prolific offender had previously been convicted many times for shoplifting and had various penalties in the past including a 3 week imprisonment but had continued upon his release. He was subsequently the recipient of a CBO. He was charged with shoplifting but also several breaches of the order. The sentence was a 30 week prison term.

Most neighbourhood teams collaborate closely with local Business Improvement Districts and often share equipment, such as “Shopnet” radio so PCSOs and Police on the beat team hear first hand when a crime is occurring and can attend straight away as they are on the ground. Problem Solving is currently subject to force improvement activity in response to the HMICFRS Area for Improvement. It has been used as a tool to tackle high levels of ASB and street crime affecting businesses (and the wider community) such as the one for Glastonbury High Street. As a result, reported crime fell by 25% and incidents of ASB fell by 17% in the 12 months period.

QR codes have been introduced and embedded Forcewide via a business crime advice leaflet. This provides a quick and easy way to upload CCTV, reports and how to contact Police. These have been welcomed by the businesses and feedback is generally positive (more detail is provided on the next slide). There are also fact sheets with suggestions on how to keep the store safe which have been distributed across the main areas of concern. We are linked with the Crime prevention team, who are currently in the process of making a funding BID, Safer Shops funding via the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) and the WECA Mayor.

Neighbourhoods have created an action plan to drive better performance with regards to problem solving. In terms of business crime, there are 2 live plans regarding begging affecting businesses, 1 aimed at reducing shoplifting and ASB in a supermarket and one aimed at targeting the offending behaviour of a prolific shoplifter.



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## Q: To what extent do we use established good practice to inform our approach to business crime?

Key Identified Risks	Mitigating / proposed activities
<p>There have been missed opportunities to target and enforce against prolific shop theft offenders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Increased focus on offenders</b> – opportunity to focus on the “power few” via Local Tasking Meeting processes, creating intelligence packs and trigger plans. Days of action planned for March.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Serious Organised Retail Crime (SORC)</b> – bring this into the broader serious organised crime agenda.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Further development of PND facial recognition</b> – potential to equip more staff and improve processes to identify more offenders</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Uplift in VOT</b> – success has been had with a dedicated resource looking at volume crime but gaps still exist. The process is effective at creating quality arrest packages leading to positive outcomes.</li> </ul>
<p>Problem solving has not been utilised to full effect to tackle the problems of business crime.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Increased focus on problem solving</b> – opportunity to target hotspot locations, repeat victims, prolific offenders through more effective use of problem solving.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Ongoing training for NH</b> – new NH Craft sessions, induction processes and creation of an online learning platform will enable better knowledge and utilisation of problem solving and ASB powers &amp; tools to tackle business crime.</li> </ul>
<p>Business crime data is available but located across several Qlik sheets and there is no single dashboard to properly understand the issues. Police data is not easily shared with business partners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Creation of a business crime dashboard</b> – better understand and utilise data to identify and target hotspot areas and prolific offenders.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Production of a local Data Sharing Agreement (DSA)</b> – working with Co op stores to share intelligence, there is a DSA already in existence with NBCC at national level.</li> </ul>
<p>Victims of business crime do not have confidence in reporting and there is a diminishing rate of return at each stage of the process with regards to supply of CCTV and Statements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Continue to raise retailer awareness</b> – focus upon reporting mechanisms, evidence requirements and use of business impact statements. Days of action planned for March focussing on engagement and prolific offenders. Working with key retailers to tackle business factors affecting evidence gathering, e.g. staff access to CCTV, staff time to report.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Review of reporting mechanisms</b> – look at opportunities to reduce “touchpoints” and “back &amp; forth” between reporting a crime, upload of CCTV and request for statement. Shoplifting pack being trialled in Bristol.</li> </ul>

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## AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

20 MARCH 2024

### COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE REPORT

#### Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide the Police and Crime Panel with a summary of key activities of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and his Office (OPCC) since the last meeting to discharge statutory duties and support delivery of the Police and Crime Plan. The report was reformatted last year 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

- **Male Violence Against Women and Girls (MVAWG):** Update on Bystander intervention training through Safer Streets 5 funding to improve safety of female workforce and women in the night time economy.
- **Serious Violence:** Strategic Needs Assessment and Serious Violence Strategy submitted; Duty funding confirmed for 24/25; Extraordinary meeting convened in response to recent deaths of teenagers and other serious incidents of knife crime.
- **Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)/Neighbourhood:** A&S allocation of national ASB Hotspot funding for uniformed presence in identified hotspots and for partnership initiatives.
- **Fraud & Cyber Crime:** Stop! Think Fraud campaign launched; Ofcom consultation: online harm.

##### Priority 2

- **Engagement:** precept survey update; PCC community engagement activity summary; Independent Panel Member recruitment campaign; VRU communications strategy development.
- **Victims:** Recommissioning tender documents due to be published after Board meeting on 5 March.
- **Criminal Justice:** LCJB Business Plan Review completed to inform new plan; update on Whole System Approach to support Women in the Criminal Justice System.

##### Priority 3

- **Recruitment:** high level police officer recruitment and leaver figures.
- **Leadership:** update on Leadership Days.
- **Estates:** update on key decisions – Minehead and Chard.

##### Priority 4

- **Inequality & Disproportionality:** training and induction session held for new Independent Scrutiny Board.
  - **PCC Scrutiny Panels:** Police Powers Panel scrutiny of Stop & Search in Somerset and use of s60 powers in Bristol; Complaints Panel review of police corruption and abuse of position; Joint ASP/OPCC Out of Court Disposals (OoCD) Panel annual meeting, training and scrutiny of community resolutions; Independent Custody Visitor meeting focus on custody healthcare, detainee transport and appropriate adult provision, HMICFRS Custody Inspection.
  - **Complaints & Contacts:** current contacts themes including feedback on Channel 4 Documentary.
- Governance & Accountability:** overview of PCC oversight boards and links to recent minutes; links to recent HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection reports and PCC responses; overview of progress against PEEL Areas for Improvement.

**Key Decisions:** None since the last meeting. Summary of key decisions due to be considered at the March meeting.

**National Updates:** including APCC PCC Election awareness campaign; Police Dismissals Review and A&S OPCC input into APCC Holding to Account workshop.

## **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.

An update on 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**

The Safer Streets 5 VAWG project aims to prevent violence against women and girls and challenge misogyny occurring in public space and the nighttime economy. It aims to do this by offering bystander intervention training to businesses and staff working in the nighttime economy and providing them with a toolkit to intervene in incidents of harassment and unwanted behaviour that may precede criminal offending. Research by Public Health England shows that there are clear positive changes, both behavioural and attitudinal, reported for participants in bystander programmes.

The OPCC has launched a tender opportunity for bystander intervention training providers on Monday 12 February. The successful provider will begin delivering training, in the summer, in key VAWG hotspot areas across A&S. The OPCC will continue to work closely with ASC, local authority licensing and community safety teams to ensure training opportunities are targeted and widely promoted.

#### **Serious Violence**

##### **Achievements**

- The newly appointed Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) Director, and the Senior Partnerships and Engagement Manager have got off to a fast start in their new roles and the VRP Director is conducting a review of Hub ways of working to identify areas of improvement needed.
- The new Avon & Somerset Violence Reduction Partnership website ( [www.asvrp.co.uk](http://www.asvrp.co.uk) ) went live at the end of January 2024 and will continue to be developed over the next few months. The site will include key information on activity taking place across Avon & Somerset as well as activity within each of the five local VRPs which will each have a dedicated section on the website.
- The 2024 Strategic Needs Assessment and 2024-25 VRP Strategy have been submitted to the Home Office and the Strategy has been published on VRP's website on 31 January. These are iterative documents, which will be further developed by the Director and partnership over coming months.
- The Serious Violence Reduction Partnership Board (SVRPB) meeting was held on the 28 February and progress was made with agreement on workstream prioritisation.
- VRU funding and Serious Violence Duty funding for 2024-25 has been confirmed as part of the Home Office funding settlement. A proposal for funding allocations has been circulated to partners for approval in preparation for completion of the 2024-25 Delivery Plan.

### Challenges

- There have been a number of incidents of serious violence within the Bristol area which have resulted in the untimely death of, or serious injury, young people. This is putting high levels of pressure on partners involved. An extraordinary meeting for the Violence Reduction Partnership Board was called by the Commissioner and Deputy on 21 February which was also attended by the elected member leads from the local authorities and organisations working in the education and youth sectors. The meeting was an opportunity to share views on the additional action that is needed across the partnership to continue to tackle serious violence and keep communities safe, and to receive an update from Avon and Somerset Constabulary on its plans for an enhanced approach to knife crime.

