

AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE AND CRIME PANEL
8 DECEMBER 2023

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 earlier this 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):** Successful Safer Streets 5 bid to improve safety of female workforce and women in the night time economy, rolling out Bristol Women's Safety Charter. Appointment of OPCC project worker.
- **Serious Violence:** progress in implementing new governance arrangements and recruitment of VRP Director; Q2 outcomes and reach; launch of new executive Board and website.
- **Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)/Neighbourhood:** success in two partnership Safer Streets 5 bids to tackle ASB. To be supported by OPCC project worker funded through the bids.
- **Fraud & Cyber Crime:** new national policing strategy; fraud and cyber victims in scope for OPCC recommissioning of victim services; development of local performance framework; awareness campaign update.
- **Road Safety:** PCC convenes National E-scooter Safety Advisory Group.

Priority 2

- **Engagement:** precept survey launched; Councillor Forum event evaluation underway; update on community engagement activity.
- **Victims:** publication of commissioning intentions and launch of the engagement period for recommissioning of victim services.
- **Criminal Justice:** work to support women in the criminal justice system underway; Ministry of Justice consulting OPCCs on victims' code of practice compliance and potential devolution of witness service commissioning.

Priority 3

- **Recruitment:** high level police officer recruitment and leaver figures, including national comparator information on resignations.
- **Estates:** *covered in a separate report.*

Priority 4

- **Inequality & Disproportionality:** progress on Independent Scrutiny Board arrangements.
- **PCC Scrutiny Panels:** Police Powers Panel scrutiny of Body Worn Video and piloting new online forms; Complaints Panel review of damage to property or premises complaints, Out of Court Disposals (OoCD) Panel scrutiny of youth knife possession cases; Panel support welcome for Independent Custody Visiting Scheme volunteer recruitment.
- **Complaints & Contacts:** current contacts themes – concern at delays in Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) processing; support for Community Speedwatch schemes; further delay to new contact management system.

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: Summary of latest decisions: Deferred Prosecution Model Business Case, Occupational Health, Digital Evidence Management System, Learning and Development.

National Updates: Criminal Justice measures in the Kings Speech; Home Affairs Committee Inquiry - PCCs 10 Years On; ASB Action Plan funding update.

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 OPCC submitted a proposal to the Home Office under round 5 of the Safer Streets funding to reduce male violence against women and girls in the Night Time Economy.

Bristol City Council have done a lot of work in this area already and have created a [Women's Safety Charter](#), a strategic document with the aim of improving the feeling of safety amongst the Night Time Economy. The intention is to expand that work to improve the safety of women who work in the night-time economy across all of Avon and Somerset. The charter is specifically aimed at employers with a female workforce who are at work between 6pm and 6am. It is intended to enable organisations to prioritise safety of women both in the workforce, but also as customers of their local night-time economy. The charter will provide the overarching umbrella for other interventions within the Safer Streets proposal, the bystander training programme - inviting Bristol businesses to take a zero-tolerance stance on the harassment of women and the community champions network.

The Safer Streets proposal included the cost of a project worker to be based within the OPCC Policy & Partnerships Directorate to drive this work forward. Recruitment has been successful and start dates are currently being negotiated.

Serious Violence

Achievements

- The Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) Director has been successfully recruited, and will be starting in January 2024.
- The Data Working Group is seeing developments on strategic data sharing across duty holders. Whilst there are still challenges with perceived risk and data quality, partners such as Health and Probation are well engaged to help inform the 2023-24 strategic needs assessment, over and above core Police and Local Authority data.
- The new governance arrangements and meetings to support this are in place, with the overarching board being the Serious Violence Reduction Partnership Board (SVRPB), which is made up of executive level duty holders.

Challenges

- Both the Central Hub and Local Authority Spoke teams are undergoing staffing changes at a leadership level. This will impact on capacity and legacy knowledge of the partnership.

Q2 Outcomes

- To date this financial year, 6406 young people (under 25s) have been reached through the VRPs.
- The high reach has been achieved through detached youth work and community engagement and awareness approaches.
- 44 under 25s have received bespoke mentoring support.
- 24 have engaged with criminal justice diversion programmes (through the Bristol weapons in schools response).
- 431 professionals have been trained.

Next quarter milestones

- Launch of the SVRPB on 28 November, to be chaired by DPCC.
- Launch of the new VRP website 4 December.
- 31 January 2024 will see the completion of the Strategic Needs Assessment and first VRP Strategy as required under the new Serious Violence Statutory Duty.

