Police and Crime Panel

Date: Wednesday, 11 December 2024
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Council Chamber, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

Members (Quorum: 3)
Alasdair Keddie (Chair), Dr Elizabeth Mytton (Vice-Chair), Louise Bown, Patrick Canavan, David Flagg, Simon Gibson, Louie O'Leary, Mike Short, Peter Sidaway, Andrew Starr, Tony Trent, and Carl Woode

Chief Executive: Matt Prosser, County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ

For more information about this agenda please contact Democratic Services
Meeting Contact 01305 224709 - megan.r.rochester@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting, apart from any items listed in the exempt part of this agenda.

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Agenda

Item		Pages
1.	**APOLOGIES**	

To receive any apologies for absence.

2.	**MINUTES**	5 - 8

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 9th October 2024.

3.	**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**	

To disclose any pecuniary, other registrable or non-registrable interests as set out in the adopted Code of Conduct. In making their disclosure councillors are asked to state the agenda item, the nature of the interest and any action they propose to take as part of their declaration.

If required, further advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

4.   **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Representatives of town or parish councils and members of the public who live, work, or represent an organisation within the Dorset Council area are welcome to submit either one question or one statement for each meeting. You are welcome to attend the meeting in person or via MS Teams to read out your question and to receive the response. If you submit a statement for the committee this will be circulated to all members of the committee in advance of the meeting as a supplement to the agenda and appended to the minutes for the formal record but will not be read out at the meeting.

The first eight questions and the first eight statements received from members of the public or organisations for each meeting will be accepted on a first come first served basis in accordance with the deadline set out below. For further information please see Public Participation - Dorset Council

All submissions must be emailed in full to megan.r.rochester@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk by 8.30am on Monday 9th December 2024.

When submitting your question or statement please note that:

- You can submit one question or one statement.
- A question may include a short pre-amble to set the context.
- It must be a single question, and any sub-divided questions will not be permitted.
- Each question will consist of no more than 450 words, and you will be given up to three minutes to present your question.
- When submitting a question please indicate who the question is for (e.g. the name of the committee or Portfolio Holder)
- Include your name, address, and contact details. Only your name will be published but we may need your other details to contact you about your question or statement in advance of the meeting.
- Questions and statements received in line with the council's rules for public participation will be published as a supplement to the agenda.
- All questions, statements and responses will be published in full within the minutes of the meeting.

Dorset Council Constitution - Procedure Rule 9

Councillor Questions

Councillors can submit up to two valid questions at each meeting and sub divided questions count towards this total. Questions and statements received will be published as a supplement to the agenda and all questions, statements and responses will be published in full within the minutes of the meeting.

The submissions must be emailed in full to megan.r.rochester@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk by 8.30am on Monday 9th December 2024.

Dorset Council Constitution – Procedure Rule 13

5. **MONITORING REPORT**   9 - 20

To receive the Q2 Monitoring Report 2024/25.

6. **CHILD EXPLOITATION**   21 - 32

To provide members with an update on the PCC's work in support of the best use of technology within the Police and Crime Plan priority of Making Every Penny Count. This paper also seeks to address the Key Lines of Enquiry as provided by the Dorset Police and Crime Panel.

7. **USE OF TECHNOLOGY**   33 - 48

This paper updates members on the Police and Crime Commissioner's work on the Use of Technology.

8. **COMPLAINTS UPDATE**

To receive a verbal update from the Service Manager for Assurance.

9. **FORWARD WORKPLAN**

To discuss the Forward Workplan.

10. **URGENT ITEMS**

To consider any items of business which the Chairman has had prior notification and considers to be urgent pursuant to section 100B (4) b) of the Local Government Act 1972. The reason for the urgency shall be recorded in the minutes.

11. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

To move the exclusion of the press and the public for the following item in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). The public and the press will be asked to leave the meeting whilst the item of business is considered.

There are no exempt items scheduled for this meeting.

Dorset Council

POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9 OCTOBER 2024

Present: Cllrs Alasdair Keddie (Chair), Dr Elizabeth Mytton (Vice-Chair), Mike Short, Patrick Canavan, David Flagg, Peter Sidaway, Tony Trent, Louise Bown, Simon Gibson, Louie O'Leary and Andrew Starr

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Simon Bullock (Chief Executive, OPCC)
Chris Harrod (Senior Democratic Services Officer)
Adam Harrold (OPCC Director of Operations)
Jonathan Mair (Director of Legal and Democratic and Monitoring Officer)
James Potten (Communications Business Partner - Place)
David Sidwick (Police and Crime Commissioner)
Julie Strange (OPCC Chief Finance Officer)
Matthew Turnbull (Democratic and Elections Apprentice)

Officers present remotely (for all or part of the meeting):
Marc Eyre (Service Manager for Assurance)

14. **Apologies and Introductions**

    Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Carl Woode.

15. **Minutes**

    The minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2024 were confirmed and signed.

16. **Declarations of Interest**

    No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made at the meeting.

17. **Public Participation**

    There were no requests to speak from member of the public.

18. **Election of Vice-Chair**

    The Chair proposed that Dr Elizabeth Mytton be elected as Vice-Chair, which was duly seconded by Mike Short.

    It was moved by Cllr Peter Sidaway and seconded by Cllr Andrew Starr that Cllr Louise Bown be nominated as Vice Chair of the Police and Crime Panel.

    RESOLVED

That Dr Elizabeth Mytton be elected as Vice Chair of the Police and Crime Panel.

19. **Revised Police and Crime Plan - 00:07:57 on the recording**

The Police and Crime Commissioner introduced the report which set out proposals to revise the Police and Crime Plan.

Questions from Panel members. (attached at appendix 1).

Officers responded member comments and requests for clarification, details included:

- A 'deep-dive' item on child abuse and exploitation would be presented to a future meeting of the panel.

NOTED

20. **Q1 Monitoring Report - 00:36:34 on the recording**

The PCC gave an update on process against the Police and Crime Plan which covered the period April to June 2024.

Priority 1 – Cut Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour – 00:37:40 on the recording

The PCC highlighted the work being undertaken as part of priority one of the plan.

Questions from the Priority Leads and Panel members. (attached at appendix 1).

Panel members were given the opportunity to ask questions. The PCC responded in detail to questions in relation to Safer Streets funding, larger police presence, joined up working with other commissioners around county borders, road safety initiatives, retail crime and stolen goods.

Priority 2 – Make Policing More Visible and Connected – 01:08:32 on the recording

The PCC highlighted the work being undertaken as part of priority two of the plan.

Panel members were given the opportunity to ask questions. The PCC responded in detail to questions in relation to community engagement opportunities, neighbourhood watches and regular communication with elected representatives.

Priority 3 – Fight Violent Crime and High Harm – 01:22:23 on the recording

The PCC highlighted the work being undertaken as part of priority three of the plan.

Questions from the Priority Leads and Panel members. (attached at appendix 1).

Priority 4 – Fight Rural Crime – 01:51:15 on the recording

The PCC highlighted the work being undertaken as part of priority four of the plan.

Panel members were given the opportunity to ask questions. The PCC responded in detail to a series of questions and comments in relation to fly tipping.

Priority 5 – Put Victim and Communities First – 02:00:14 on the recording

The PCC highlighted the work being undertaken as part of priority five of the plan.

Panel members were given the opportunity to ask questions, of which there were none.

Priority 6 – Make Every Penny Count – 02:04:42 on the recording

The PCC highlighted the work being undertaken as part of priority six of the plan.

Questions from the Priority Leads and Panel members. (attached at appendix 1).

Panel members were given the opportunity to ask questions. The PCC responded in detail to questions in relation to 'Project Evolve' and the lobbying of central government for additional funding for Dorset Police.

NOTED

The Chair called for a brief adjournment at 12:33pm and the meeting reconvened at 12:40pm.

21. **Right Care, Right Person - 02:35:57 on the recording**

The Police and Crime Commissioner introduced the report which set out the work undertaken to implement the 'Right Person, Right Care' initiative across Dorset.

Questions from the Panel members. (attached at appendix 1).

Panel members were given the opportunity to ask questions, of which there were none.

NOTED

22. **Complaints Update**

The Service Manager for Assurance advised that there were no live complaints against the Police and Crime Commissioner.

23. **Forward Workplan**

The following Items were added to the forward workplan for the December meeting following discussions held earlier in the meeting:

- Investment in technology to improve police response efficiency and to identify priorities
- Intervention on child abuse

The Panel noted that there was an informal work planning session due to take place in the near future in order to prioritise future items for consideration.

24. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

25. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

Police and Crime Commissioner Responses to Questions

Duration of meeting: 10.03 am - 1.11 pm

Chairman

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Police and Crime Plan Monitoring
Quarter 2 Report 2024/25
Progress Overview and Highlights

Cut Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour

Crime & ASB	Burglary	Fraud & Cyber	Road Safety	Business & Retail
🟩	🟩	🟩	🟨	🟨

- PCC published newsletter on romance fraud, warning people of the dangers of this crime.
- Plain clothed officers carried out proactive patrols under Op Spotter.

Make Policing More Visible & Connected

Uplift and Visibility	Connectivity and Engagement	Customer Service
🟩	🟩	🟩

- Successful community engagement carried out by the OPCC at six summer events.
- Launch of the Bournemouth Together Clear, Hold, Build scheme.

Fight Violent Crime and High Harm

Addiction	Violence Reduction	VAWG	DA & Stalking	Child Abuse	RASSO
🟩	🟨	🟨	🟨	🟩	🟨

- OPCC-led VAWG conference delivered in July, focusing on early years.
- Drug Testing on Arrest introduced in custody suites for VAWG offences.

Make Every Penny Count

Funding	Efficiency	Evidence Based Policing	Philosophy & Co-operation
🟨	🟩	🟩	🟩

- The second phase of Right Care, Right Person went live in July.
- Launch of the Mutual Agreement Resignation Scheme to meet savings targets.

Put Victims & Communities First

Philosophy	CJS & RJ	Vulnerability	Hate Crime	Young People
🟩	🟨	🟨	🟨	🟨

- OPCC published the victim services contract, inviting organisations to bid.
- Continuation of the hate crime awareness course, following review.

Fight Rural Crime

Rural Resources	Country Watch	Fly-tipping	Wildlife Crime	Heritage Crime
🟩	🟩	🟨	🟨	🟩

- Crime Prevention packs distributed to farms and rural businesses.
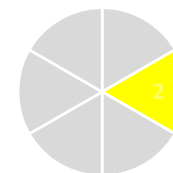- Exploration of new approaches to improve rural engagement through social platforms.

DORSET POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER DAVID SIDWICK

Police and Crime Plan Monitoring
Quarter 2 Report 2024/25
Cut Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

RAG Status

This Period	Last Period

In the Spotlight	Measures of Success	Target	Current	Additional Key Indicators		Q1	Q2
"[The Immediate Justice Scheme] provides an opportunity for low-level or first-time offenders to give back to the community and change their behaviour going forward. Measures like this produce real results and cut re-offending, and as I continue the mission to make Dorset the safest place, these initiatives are vital to ensure our residents feel safer." **PCC, 8 August 2024**	Total Crime (from 2019 baseline)	↓	↓ -4%	Non-dwelling burglary 24/25 (YTD)	+20.0% (+69)		∧
				Dwelling burglary 24/25 (YTD)	+0.6% (+3)		∧
	Total ASB incidents (from 2019 baseline)	↓	↓ -32%	Killed or Seriously Injured (rolling)	+3.3%		∧
				ASB YTD	-7.9% (-688)		∨
	Public Opinion	↑	-- 46%	Business Crime (YTD)	+0.5% (+14)		∧
				Commissioning: Crime Prevention 24/25	£437k		

Theme	RAG Q1	RAG Q2	Detail	Theme	RAG Q1	RAG Q2	Detail
Crime and ASB			The Home Office Hotspot Policing program resulted in a further increase to **visible hotspot patrols** undertaken by Dorset Police. During this period a total of 1,439 hours of patrols have been delivered which resulted in 54 associated arrests, 53 stop and searches undertaken, and an additional 38 uses of ASB powers.	Road Safety			Following complaints of e-scooter related ASB in West Howe, Dorset Police carried out **targeted enforcement**, seizing 7 scooters.
				Fraud & Cyber Crime			The PCC published a newsletter informing the public of the issues of **Romance Fraud**, a form of emotional manipulation, where scammers create fake online profiles to lure unsuspecting victims into a false sense of intimacy.
Burglary & Acquisitive Crime			The **Bobby Van scheme** was placed under review during this quarter due to the financial pressures currently being experienced by the Force. Though a success, Dorset Police has concluded that the scheme may have to cease in order to meet required **saving targets**.	Business & Retail Crime			In addition to the **Op Shopkeeper** initiative, which seeks to bring prolific shoplifters to justice, **Op Spotter** saw plain clothed officers patrolling in Bournemouth during September. This activity resulted in 36 **positive outcomes** in relation to shoplifting.