### Q3 Outcomes

- The Q3 returns have been completed as have the Q4 forecasts. Projections indicate a full spend of allocations and no concerns have been raised.

### Next quarter milestones

- A timeline and project plan will be developed for the VRP work activities.
- The VRP Director has created a VRP response plan which is being presented to the SVRPB for approval. This will support the delivery of the priority areas of action identified in the new Avon and Somerset Serious Violence Strategy.
- A performance framework will be completed for the partnership.
- Work will commence on the Data and Evaluation Strategy for the VRP.

## **Neighbourhood Crime & ASB**

### Anti-Social Behaviour / Serious Violence Hotspot Funding

- The Home Office have awarded Avon and Somerset £1.6 million to cover both ASB and GRIP (serious violence) initiatives. A focus group has taken place on 19 February chaired by the OPCC bringing together all ASB leads across force, serious violence contacts, legal, communications and Local Authority community safety partners.
- The budget will cover uniformed presence in top hotspot areas which have the highest identified need for concern for ASB and SV. Work is currently ongoing to identify these using a blended approach of data, intelligence and expert knowledge.
- A GPS technology approach is being scoped to develop a programme to oversee patrols being carried out and scrutiny of compliance.
- The second part of the budget is to cover partnership initiatives to directly support the reduction in ASB/SV in the identified hotspot locations. Proposals have been submitted and are being reviewed by the OPCC.
- Proposals must be submitted to the Home Office by 8 March.
- Further information can be found at the following link: [www.gov.uk/government/news/plan-proven-to-slash-anti-social-behaviour-rolled-out-nationwide](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/plan-proven-to-slash-anti-social-behaviour-rolled-out-nationwide)

## **Fraud & Cybercrime**

- The Home Office has launched a major anti-fraud campaign. Stop! Think Fraud is backed by leading counter fraud experts who are uniting under one voice to provide consistent, clear and robust anti-fraud advice to the public. The evidence-led campaign draws on the expertise of leading counter-fraud experts and includes an online fraud hub which will provide concise, simple to follow advice. It will also signpost victims to relevant organisations for further advice and support. Further information can be found at the following link: [www.gov.uk/government/news/major-campaign-to-fight-fraud-launched](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/major-campaign-to-fight-fraud-launched)

- An Ofcom consultation on online harm will be launched this week, a joint response has been drafted with the APCC for submission.

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

**Public Engagement**

- Precept Survey – the analysis report was submitted to the Panel and has been published on the OPCC website. PCC council tax leaflets have been designed, with a digital version sent to all Local Authority communications teams. A hard copy version has been created and sent to all Local Authorities to be included in postal bills to 705,000 households across Avon and Somerset. A QR code to an online policing priorities survey was included in the leaflet to measure engagement with the leaflet as a communications tool and evaluate its efficiency and cost effectiveness. The survey is seeking views on the policing priorities of local people and will be used to inform the process of either refreshing the current or creating a new police and crime plan following the PCC election in May.
- PCC community engagement activity continues. Recent visits include:

<b>MONTH</b>	<b>AREA</b>	<b>VISITS</b>	<b>ISSUES HIGHLIGHTED</b>
January	Somerset & WsM Keynsham Bristol South Gloucestershire	MPs Ian Lidell-Grainger, Liam Fox, Luke Hall. WsM football club, The Bridge Sexual Assault Referral Centre, Opoka, Local Crime Forum, Holocaust Memorial Day Ceremony, Indian Republic Day celebration	Youth diversionary community projects, ASB, burglary, road safety, improving engagement between Neighbourhood Watch and Local Police Teams,
February	Bristol Bridgewater BaNES Taunton (Wellington)	MPs Jacob Rees-Mogg, Vera Hobhouse, Kerry McCarthy, Cllr Mick Lerry Bridgwater Chamber of Commerce One25 Freetalk CIC Bath Football Foundation Major Crime Investigation Team ASP Ambition Southmead Project Sparks Bristol Together	Drugs, Knife Crime, homicides in Bristol, ASB, shoplifting, domestic abuse victim support, drug addiction rehabilitation,



- Independent Panel Member recruitment campaign

The recruitment campaign for Independent Panel Members was launched to support the forthcoming national changes to the misconduct process. The campaign was launched following on from the recent Story Films Channel 4 series to capitalise on the interest in policing and the scrutiny work of the PCC's office. Diversity of applicants and targeting was given key consideration.

The campaign included a press release which led to coverage in: Bristol Live, Somerset County Gazette, BNN People's Network. A three-week social media campaign ran with posts several times per week over LinkedIn, Facebook, Nextdoor and X. Blog post on the OPCC website were shared via peer to peer targeting through LinkedIn and via the engagement team with people who are working with or have had visits from the PCC/third parties. Creation of a new website section in 'Get Involved' section included FAQs created to support ease of applications. The Constabulary communications team supported the campaign, promoting it via their channels. The campaign has been successful in attracting a diversity of applicants as follows:

<b>Diversity of applicants - total applicants 66:</b>
- 8 different ethnicities specified
- 9 non-white applicants (13%)
- 5 prefer not to say
- 8 said yes to disability (12%)
- 5 sexuality specified other than heterosexual
- 30 women (45%)
- 2 people in 20-29 age category / 9 in 30-39 / 13 in 40-49 / 10 in 50-59 / 27 in 60+

- Internal and external engagement around story films broadcast has been a key focus in the past month. Activity has included:
  - Attending partner and community screening at Everyman Cinema with key stakeholders
  - Attendance at Gold Groups
  - PCC statements published to the OPCC website
  - Social media content from PCC and ASP shared
  - Summary statement from Independent Scrutiny of Police Powers Panel issued.
- Serious youth violence and knife crime Comms and Engagement: Recent incidents across Bristol and South Gloucestershire have triggered a review of the communications and engagement in relation to the work of the Violence Reduction Partnership hub. A workshop is scheduled for April with the new Director, Stakeholder Manager and Communications Manager for the VRP and the OPCC Communications and Engagement Team to work jointly on a strategy.

### **Supporting victims of crime and ASB**

On the 5 March 2024 the Victim Services Recommissioning Board is meeting to sign off key plans before commencing a tender process for the commissioning of services due to commence in April 2025. At the time of writing the content of these papers is commercially sensitive so for the latest update please see the [OPCC Website](#).

### **Criminal Justice**

The LCJB will take place on the 6 March, with the focus to include Bristol Knife crime, Tackling Disproportionality, and Youth Offending consequences. In addition, a final closing report is being collated on behalf of each sub group to submit to the board outlining progress against the LCJB

Business Plan. Next steps will be to start discussions around a new Business Plan to monitor performance of the subgroups more closely and identify where the LCJB can assist or leverage progress for 24/25.

Women in the Criminal Justice system - Whole System Approach: Funding was granted to The Nelson Trust last year to deliver on the development of a whole system approach for women in the criminal justice system. Successful recruitment has taken place and Nelson Trust report that there has been strong partnership buy-in.

**Priority 3 – Leading the Police to be Efficient and Effective**

**Recruiting Officers**

	Month of January 2024	(Average) Year ending January 2024
Leavers (headcount)	24	20
<b>Reasons for leaving (% of all leavers)</b>		
Resignation	25%	43%
Retirement	58%	45%
Other	17%	12%

**Capability**

Leadership Time Events

ASP have run their Leadership Time events, for the second year, from November 2023 – February 2024. These are whole day events, held off-site and are mandatory for leaders across ASP. The overarching purpose of the day is to help bring to life ASP's five year strategy and help people understand what this means for them and their teams.

The Chief Constable's address and question and answer sessions are an important part of the day. The questions are taken in the room or via people submitting through a live online system. Chief officers also gave presentations on culture and leading change in the morning. In the afternoon there was a focus on the strategic imperatives:

- Perpetrator focus
- Transparency
- Trauma informed
- Inclusion
- Innovation

Attendees would consider how these strategic imperatives applied in their work. Attendees worked individually and in small groups before coming back together in a plenary session.

The event also provides an opportunity for colleagues to talk and network and people are assigned tables to ensure there is a blend of different people on each table rather than teams gravitating together.

Estates Update

Final Business Cases with respect to Minehead and Chard are due to be considered at the next GSB meeting in March. Should these be approved, we will be in a position to sign contracts to proceed with the developments.