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. These proposals have been approved and grant agreements are being set up.

Fraud & Cybercrime

- The National Policing Strategy for Fraud, Economic and Cyber Crime 2023-28 has been published. This will build on the Government Fraud Strategy and provide tangible aims and targets for local forces and ROCUs.
- There is a risk, that the 10 year Government Fraud Strategy, in the absence of a supporting funding strategy, will present issues for long term planning within local forces.
- PCCs are required to consider the impact on victims of fraud and cyber-dependant crime in their local victim service commissioning. The OPCC have considered this in the victims recommissioning approach which is currently underway, and it is included in commissioning intentions.
- Accountability and scrutiny work is ongoing to support the Economic Cyber Crime portfolio within Avon and Somerset. Work is underway to refine the performance framework in relation to Fraud and Economic Cyber Crime. An assurance report will be considered by the Governance and Scrutiny Board (GSB) in January.
- Engagement is ongoing with an external consultancy on branding for the new Action Fraud model, with the aim to have a more victim focused approach.
- OPCC communication activity continues to promote awareness and support people to avoid becoming victims. The current focus is on campaigns to target Black Friday and Cyber Monday.

Road Safety

A National E-Scooter Safety Advisory Group has been convened by the PCC. The group will support national partnership work currently in progress to address safety concerns and challenges following

the rapid rise of the use of e-scooters across the UK. Bristol, Bath and South Gloucestershire is the location of the biggest trial of public hire e-scooters in the UK. Currently, there is no specific legislation governing the use of e-scooters and the group will focus on lobbying central government and increasing public awareness of issues surrounding the use of both public hire and privately owned e-scooters. The group includes representatives from policing, fire and rescue, grading standards, government departments, academic research bodies and scooter hire companies. Further information can be found here: www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/news/2023/11/avon-and-somerset-police-and-crime-commissioner-launches-national-e-scooter-safety-advisory-group/

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

Public engagement

- The **Precept Survey** has been launched, asking residents in Avon and Somerset for their views on the PCC's proposal to increase the policing part of the council tax, known as the precept. The precept makes up 41% of police funding. The government has not yet confirmed the maximum amount PCCs can increase the precept for next year, however it will be at least £10 a year for a band D household (3.8% of the council tax bill). A postal survey is also being launched, in order to reach under-represented groups. Consultation closes on 22 January 2024. Support from Panel Members would be welcome in promoting the precept survey through networks and within local communities. The online survey can be found at the following link: www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/forms/ops
- The OPCC has completed the second autumn series of **Councillor Forum Events**. The events have brought together local councillors, local policing teams, the Violence Reduction Partnership, the Independent Office for Police Conduct and the PCC for listening, learning and discussion. It has provided a space for councillors to highlight issues of concern in their local communities. Evaluation is being carried out to inform planning for future events and to assess their impact.
- **PCC community engagement** activity continues. Recent visits include:
 - 6 October: visit to local community groups, businesses and elected leaders in South Bristol to understand policing and crime concerns in the area. The PCC met with Karin Smyth MP for Bristol South, representatives from local shops and local faith leaders.
 - 13 October: the PCC joined local police officers to patrol the heart of St Pauls, calling into Jamaica street hostel and speaking with the homeless community. This community visit was an opportunity for the PCC to experience first-hand how local officers engage with the residents and the concerns they have within the area. The PCC then travelled to Bristol North where he met with Mark Weston, Councillor for Henbury and Brentry to discuss local crime, safety, and policing concerns in the area.
 - 4 November: the PC was one of the key speakers at the Bristol Muslim Conference 2023 organised by the Bristol Muslim Strategic Leaders Group. The OPCC supported communications for the event including producing videos promoted via social media.
 - 17 November: visit to Bath & North East Somerset, meeting with Jacob Rees-Mogg MP to discuss concerns around Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and crime issues affecting the area, in particular shoplifting, and visiting retailers in Bath city centre experiencing an increase in shoplifting and burglary. The PCC went on to visit TimeOut Youth Centre, run by Keynsham Town Council.

Supporting victims of crime and ASB

The engagement period for recommissioning of victim services in Avon and Somerset opened on 15 November and will run until 31 January 2024. The OPCC has commissioned services for victims of crime and ASB across Avon and Somerset since 2015. Current contracts are due to end in March

2025. A Needs Assessment was undertaken by Tonic consultancy on behalf of the OPCC. Commissioning intentions¹ have been developed based on the OPCC's assessment of available budget, data and stakeholder feedback. A number of other services currently funded are out of scope as described within the commissioning intentions document.