Police and Crime Plan Monitoring
Quarter 2 Report 2024/25
Make Policing More Visible and Connected

DORSET POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER DAVID SIDWICK

RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period
(green)	(green)

In the Spotlight	Measures of Success	Target	Current	Additional Key Indicators		Q1	Q2
"Entering my second term in office, I am determined to keep lines of communication open, to stop and talk with you when I'm out and about, to attend resident meetings, go along to your local community hall, be at community events and spend time listening to what you have to tell me." **PCC, 2 August 2024**	Number of full-time equivalent police officers	↑	-- 1,431.79	Victim Satisfaction (Whole Experience)	64.9%		^
				Victim Satisfaction (Actions Taken)	61.1%		^
	Percentage of People who feel Dorset Police do a good job in their area	↑ 80%	-- 64%	Victim Satisfaction (Kept Informed)	58.6%		^
				Average 101 answer time	17.7 mins		^
	Percentage of 999 calls answered within 10 seconds	↑ 90%	↑ 92%	Complaints received by Dorset Police (Q2)	355		^
				Complaint Reviews received by OPCC (Q2)	24		^

Theme	RAG Q1	RAG Q2	Detail
Uplift and Visibility			In the aftermath of the Stockport murders, Dorset Police dealt with local protests and demonstrations, with the PCC supporting the approach to dealing with the disorder in a firm and fast way. As **Dorset Criminal Justice Board Chair** he also co-signed a **letter to communities** highlighting perpetrators who were brought to justice quickly and with firm sentences to reflect their offending.
Engagement and Connectivity			Over the summer, the PCC and OPCC was present at, and engaged with, the public at six different **summer events** across Dorset, including Bournemouth Air Festival, Gillingham and Shaftesbury Show, Bourne Free and Dorset County Show, Community Contact Point in Swanage, and Littledown Family Fun Day. This gave the commissioner the opportunity to speak with members of the public, asking their **views of policing and priorities**.
			The PCC attended launch of the **Clear, Hold, Build** initiative in Bournemouth town centre, taking part in a joint communications approach with Dorset Police and BCP Council.
Customer Service			The OPCC has now taken on the administration of **complaints misconduct panels** following a change in legislation and a subsequent review. The newly constituted panels are chaired by Chief Officers as opposed to Legally Qualified Chairs.
			As part of the summer engagement strategy, the OPCC engaged with the public distributing the PCC's **Contact and Engagement leaflet** and listening to the public's questions and concerns, signposting them where appropriate.

Police and Crime Plan Monitoring
Quarter 2 Report 2024/25
Fight Violent Crime and High Harm

DORSET
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER
DAVID SIDWICK

RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period

In the Spotlight	Measures of Success	Target	Current	Additional Key Indicators		Q1	Q2
"As the Police and Crime Commissioner for Dorset, I am resolute in my dedication to tackling these abusive, destructive offences, and will continue to work with any group that wants to make Dorset a safer place for women and girls." **PCC, 19 July 2024**	Most Serious Violence (from 2019 baseline)	↓	↓ -1%	Domestic Abuse Crimes	-1.4% (-67)		V
				Domestic Abuse Incidents	-1.8% (-108)		V
	Domestic Abuse Crime and Incident Reports	↑	↑	Violence Against the Person	-4.4% (-477)		V
				Domestic Violence, Sexual Harm and Stalking Prevention Orders 24/25	91		^
	Effectiveness assessment by HMICFRS	ADQ.	ADQ.	Commissioning: Reducing Reoffending 24/25	£132k		

Theme	RAG Q1	RAG Q2	Detail	Theme	RAG Q1	RAG Q2	Detail
Domestic Abuse & Stalking			Providers were invited to bid for the PCC commissioned standard risk **domestic abuse victim service**.	Child Abuse			First **Op Encompass Task & Finish Group** meeting held with partner agencies. Terms of Reference for group signed off.
RASSO			Contract evaluations for the new **SARC service**. Recommendation to award 7-year contract to Partnering Health Limited will enable a long-term strategic partnership to **improve service** to victims.	Violence Against Women and Girls			The OPCC held a VAWG event in July 2024. The **conference** focused on early years and discussed themes around **appropriate behaviours, sexual violence**, current trends and the work of various services that are available across Dorset.
Addiction and Substance Misuse			**Drug Testing on Arrest** introduced for all VAWG offences, resulting in **53 people** being tested within custody, producing 40 positive tests for cocaine, two for opiates and four for both.

The PCC also supported the launch of the **Bournemouth Together Clear, Hold, Build Model** – a three-stage approach to eliminate serious organised crime in an area. | Violence Reduction | | | The commencement of Immediate Justice youth diversion in partnership with the Youth Justice Service saw the scheme reach **young people** for the first time.

The PCC also supported the launch of a **knife surrender scheme**, in a bid to encourage those who have a zombie knife or machete to turn it into the authorities. |

Police and Crime Plan Monitoring
Quarter 2 Report 2024/25
Fight Rural Crime

DORSET POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER DAVID SIDWICK

RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period

In the Spotlight	Measures of Success	Target	Current	Additional Key Indicators		Q1	Q2
"The outlook for tackling rural crime is improving, but there is still a long way to go. It is a collective effort and together, we will beat the gang's causing misery and profit from criminality in Dorset's wonderful countryside." **PCC, 6 September 2024**	Total Rural Crime (compared to 2019 baseline – YTD)	↓	↓ -77%	Crimes 'Flagged' as Rural	-66% (-37)		V
	Rural Resources	↑	↑	Engagement events in County LPA (Q2)	-14% (25)		∧
	Public Opinion	↑	TBC				

Theme	RAG Q1	RAG Q2	Detail	Theme	RAG Q1	RAG Q2	Detail
Rural Resources			The OPCC and Force continue to explore routes to improve engagement with rural business owners, including meeting with the **National Rural Crime Unit** (NRCU) lead to discuss the NCRU's pilot of WhatsApp engagement with local farmers groups.	Country Watch			A review of the **Country Watch** website was undertaken, which saw a range of actions identified to improve pages and content. Films made for **Rural Crime Action week** were created and added to the site.

It was confirmed that 215 **Crime Prevention Packs** had been distributed in rural areas of Dorset, with plans agreed with the Force to increase this. A request has been made to the Home Office to consider widening the geographic area for recipients. |
| Heritage Crime | | | Update given to the Dorset Partnership Against Rural Crime on the pilot Christchurch **Heritage Watch Scheme.** Further meetings with Heritage England and Citizens in Policing have been set up to discuss progression. | | | | |
| Fly-Tipping | | | PCC interviewed on Radio Solent regarding **fly-tipping** highlighting the responsibility of partner agencies, such as local authorities and the Environment Agency to investigate and enforce the laws around fly-tipping. | Wildlife Crime | | | The September meeting of the Partnership Against Rural Crime focussed on **Wildlife Crime.** Action agreed to establish a **Task & Finish Group** to increase public awareness of the impact leisure activities have on wildlife. |

Police and Crime Plan Monitoring
Quarter 2 Report 2024/25
Put Victims and Communities First

DORSET POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER DAVID SIDWICK

RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period
(yellow)	(yellow)

In the Spotlight	Measures of Success	Target	Current	Additional Key Indicators		Q1	Q2
"[Ref. Romance Fraud] Falling in love is an experience we should enjoy without fear of being manipulated or used. Intelligence gathering is crucial in building a bigger picture and tracking down the heinous individuals committing these crimes. I urge victims to report incidences, even if some time has passed since it occurred." **Age UK Dorset, 22 August 2024**	Number of victims supported by OPCC commissioned services	↑	↑	Victim Support – Cases Created (Q2)	3,093	(green)	V
				Victims' Bureau – Contact (Q2)	6,909		V
	Victim Satisfaction	↑	-- 69%	Recorded Hate Crime (YTD)	+14.7% (+64)	(yellow)	^
				Recorded Hate Incidents (YTD)	+19.2% (+15)		^
	Legitimacy Assessment by HMICFRS	ADQ.	ADQ.	% people feeling safe in Dorset	90%	(green)	
				Commissioning: Victim Services 24/25	£807k		

Theme	RAG Q1	RAG Q2	Detail	Theme	RAG Q1	RAG Q2	Detail
Criminal Justice Service and Restorative Justice	(yellow)	(yellow)	The **Criminal Justice Board** has renewed its strategy, following its **annual review meeting**. The four over-arching themes are to: provide quality support to victims and witnesses; provide an effective and efficient CJ Service; promote rehabilitation; and promote confidence in the CJS.	Support for Young People	(green)	(green)	The OPCC **Youth Participation Strategy** has been created and signed off by the PCC. This strategy outlines a bold three-year plan and is very much supported by partners across the county to ensure we capture a wide variety of **voices** from different communities.
Victims and Community	(yellow)	(yellow)	Following a comprehensive review, providers were invited to bid for the OPCC commissioned **victim service contract**. This service provides practical and emotional support to all victims of crime. Continued work with the MOJ regarding the **victims' code of practice** metrics to ensure compliance with legislation once the standards come into effect.	Vulnerability	(yellow)	(yellow)	An initial review of **veterans work** has been undertaken, linking with the Dorset Council Co-ordinator for Armed Forces who is responsible for the **Armed Forces Covenant** for Dorset.
				Hate Crime	(green)	(green)	Following review, it was confirmed that the **hate crime awareness course** through Restorative Dorset as an out of court disposal option can continue.

RAG Status

This Period	Last Period

In the Spotlight	Measures of Success	Target	Current	Additional Key Indicators		Q1	Q2
"Some forces receive 80 per cent of their funding from the central government but in Dorset, it is closer to 50 per cent, with the rest raised through council tax. This unfairness is widely recognised both by His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary, the Police Federation and Police and Crime Commissioners." **PCC, 16 August 2024**	Money secured from competitive national funds	↑	↑ **£1.63m**	Total Commissioning Spend by OPCC (2024/25)	£1.38m		
	Budget Forecast	SEE FINANCE SLIDES	SEE FINANCE SLIDES	Innovation Bids Submitted (since 01/04)	9		^
				Small Grant Bids Awarded 2024/25	9		^
	Efficiency assessment by HMICFRS	ADQ.	ADQ.	Absence Rates for Officers (Q1)	3.24		V
				Absence Rates for Staff (Q1)	3.20		V

| Theme	RAG Q1	RAG Q2	Detail	Theme	RAG Q1	RAG Q2	Detail
Evidence Based Policing			Phase 2 of **Right Care Right Person** went live in July 2024. This latest phase aims to ensure that patients who leave unexpectedly from healthcare settings, such as hospitals and mental health establishments, are provided with **care from the right service**, and police officers are not routinely called to locate patients.	Philosophy and Co-Operation			Following the **general election**, the PCC has been meeting with the new and returning MPs across Dorset. The PCC has heard their perspectives on the key issues affecting their constituents and has been providing updates on both his refreshed **Police and Crime Plan** and the funding challenges facing the Force.
Funding			As part of its emergency funding measures, Dorset Police launched the **Mutual Agreement Resignation Scheme (MARS)** to help balance the budget. The scheme invited members of police staff to voluntarily resign for a one-off, tax-free payment. The roles would then be deleted or the tasks absorbed elsewhere allowing the Force to make savings.	Efficiency			Dorset Police launched phase 2 of 'Direct and Deploy' an initiative to further improve the timeliness and quality of emergency call handling and dispatching. Enabling officers to undertake routine tasks historically completed by call handlers, has meant that the control room has more capacity to manage both emergency and non-emergency calls.

2024/25 QUARTER 2 FINANCIAL REPORT- OVERVIEW

CAPITAL

The overall revenue spend for the year is forecast to be £174.2m against a budget of £171.9m, an adverse variance of £2.307m or 1.34%. Whilst this is still an adverse position, it is an improvement of £1.357m since Q1 and now includes the impact of the pay award and shortfall in funding.

The current forecast would reduce the General Fund Balance to £3.571m, equivalent to 2.08% of Net Revenue Expenditure which would be below the minimum level of reserves of 3%. The actions to address this forecast are included on the last page of this update. Progress is being monitored closely by the Resource Control Board.

The graph below summarises the outturn revenue variances for the year to 31 March 2025.
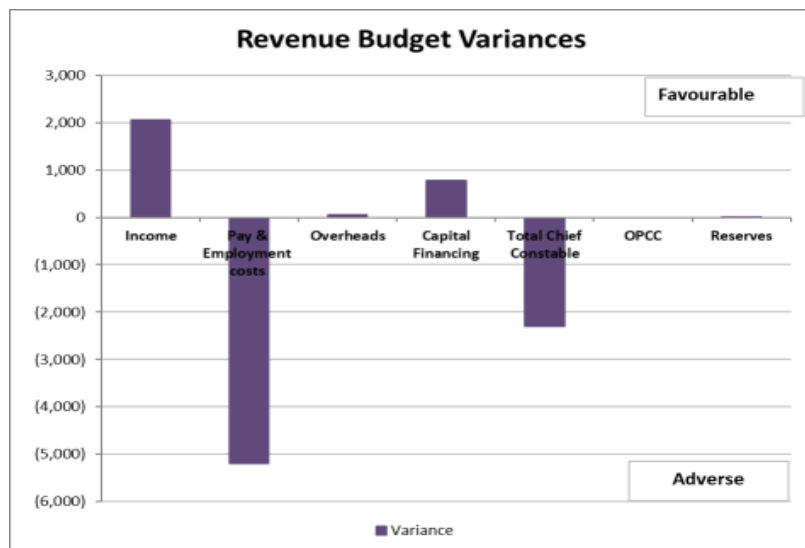
The Capital Programme is currently predicting expenditure of £12.322m against a revised budget of £17.959m for the year, after adding the slippage brought forward from 2023/24. The variance of £5.637m is made up of slippage of £4.701m and forecast underspends of £0.936m. This will reduce the borrowing required in 2024/25.