The land purchase of the Trinity site was completed by The Guinness Partnership at the end of February 2024 with works due to start on site in March. The construction of the new police area is scheduled for completion by February 2027 ready for the Constabulary to fit out, with the site expected to re-open by the end of 2027.

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

##### **Inequality and Disproportionality**

The Independent Scrutiny Board is now gaining momentum with two ways of working sessions completed, as well as their first training session which took place in February 2024. A knowledge and skills assessment has been undertaken to gain a better understanding of the knowledge of the criminal justice system within the group but also to understand how to get the best from them collectively as well as individually.

The Steering Committee continue to meet regularly, and training leads are being provided from across the multi-agency partnership. The programme now has a dedicated comms lead, and the first Board meeting is scheduled for March.

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

###### **Independent Scrutiny of Police Powers Panel (ISoPPP)**

Preparations are well underway for the March panel meeting which will look at themes covering stop search and use of force, including a focus on stop-search of Black and Minority Ethnic people in Somerset which was highlighted in the Identifying Disproportionality report as having the highest disproportionality rate in the Force area. The panel have scrutinised 54 cases of body worn video and will review a selection of recent s.60 stop and search cases from the recent s.60 order in Bristol in person.

Attendees at the March meeting will include the Regional IOPC Director and the HMICFRS Force Liaison Lead.

###### **Independent Scrutiny of Police Complaints Panel (ISPCP)**

The next meeting of the ISPCP is scheduled for the 7 March and the panel have opted to scrutinise complaints relating to police corruption and abuse of position. The panel continue to review a small sample of discrimination complaint cases as part of their commitment to PSD to review these type of complaints as regularly as possible. Chief Inspector James Turner from Avon and Somerset Constabulary will be presenting to the panel regarding the use of police Body Worn Video as this is an area of interest. The panel frequently identify complaints which could have been dealt with better if BWV was available.

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)

### Joint ASP-OPCC Out of Court Disposals Scrutiny Panel

The Out of Court Disposals Scrutiny Panel will meet on 27 March for its annual meeting, to review their Terms of Reference, appoint a new Chair and welcome newly appointed Magistrate members. The session will focus on a training and development session, including piloting use of a new online form to capture learning from the Panel and feed into a Qlik App to enable oversight of action taken in response to recommendations, and analysis of common themes. The Panel will scrutinise Community Resolution cases to assess progress since the introduction of new guidance in Autumn 2022, and scrutiny by the Panel on this theme in March 2023.

Reports are published at the following link: [www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/reports-publications/out-court-disposals-reports/](http://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/reports-publications/out-court-disposals-reports/)

### 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. The OPCC launched a focused ICV Volunteer Recruitment Campaign at the end of November and this closed in January. It was highly successful, attracting 37 applicants. Suitability interviews are scheduled for mid/end of March.

ICV panel meetings took place on 27 and 29 February in Bridgwater and Keynsham respectively. The panel welcomed a presentation from Bill Hillier, ASC Custody Logistics Coordinator who manages the contracts with MITIE (health care provider), SERCO (detainee transport provider) and TAAS (The Appropriate Adult Service). ICVs have identified ongoing concerns in relation to the delays with SERCO transporting detainees to courts and prisons. This appears to be a national concern and attributed to lack of resources. ICVs continue to feedback on the availability of healthcare provision in custody and are pleased to report provision has improved following a recent uplift in staff. This continues to be monitored.

HMICFRS inspected the Constabulary custody provision in January and the ICV Scheme Manager and Senior Scrutiny and Assurance Manager were interviewed as part of this process. The report is awaited.

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

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

### **Contacts/Complaints Oversight**

The OPCC continues to monitor contacts coming in from local residents, and to raise 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.

The PCC has received significant contact from both residents and current/former employees of ASP in relation to the recent screening of the Channel 4 Documentary titled To Catch a Copper. The PCC has received mixed feedback which has included praise for the openness and transparency of ASP and concerns relating to the themes and issues highlighted in the programme.

Residents have also contacted the PCC around ongoing issues on the Downs, retail crime and hunting offences.

Go live of the new iCase management system is still delayed. The OPCC plan to start using the system once the ASP Legal Services Team go live which is expected later in the year.

## Governance and Accountability

### Oversight Boards

The PCC holds 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; and
- 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 link: [www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/reports-publications/oversight-boards/](http://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/reports-publications/oversight-boards/)

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. Minutes of GSB meetings held since the last Panel meeting can be found at the following link: [www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/reports-publications/oversight-boards/](http://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/reports-publications/oversight-boards/)

### HMICFRS – PCC responses

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

- An inspection of the effectiveness of the police and law enforcement bodies' response to group-based child sexual exploitation in England and Wales
- Meeting the needs of victims in the criminal justice system

There is currently one report requiring a response:

- [Efficiency spotlight report: The impact of recruitment and retention on the criminal justice system](#)

The PCC has provided the Association of PCCs with a response to the recommendation from the [Report on the Criminal Justice Alliance's super-complaint - Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 and independent community scrutiny of stop and search](#).

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.

PEEL Grading	Progress Tracker: HMICFRS PEEL 2021/22 AFIs (All Level 3) February 2024	Business Lead	Not Started	Metrics Identified	Work Ongoing	Improving	Closure pending
Requires Improvement	AFI 1 – The constabulary needs to improve the accuracy of recording rape crimes and incidents of rape	Maya Munden					
Requires Improvement	AFI 2 – The constabulary needs to improve its recording of crimes which involve vulnerable victims	Maya Munden					
Requires Improvement	AFI 3 – The constabulary needs to improve how it records crime when antisocial behaviour is reported	Maya Munden					
Requires Improvement	AFI 4 – The constabulary needs to improve how it records equality data	Ed Yaxley					
Adequate	AFI 5 – The constabulary should consistently evaluate and share effective problem-solving practice	Lisa Simpson					
Adequate	AFI 6 – The constabulary needs to ensure that neighbourhood policing officers have access to structured training	Lisa Simpson					
Requires Improvement	AFI 7 – 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	Becky Tipper					
Requires Improvement	AFI 8 – The constabulary should reduce the number of abandoned 101 calls	Becky Tipper					
Requires Improvement	AFI 9 – The constabulary should make sure that repeat and vulnerable callers are routinely identified	Becky Tipper					
Requires Improvement	AFI 10 – The constabulary should introduce effective processes for timely allocation of crimes of rape and other serious sexual offences to reduce the backlog	Ed Yaxley					
Requires Improvement	AFI 11 – The constabulary should make sure that an auditable record is kept if a victim withdraws their support for an investigation, and whether an evidenced prosecution is considered in all such cases	Ed Yaxley					
Requires Improvement	AFI 12 – The constabulary needs to improve the quality assurance and supervision of investigations	Rachel Shields					
Adequate	AFI 13 – The constabulary should ensure that risk assessments are effectively supervised, quality assured, and checked for compliance	Ed Yaxley					
Adequate	AFI 14 – The constabulary should reduce the backlog of applications waiting to be processed	Victoria Caple					
Requires Improvement	AFI 15 – The constabulary should reduce the time taken to conduct visits and risk assessments on registered sex offenders	James Turner					
Requires Improvement	AFI 16 – The constabulary should ensure its enforcement action against offenders accessing indecent images of children is robust and conducted in a timely manner	James Riccior					
Requires Improvement	AFI 17 – 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	James Riccior					

### 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)

No new key decisions have been published since the last Panel meeting. The following key decisions are due to be considered at GSB in March:

- Digital Evidence Management System Final Business Case
- Minehead Final Business Case
- Chard Final Business Case
- Treasury Management Strategy

### National Updates

### PCC Elections

PCC elections will take place on 2 May 2024. The APCC has launched a public campaign, 'Your Voice Your Police' to promote awareness and understanding of the role and impact of PCCs and encourage voters to have their say. Further information, including an introductory video, can be found at the following link: [Your Voice in Policing \(apccs.police.uk\)](https://apccs.police.uk)

### **Police Dismissals Review**

In January 2023, the then Home Secretary launched a review into the process of police officer dismissals, designed to ensure that the system is fair and effective at removing those officers who are not fit to serve. Following completion of this, the Government announced a series of reforms to strengthen the disciplinary system on 31 August 2023 and published the [final report on 18 September](#).

The delivery of these reforms will be split into 3 separate tranches, set out below. Tranches 1 and 2 will be delivered through secondary legislation, whereas tranche 3 will require changes to both primary *and* secondary legislation.

