

AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE AND CRIME PANEL
28 SEPTEMBER 2023

COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE REPORT

Executive Summary

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

Police and Crime Plan Delivery

Priority 1

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

Priority 2

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

Priority 3

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

Priority 4

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

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

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

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

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

Police and Crime Plan Delivery

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

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

Priority 1 – Preventing and Fighting Crime

Male Violence Against Women & Girls

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

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

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

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

Drug Crime

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

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

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

Serious Violence

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Joint Definition of Serious Violence:

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

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

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

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

Neighbourhood Crime & ASB

Safer Streets 5

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

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

Police and Crime Grant

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

See below for the amounts provided by local authority area:

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

The Crime Commissioner's Prevention Fund

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

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

The Preventing Victims Fund

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

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

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

Fraud & Cybercrime

National Portfolio

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

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

Communications & Awareness

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

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

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

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

Avon and Somerset Multi Agency Approach to Fraud

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

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

Public engagement

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

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

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

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

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

Supporting victims of crime and ASB

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

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

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

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

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

The Criminal Justice System

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

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

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

Reducing Reoffending

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

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

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

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

Priority 3 – Leading the Police to be Efficient and Effective

Standing updates as requested by the Panel:

Recruiting Officers

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

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

Leavers		
	July 22	July 23
Headcount in month	19	14

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

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

Estates Update

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

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

Leadership:

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

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

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

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

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

Inequality and Disproportionality

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Out of Court Disposals Scrutiny Panel

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

The Panel identified:

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

Learning to inform future scrutiny arrangements included:

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

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

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

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

Independent Custody Visiting Scheme

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

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

ICV Panel Meetings are scheduled for early/mid October.

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

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

Contacts/Complaints Oversight

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

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

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

Governance and Accountability

Oversight Boards

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

HMICFRS – PCC responses

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

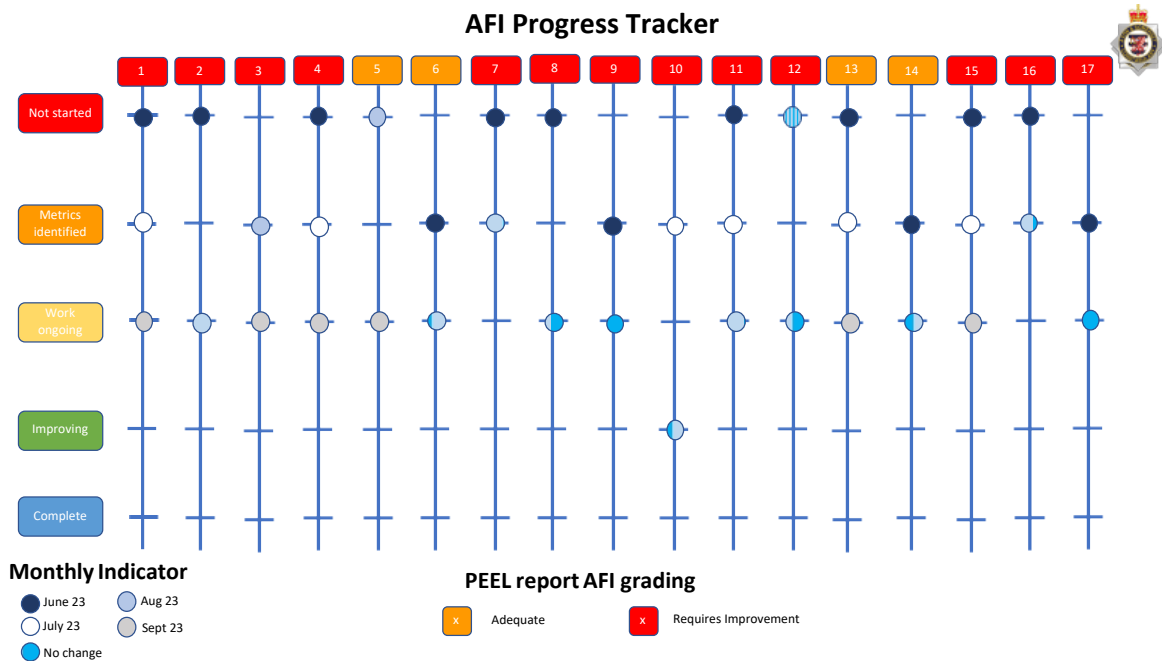
- State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2022
- Police performance: Getting a grip
- An inspection of how effective police forces are in the deployment of firearms

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

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

PEEL Areas for Improvement (AFIs)

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



The Constabulary...

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

Key Decisions

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

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

Key decisions since the last Panel meeting are as follows:

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

National Updates

Anti-Social Behaviour

An Anti-Social Behaviour action plan was released by the Home Office earlier this year. [Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118111/anti-social-behaviour-action-plan-2022-2025.pdf)

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

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

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

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

Mental Health

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

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

Contact Officer:

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