The graph below shows the final allocation of the capital spend for 2024/25.
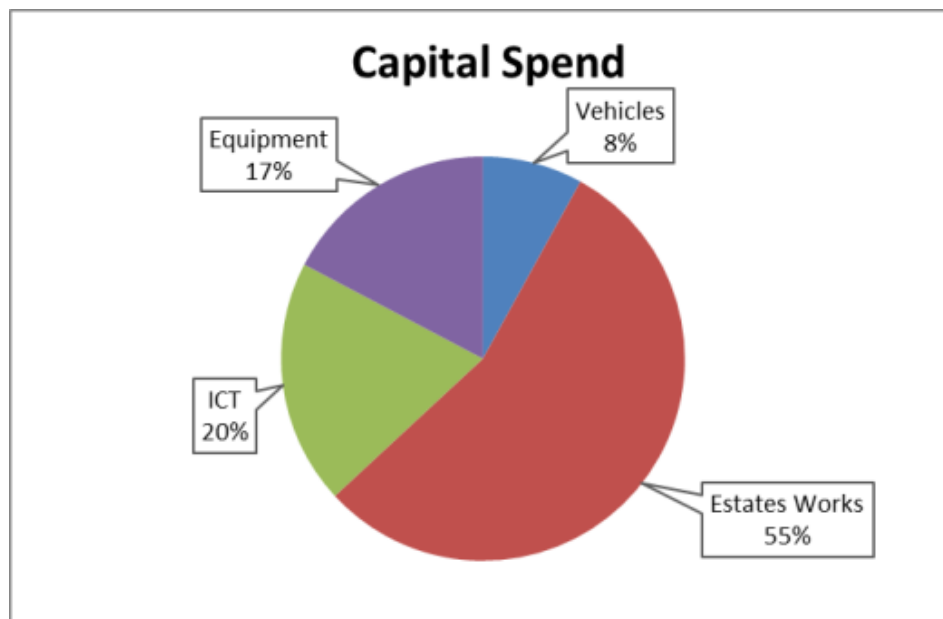
Further information on both the revenue budget, capital programme and reserves can be found on the following pages.

RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period

REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING
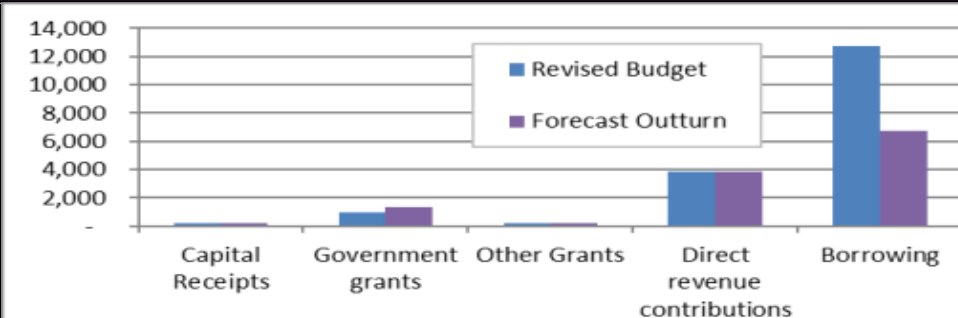
2024/25	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Actual to Date	Forecast Outturn	Variance fav / (adverse)	Ref
Chief Constable	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	
Income	(32,865)	(32,818)	(14,060)	(34,870)	2,052	R1
Pay & Employment costs	148,852	148,606	76,042	153,797	(5,191)	R2
Overheads	47,174	47,305	23,102	47,246	59	R3
Capital Financing	6,030	6,172	(363)	5,399	773	R4
Total Chief Constable	169,190	169,265	84,721	171,572	(2,307)	
OPCC	3,267	3,267	336	3,267	0	
Total Net Revenue Expenditure	172,457	172,532	85,057	174,839	(2,307)	
Reserves	(582)	(657)	(75)	(657)	0	
Net Budget	171,875	171,875	84,982	174,182	(2,307)	R5

Revenue Commentary

R1. Additional income from pay award grant of £1.358m as well as interest receivable, seconded officers, football matches and abnormal loads

R2. The higher than budgeted pay award totalled £1.820m but is not fully funded from the additional grant. Additional officers at the start of the year has increased costs, Ill health retirements are also forecast to be higher than budgeted, as is both officer and staff overtime. Of the £4.5m savings built into the budget, £0.9m have not yet been achieved. Further details on savings are contained on a separate page

R3. Increased costs of the Dangerous Dogs Act and additional equipment requirements have been offset by savings in IT network costs, fuel and fleet repairs. Revenue costs of IT systems will be funded from reducing RCCO

R4. Reduced costs of contributions to capital in order to fund revenue costs of IT systems, previously budgeted within the capital programme

R5. The forecast variance of £2.307m is equivalent to 1.34% of the total net budget. If this position were to be the final outturn position this would reduce the General Reserves to 2.08%, below the minimum level of 3%. Details of the actions taken to address the variance are set out separately

Police and Crime Plan Monitoring
Quarter 2 Report 2024/25
Make Every Penny Count

RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period

CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING

2024/25	Original Budget £000's	Revised Budget £000's	Actual to Date £000's	Forecast Outturn £000's	Variance Fav / (Adverse) £000's
Capital Investment					
Vehicles	1,434	1,434	329	989	445
Estates Works	7,996	9,379	1,622	6,787	2,592
ICT	5,094	5,199	348	2,414	2,785
Equipment	976	2,347	600	2,132	215
Slippage	(400)	(400)	0	0	(400)
Total Capital Programme	**15,100**	**17,959**	**2,899**	**12,322**	**5,637**

Capital Programme Commentary

A review of vehicle replacements has resulted in an overall forecast underspend of the budget of £445,000. All other vehicles are currently expected to be ordered and delivered within the year.

The Estates forecast variance is primarily slippage (£2.1m) largely relating to the work on the SEC roof which cannot start until the demolition and landscaping works at HQ are complete. There are underspends currently forecast for the Firing Range and Ferndown projects, but these will only be confirmed once the projects have been completed.

The ICT variance is also primarily slippage relating to Strategic Change projects such as the Contact Centre system replacement and the regional Digital Asset Management System (DAMS) project, as well ICT projects for equipment replacement which will be undertaken next year after the implementation of the managed service contract.

The equipment variance relates to slippage in the taser replacement and other equipment which is not forecast to be required this year.

CAPITAL FINANCING

Sources of Finance					
Capital Receipts	-	200	-	182	18
Government grants	-	965	463	1,322	(357)
Other Grants	-	197		197	0
Direct revenue contributions	4,369	3,867	813	3,867	0
Borrowing	10,731	12,730	1,623	6,754	5,976
Total Capital Funding	**15,100**	**17,959**	**2,899**	**12,322**	**5,637**

RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period

USABLE RESERVES

2024/25 Reserve	Opening Balance at 1/4/24	Budgeted transfer to/(from) reserves	Commitments to transfer to/(from) reserves	Actual Transfer to/(from) reserves	Forecast Closing Balance at 31/3/25
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Budget Management Fund	819	(275)	(200)	(75)	544
Police and Crime Plan Reserve	461	0	0	0	461
Violence Reduction Reserve	770	(135)	(135)	0	635
OPCC Legal Reserve	250	0	0	0	250
OPCC Reserve	416	0	0	0	416
Regional Collaboration Reserve	34	0	0	0	34
Forensic Capability Network Reserve	268	0	0	0	268
Workforce Change Reserve	643	(300)	(300)	0	343
Learning & Development Reserve	46	0	0	0	46
PEQF Reserve	47	(47)	(47)	0	0
Total Earmarked Reserves	3,754	(757)	(682)	(75)	2,997
General Fund Balance	5,778	100	100	0	5,878
Total Revenue Reserves	9,532	(657)	(582)	(75)	8,875
Capital Receipts Reserve	3,617	0	0	0	3,617
Total Usable Reserves	13,149	(657)	(582)	(75)	12,492

Reserves Commentary

- The Budget Management Reserve holds the unspent carry forward requests from previous years which will be transferred from the reserve as they are required. In addition, the planned use of reserves is still expected to be required during the year.

- At this early stage of the year no other transfers have been made to or from earmarked reserves

- The General Fund Balance is budgeted to increase to £5.878m at 31 March 2024, equivalent to 3.42% of Net Revenue Expenditure. This would be above the minimum level of reserves, but below the maximum of 5%, however this does not factor in the current forecast position.

- No significant capital receipts are currently forecast to be received in the current year apart from the sale of a boat which is planned to part fund the purchase of a replacement vessel.

RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period

DELIVERY OF SAVINGS

Budget Savings

When the 2024/25 budget was set in February 2024, there were a number of savings built into the budget. These totalled £4.5m and were broken down as follows:

Efficiency Savings £1.8m
Service Changes   £1.2m (specific proposals to deliver savings)
Service Reviews   £1.5m (reviews into service areas to develop savings)
Total   £4.5m

As at quarter 2, all efficiency savings have been delivered. Of the service changes built into the budget £0.9m is forecast to be delivered for the year and £0.3m are no longer being taken forward. For the service reviews, one has been completed, three are in progress, one has been delayed until 25/26 and one has been completed but no savings were taken forward. £0.5m of savings have been delivered from these reviews so far. A total of £0.4m new savings have been delivered to replace some of those no longer being taken forward.

At this stage there remains £0.9m of savings built into the budget that have not yet been achieved, although around a third of these are currently forecast to deliver for 2025/26. Others have been impacted by the remedial actions taken to address the developing in-year pressures, therefore, to avoid double counting of savings they are shown as not achieved at this stage.

Addressing In Year Pressures

Following the Q1 forecast of a significant overspend, the Force agreed an action plan in July in order to bring spending back in line with the budget. This included restrictions on overtime, staff recruitment and non-essential spend such as some travel, discretionary training and some IT budgets. These actions have delivered positive results and have helped deliver a reduction in the forecast position in Q2, despite the inclusion of an additional pressure from the pay award of nearly £0.5m.

However, it became clear that these actions alone would not be enough to close the gap, therefore on 2 September the Force launched their Mutual Agreement Resignation Scheme (MARS), where police staff could apply to voluntarily resign in return for a severance payment. This process ran for just over two weeks and a decision-making panel was held at the end of September. As the process was still ongoing, the effects of the scheme were not factored into the Q2 forecast but will be incorporated into Q3.

The MARS scheme, in particular, has some overlap with savings that were potentially already planned as part of the service reviews. There is a real risk that savings get counted twice and so all savings achieved through the MARS scheme will be counted as MARS savings at this stage, even if it gives the impression of under achieving planned savings.

DORSET POLICE & CRIME PANEL – 11 DECEMBER 2024

CHILD EXPLOITATION

REPORT BY HEAD OF VIOLENCE REDUCTION AND PREVENTION

PURPOSE

This paper provides the panel with an overview of child exploitation in Dorset. This paper also seeks to address the following five Key Lines of Enquiry as provided by the Dorset Police and Crime Panel:

I. *What data is there to illustrate the scale of this nationally and how Dorset compares?*

II. *How are the PCC and the police working with the Local Authorities, schools, and local communities around prevention measures?*

III. *How do we ensure that young people are central to prevention measures with their voice heard including through lived experience?*

IV. *How does this work in practice and which agencies are involved in shaping prevention messages and disseminating them?*

V. *What are the biggest opportunities and challenges in this area for the PCC and Dorset Police?*

1.   INTRODUCTION

1.1.   Child abuse, in all forms, is an abhorrent crime, and its prevalence is still largely unknown. Child abuse can be grouped into four categories: neglect; emotional abuse; physical abuse; and sexual abuse. This paper will focus on Child Criminal Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation which are generally forms of child abuse experienced outside the family home, perpetrated by peers and people perceived by the victim as trusted adults.

1.2.   Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) is described as "when an individual or a group manipulates, deceives, coerces, or controls someone under the age of 18 to take part in any activity which breaks the law. All children are at risk of criminal exploitation, including girls[1]". A form of CCE commonly referred to by police and the media is 'County Lines' which is when a child is manipulated into dealing drugs or other activities across geographical areas.