- Tranche 1 – Changes to the composition of misconduct panels.
- Tranche 2 – Wider changes to police misconduct, vetting and performance.
- Tranche 3 – Enabling chief officers to appeal to the Police Appeals Tribunal (as well as Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) where the officer concerned is the chief officer).

Work has started in relation to Tranche 1 which will see the misconduct panel composition change from:

- a Legally Qualified Chair, a police officer of Superintendent rank or above and a lay Independent Member, to
- a Chief Officer Chair, 2 Independent Members (one with a specific skill set in organisational standards and disciplines, senior leadership or HR) and a Legally Qualified Advisor (who will act as advisor to the panel only and not be considered a decision-making role).

The Home Office have scheduled the changes to come into effect from April 2024. Recognising the short timescales, the OPCC are working at pace to adhere to this where possible.

### **APCC Holding to Account Workshop**

The APCC has been holding a series of workshops to support PCCs and OPCCs in their holding to account and scrutiny arrangements. The February session featured an input from the A&S OPCC team on their approach to holding the Force to account on police performance.

### **Contact Officer:**

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

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**AVON &  
SOMERSET**  
POLICE & CRIME  
COMMISSIONER

# Performance Report

Quarter ending December 2023 (Q3 2023/24) v2

**4P** – [prepare, prevent, protect, pursue](#) – a nationally recognised policing strategy for dealing with crime.

**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.

**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.](#)

**County lines** – is a term used when drug gangs from big cities expand their operations to smaller towns, often using violence to drive out local dealers and exploiting children and vulnerable people to sell drugs. These dealers will use dedicated mobile phone lines, known as 'deal lines', to take orders from drug users.

**CPS** – [Crown Prosecution Service.](#)

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

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

**Drug trafficking** – these are drug offences, other than simple possession offences, such as drug supply.

**ISVAs** – Independent Sexual Violence Advisers.

**Lead Responsible Officer** – The officer responsible and accountable for disrupting and dismantling an organised crime group using a 4P approach. They work with subject matter specialists and partner agencies to achieve this.

**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.

**OCGs** – organised crime groups.

**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.

**RASSO** – rape and serious sexual offences.

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

**Uplift** – is the national programme of police officer recruitment that launched in 2019. ASP’s temporary funded target of 3,331 must be maintained until at least 31 March 2024. This is 496 more officers than ASP had at the start of the programme.

# **National Police and Crime Measures**

**(Priorities for Policing)**

## **Contribution of Avon and Somerset Police**

# Reduce Murder and Other Homicide

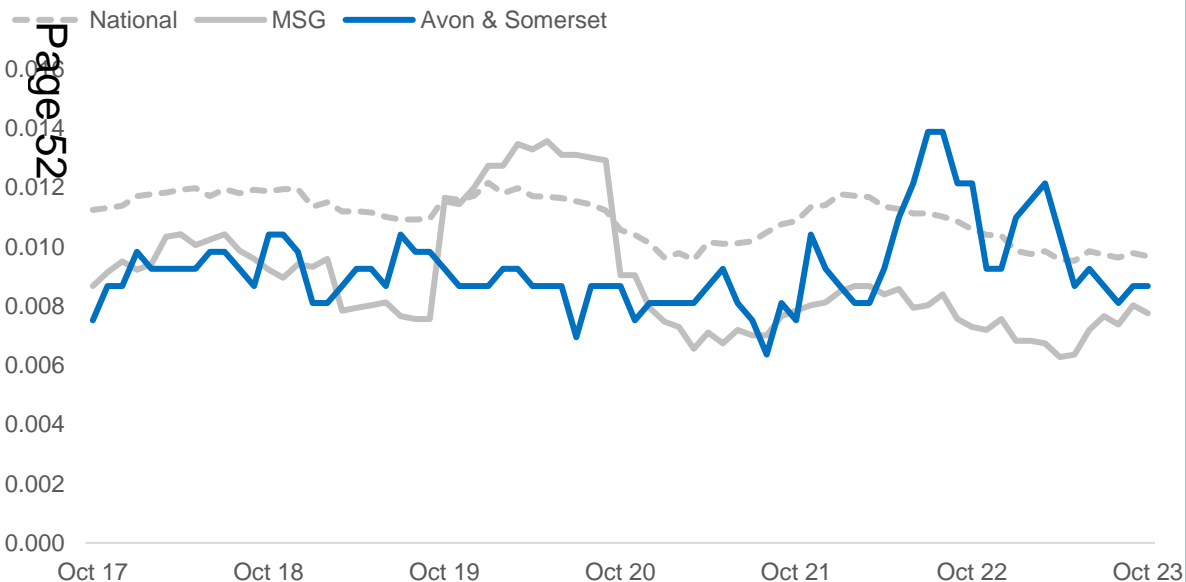
## Measures Summary

Local Measures	Trend	Benchmark
Police recorded Homicide offences	Stable	5th/8 MSG (above MSG average rates)

## Planned Action to Drive Performance

- HMICFRS have set a number of recommendations in relation to the prevention of Homicide. One recommendation was that Chief Constables should make sure their force can quickly identify lessons from homicides and serious violence incidents. The process should be capable of involving partner organisations when appropriate, so that lessons can be learned more widely. Within A&S the process in relation to initial learning for Homicide offences was already underway. As part of the National Homicide Prevention Strategy from the NPCC, a Homicide Framework has been developed to reduce crimes that can lead to homicide and includes a Prevention Debrief guidance and template; this has now been adopted to ensure consistency with National Standards. To date, one Homicide Prevention debrief has taken place utilising the national template. Two further reviews for Homicides are planned for the next quarter.

Homicide - 12 Month Rolling Rates per 1000 Residents



## Comments

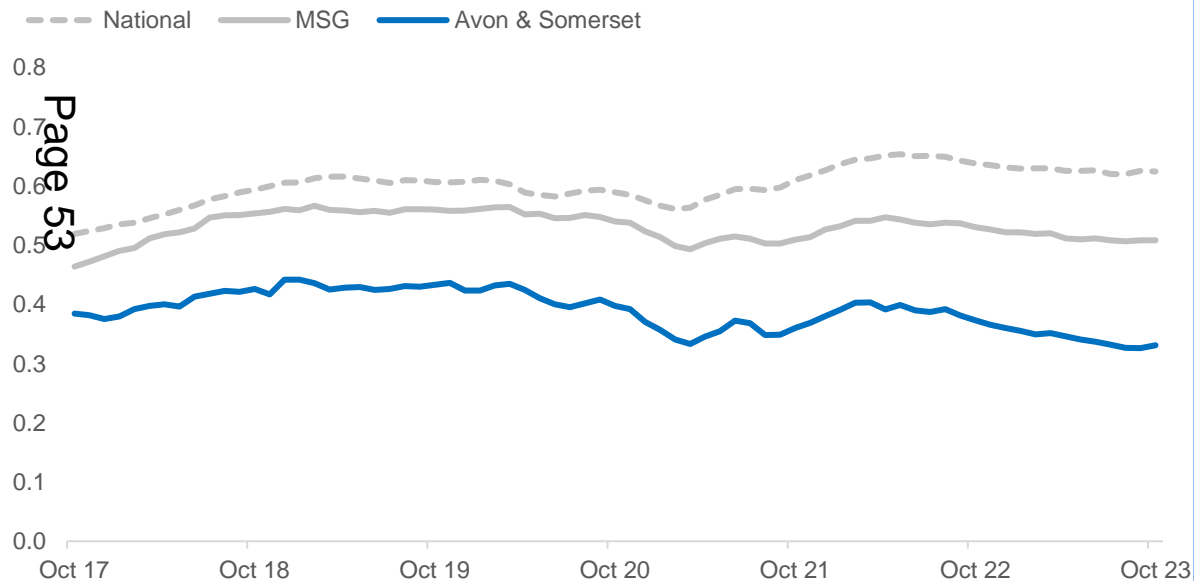
- Historically there are have been low levels of homicide within Avon and Somerset. The spikes in the last year did not correlate with any broader increase in serious violence.