Commissioning intentions are based on the vision that all victims of crime and ASB have access to a broad range of support services locally to help them cope with, and as far as possible recover from the effects of crime or ASB. OPCC resources will be used to commission efficient and effective support services that meet the needs of victims in Avon and Somerset with a coordinated victim experience. Key principles are as follows:

- Support is offered by need not offence type
- Collaboration can improve efficiency and effectiveness of OPCC investment
- Where specialist resources are already in place, this should be the first port of call
- Longer contracts will require greater flexibility from providers
- OPCC services are there to provide support
- Quality standards

A summary of commissioning intentions is set out below:

- An Adult Victims of Crime and ASB Support Service (indicative budget: £738,000 p.a.)
- A Children & Young People Victims of Crime and ASB Support Service (indicative budget: £250,000 p.a.)
- An Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) Service (indicative budget: £990,000 p.a.)
- A contribution of £30k towards specialist pathways for survivors of modern slavery, to complement nationally commissioned services.

Support of Panel Members in promoting the engagement period would be welcomed. Engagement opportunities include:

- The OPCC invites feedback via the online survey [OPCC Victim Services Engagement: Stakeholder Survey \(office.com\)](#)
- The OPCC has contracted Tonic to consult with victims on proposals – details are available on the OPCC website [Victim Services Recommissioning | OPCC for Avon and Somerset \(avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk\)](#)
- In-person events are being held for potential providers (Bristol, Taunton, Online) [Avon and Somerset Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Events | Eventbrite](#)

It is intended to publish the commissioning plan at the end of February 2024.

The Criminal Justice System

Following a successful bid to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Female Offenders fund, work is underway to develop a whole system approach to supporting women in the criminal justice system. Work is being delivered by Nelson Trust. The OPCC is overseeing strategic delivery and reporting back to the MoJ on progress.

The MoJ is consulting OPCCs on future proposals for checking local compliance with the Victims' Code of Practice (VCOP). Proposed changes are among the measures in the Victims and Prisoners Bill, due to continue its passage through Parliament. The MoJ is also currently considering whether to devolve responsibility for commissioning the witness service to PCCs.

¹ [Commissioning-Intentions-and-Strategy-FOR-PUBLICATION.pdf \(avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk\)](#)

A number of Key Performance Indicators are being established for the Local Criminal Justice Board business plan to enable the Board to hold each sub-group accountable for driving performance. Proposals will be considered at the December meeting of the LCJB.