1.3.   Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) "happens when a child or young person is coerced, manipulated or deceived into sexual activity in exchange for things that they may need or want like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection[2]". Cases such as those within Rochdale and Rotherham have put a national spotlight on this form of child

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[1] Barnando's, 2024
[2] NSPCC, 2024

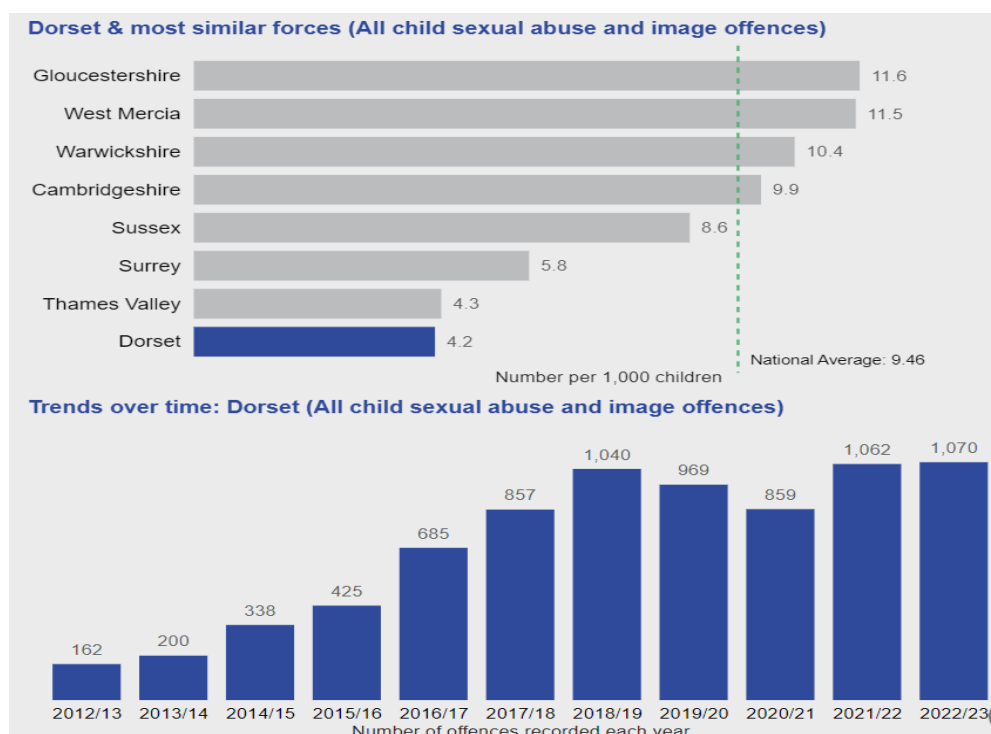abuse which happens in all communities across the UK often in plain sight of authorities.

1.4. The consistent theme with both CCE and CSE is the grooming process a child goes through before the abuse begins. At first, they are led to believe the abuser is a friend and the only person that understands them. The abuser might appear to trust the child to look after an item or keep a secret, they might buy them gifts or give them money. Another common tactic is exposing the child to violence, knives, and drug use. They may also expose the child to pornography that shows violent sex and rape. The exposure to violence and rape alongside the suggestion that this is 'normal' means that when a child first experiences criminal or sexual exploitation, they are less likely to question it or identify it as abuse. The child is unable to see the abuser as a risk, as this person is everything that has been missing in their life.

1.5. All children are at risk of CCE/CSE as perpetrators of this crime are skilled and able to adapt their approach depending on the child. That said, some children are at heightened risk of being targeted. Anything within a child's life which can support the abuser to create an imbalance of power is utilised. Children who have had an unstable home environment due to child abuse or another form of Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) are at a heightened risk. Children who are socially isolated and as a result lack a network of supportive safe adults within their community are also at a heightened risk. This isolation could be due to homelessness, mental health issues, being a care leaver, exclusion from mainstream education or having an insecure immigration status. Social isolation and having lived experience of ACEs can often result in the child mistrusting services that should be there to protect them.

1.6. Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) often have considerably more resources available to them to aid the exploitation of children than professionals have to safeguard. OCGs are often dynamic to new trends and innovate new methods to target children, while the legal system can struggle to legislate quickly enough to keep apace and protect the public. A current example is that of artificial intelligence (AI) generated child abuse images. AI generated films and videos are created and used to threaten and coerce children into CCE and CSE. As a result of the recent rapid growth of AI tools, there is some broad confusion about the legality of artificially generated child sexual abuse material. This period of confusion amongst professionals, parents and the wider community creates an opportunity for OCGs to continue effective use of this tool.

1.7. No one knows the true extent of CCE and CSE in Dorset due to under reporting – and for reasons such as those outlined above – but there is a good understanding of the devastating impact on its victims.

1.8. In recent years, the development of research related to ACEs has provided a helpful narrative to better understand the lifelong impact of early adversity, including child abuse. The harm caused by ACEs alone provides a strong justification for implementing strategies to prevent and mitigate them. Adults who experience four or more ACEs (9% of the population) are 4.5x more likely to develop depression and 2x more likely to receive a diagnosis of liver disease. Adults who lived with six or more ACEs are 46x more likely to become an intravenous drug user and 35x more likely to attempt to end their life by suicide[3]. The predictable poor outcomes for adults who have lived with ACEs adds even more weight to the importance of early identification and swift effective safeguarding responses to children experiencing CCE and CSE.

2. **Background**

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[3] Bellis, 2014

2.1.   Understanding the true picture of CCE and CSE in Dorset is complex due to the ways in which it is recorded. This report has made use of relevant data sets for recorded child sexual abuse, recorded violence against the person where the victim is under 18, Child Abduction Warning Notices (CAWNs) and referrals to the National Referral Mechanism. For the purposes of this document, reports of historic child sexual abuse have been excluded from the data set.

2.2.   According to the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) 2016, one in five adults aged 18 to 74 experienced at least one form of child abuse before the age of 16. Around three in four victims had not told anyone about the abuse at the time it happened, and the most common reasons cited for not disclosing the abuse were embarrassment or humiliation or thinking that they would not be believed[4].

2.3.   Nationally, under-18s make up one-fifth of the population but two-fifths of victims of recorded sexual offences[5].

2.4.   In 2022/23 52 children were placed on a child protection plan due to sexual abuse in Dorset, 615 children were assessed as 'at risk of child abuse' (including CSE), 1,070 child sexual offences were recorded by police, and it is estimated that 12,160 children were sexually abused in Dorset[6].

2.5.   The table below shows Dorset's reporting rates compared to the most similar force areas. This table includes sexual abuse and image offences where the victim is under 18. Dorset's reported child sexual abuse rates remain low in comparison to other similar areas, but a point of caution should be held here, as explained in section 2.2 within this report, as there remain high numbers of unreported offences.

Dorset & most similar forces (All child sexual abuse and image offences)

Force	Number per 1,000 children
Gloucestershire	11.6
West Mercia	11.5
Warwickshire	10.4
Cambridgeshire	9.9
Sussex	8.6
Surrey	5.8
Thames Valley	4.3
Dorset	4.2

National Average: 9.46

Trends over time: Dorset (All child sexual abuse and image offences)

Number of offences recorded each year

Year	Offences
2012/13	162
2013/14	200
2014/15	338
2015/16	425
2016/17	685
2017/18	857
2018/19	1,040
2019/20	969
2020/21	859
2021/22	1,062
2022/23	1,070

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[4] ONS 2016
[5] The Centre of Expertise on Child Abuse, 2024
[6] The Centre of Expertise on Child Abuse, 2024

2.6. There has been a significant increase in reported offences since 2013 which is mainly due to the increase of image offences. There has been a national and international co-ordinated response to identify adults creating, distributing, and downloading child abuse images. This has been responsible for a 14% increase in the recording of child abuse image offences nationally[7].

2.7. As a result of this national and international action, there has been an unprecedented demand on all UK forces, including Dorset Police, as the responsibility falls to the service to determine whether there has been a contact offence and/or whether the suspect has created the child abuse images or downloading them from elsewhere. Similarly, it is crucial to establish whether the pictured victim is a child living within Dorser or not. Upon arrests, suspect's computer equipment is seized to allow for a forensic examination to be completed. Previously this process has created a backlog in crimes not allocated for investigation. Although this backlog has now been cleared, demand is likely to increase going forward as the international effort continues to identify UK residents downloading child abuse images.

2.8. The table below shows the top 10 offences reported to Dorset Police in which the victim is a child (Under 18).

Offence Description	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Sexual assault on a female aged 13 and over	76	87	121	137	129	550
Assault without Injury	119	105	90	92	92	498
Assault with Injury	71	84	90	95	108	448
Sexual activity involving a child under 16	62	81	78	91	76	388
Sexual assault on a female child under 13	74	63	72	64	92	365
Rape of a female child under 16	61	32	56	75	64	288
Sexual activity involving a child under 13	53	51	64	60	55	283
Cruelty to children / young persons	94	51	44	28	18	235
Sexual grooming	44	36	48	26	48	202
Rape of a female aged 16 and over	19	33	27	26	19	124

Table 1: Top 10 Offences – Victim under 18.

2.9. Although sexual grooming is an offence directly linked to child exploitation, a number of other offences listed here will have taken place in the context of an exploitative relationship. The following table shows the relationship between the suspect and the victim of these offences:

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[7] The Centre of Expertise on Child Abuse, 2024

Offender/Victim Relationship	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Friend/acquaintance/colleague	129	138	114	139	127	**647**
Family - father	133	96	128	102	119	**578**
Family - mother	126	93	89	77	60	**445**
No known relationship	74	59	59	79	88	**359**
Complete stranger	53	71	78	60	62	**324**
Other relationship (misc)	63	49	63	63	78	**316**
Family - other family member	56	63	35	44	41	**239**
Educational relationship	21	25	59	58	68	**231**
Online/internet/social media	23	36	56	55	54	**224**
Ex spouse/cohabitee/partner	33	26	50	41	43	**193**
Spouse/cohabitee/partner	12	19	20	17	16	**84**

Table 2: Offender/Victim Relationship

2.10. Child safeguarding risks have traditionally been associated with the family home environment and linked to parenting capacity. However, the table above shows the increased risk posed by people outside the family home. This is referred to as *extra-familial harm,* where risk of harm comes from other sources, or contexts, including, for example, from drugs, gangs, youth violence, bullying, missing from care or home, radicalisation, trafficking, modern day slavery, sexual and criminal exploitation.

2.11. The final table below outlines the outcomes for the offences detailed above:

Status	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Victim declines/withdraws support - named suspect identified	150	156	202	231	226	**965**
Other body/agency has investigation primacy	253	193	200	155	150	**951**
Police - named suspect, victim supports but evidential difficulties	114	117	127	99	135	**592**
Victim declines/unable to support action to identify offender	86	73	89	90	100	**438**
Investigation complete no suspect identified	65	59	69	79	70	**342**
Charged	28	29	30	26	22	**135**
Summonsed/postal requisition	20	26	37	24	13	**120**
Police - named suspect, investigation not in the public interest	20	19	24	24	22	**109**
CPS - named suspect, victim supports but evidential difficulties	17	25	7	10	9	**68**
Police - formal action not in public interest	10	10	12	16		**48**

Table 3 : Offence Outcomes for Table 1

2.12. The high number of crimes where the outcome is 'Victim declines/withdraws support' is an area of concern. Nationally, there has been a charge in around 11% of child sexual abuse cases. Of the reported offences in Table 1 which related to sexual abuse of a child, no more than 6% have resulted in a charge. Cases where another "Agency has investigation primacy" generally relates to cases where the safeguarding of the child is the priority. In these cases, Children's Social Care become the lead investigation agency, supported by Dorset Police.

2.13. Child Abduction Warning Notices (CAWN) are a non-statutory notice that is issued to disrupt an adult's association with a child and to warn the adult that the association could result in arrest and prosecution. When Dorset Police becomes aware of a child spending time with an adult who they believe could be harmful a CAWN is a key tool to disrupt this relationship. In 2022 Dorset Police issued 25 CWANs, in 2023 29 were issued, and in 2024 so far 19 have been issued at the time of writing.

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2.14.   Human trafficking involves the recruitment or movement of people for exploitation by the use of threat, force, fraud, or the abuse of vulnerability. Human trafficking is often associated with the movement of people across borders but in the context of CCE and CSE, the Police would consider a child being moved from one address to another as Human Trafficking. Police and Local Authorities are the only local 'First Responders' able to refer into the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). The NRM is the national framework for identifying and referring victims of modern slavery and trafficking. When Dorset Police identifies a child who they believe is being trafficked as a victim of CCE or CSE, they will complete an NRM which is administered by the Home Office. The Home Office will then investigate any child referred to the NRM who is at least 100 days from their 18th birthday to determine if they are a victim of trafficking.

2.15.   If it transpires that a child was coerced to commit crimes because of their exploitation, they may not be subject to prosecution for certain crimes, known as a Section 45 defence. Other outcomes of a successful NRM referral may include recognition amongst professionals that the child may be subject to certain vulnerabilities or have certain support needs, improving their support. It may also counter unconscious bias in professionals about a child's presentation. A successful referral may also support a positive transition from child to adult services. In other areas, the child would also have access to the Independent Child Trafficking Guardian service, currently not offered to Dorset residents.

2.16.   The below table provides the numbers of referrals to the NRM made by Dorset Police:

Financial Year	Number of Referrals	Exploitation Type
20/21	17	Criminal
21/22	22	Criminal 18, Sexual 1, Multiple 1, Unknown 2
22/23	22	Criminal 15, Sexual 2, Multiple 2, Labour 2, Unknown 1
23/24	35	Criminal 28, Sexual 1, Multiple 2, Labour 1, Unknown 3

Of note from the table above is the higher level of referrals due to criminal exploitation. There is a noticeable difference between the County and BCP localities in the exploitation type most identified. The County area is more likely to identify sexual exploitation whereas the BCP area are more likely to identify criminal exploitation.