# Reduce Serious Violence

## Measures Summary

Local Measures	Trend	Benchmark
Police recorded serious violence offences	Reducing	2nd/8 MSG (below MSG average rates)

**Serious Violence - 12 Month Rolling Rates per 1000 Residents**



## Planned Action to Drive Performance

1. Use of a new (Jan '24) Strategic Assessment and Local Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) profiles to proactively identify and manage SOC in line with the Home Office [Clear, Hold, Build](#) Programme.
2. Creation of a new local SOC strategy – following release of new Government strategy – and the governance structure to support this.
3. Regional training for Lead Responsible Officers alongside training for intelligence managers for the identification and assessment of Organised Crime Groups.
4. Ongoing work with Safer Options team in Bristol who link in with VRUs and the most vulnerable SOC offenders in East Bristol.
5. Developing our use of Serious Crime Prevention Orders through improved training and guidance to give investigators the tools to identify and protect those at risk of being drawn into SOC; improved oversight through Qlik, and through a review of force and CPS processes relating to use of these orders.
6. Ongoing work groups with businesses and local authorities to supply and train night-time economy stakeholders (door staff, street pastors etc.) with advanced bleed kits.

## Comments

1. ASP have lower rates of serious violence for over six years, compared to both national levels and the MSG forces.

# Disrupt Drugs Supply and County Lines

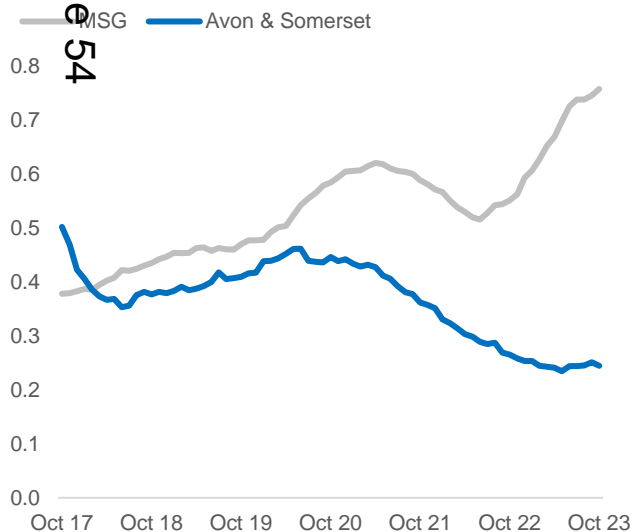
## Measures Summary

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

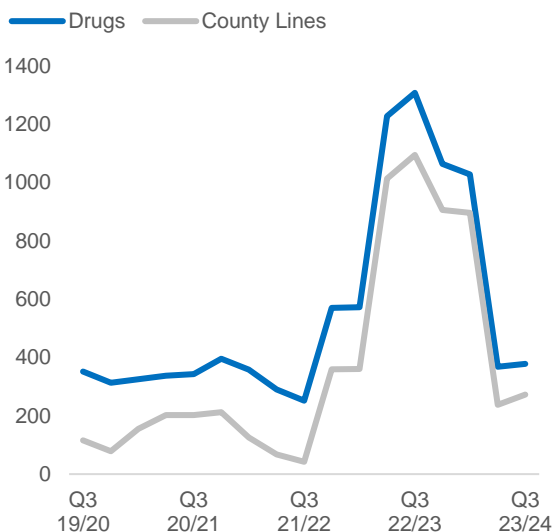
## Planned Action to Drive Performance

1. County Lines Intensification Week encompassing school visits, pro-active ANPR action and joint patrols with British Transport Police.
2. Delivery of bespoke 4P plans by Neighbourhood Teams during the County Lines Intensification Week. Plans include a mix of overt and covert disruption and prevention activity aimed at disrupting people involved in County Lines.
3. Joint operations with regional forces to target cross-border offenders.
4. Provide training and CPD to ensure they know what County Lines is and what help and support is available to them and child-centred approaches to County Lines, including how to recognise the signs.
5. Rollout of Operation Pester in East Bristol following successful pilot. A national County Lines Coordination Centre tactic where telephone numbers collected from lines don't meet the threshold for enforcement, they are sent a message with a treatment offer, signposting and advice. If effective, this may also be expanded as part of the response to dangerous and contaminated batches of drugs.

**Drug Trafficking Crime -**  
12 Month Rolling Rates per 1000 Residents



**Drugs and County Lines Disruptions -**  
12 Month Rolling Rates



## Comments

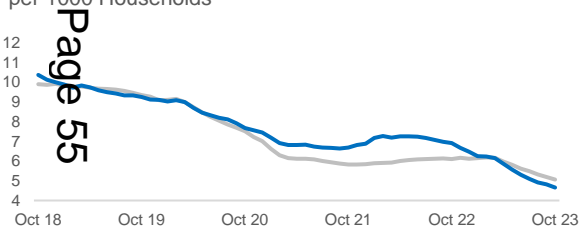
1. The force has a lower rate of drug trafficking offences per 1000 residents, compared to the MSG forces and this gap has been growing since mid 2020. This may indicate less proactive identification of the offending.

# Reduce Neighbourhood Crime

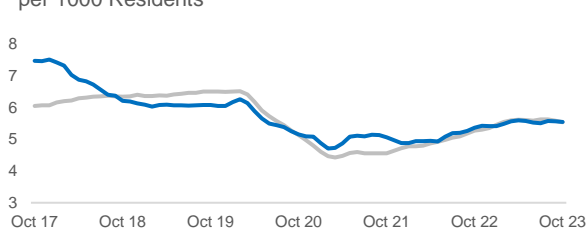
## Measures Summary

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

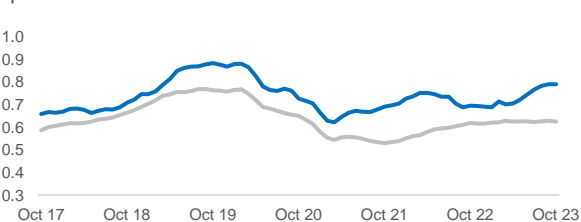
**Residential Burglary - 12 Month Rolling Rates per 1000 Households**



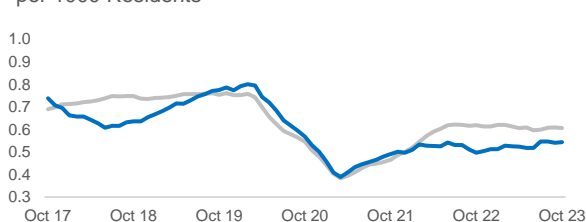
**Vehicle Offences - 12 Month Rolling Rates per 1000 Residents**



**Personal Robbery - 12 Month Rolling Rates per 1000 Residents**



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



## Planned Action to Drive Performance

1. Ongoing assurance work to review all existing problem-solving plans that will be used to shape the delivery of any problem-solving training to be rolled out over the coming months. A 'tried and tested' page will be used to highlight further examples of effective problem-solving.
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. Implementation of 4P plans for burglary and robbery to reduce the likelihood of these crimes happening in the first place through crime prevention advice and detecting the crimes that do occur.
4. New vehicle crime lead appointed who will develop a 4P plan specific to vehicle crime.

## 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.

## Measures Summary

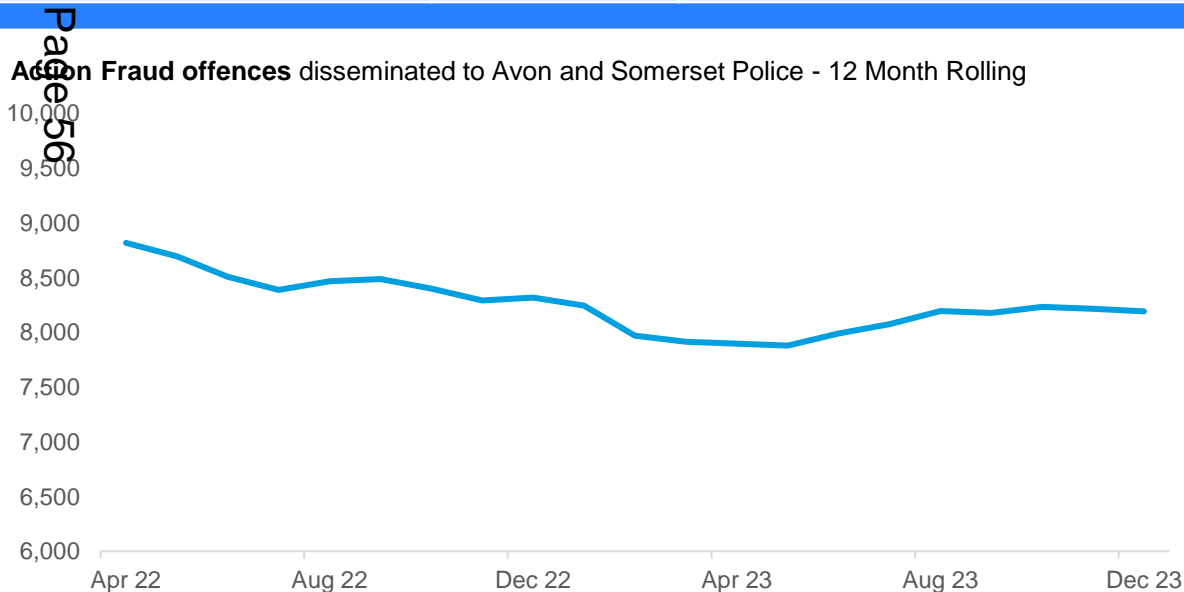
Local Measures	Trend	Benchmark
Investigate 100% of all cyber dependant crime disseminated to forces	Stable (100%)	Not available
Provide 100% of all cyber dependant crime victims with specialist advice	Stable (100%)	Not available
Action Fraud Offences	Reducing	Not available