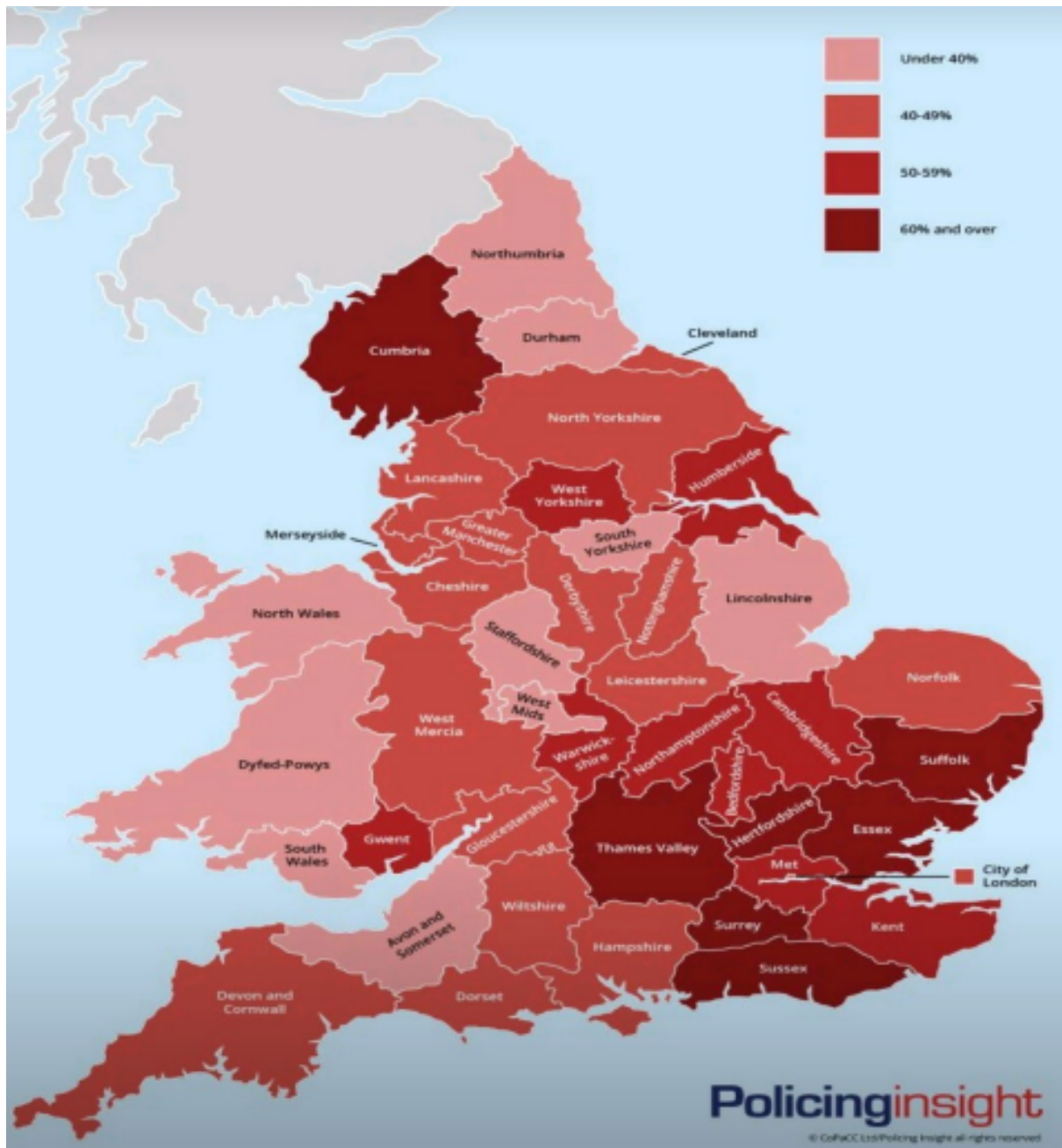
Priority 3 – Leading the Police to be Efficient and Effective

Recruiting Officers

At the time of writing there are 3,285 FTE police officers which is +62 against the authorised total of 3,223. The first table shows police officer vacancy variance in relation to authorised establishment levels and national targets.

	Month of October 2023	(Average) Year ending October 2023
Leavers (headcount)	21	20
Reasons for leaving (% of all leavers)		
Resignation	24%	46%
Retirement	76%	43%
Other	0%	12%

Resignations as a % of total police officer leavers (2022/23):



Capability

Estates Update

See separate report on Estates Strategy.

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. 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 as a subsidiary group of the Local Criminal Justice Board led by PCC Mark Shelford.

Desmond Brown and Maya Mata-Kole have now completed the appointment process for board positions on the Independent Scrutiny Board which will act as the community body holding partners to account in the delivery of this work. The process was very successful with the number of appointable candidates exceeding the numbers required. Communications are planned as part of the launch of the Board which will include biographies and details on next steps.

Work is now progressing in relation to assigning ownership of the work pillars, alongside drawing together a multi-agency communications strategy which now has a dedicated Communications Officer.

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

Independent Scrutiny of Police Powers Panel (ISOPPP)

The September ISOPPP welcomed 8 new panel members. A 9th new member will join the panel in December, bringing the total number of members to 16.

The panel used online feedback forms for the first time, with positive feedback. This has streamlined the process of recording the feedback from the panel, reducing the resource demand on the OPCC staff, and enables key themes and learning to be captured for organisational learning and scrutiny purposes.

The themes derived from the September panel included the use of body worn video (BWV), and what was considered adequate. The Constabulary have responded positively to the feedback and has instigated a review of existing national and local guidance through the lens of using BWV when applying police powers. Work is ongoing to enhance existing force procedural guidance which will be shared with the ISOPPP to seek views before making it live.

Overall, the Panel identified areas of good police practice and areas of learning, all of which have been fed back to the individual officers, and senior leaders where appropriate. The December panel will look at themes covering stop search and use of force, with specific focus on stop-search of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic children and a South Bristol team.