3.   Prevention Measures in Dorset and BCP

3.1.   Earlier in this paper, the long-term negative outcomes for adults who have experienced ACEs was outlined. It is by no means set in stone that a child who has experienced adversity will have a life of adversity ahead. It is important to note that a high proportion of children who live with adversity are supported to build resilience through positive activities, positive relationships with safe adults, build aspirations, feeling part of a community and building skills to manage emotions and impulsivity. A high proportion of the work force supporting children at risk of CCE and CSE are adults who have lived experience of ACEs who have been able to build resilience and skills which equips them to deliver high quality impactive interventions for some of our most vulnerable children and to deliver prevention education.

3.2. Although Dorset Police is a pan-Dorset service, the organisation supports the location-based response in place which is led by the two local authorities. Both local authorities use a risk assessment tool which evidences a child as being at emerging risk, moderate risk, or significant risk of exploitation. Children assessed as moderate or emerging risk are managed at a local level by the Neighbourhoods teams. Children assessed as 'significant risk' are managed by the Safeguarding Team who have specialist knowledge and training of child exploitation. As well as being open to the Safeguarding Team, children assessed as 'significant risk' are referred into a multi-agency meeting to support the creation of a multi-agency management plan. Both in Dorset and BCP multi-agency settings, the voice of the child is central to safeguarding decisions and risk management plans.

3.3. BCP host a partnership meeting called the Missing, Exploited, Trafficked (MET) panel chaired by BCP Children's Social Care. The MET panel consists of a multi-agency group with a knowledge of the child at risk. This group meet fortnightly to consider concerns about all forms of child exploitation, particularly focussing on identifying the links between children, places they go to and the people who exploit them. Children discussed here have been assessed as high risk following the completion of the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation Screening tool.

3.4. Dorset County host the Extra Familial Risk and Harm Panel, a partnership meeting, hosted by Dorset Council Childrens Social Care. This multi-agency group meet weekly with a rolling locality agenda. The Dorset risk assessment tool is different to that used by BCP so the cohort of children discussed can differ. This can mean that due to a child's lived experience of ACEs or their current mental health they are assessed at 'significant risk' even when there is no clear evidence the child is currently being exploited. This is commendable practice in terms of early intervention, but this does result in the Safeguarding Team discussing cases that will be managed by Neighbourhood Teams in the community.

3.5. Dorset Police is a key partner aiding the positive outcomes for children discussed within both multi agency meetings. Dorset Police not only focuses on the safeguarding of the victim but also develops disruption plans to target known offenders and locations of concern. Disruption plans will utilise police powers specifically designed to target perpetrators of child exploitation such as CAWNs, but will also involve creative deployment of other policing teams such as Traffic who can target offenders for other offences such as driving drunk/drug driving, driving without a licence or without insurance.

3.6. Research consistently tells us that victims of sexual abuse are unlikely to disclose to services, note 2.2 of this report. Understanding this, Dorset Police has developed the [Community Partnership Intelligence](#) scheme. By visiting this link, professionals are able to share intelligence related to adults of concern, locations of concern and children of concern. Dorset Police is promoting this across all partner organisations, to build confidence in reporting information, however insignificant it may seem, to help create the local picture. The Community Partnership Intelligence scheme is a tool for all professionals to support building the local intelligence picture which is crucial to aid the long-term reduction of CCE and CSE. This approach puts the onus on the professionals to disclose the risks rather than waiting for a child to make a disclosure.

3.7. Operation Makesafe is a national initiative focused on making sure that the public and people working in the business sectors are aware of the early warning signs of child exploitation and know how to report concerns to the police. The Safeguarding

team from Dorset Police attends quarterly meetings to support the national coordination of this operation.

3.8.   In 2020, the OPCC developed education videos for hotels and other business venues that perpetrators may use to facilitate CCE and CSE. The videos educate on the warning signs that a child is being exploited and gives helpful guidance on appropriate safeguarding responses. These videos were launched as part of planned activity under Op Makesafe in 2020. Raising awareness of CCE and CSE within the business community creates a shared responsibility to safeguard children.

3.9.   Hotel watch is a scheme co-ordinated by Dorset Police. The scheme is used to educate the hotel community about CCE and CSE as well as other related safeguarding matters such as County Lines. As well as promoting educational messages to hotels, including the videos described above, hoteliers are able to share intelligence, and Dorset Police use the scheme to support the location of missing people and people of interest.

3.10.   The Safer Schools and Communities Team (SSCT) is a partnership between Dorset Police, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service with a remit to provide targeted interventions to prevent and reduce anti-social behaviour and crime amongst children and young people and help keep them safe in a digital world. The capacity for the Safer Schools team to deliver these vital sessions has reduced in recent years. As a result, the team has collated several of their own produced resources and those from national and local services to offer specialist support and advice on a wide range of needs, concerns, and topics. These resources can be accessed and downloaded by schools via the Dorset Police website to aid the delivery of consistent education and harm reduction. Specific sessions are available covering the topic of CCE and CSE. These sessions explain the grooming process, describe what a healthy relationship should look and feel like and advice on spotting the signs of CCE and CSE within participant peer groups.

3.11.   A consistent driver for young people choosing to carry a knife is fear of serious violence. According to a recent report by the Youth Endowment Fund, 67% of children aged 13-17 are worried about becoming a victim of violence. The same report highlights that "*violence is most concentrated among children who are persistently absent, excluded from school, have special educational needs, are supported by social workers, or are at risk of exploitation[8]*".

3.12.   Firearms and Knife Education (FAKE) is an education session, delivered by the Firearms Unit, to challenge the notion that carrying a knife is normal and acceptable. The session is also designed to reduce the fear amongst children which will help reduce the chances of them choosing to carry a knife. Children participate in an interactive session during which they learn the law related to carrying a knife, the impact of knife crime on the victim and wider community, and what to do if someone they know is stabbed. All participants are left with the clear message that you are at greater risk of being stabbed by your own knife if you choose to carry one. The OPCC has created four films which feature in this session providing insight into knife crime from different perspectives including an Emergency Department Consultant; a police officer who was the first responder to a fatal stabbing; the mother of Cameron Hamilton; and the perspective of a young man who used to carry a knife when involved in county lines. The session is extremely impactive and engages the audience in a difficult conversation. During November, as part of Operation Sceptre,

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[8] *Youth Endowment Fund 2024.*

this session was delivered to 3,156 children across schools and alternative education provisions in Dorset.

3.13. As part of the Serious Violence Duty, each Community Safety Partnership (CSP) has completed a needs assessment to better understand the local drivers and causes of serious violence. The OPCC is the Convening Authority of the Serious Violence Duty Fund that each CSP has been allocated to respond to the identified drivers for serious violence. BCP CSP, in partnership with the OPCC, planned and delivered a Knife Crime Month of Action which provided a range of activities to raise awareness of the dangers of knife crime. BCP CSP have also funded a mobile youth café which is deployed to hotspot areas to provide a safe space for young people to engage with positive role models and engage in activities to build their pro-social values. Dorset CSP have funded a youth project to target boys and young men at risk of carrying a knife. This program covers a range of topics with the aim of building young men's pro-social identity.

3.14. According to research commissioned by the Home Office, there are two consistent drivers to serious violence – drugs and vulnerability[9]. In September 2022 the Dorset Combatting Drugs Partnership Board was established, chaired by the Dorset PCC. This partnership approach to tackling drugs within Dorset has three key areas of work – enforcement; prevention; and treatment and recovery – and targets the driver to serious violence related to drugs. Some of the key achievements of this group in the last 12 months have included establishing trug testing on arrival to custody for suspects of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) offences; the development of a Synthetic Opioid Preparedness plan to deal with the growing risk related to nitazines entering the drugs market; and the successful engagement of 99 young people to support the development of prevention education resources.

4.   Co-Creation with Young People

4.1. The OPCC is committed to listening to children and young people and co-creating our response to CCE and CSE. It is understood that there are a number of barriers for some communities of children and young people to feel safe and enabled to participate in conversations with public bodies. Since coming into post, the OPCC's Violence Reduction and Prevention team have been scoping an approach to create meaningful participation opportunities for children and young people across Dorset.

4.2. The PCC and his Office are committed to getting things right and so will ensure that approach is carefully developed, allowing time for regular evaluations and improvements. The OPCC approach will be broken down into three main areas of development to ensure that a wide breadth and depth of voices are head.

4.3. Firstly, the OPCC is working with organisations already supporting youth participation such as the Children's Rights and Engagement team in BCP, the Targeted Youth Service in Dorset, Dorset Police Cadet, the Youth Justice Service and Community Action Network (CAN). The OPCC is developing a participation pack which can be used by these 'community assets' to facilitate safe and meaningful participation.

4.4. To ensure the OPCC's Youth Participation Strategy is meaningful for young people, capturing 'voice' is not enough. The Office needs to facilitate a two-way ongoing conversation through which young people can see their influence on decision making. As the partnership builds trust with young people through the community asset-based participation in year one, the OPCC will seek young people's views on the ideal

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[9] Sarah Kincaid, 2021

approach to a youth voice network. To start with: is this something young people want? If so, what is the best model to adopt?

4.5. The third area of youth participation relates to targeted projects where the OPCC and partner agencies may want to hear from children and young people with a particular lived experience. This area of participation would be delivered through interviews or focus groups, facilitated by a skilled practitioner.

5. Opportunities and Challenges Ahead

5.1. Dorset is not a funded Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) area, but the PCC has committed funding to lay the groundwork and build on the positive progress made by our local CSPs, as part of his commitment to tackling serious violence as detailed within his Police and Crime Plan. The foundations for a VRU are Multi-Agency working; data sharing and analysis; engaging young people and communities; and commissioning evidence based interventions. The Youth Participation strategy detailed above will be supported by a needs assessment which will pull together all relevant data sets to help the OPCC better understand local trends and drivers for serious violence.

5.2. As highlighted in this paper, there is significant research and evidence which indicates what may increase a child's vulnerability to CCE and CSE. The ambition is that the OPCC VRU and Prevention team will work with partners to create and commission early interventions that are accessible to children, before they are targeted and groomed, before they are carrying a knife or become a victim of sexual abuse. This approach will be impactive in preventing a number of ACEs and ultimately support positive outcomes for the children and young people of Dorset.

5.3. Research from the US has highlighted that the long-term impact on serious organised crime is significantly improved when you take a 'Place Network Investigation' (PNI) approach. This not only takes into consideration the hot spots of reported crime but also looks at social networks, how offenders create links with children and crime infrastructures, the venues used to facilitate CCE and CSE[10]. Dorset Police has already embedded a 'Hotspot' policing model. Building on the progress made here, the Community Partnership Intelligence scheme is a tool that could be utilised to support the local partnership to build a PNI approach supporting long term consistent reductions in serious violence and exploitation of Dorset children.

5.4. The Serious Violence Duty Guidance is currently under review, a refreshed version due for publication in March 2025. The refreshed guidance will include 'Prevention Partnerships' which is a partnership response to children at risk of CCE, CSE and other forms of serious violence. Section 3.2 of this paper highlighted the frameworks in place to safeguard children assessed as a potential victim of CCE and CSE. Although there are robust multi-agency responses in place for children assessed as at 'Significant' risk, there is more that should be done for those children assessed as at 'emerging risk'. A Prevention Partnership is a multi-agency group that focuses on those children at emerging risk and will create accountability at the earliest possible opportunity. The details and financial support for the establishment of a Prevention Partnership is still unclear, but this provides an opportunity and a framework to consider prevention intervention for children identified as vulnerable.

5.5. A key challenge is the uncertain financial investment from central government. All agencies working to safeguard our children are dealing with financial hardship. The

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[10] Herold, 2010

PCC is working hard to lobby government to deliver long term sustainable funding to continue our fight against CCE and CSE. The PCC and his Office are also working to build better collaborative relationships with partners to ensure that the funding that is available is best put to use to provide the best possible service for Dorset.

5.6. CCE and CSE are complex issues that impact people, communities, and services across our society, spanning health, housing, social care, the Criminal Justice System, voluntary sector and beyond. Agencies and organisations are often responding to one aspect of the issue and/or the same problem from different angles. These same agencies also have their own, sometimes conflicting processes, responsibilities, and measures of success. An opportunity and a challenge relate to a co-ordinated community response in which victims of CCE and CSE receive a whole system response. By looking to communities and voluntary sector partners to a whole system approach can be co-created which will improve access to services and reduce the pressure on statutory providers.

6. Recommendations

6.1. Members are asked to note the report.

6.2. Members are further asked to raise awareness of the Community Intelligence Scheme within their wards.

RACHEL YOUNG
HEAD OF VIOLENCE REDUCTION AND PREVENTION

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POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – 11 DECEMBER 2024

POLICE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

REPORT BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide members with an update on the PCC's work in support of the best use of technology within the Police and Crime Plan priority of Making Every Penny Count. This paper also seeks to address the Key Lines of Enquiry as provided by the Dorset Police and Crime Panel:

  I.   *How is the PCC investing in technology to meet the desired outcomes set out in his Police and Crime Plan? Please provide some case studies (examples may include: Digital Evidence Management (DEMS); Single Online Home; Video Enhanced Contact; PRONTO)?*

  II.   *For each case study, please identify how the success of the investment is being monitored, in terms of value for money; improved performance; and impact on delivery of the Police and Crime Plan.*

  III. *What horizon scanning is the PCC undertaking to identify future technology investment opportunities to meet future needs/demand?*

1.   INTRODUCTION

1.1.   Dorset County Constabulary was formed in 1856. From the use of Victorian police equipment such as the police whistle, rattle, and lantern to the wide range of communications, surveillance, protective, and tactical equipment, and technology available to officers, staff, and volunteers today, the history of policing has been one of constant scientific and technological evolution driven by a relentless desire to stay one step ahead of criminals and protect the public.