## 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. Delivery of the Cyber Escape Room - an interactive cyber awareness workshop.
5. Development of the Digital Media Advisor role to provide specialist digital knowledge and advice around all investigations.
6. Development of automated procedures to ensure that all acquisitive crime cases are considered for Asset Recovery, and creation of an app for frontline officers to walk through Asset Recovery techniques.

## Comments

1. There is no local measurement similar to the national measures, which focus on 'Confidence in the law enforcement response to cybercrime' 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

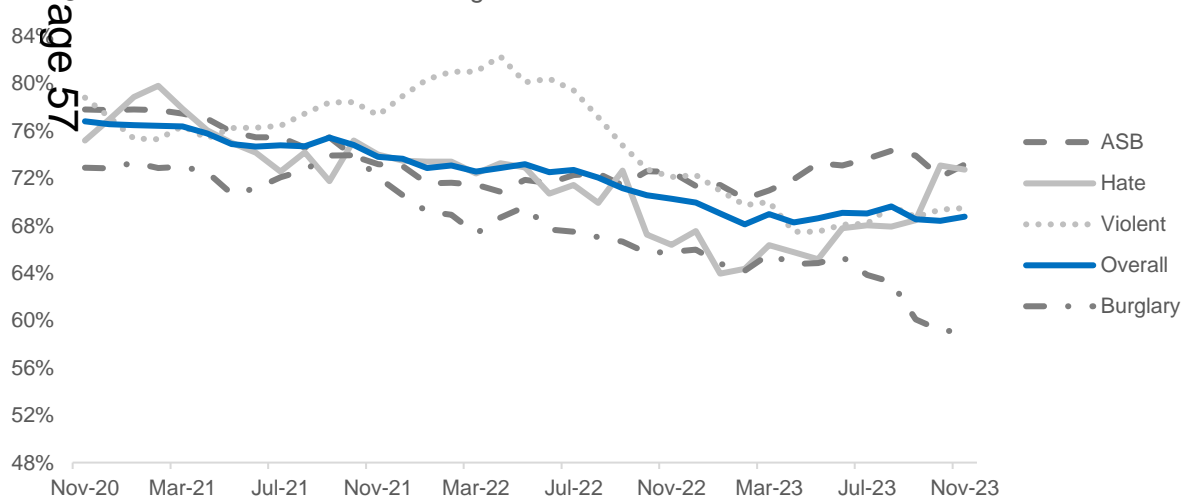
## Measures Summary

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	Reducing	Not available
ASB victim satisfaction rate	Reducing	Not available

## Planned Action to Drive Performance

1. Implementation of local [violence against women and girls framework](#) (which includes domestic abuse).
2. 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.
3. Development of a joint panel with the police and CPS to look at decisions to take no further action in RASSO, domestic abuse and Stalking & Harassment cases.
4. 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.
5. Improvements to the accessibility and service provision of ISVAs in police premises to enable closer working with police and improved services to victims.
6. Expansion of the DRIVE programme – to Bristol and Somerset – for domestic abuse perpetrators, aimed at challenging and supporting perpetrators of domestic abuse offences and reducing reoffending.
7. Recruit two additional officers to support the [Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme](#).

Victim Satisfaction - 12 Month Rolling Rate



## Comments

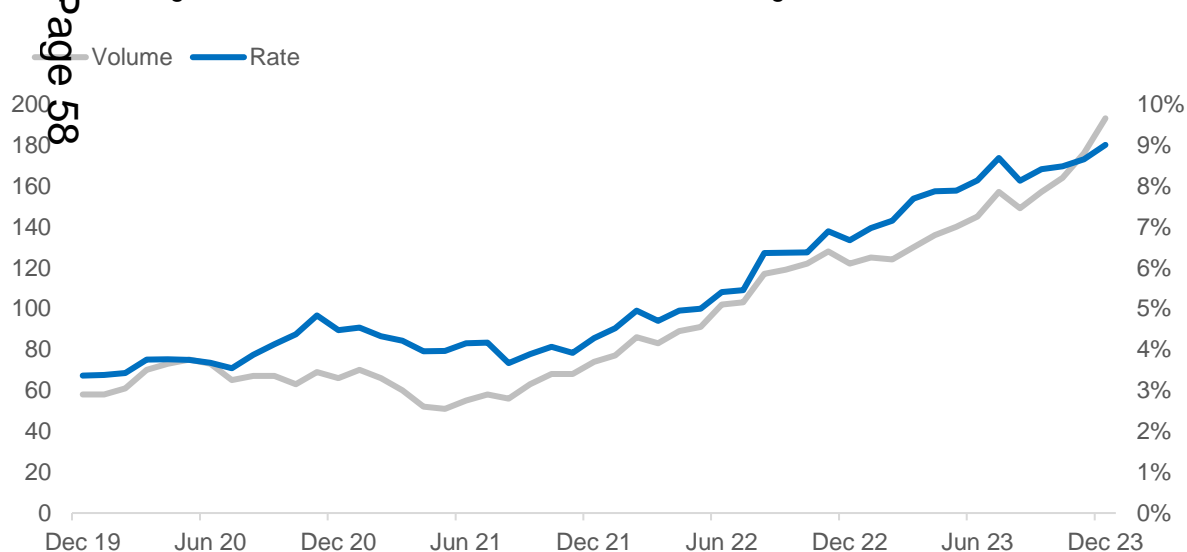
1. Dwelling burglary shows higher satisfaction levels than all burglary (79.8% vs 60.1%).
2. There is no domestic abuse victim satisfaction survey currently in place in Avon and Somerset.

# 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	4th/8 MSG (above MSG average rates)

Rape - Charge & Summons Volume and Rate - 12 Month Rolling



## 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 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. Analysis and understanding of national victim survey from the national academic team to identify key areas of interest and learning. ASP also now qualify for local survey form.
5. Analysis of rape cases where 'no further action' was taken to understand victims' reasons for withdrawing support and identify any areas for improvement.
6. Implementation of a RASSO data standard to improve levels of data completion, particularly in relation to victims' protected characteristics and across relationship contexts. This data collection will help to carefully monitor and provide richer insight into victims and their needs.

## Comments

1. There has been a sustained increase in both the volume of charges and the rate as a result of the implementation of the Bluestone/Soteria model.