Independent Scrutiny of Police Complaints Panel (ISPCP)

The quarterly September ISPCP saw the panel welcome 5 new members taking the panel to 11, with another prospective member in the process of being vetted. The panel met in person for the first time since Covid-19. This was a welcome experience allowing people to reconnect in a more personal and meaningful way. The addition of more panel members means that the ISPCP can further broaden their scope and delve deeper into examining and addressing more police complaint cases, which will help to ensure transparency and accountability within the police complaints system.

The panel opted to focus their September meeting on the theme of complaints involving the handling or damage to property/premises by the police alongside their usual sample of complaint cases alleging discrimination. This year the panel requested that PSD re-open and re-review 2 closed complaints from the dip-sample of cases that they analysed. These re-reviews prompted further reflection and learning for Avon and Somerset Constabulary. In one case, the panel supported the complainant, who was of African heritage and felt they had been racially profiled by an officer who stopped her whilst she was in her car. As a result of this re-review individual learning was fed back

directly to the officer from a Chief Inspector regarding how they conducted the stop and what is expected from police in terms of cultural and emotional intelligence. Without the panel's scrutiny this would not have happened. The December ISPCP will focus on the theme of Discreditable Conduct.

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 in September to review youth cases with a focus on Knife Possession. The purpose was to inform a review of Force policy and to ensure consistency across the Force area in youth cases. The Panel reviewed 37 cases: 13 charged to court, 15 Youth Caution / Youth Conditional Caution, 9 Outcome 22 (an educational intervention) and 2 Community Resolution sexual offences cases. The Panel found 19 cases to be appropriate, 17 to be appropriate with observations and 3 to be inappropriate. The Panel identified inconsistencies in the approach across the Force area and made recommendations to strengthen guidance, particularly in relation to use of Outcome 22. The Panel welcomed the launch of a new ACPO Youth Gravity Matrix, which will help to bring clarity and strengthen consistency in youth cases. A Youth OoCD Peer Review group has been set up to drive improvements in the approach to youth cases, bringing together representatives of the five Youth Justice services, and police Early Intervention / Violence Reduction Unit representatives.

The new draft Code of Practice is currently out for consultation, with implementation expected in Spring 2024. This will inform review of the Panel Terms of Reference and development of the work programme for the coming year.

The Panel will meet in December to review Domestic Abuse Conditional Caution cases and cases relating to shop theft.

Reports are published at the following link: [Out of Court Disposals Panel Reports | OPCC for Avon and Somerset \(avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/out-of-court-disposals-panel-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. Four new ICVs successfully completed a training day in September at Police HQ and are now undertaking visits. Further ICVs are still required therefore a renewed Volunteer Recruitment Campaign will be launched and live at the end of November, with targeted recruitment for ICVs. Support from Panel Members would be welcome in promoting this volunteering opportunity.

ICVs have continued to feedback concerns regarding the provision of health care providers (HCPs) on site and the lack of HCPs in custody. The resultant 'Gold Group' set up between the Constabulary and Mitie, the provider continues, 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, but at present the lack of resourcing continues to be an issue. ICVs continue to feed back and monitor.

ICV Panel Meetings were held in Keynsham and Bridgwater in October and were well received.

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 delays with Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) processing and concerns with the ASP support to the Community Speed Watch Scheme.

Go live of the new iCase management system has been further delayed until 2024. The OPCC plan to start using the system once the ASP Legal Services Team go live.

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;
- 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/2023/11/14-Nov-2023-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/2023/10/12th-September-2023-Governance-and-Scrutiny-Board-Minutes.pdf>

[16th-October-2023-Governance-and-Scrutiny-Board-Minutes.pdf \(avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/16th-October-2023-Governance-and-Scrutiny-Board-Minutes.pdf)

HMICFRS – PCC responses

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

- 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

There are currently no other HMICFRS reports requiring a response.

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 AFI's (All Level 3)	Business Lead	Not Started	Metrics Identified	Work Ongoing	Improving	Complete
Requires Improvement	AFI 1 – CDI: The constabulary needs to improve the accuracy of recording rape crimes and incidents of rape.	Maya Munden					
Requires Improvement	AFI 2 – CDI: The constabulary needs to improve recording of crimes which involve vulnerable victims.	Maya Munden					
Requires Improvement	AFI 3 – CDI: The constabulary needs to improve how it records crime where anti-social 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 evidence-led 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 Riccio					
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 Riccio					

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 \(avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk\)](#)

Key decisions since the last Panel meeting are as follows:

Date	Summary of Decision	Link to Decision Notice
6/11/23	<p>Deferred Prosecution Model Business Case:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval to make Deferred Prosecution available to 18 – 24 year olds to give individual opportunity to complete specific conditions as an alternative to formal prosecution. Proposes a service commissioned through the Constabulary, based on successful projects in London and Birmingham. The model will be subject to ongoing evaluation. 	www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/2023_006-Deferred-Prosecution-Model_signed.pdf
15/11/23	<p>Digital Evidence Management System:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval to procure a new system for end-to-end processing of digital evidence. This would replace existing systems. This will be conducted as a regional procurement exercise with Avon and Somerset as the lead Force. A Final Business Case will be presented in the future post-procurement to the Governance and Scrutiny Board. 	www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/2023_008-Digital-Evidence-Management-System_signed.pdf
21/11/23	<p>Occupational Health Final Business Case</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval for an Outline Business Case to create capacity and improve efficiency through restructuring the Occupational Health Unit and developing a new counselling function. 	www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/2023_007-Occupational-Health_signed.pdf
21/11/23	<p>Learning and Demand Final Business Case:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval to extend employment contracts of 16.4 FTE within the Learning & Development Department to March 2025 to continue to support delivery of the Police Uplift Programme and ensure compliance with nationally required skills and accreditations. 	www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/2023_009-Learning-Demand_signed.pdf

National Updates

King's Speech

Criminal Justice reform was a key theme of the King's Speech on 7 November, as the government set out its intention to 'increase the confidence of victims and empower police forces and the criminal justice system to prevent new or complex crimes' through proposed legislation including:

- **Sentencing Bill** – aims to ensure that the prison estate is used for the most dangerous offenders, whilst introducing a presumption in favour of a suspended sentence for custodial sentences of twelve months or less to help such offenders avoid the 'revolving door' of reoffending. The Bill includes commitments to strengthen sentencing for rape and serious sexual offences and that in the most serious cases, 'life will really mean life'.
- **Criminal Justice Bill** – wide-ranging measures focused on including compelling defendants to attend their sentencing hearings, introducing a mandatory duty on those working with

children to report concerns relating to child sexual abuse, new measures to tackle violence against women and girls, tougher measures to tackle anti-social behaviour, and increasing police powers to counter evolving threats and technologies.

- **Victims and Prisoners Bill** – carried over from the previous Parliamentary session. Includes measures to place the key principles of the Victims Code in law and a duty on criminal justice agencies to review compliance. Introduces a new joint statutory duty on PCCs, health and local authorities to work together when commissioning support services for victims of domestic abuse, sexual abuse and other serious violence.

Home Affairs Committee Inquiry: PCCs 10 Years On

The Home Affairs Committee is conducting an Inquiry into the role of PCCs. The Inquiry will explore:

- The impact of PCCs since 2012
- The extent to which they provide effective oversight and democratic accountability for local policing
- The efficacy of Police and Crime Panels at scrutinising PCCs
- Relationships between PCCs and Chief Officers
- The efficacy of PCCs at driving collaboration to improve public safety, commissioning services and performing their roles in the complaints system
- The impact where PCCs have taken on responsibility for fire and rescue services
- Any reform needed to the PCC model.

The first session took place on 8 November, with evidence from HMICFRS, the National Police Chief's Council, the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, the Police Foundation and the Local Government Association.

Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Review

The Home Office has published their response² to consultation on part one of the CSP Review. The Home Office will seek to improve and clarify the ways which CSPs and PCCs work together through a range of proposals focusing on requirements for CSP strategic assessments, the PCC duty to have regard to the priorities of key partners (responsible authorities) within the CSP, and creating powers for PCCs to make recommendations on the activity of CSPs to support delivery of the police and crime plan and a duty for CSPs to take these into account. The APCC will be holding workshops in early December for OPCCs to provide feedback on outcomes of part one of the review and the scope of part two.

Anti-Social Behaviour

An Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) action plan was published 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/100000/anti-social-behaviour-action-plan-2022-2025.pdf) Some OPCC areas have been given funding to pilot Immediate Justice schemes for perpetrators of ASB. Funding is expected to be disseminated to all PCC offices in 2024 to implement this scheme nationally. This will be an additional responsibility for the OPCC to implement and support.

Contact Officer:

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

² [Community safety partnerships review and antisocial behaviour powers: government response - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/100000/anti-social-behaviour-action-plan-2022-2025.pdf)