1.2.   However, as the research, development, and manufacture of technology is not necessarily a core police objective, the delivery of this important enabling service is nowadays managed through a mix of bodies, virtual structures, and other capabilities operating at the national, regional, alliance, and individual Force level, as well as through a network of strategic partnerships with commercial and academic enterprises.

1.3.   A brief overview of some of these external capabilities will be outlined before providing a summary of local governance arrangements, and then several case studies relating to technology invested, or potentially about to be invested, in by the PCC. Finally, a very brief summary of future areas of opportunity will be detailed, under horizon scanning.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. A range of national structures exist that manage and govern policing technology collaborations and capabilities on behalf of Chief Constables and their equivalents, and PCCs and their equivalents. The below is by no means an extensive list but does illustrate some of the different types of structures and collaborations that exist, and how they are governed.

2.2. Despite the range of structures and bodies in place to govern policing technology at a national level, these all refer to the single strategy which sets the direction for the police use of technology, namely the joint NPCC and APCC National Policing Digital Strategy 2020-2030[1].

Police Digital Service

2.3. At the national level, the Police Digital Service (PDS) is the UK organisation responsible for coordinating, developing, delivering, and managing digital services and solutions that enable UK policing to safely harness technology to improve public safety. PDS is governed[2] by a board of Directors that includes Home Office officials, Chief Constables and equivalents, and Police and Crime Commissioners and equivalents.

2.4. PDS typically focuses on programmes of work which are whole-system and transformative, such as progressing delivery of a national Digital Fingerprint Capability which will provide a real-time fingerprint identification service to forces by providing secure remote transmission from a crime scene to the Home Office Biometrics database, in line with the Forensic Science Regulator's code of practice. It is estimated that, once operational, £6m per year might be saved nationally through removing the current fingerprint workflow and digital process.

2.5. PDS is also, for example, working to support delivery of the national policing priority areas of violence against women and girls (VAWG) through the development of capabilities to support the national rollout of Operation Soteria, and cyber-crime through the production of national guidance for cyber security policies and standards for policing and partner agencies.

BlueLight Commercial

2.6. Also at the national level, albeit not directly responsible for the development of technology, BlueLight Commercial (BLC) is responsible for the procurement of national policing technology capabilities. BLC is a membership-based organisation, open to any agency with an interest in improving the delivery of effective commercial services to the bluelight services. BLC is governed[3] by a board of largely PCCs and equivalents, and Chief Constables.

2.7. BLC manages the commercial arrangements with several technology suppliers on behalf of its members, using collective bargaining and economies of scale to drive better value from contracts than forces could achieve individually. Typically, BLC manages commercial arrangements on behalf of forces with organisations such as Microsoft, Adobe, and IBM. At the half-year reporting stage (30 September 2024) BLC reported savings of £18.1m against the full-year Home Office set target of £30m.

Home Office

2.8. Home Office Police and Public Protection Technology (PPPT) is primarily responsible for the design, build and deployment of national law enforcement systems, ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of systems which support all UK police forces, and some law-enforcement arm's length bodies, in total incorporating a user community of more than 300,000 individuals.

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[1] https://pds.police.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/National-Policing-Digital-Strategy-2020-2030.pdf
[2] https://pds.police.uk/governance/
[3] https://bluelightcommercial.police.uk/about/governance/

2.9. PPPT consists of over one thousand individuals across a variety of teams and organisations. Its governance sits within Home Office structures and, as such, is ultimately the responsibility of Government. PPPT is responsible for a plethora of national systems, including the:

- Police National Computer (PNC)
- Police National Database (PND)
- National ANPR Service (NAS)
- Child Abuse Image Database (CAID)
- Penalty Notices system (PentiP)
- Violent and Sex Offender Register (ViSOR)

2.10. PPPT also manages several national contact and incident management systems including providing the national 101 non-emergency telephone line. It furthermore includes Home Office Biometrics which provides for the development and enhancement of biometric services to support both policing (criminal investigation, victim identification, counter-terrorism operations, etc) as well as for borders, immigration, and asylum purposes.

2.11. Whilst Dorset Police does benefit from the technology services and systems that these national capabilities provide, like other individual PCCs and Chief Constables, our local leadership has limited scope to challenge and support their operation.

Minerva Programme

2.12. The Minerva Programme was created in 2013 as a collaboration of 10 UK police forces based upon their common use of the Niche Records Management System (Niche RMS365). The initial aims of the Minerva Programme were to promote best practice between member forces and to create an agreed approach to the use of RMS.

2.13. The Minerva Programme is governed by a Section 22A agreement (often referred to as a Section 22 or S22). This is a legal mechanism pursuant to Section 22A of the Police Act 1996 (as amended)[4] which enables chief officers of police and local policing bodies as defined in that Act to make an agreement to collaborate and to discharge their functions where it is in the interests of the efficiency or effectiveness of their own and other police force areas to do so.

2.14. The latest S22, between the 28 member forces including Dorset, came into effect in June 2024, and the Minerva Management Board is chaired by the Avon and Somerset Chief Constable, with the Avon and Somerset PCC representing the interests of PCCs and their equivalents.

National Police Chief's Council

2.15. On behalf of policing, the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) undertake a range of collaborative functions, which include the development and hosting of some national technology capabilities. This is part of a programme arising from the Home Office desire to actively reduce its own national technology hosting responsibilities and move these over to policing as a sector.

2.16. NPCC works with key partners such as the College of Policing and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners and is a membership body funded by Chief Constables and supported by a dedicated leadership team[5].

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[4] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/16/section/22A
[5] https://www.npcc.police.uk/About-Us/structure-and-membership/

SINGLE ONLINE HOME

The NPCC Digital Public Contact Programme (DPC) is responsible for the national implementation of the Single Online Home (SOH) platform – the digital contact platform (primarily a website) that enables members of the public to contact individual forces at any time and report crimes, incidents, or pass on intelligence or other information.

DPC took over the established police.uk[6] platform from the Home Office Digital Policing Portfolio as part of the drive to reduce Home Office technology hosting. A mobile version of the site was developed, which provided information about local policing teams, crime prevention advice, and offering detailed crime and outcome data at the local level.

Parts of this platform were then developed into the national SOH platform, which is now available across all 43 police forces, freeing up local time and resource, as well as reducing administration and maintenance by providing a consistent platform across all forces that allows each one to benefit from further enhancements and improvements to the platform over time.

As with other nationally developed technology capabilities, whilst individual forces did provide specific input on how systems might be developed, the final platform is the product of the input from 43 forces, and as a result is not necessarily tailored to the needs of each individual force.

Whilst the nationwide introduction on SOH was mandated, individual Chief Constables were able to determine when their force should onboard, and as a result Dorset Police and Devon and Cornwall Police opted to wait until a later tranche to benefit from the experience of others in implementing the new system.

Dorset Police fully transitioned to the SOH platform in early 2023, and the system is now routinely managing a far greater volume of public contact than was received by the previous systems. Dorset will pay an annual charge of £94,628 for SOH in 2025/26, out of a national total of just under £8m, and an annual charge of £12,492 in 2025/26 for police.uk, out of a national total of a little over £1.1m.

3. GOVERNANCE

3.1. Locally, however, the governance of Force, alliance and regional technology capabilities are much more accessible and operate in a very structured manner.

3.2. At a Dorset level, the governance of this enabling service sits with the Strategic Change Board. This is an Alliance Board, given that the ICT is an alliance function collaborated across both Dorset Police and Devon and Cornwall Police. The senior responsible officers for each Force are the Deputy Chief Constables, and Dorset OPCC is represented by the Chief Executive, whom is one of the Board's longest serving members.

3.3. Strategic Change Board is informed by a series of boards including the Technology Board, Continuous Improvement Board, Efficiency and Productivity Board and Innovation Board, the majority of which are attended by members of the OPCC senior management team. Strategic Change Board then reports into the Working Together Board, which is attended by the two Chief Constables and two PCCs from each force area.

3.4. Decisions relating to funding technology initiatives are made by the Resource Control Board, which is attended by the OPCC Chief Executive and Treasurer, and the Capital Strategy

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[6] https://www.police.uk/

Group, which is chaired by the Treasurer. For further financial assurance, due to the value of new and renewed technology contracts, the established financial delegation limits set out in the OPCC Code of Corporate Governance[7] mean that these are typically signed off by the OPCC Chief Executive.

3.5. At a regional level, governance sits with the South West Police Collaboration Strategic Board, which sets the strategic direction on all regional collaborations and is attended by all five Chief Constables and five PCCs from the south-west force areas. This Board is informed by several regional boards and meetings between regional Chief Officer counterparts.

STRATEGIC CHANGE BOARD

Formerly PRISM Board, this is a monthly meeting managed by the two Alliance Deputy Chief Constables. Once the board has made a decision, specialist business change resources are allocated to ensure the pace of delivery can meet the expectations of the business.

Business change will review what impact these decisions will have on the wider resource commitments already in place and will continue to manage demand and prioritisation through the steering group to gain a clear understanding of the critical pathway to deliver change.

Consideration is given to how environmental context may affect the portfolio moving forward, including Government announcements which often necessitate adjustments in budgets.

Assessments of both financial and operational risk are ongoing, and the portfolio has a discipline of ongoing engagement with project executives and senior leadership to keep delivery on track and escalate any concerns as they arise so considerations around strategic importance, dependencies, time/urgency, and cashable and non-cashable benefits can be kept under constant review.

At the time of writing, there are 33 separate projects managed within this board's portfolio, some of which will be detailed in section 4.

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4. CASE STUDIES

4.1. Recognising the possibility of falling into a level of detail that would complicate scrutiny, this section will be given over to outlining a small number of examples in more detail.

4.2. In the first of which, technology has been implemented and is in a steady state of delivering business and public benefit. In the second, technology has been implemented and the initial benefits are deemed to be positive but sufficient time has not yet passed for a full benefits realisation to be completed. Finally, in the third, the need for improvement has been identified and agreed, and a technology solution has been scoped and commissioned, but this has not yet been implemented.

4.3. In this way it is hoped that an overview of the full development cycle can be provided, which demonstrates the steps taken at each point to identify how the success of the investment is being / will be monitored in terms of value for money, improved performance, and impact on delivery of the Police and Crime Plan.
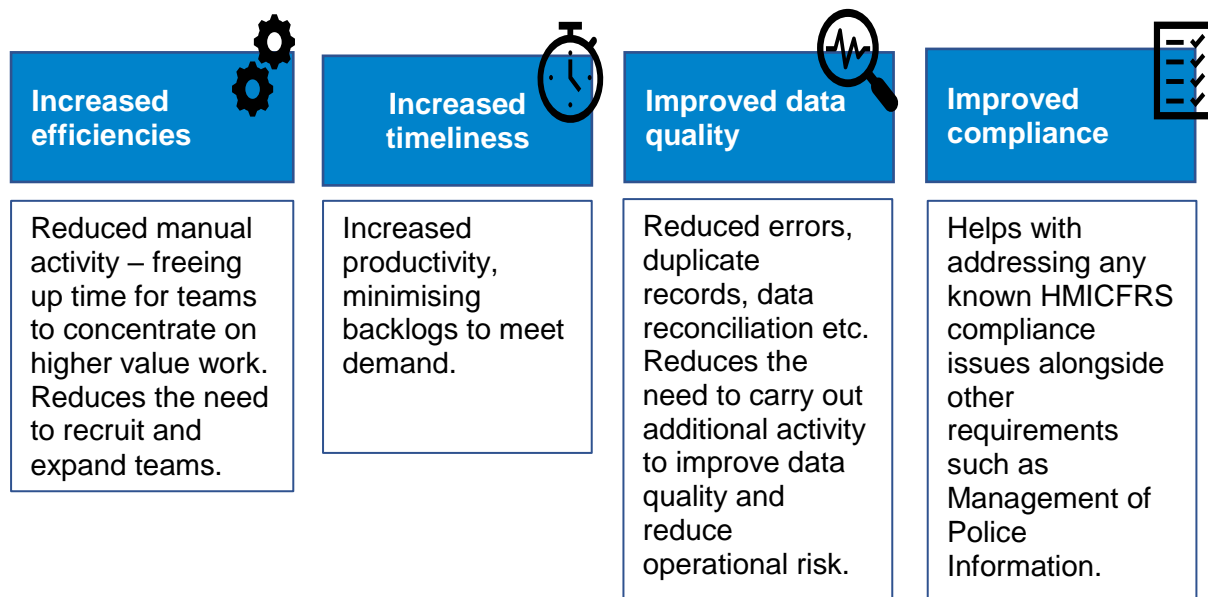
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[7]https://dorsetpccpolice.s3.amazonaws.com/Documents/Information%20Hub%20/Our%20policies%20and%20procedures/Code%20of%20Corporate%20Governance%20-%20September%202023.pdf

A. Robotic Process Automation

4.4. Almost every business process involves an element of repetitive, manual effort to which the member of staff adds little business value, and policing is no exception. Dorset Police is a large complex public sector organisation with multiple processes and work streams that rely on consistency, quality, accountability, and compliance.