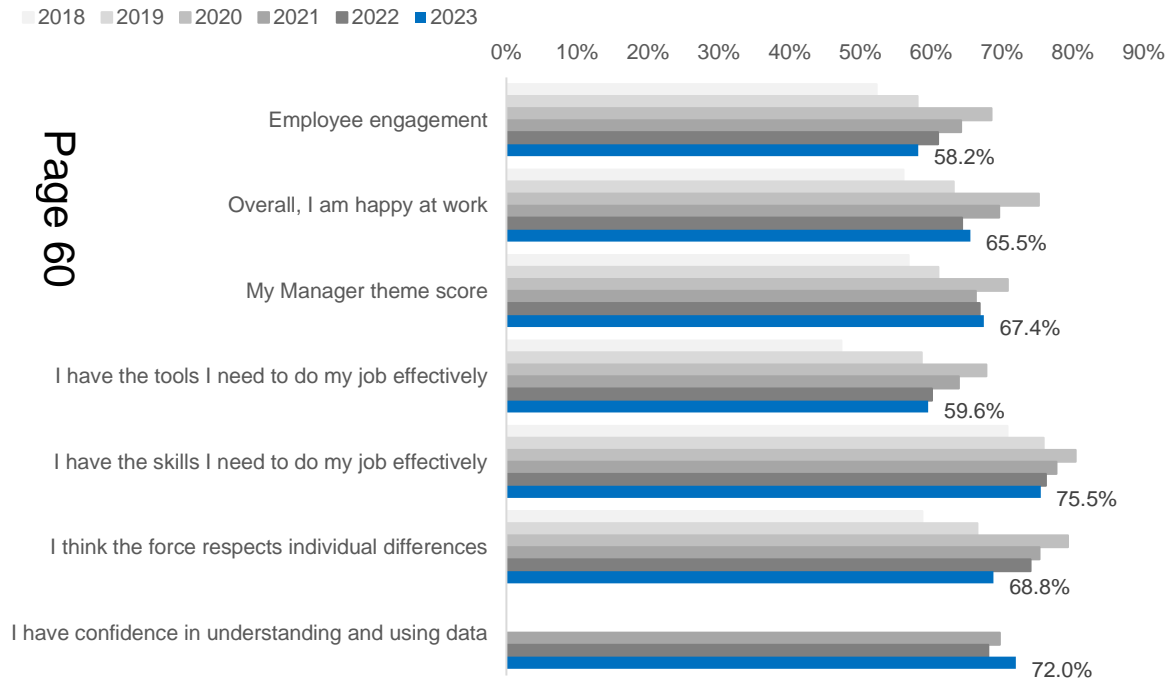
# Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Plan 2021-2025

## Contribution of Avon and Somerset Police Priority 3 – Leading the police to be efficient and effective\*

\*Two of the areas of focus in Priority 3 are the Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) and environmental impact. Oversight of these will be achieved through a yearly self-assessment which is not available at the time of writing this performance report.

## Measures Summary

### Workforce survey



Page 60

## Planned Action to Drive Performance

1. Ongoing workforce planning to allocate the achieved Uplift in police officers across the organisation to best meet demand and ensure appropriate capability, particularly within CID and proactive teams.
2. Exploration of a non-degree entry route for people wishing to become a police officer. The new route would be designed in a way that supports the application of recognition of prior experience and learning, and will be quality assured by the College of Policing to ensure consistency of standards across policing.
3. Roll-out of a new First Line Leaders programme providing mandatory training for all new and existing first line leaders (officers and staff), as well as an annual leadership development session. This is to provide essential skills and support for leaders in achieving performance priority areas and appropriate staff support.
4. Improvements to Occupational Health that optimises the structure to meet demand across the organisation both now and at least 5 years ahead. The work will enhance the service provision aimed at supporting our people, improving the employee experience, and supporting the organisation to become more trauma-informed.

## Comments

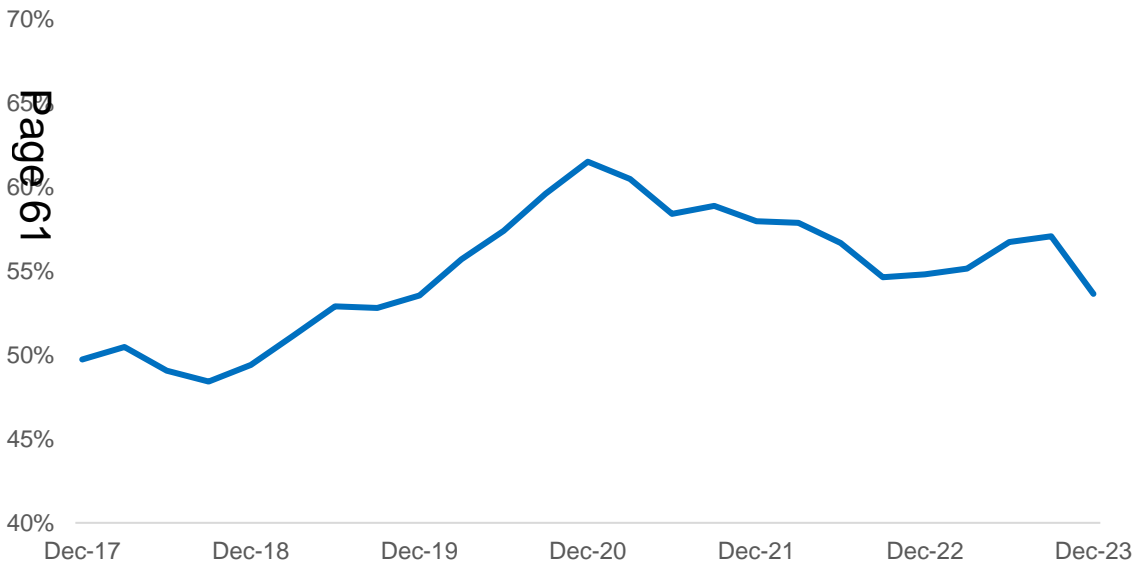
1. On 31 March 2023 ASP had 3,393 police officers. This number is being gradually reduced back down to the funded temporary Uplift target, so that on the 31 March 2024 there are 3,331 officers.

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

## Measures Summary

Local Measures	Trend	Benchmark
Police visibility	Stable	Not available

Police Visibility - 12 Month Rolling Rate



## Planned Action to Drive Performance

1. Improve forecasting ability to more accurately match resourcing to demand.
2. Implementation of a new Qlik app for repeat and persistent callers to manage demand.
3. Exploring voice analytics software which would support better understanding of call demand and help identify repeat callers.
4. Local implementation of the National Right, Care Right Person initiative to assist demand management for areas such as Concern for Welfare, Missing People and Mental Health.
5. Feedback and learning from this year's summer demand period to be analysed and fed into next summer's plan.
6. Check and test that crime is being allocated on a risk basis and in accordance with the amended Allocation Policy.

## Comments

1. Visibility peaked during the COVID period but the level in 2023 is the same as it was in 2019.

# Crime recording and response to calls for service

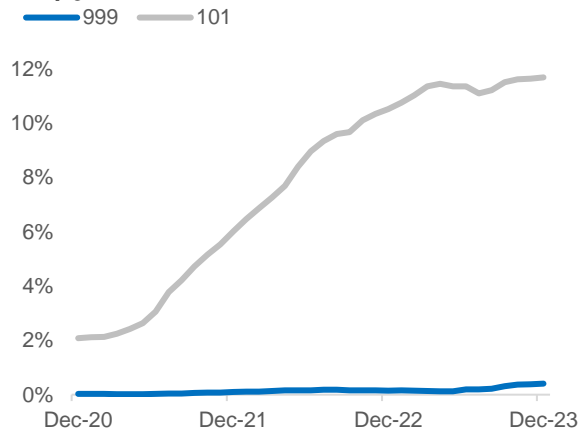
## Measures Summary

Local Measures	Trend	Benchmark
999 abandonment rate	Increasing	Not available
101 abandonment rate	Increasing	Not available
SLA compliance – immediate calls	Decreasing	Not available
SLA compliance – priority calls	Decreasing	Not available
SLA compliance – routine calls	Stable	Not available

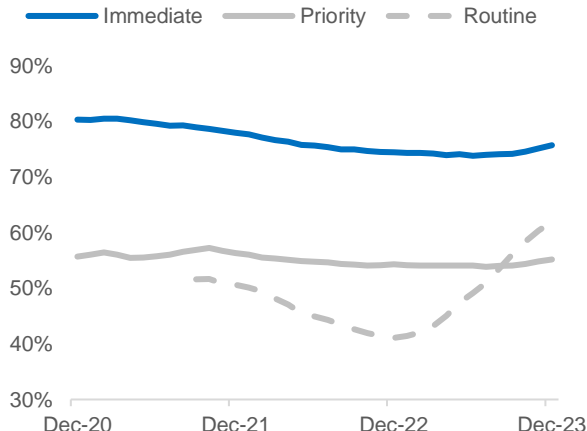
## Planned Action to Drive Performance

1. Increase the number of response trained drivers.
2. Exploring voice analytics software which would also quality assess all calls.
3. Crime recording training and briefings continue to be implemented with targeted packages for specific teams and departments.
4. Review of recent changes in management of the dispatch function in the Control Room to understand if this is delivering improvements.
5. This includes ongoing recruitment to attract more staff, upgrades to the call handling system to improve functionality and a victim contact automation service to ensure victims are assured that they will be contacted.
6. Ensuring vulnerable callers are identified at first point of contact how through improved Threat Harm Risk assessment tools, relevant training and CPD to call handlers, and additional assurance for DA and VAWG related calls.