4.5. At the same time, with demand for police services outstripping supply, augmenting the human workforce with digital workers has become a strategic imperative for forces to ensure they are making every penny count and maximising taxpayer value for money.

4.6. It has been evidenced from other police forces exploring opportunities on behalf of policing nationally, that the implementation of well managed and detailed strategies around Robotic Process Automation (RPA) can boost productivity, contribute to cost reduction targets and allow forces to refocus on delivering critical public services.

4.7. RPA is the automation of business processes using a 'digital workforce' which when trained, mimic the activities of existing staff. RPA reduces the amount of time staff spend on repetitive and routine activities, allowing more time to be spent on interaction with the public and jobs requiring a greater degree of complex problem solving or human judgement. This has a commensurate benefit on the welfare of staff and allows for the development of new and more value-adding skills.

4.8. RPA is not artificial intelligence. RPA frees up staff from undertaking routine and repetitive tasks by creating a streamlined and efficient process, whilst the overall decisions still sit with staff. For example, RPA can effectively eliminate the incidences of staff double keying the same information into different systems to check whether a particular individual or address has a record, or automatically produce and issue letters or other correspondence using standard templates without any intervention.

4.9. In 2020, the then Alliance Firearms and Explosives Licensing Unit was identified as a suitable testbed to determine the potential viability of exploiting RPA within the Alliance. Many of the tasks undertaken by the team involved querying multiple systems, aggregating, and checking routine information, and sending repetitive requests for information. A six-month proof-of-concept was undertaken which highlighted considerable likely benefit of automation and highlighted that should these opportunities also be implemented right across the Force; a significant cumulative benefit could be realised.

4.10. As a result of the proof-of-concept, in 2021, it was agreed to move into Phase 2 with the intention to iteratively scale over a five-year period, creating an internal centre of excellence for RPA delivery. This involved identifying a supplier with which the Alliance could work over a six-month period to rapidly scope 12 'quick win' automations which addressed challenges within critical areas of business delivery. The supplier would also help the Alliance determine its strategic approach to RPA, with the end goal of being completely self-sufficient and able to undertake our own automations as part of the five-year plan.

4.11. Phase 3 of this plan, for delivery during 2022/23, therefore involved the supplier mentoring and training Alliance staff on RPA processes and methodology, with a view of the internal team starting to play more significant roles in the delivery of automations during Phase 4, which was the formal handover from the supplier to the Alliance centre of excellence. This was duly achieved during 2023/24.

4.12. By 2024/25, Phase 5 was well underway, which reflects a business-as-usual state with the internal Alliance team working with the business to identify and scope opportunities for automation, and to begin to realise the expected benefits of RPA.

4.13. From a governance perspective, this work has been led through the Strategic Change Board, and at the outset of this work the expected costs and benefits were considered in detail through this board, including by the OPCC Chief Executive. These costs were then passed to the Resource Control Board, where they were signed off by the OPCC Chief Executive and Treasurer. The headline benefits of the RPA programme are as follows:

Increased efficiencies	Increased timeliness	Improved data quality	Improved compliance
Reduced manual activity – freeing up time for teams to concentrate on higher value work. Reduces the need to recruit and expand teams.	Increased productivity, minimising backlogs to meet demand.	Reduced errors, duplicate records, data reconciliation etc. Reduces the need to carry out additional activity to improve data quality and reduce operational risk.	Helps with addressing any known HMICFRS compliance issues alongside other requirements such as Management of Police Information.

4.14. A benefits logic map was completed which detailed specific benefits around these four pillars, although it was recognised that the contribution each automation has on the strategic outcomes will vary, dependent upon the process being automated.

4.15. Aside from the strategic benefits, several opportunities for efficiency savings to be realised, were also identified, including:

- Redeploying staff onto other high value adding work or into other areas;
- Cost avoidance through reduction in bids to increase establishment;
- Budgetary savings through natural wastage: non-replacement of leavers; and
- Budgetary savings where resources cannot easily be redeployed or are no longer required this could lead to cashable savings.
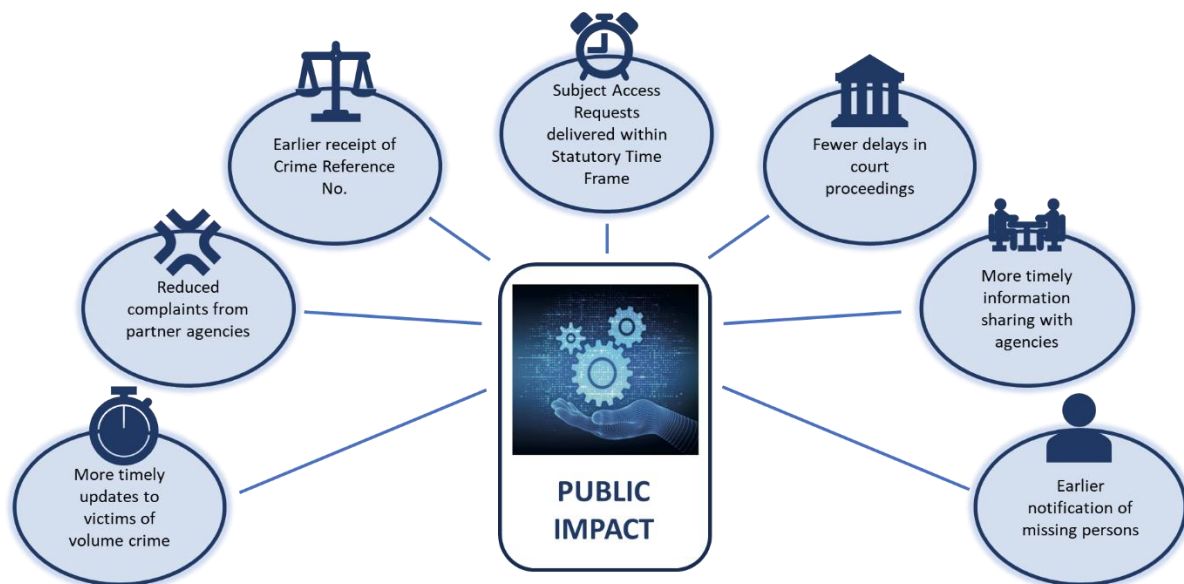
4.16. These benefits were successfully realised through Phases 2 and 3, and by November 2023, 20 separate automations were live across the Alliance, with circa £113k of economic benefits having been realised, the bulk of which related to police officer time being saved. At the same time, around £89k of non-cashable efficiency savings were made, and around £120k worth of costs were avoided by improved and more timely processes.

Benefits Categorisation

- Economic benefits are benefits resulting in financial improvements, releasing cash, increased income, or the better use of funds (for example operating cost reductions).
- Efficiency benefits are benefits which allow the organisation to do more for the same or the same with less (for example processing more information but with the same number of people).
- Effectiveness benefits are benefits which result in the organisation doing things better or to a higher standard (for example increased public satisfaction).
- Cost avoidance benefits are costs not currently incurred but anticipated in the future (for example negating the need for future recruitment to backfill gaps in delivery).

4.17. Aligned to the benefits headlines illustrated in paragraph 4.13, at this point benefits were seen across all pillars – with 17% of benefits realising efficiencies, 26% improving timeliness, 15% improving data quality, and 22% improving compliance. A further 18% of benefits related to a reduction in risk, and the final 2% related to cost avoidance.

4.18. Some of these initial automations included:

- Production and issue of letters to victims of crime, in accordance with the Victims Code of Practice. This automation freed up a Victims Bureau Officer and part of a Sergeant role to undertake more value-added tasks. (Went live in December 2022)

- Recording of a variety of markers and warnings on crime and incident databases, once specialist investigations or tasking had completed, e.g. domestic abuse public protection notice markers. This automation saw time efficiencies for the Safeguarding Referral Officers roles being realised, immediately reducing the backlog and enabling a more timely and improved service to be delivered. (Went live in March 2023)

- Recording and closedown of crimes and incidents determined as having no opportunity for further action to be taken. This automation contributed to less police officer overtime within local policing areas but did not correlate to a direct budget reduction as the goal was an improvement in efficiency. (Went live in March 2023)

- Recording of and supply of investigative material as part of court disclosures. This automation resulted in significant time efficiency for the Discloser Officer roles, freeing up staff to make decisions and quality assure material being disclosed, further enhancing compliance rates. (Went live in July 2023)

- Recording of annual leave approvals from local systems to the central HR system. This automation saved significant administrative time for HR Operations staff, allowing some cost savings to be taken as staff could be freed up to undertake roles elsewhere. (Went live in November 2023)

4.19. Throughout Phase 4 and into Phase 5, the Alliance became more sophisticated at mapping and assessing benefits, and several emergent opportunities arose:

- Data quality issues were highlighted that were not known prior to automation,
- Automation was increasingly being used to smooth the variability of demand, with more robots being activated during peak summer demand, for example,
- Those areas that had not yet benefitted from automation due to a lack of supervisor capacity to help automation development were focused on to ensure opportunity was equally spread through the Force,
- The RPA Project Board created a new prioritisation process and framework to ensure the equality of opportunity, and
- The impact of automation on staff was better understood, and due to the overwhelming positive feedback, further opportunities were identified all the time.

4.20. Importantly, whilst the initial benefits pillars as shown in paragraph 4.13 were largely internally focused, improved processes and understanding allowed the benefit to the public to be better tracked. These include:

Public Impact diagram showing: Earlier receipt of Crime Reference No.; Subject Access Requests delivered within Statutory Time Frame; Fewer delays in court proceedings; Reduced complaints from partner agencies; More timely information sharing with agencies; More timely updates to victims of volume crime; Earlier notification of missing persons.

4.21. Overall, by July 2024, RPA was forecast to have reached a breakeven point in terms of investment – with the then 24 automations in place having been implemented at a total cost of £2.3m and being forecast to deliver £2.4m of cashable and non-cashable savings by 2026/27. This savings figure was quite conservative given that they assume that no further automations would go live (which was not the case), and that the existing automations would not continue to scale up and deliver ever increasing savings (which was also not the case). It should also be noted that the automation cost represents a one-off cost, whereas the automation savings are accrued annually.

4.22. Overall, RPA should be regarded as a successful implementation of a challenging and complex technology capability. Dorset Police has, over the past 5 years taken a proof-of-concept idea and carefully and incrementally built its own internal capability and resources to undertake work that both saves money, improves efficiency, supports staff removing repetitive tasks, and improves public outcomes, timeliness, and service.

4.23. RPA is now business as usual, and established processes and workflows exist to help individual teams identify what areas of their business might be automated and to engage with the automation team to support the realisation of that vision. Currently, OPCC is engaging with the automation team to explore opportunities to improve its public contact workflow.

B. Operation Edison

4.24. Technology has, in this paper, been described as an enabling service. It is important to recognise its place in policing as a means to an end and not an end in itself. To illustrate this, the second case study is an approach that describes the process by which Dorset Police hopes to simultaneously streamline its processes, optimise its operating (staffing) model, identify opportunities to remove internal inefficiencies through technology and innovation – Op Edison – all with the goal of freeing up resources to better manage its emergency and non-emergency call handling and dispatch.

4.25. Starting at the beginning, in August 2022, the PCC raised a formal PCC Challenge with the then Chief Constable recognising that the long-term performance data suggested a declining position in the servicing of calls for immediate service and requesting that a deeper explanation and, if necessary, reparative plan was provided.

4.26. Following on from this Challenge the Force launched a programme to complete this comprehensive review of Force resources, systems, infrastructure, and contact channels.

This led to the creation of new processes and new performance targets, but also recognised some real challenges in the way that these data were aggregated across forces and demonstrated that the data across forces was not accurately comparable, a conclusion also supported by OPCC.

4.27. These initial improvements did not focus on technology as a starting point, as it was recognised that processes should be addressed first to maximise the benefit of improved workflows before additional investment was scoped.

4.28. By way of example, a key improvement was the recognition that when dealing with an emergency call, the call handler was required to fully complete the call log before transferring to a radio dispatcher for an officer to be tasked. A process improvement was made that allowed call handlers to request an emergency dispatch whilst the call log was still being completed. This improvement went live and immediately realised improvements in dispatch time, which were further improved when a small technology improvement of an auto call transfer function was made.

4.29. Subsequent work uncovered a legacy practice whereby calls that were initially recorded as 'Grade 2' incidents (and so requiring an attendance within 60 minutes) but were then upgraded to a 'Grade 1' incident as the result of subsequently received information (and so requiring an attendance within 20 minutes) did not have the response time reset. This meant that emergency response times were impacted by incidents which were initially recorded as a standard response. A small tweak to systems meant that these incidents that changed gradings were immediately identified and could be attended in line with the new grading.

4.30. With these, and other people, process, and policy improvements made to achieve the desired impacts, more significant investment opportunities were considered that would further enhance call handling and response times and improve overall services to the public. Some of the more recent technology work under Op Edison includes:

4.31. **GoodSAM** is a bespoke platform for emergency services to communicate with members of the public in a safe and secure way that meets policing and courts evidential standards. Initially trialled within the control room, as of June 2024, GoodSAM was available to all officers and staff within investigative roles.