999 and 101 Abandonment Rate - 12 Month Rolling



Response time SLA compliance - 12 month average



## Comments

1. In 2023 ASP answered 81.0% 999 calls in under 10 seconds, compared to 79.6% nationally.

## **AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE AND CRIME PANEL**

**20<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

### **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 has been one new complaint recorded against PCC Mark Shelford since the last meeting of the Police and Crime Panel.
5. Complaint number 96 was sent directly to the PCP. The complainant alleged misconduct but did not put forward any specific allegations. A request was made for allegations to be sent but was not forthcoming. The complaint was handled by the PCP. Allegations relate to the PCC's handling of a complaint against police which was referred to the police Professional Standards Department. The complainant was provided with an explanation around the outcome by the panel.
6. 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

7. 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.
8. The complaint review manager has handled 732 reviews up to the beginning of March 2024. 20% were upheld, 69% not upheld and 11% were void.

## RECORDED COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

9. The OPCC has received and logged 6 new complaints against the Chief Constable since the last meeting of the Police and Crime Panel which are still live. All complaints relate to the recent Channel 4 documentary.
10. All complaints have been assessed and none of the complaints received have been recorded under Schedule 3 of the Police Reform Act 2002 at this time.
11. Whilst the complaints have not been recorded as the complainant is not eligible to make a complaint under the regulations (*to be eligible the complainant must meet the criteria of ['Adversely Effected'](#) as defined in the legislation*), all the points raised will be addressed with a response to try and provide customer service approach.

## 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: 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

No.	Date rcvd / log no.	Summary of complaint or allegation	Recorded?	Handled by	Outcome	Live or Closed
<b>COMPLAINTS and CONDUCT MATTERS AGAINST AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER MARK SHELFORD</b>						
96.	12/02/24	Email received alleging misconduct in relating to the handling of a complaint against police. No allegations contained within email.	Yes	Panel	Allegations requested but not submitted. Closed pending submission of allegations.	Closed

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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>27<sup>th</sup> June Deane House</p>	<p>PCC Annual Report Host Authority/Membership Report Work Programme Report – for Panel discussion/approval.</p>	
<p>28<sup>th</sup> 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>22<sup>nd</sup> 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 <sup>th</sup> December Deane House	Estates Strategy Update Scrutiny of the Budget/Draft Medium Term Financial Plan	
1 <sup>st</sup> February Deane House	Formal Review of the Budget and Precept Proposal Chief Constable Presentation	
22 <sup>nd</sup> 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 <sup>th</sup> March Deane House	<del>Equality and Diversity Update</del> Business Crime Report	Business Crime Forum for stakeholders held in September to hear their concerns and discuss ways to keep shop-owners safe. Assurance report on business crime scheduled for January 2024.

	<p>Tackling Disproportionality Steering Committee and Race Matters</p>	<p>Members welcome an offer from Councillor Craig to discuss the work on Race which is gathering pace through the Race Matters work and that of the Tackling Disproportionality Steering Committee, co-chaired by Councillor Craig and CC Sarah Crew.</p> <p>Councillor Craig will update on the work of the Steering Committee which includes chief officers from across the Avon and Somerset LA landscape. Chief Inspector Will White leads on the force's work Race Matters and the Panel extends an invitation to him to attend the 20<sup>th</sup> March meeting.</p> <p>Whilst the Disproportionality work is specified in the Public Confidence sub-committee's Terms of Reference, it is considered timely to bring this important area of business to full Panel following on from the presentation from Desmond Brown in 22/23.</p>
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#### 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*

## Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel 20th March 2024

**Title of Report:** Panel Funding and Expenditure Report

### RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is invited to consider the end of year budget information and formal notification from the Host Authority of the next contribution from the component authorities for the 2024/25 financial year.

### 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 17 members).

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. In the 2022/23 financial year, a collective annual indemnity mechanism of £5k was agreed with the component authorities and all 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 were held in reserve. This amount plus the grant funding of £68,940 assisted the Panel in meeting its budget in 2023/24.

#### **4. Financial Year 2024/25**

A report was brought to the Panel on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and the Panel noted that the estimates for 2024/25 showed that the existing £5k contribution would not allow the Panel to balance its budget. Panel members were asked to consider whether the indemnity agreement should increase by £1000 to £6000, and if the increased amount should be sought through each Council's budget processes commencing 2024/25 in order to cover Panel costs. This was agreed.

The component Councils were put on notice on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2023 (copied to Panel Members) to enable the councils to include the sum in their budget processes. For completeness, a copy of the letter is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

Appendix 2 shows outturn at 31st March 2024 and projections for 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.

#### **5. Transparency**

Details of Member expenses for the 2023/24 financial year can be found here:-  
[Member Allowance](#)

Patricia Jones  
Lead Officer

[Patricia.Jones@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:Patricia.Jones@somerset.gov.uk)



By email: [Will.Godfrey@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:Will.Godfrey@bathnes.gov.uk)

Will Godfrey,  
Chief Executive,  
Bath and North-East Somerset Council

**Contact:** Scott Wooldridge  
**Email:** [scott.wooldridge@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:scott.wooldridge@somerset.gov.uk)  
**Direct Dial:** 01823 359043  
**Date:** 27<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Dear Chief Executive,

### **Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel**

As you are aware, the collective annual indemnity mechanism of £5,000 was agreed with the constituent authorities in the 22/23 financial year. I can confirm with thanks that Somerset Council received your initial contribution of £5,000 towards Host Authority running costs.

With a surplus going into 2023/4, the indemnity mechanism was not invoked this year, however all reserves will be utilised by the end of the 2023/24 year. I am writing now to confirm that the collective commitment will be sought through each Council's budget processes for 2024/25.

Following the reduction in constituent authorities from nine to five on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, the Panel has considered a report which gave members the option of increasing the annual collective contribution from £5,000 to £6,000 for 2024/5 to help compensate for the otherwise reduced total amount of supplementary funding from the constituent authorities. All members agreed to the increase of £1,000 on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

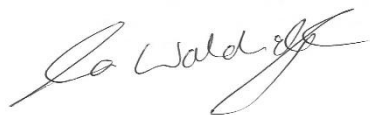
For information, I attach a copy of the budget information considered by the Panel.

Surplus funds in any given year can be returned proportionally or kept as reserves as was the case in 2023/24. What is key, is preventing a future deficit due to the reduction in the number of constituent authorities.

In the meantime, the focus of the Panel will be to ensure that your residents get the best possible Police service and that your representatives on the Panel take the opportunity to feedback to the respective authorities on the scrutiny work that is being undertaken. I am attaching for information, a copy of the Panel's Annual Report for 2022/23.

We look forward to receiving confirmation of your continued cooperation as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,



Scott Wooldridge,  
Deputy Monitoring Officer

cc: Duncan Sharkey, Chief Executive  
Police and Crime Panel Member

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**Panel Funding and Expenditure Report: Item 12; Appendix 1**

	Forecast Outturn 23/24	Est 24/25
<b><i>Staff Costs</i></b>		
Governance Specialist - GR9 - (1.0FTE including on-costs) <sup>1</sup>	56,895	59,724
Monitoring Officer, Finance Support, Website overheads <sup>2</sup>	0	300
Democratic Services Officer G12 <sup>1</sup>	15,507	16,282
EL/PL Employees Insurance	157	160
<b><i>Other in year costs</i></b>		
Staff mileage costs - PJ	857	900
Catering for meetings	673	825
Telephony - Mobile/Landline charges	200	200
Frontline Consulting Training day for PCP Panel	1,331	1,331
Frontline Consulting SV Development Day Report	0	0
National Conference (for two places)	1,050	1,050
<hr/> Administrative Cost of PCP	<hr/> 76,670	<hr/> 80,772
Members Allowances <sup>3</sup>	15,180	15,640
Members Allowances NI	510	500
<hr/> Total cost of support to Police Crime Panel	<hr/> 92,360	<hr/> 96,912
<b><i>Funding sources</i></b>		
HOME OFFICE grant funding (maximum)	68,940	68,940
Surplus 2022/23 fwd to 2023/24	19,666	0
Agreed in year contribution <sup>4</sup>	0	30,000
<hr/> <b>Shortfall / -Surplus in funding of PCP Support</b> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>3,754</b> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>-2,028</b> <hr/>

Notes:

1. Staff costs assumes - 5% increase for 24/25 as per MTFP
2. Level of cross charge for overheads to be confirmed
3. Allows for 16 members x £920 for 23/24 (17 from Oct 23), 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 at £6,000 each

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