4.32. This platform allows officers and investigators to engage in a video call with members of the public, but due to the secure nature of the platform, to also take victim or witness statements without requiring either party to travel, to receive digital files, photos, or videos, or even for the member of the public to share their phone's video and audio feed with the individual officer for evidential purposes.

4.33. **Investigation and Intelligence Assessment Centre** (IIAC) is a new operating model that went live in July 2024, following significant planning and implementation, that enhances how Dorset Police supports victims of crime. On annual basis the Force sees over 175,000 incidents and 50,000 crimes reported which are all carefully logged on crime and incident recording systems. These logs are often handled by multiple people over multiple months, often only for no lines of enquiry to be identified and for the case to be closed.

4.34. However, feedback from victims was that if a crime is not likely to see a positive outcome, they would prefer to know this upfront to manage their expectations and for the case to be closed earlier, rather than for investigators to attempt to explore opportunities that are not there in an attempt to do right by them. (See paragraph 4.39 for further detail).

4.35. IIAC is a new team created within the contact management team to finalise those crimes at the first point of contact that have not been identified for any one of the various tasking, investigative, safeguarding, or other actions that are available, which would both improve

victim engagement, and free up investigator time to focus on those cases where there are valid lines of enquiry.

4.36. Of course, should additional information be subsequently received, then cases can be followed-up on, and the IIAC team will also add any intelligence and investigative information to systems that will help other cases, supported by a range of new triaging and live time intelligence tools that have been developed to support this new function.

4.37. **Enhanced Video Response** (EVR) is an alternative to the traditional physical attendance of officers and investigators to victims and witness locations, that has been shown to reduce victim wait times, increase support for the criminal justice process, enhance victim satisfaction, and achieve cost efficiencies.

4.38. When a call for service is made to Dorset Police and the matter is assessed as a 'Grade 3' deployment (and so requiring an engagement within 48 hours), the call handler will ask the caller a series of questions to establish if the matter is eligible to dealt with by EVR. If the matter is suitable, the case is passed to the EVR team, who will then contact the caller via GoodSAM to obtain full details and conduct any primary investigation and safeguarding action that is appropriate.

4.39. EVR was launched in Dorset off the back of an extensive and successful trial. The trial data showed that, using EVR:

- Victim satisfaction increased from 31% to 74%
- Positive outcomes improved from 1.5% versus 4.9%
- Arrests and voluntary attendance increased from 6.3% to 10.6%
- Use of Outcome 16 (where there is a named offender, but the victim does not wish to engage) fell from 36% to 21%.

4.40. At the same time, with EVR, the average response times for Grade 3 incidents reduced significantly, from 21 days to 2 days. Furthermore, this increase in performance on Grade 3 incidents has also not been to the detriment of Grade 1 and Grade 2 deployment times, where faster responses from patrol officers are still being seen, as they are more able to focus on those high harm and immediate risk incidents.

4.41. **Pronto** is, in simple terms, an app that is installed on Force mobile devices to allow officers and staff to access existing systems such as Niche and the PNC, as well as complete and issue digital forms such as stop and search and vehicle tickets without relying on paper-based forms or having to take notes and return to a fixed base to complete the necessary information on desktop systems.

4.42. Whilst Pronto has been in use in Dorset since 2021, and indeed a Pronto biometric fingerprint reader has been available in every operational police vehicle since late 2021, it is under Op Edison where additional enhancements have been made, allowing officers to more fully operate in the field. For example, in the last year, tasking and deployment integration has been improved in Pronto meaning that officers log onto the app at the start of their shift and can see the tasks that have been assigned to them, complete with links to relevant incident logs (rather than having to manually enter these). Officers will also be able to see which resources have been allocated to which tasks to allow for fluid decisions to be made should situations change.

4.43. Officers are also able to take photos using their mobile device which are now directly timestamped and added into the relevant incident log, without having to manually complete this task. Similarly, victim and witness statements can now be sent to members of the public via Pronto for them to sign.

4.44. The use of Pronto is tracked, and feedback is constantly taken to ensure that the new enhancements are working as expected. For example, in late August the updated version of Pronto went live which contained almost 30 functionality tweaks and improvements that addressed issues that had been identified by officers and staff.

4.45. There was over a quarter of a million Pronto usages in October 2024, an increase of 13% on the previous month, and increase of over 500% since October 2023. Importantly, these are not just tasking, and crime and incident checks, but also reflect a significant increase in the proportion of proactive policing activity being undertaken using mobile devices – including a 15% increase in the completion of public protection notices, a 29% increase in the completion of witness statements, and a 52% increase in the completion of stop and search forms using Pronto in recent months.

4.46. Overall, Op Edison sets out how Dorset Police has been successfully working to optimise its processes and workflows and to identify how the delivery of these might be enhanced through technology. Presently, this focus on exploring opportunities for improvement within call handling and dispatch continues, and all things being equal (specifically including resources), it is expected that call handling and attendance performance will continue to improve.

C. Digital Evidence Management System

4.47. The final case study considers how Dorset Police is using technology to manage a problem that many of us experience within our own lives – the management, control and systemisation of data and information that can impact us from multiple sources, in different formats, and of different quality, relevance and priority.

4.48. A key function of policing is the management of data and information to an evidential standard. That data can exist as text, image, audio, or video and all of these various types of information must be securely held and linked to the relevant crime, incident, intelligence, person, location, and more record whilst being easily viewable across multiple systems (including on mobile devices). Historic data must be managed alongside emerging and incomplete data, and all of this information must be readily editable for sharing with the public, partners and the courts as needed. The data must also adhere to the various relevant standards, including the Management of Police Information, and allow for the appropriate deletion and retention of records as needed.

4.49. The investment in a Digital Evidence Management System (DEMS) is in the current financial context, however, a difficult choice given the significant savings that Dorset Police needs to achieve both within year, and over the next medium-term financial period.

4.50. It should come as no surprise to hear then, that the consideration of a purchase of a DEMS has been ongoing for some time, and whilst the Strategic Change Board has been considering options, timescales, and relative prioritisation of its programme of work, the South West Police Procurement Service (SWPPS) which operates on behalf of the five regional forces, was commissioned to undertake due-diligence around the selection of a supplier for a new DEMS.

4.51. Police procurement for the purchase of cloud-based computing services is managed through the Crown Commercial Service platform, G-Cloud, and the due diligence process began with using this catalogue to identify which approved suppliers could deliver a DEMS to the local specification required. In due course, including through an examination of the cost information provided by the suppliers, a preferred supplier was identified (which currently provides similar services to 19 other forces in England and Wales).

4.52. An in-person due-diligence session was then hosted between the supplier, SWPPS and technical representatives from each of the five regional forces. Leads from Dorset Police and

Devon & Cornwall Police had the opportunity to consider the technical requirements and opportunities for data sharing both across the forces, and the wider region.

4.53. Around March of this year, with the business need and the business benefits having been very clearly set out and communicated, a series of briefing sessions were convened for senior decision makers including the Assistant Chief Constable, the Force Director of Finance, and the Chief Executive. These sessions whilst covering the scope and operation of the proposed DEMS, largely and correctly focused on affordability.

4.54. It is important to note that, at this point, whilst a preferred supplier had been identified, the decision to procure, or not, was still subject to the completion and agreement of a detailed business case – there was absolutely no obligation.

4.55. Confidence in expected costs is perhaps the most important factor at this point as whilst suppliers might suggest what the costs should be the reality can sometimes be different. The benefit then of working with a supplier that had previously worked with many other forces meant that it was possible to achieve a comparatively high confidence in the expected costs, based on the experiences of other forces.

4.56. However supplier costs are only one small part of the picture, and internal implementation costs, including the cost of achieving interoperability with existing force systems, of loading existing and historic records into the new DEMS, of freeing up resource to support the implementation and training these individuals in the operation of the new systems, plus a range of third party costs to other suppliers for integration and technical advice were all assessed over a five year period – to establish the expected total cost of implementation.

4.57. At this point, the Force Director of Finance and the OPCC Treasurer worked to identify a combination of revenue and capital spend that could be proposed to meet the cost of this implementation over the next five years, in line with the current provision of the medium-term financial statement (MTFS). This, unsurprisingly, showed a shortfall in the MTFS provision across each of the five years.

4.58. At that stage, options were explored for a more streamlined implementation, as well as an incremental, or phased, implementation that allowed for the DEMS to be installed 'block-by-block' over time. The Chief Executive, whilst mindful of the incremental approach, was also cautious about guarding against being left with an incomplete system which would not ultimately derive the strategic business benefits that were deemed necessary for this implementation (better management of data, more efficient capture of CCTV and other public and third party evidence, enhanced evidential integrity, improved casefile building, and a better two-flow of information and file sharing with CPS). This position was agreed by the other senior leaders and led to a more streamlined implementation approach being proposed.

4.59. Whilst Members will want to understand the financial detail of this procurement, it cannot be shared at this point in the procurement cycle.

4.60. Following this intervention, the Strategic Change Board received updated and more affordable costs for the implementation of DEMS and agreed that both Dorset Police and Devon and Cornwall Police progress the implementation of a new DEMS, with the expected go live date of December 2025.

4.61. The estimated forecast benefits from the implementation of a DEMS (for Dorset) are a reduction of around 3,000 person hours in CCTV processing per annum, around 2,300 person hours in casefile compilation per annum, and around 300 person hours in casefile review per annum. These identified benefits savings are viewed by operational representatives as a cautious estimate and very much at the lower end of the potential savings available.

4.62. The introduction of a DEMS will also give the opportunity to remove several existing systems, either partially or completely. The benefits realisation for DEMS will be assessed across the following pillars, each of which articulates how the benefits will be measured:

- Improved access to digital evidence,
- Reduced time spent collecting, accessing, and processing digital media,
- Improved security for storage for digital media,
- Reduced time from victim report to outcome,
- Improved evidential integrity, and
- Reduced costs.

One disbenefit has been identified, as police officers and PCSOs are currently sent to collect CCTV and other digital evidence meaning that they are more visible in local communities and businesses. DEMS will remove the need for the physical collection of such digital evidence, meaning that policing will be less visible. This will be mitigated though recognising that officers and staff will be freed up from this collection task and better able to attend other jobs.

4.63. Overall, this final example sets out the process through which a technology implementation is agreed upon, and the opportunities for OPCC support in achieving better public outcomes and more efficient use of public money. Members will continue to receive updates on the implementation of this exciting and important technology capability, particularly on the realisation of public benefits.

5. HORIZON SCANNING: FUTURES

5.1. The opening to this paper set out that the history of policing has been one of constant scientific and technological evolution driven by a relentless desire to stay one step ahead of criminals and protect the public. And just as that was true in the past, so it will be true in the future. New crimes and new ways of offending will necessitate new policing and investigative methods. Increasing public use of technology will increase technology-enabled crime and require a technology-enabled policing response.

5.2. From facial recognition, which can help spot suspects and missing people, to predictive analytics that can identify patterns invisible to humans and suggest where and when crimes are likely to occur, artificial intelligence provides huge opportunities for policing. However, without sufficient transparency and oversight, particularly to guard against bias, there is a risk of injustice and a reduction in public trust and confidence.

Facial Recognition

5.3. Retrospective Facial Recognition is now business as usual for policing, given that the Police National Database also includes a facial search facility. In the 12 months to June 2024, Dorset Police accessed the database 2,030 times, which is broadly in line with the rate of usage in other forces.

5.4. Live Facial Recognition (LFR) enables police to identify wanted people. LFR essentially does what police officers do currently, but far more quickly, and with greater accuracy. All LFR deployments must be targeted, intelligence-led, time-bound, and geographically limited, and before a deployment, police must inform the public where they intend to use the technology and where they can obtain more information on its use. If the system does not make a match, the biometric data gathered by the system is deleted immediately and automatically.

5.5. Presently, LFR is being trialled by a small number of forces on behalf of policing (South Wales Police, Metropolitan Police Service, Essex Police, and Northamptonshire Police). Potential options for the exploration of LFR use, and the associated community impact and concern

will be considered by the regional Chief Constables, PCCs and Chief Executives at an upcoming South West Police Collaboration Strategic Board.

Artificial Intelligence

5.6. Whilst policing is developing its own capabilities around LFR, for example, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has increasingly become an indispensable part of everyday life with consumer examples available across a wide variety of platforms that policing might be able to exploit over time. As a result, therefore, policing is not necessarily leading the development of AI, and tends to rely on the innovation of others.

5.7. By way of example, over the summer, Dorset Police participated in an 'Innovation Sandpit' event at Bournemouth University, along with reps from other regional forces. At the event several policing challenges were discussed, and academics talked through their research and considered whether AI could hold the key to solving some of them. As a result of this, a partnership between Bournemouth University and Dorset Police is being considered to develop, trial, test and assess new AI initiatives to try and solve some of the more pressing policing issues.

5.8. Whilst this initiative is not finalised, it does demonstrate the kind of approach being taken to the development of AI initiatives. This approach is currently being considered through the Innovation Board, of which the Chief Executive is the co-chair.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1. As has been stated throughout, technology is a means to an end, and hopefully this paper has illustrated how its use and implementation is carefully considered as part of whole system improvement plans that account for all facets of policing operations.

6.2. At a strategic level, Dorset Police and the Dorset OPCC are well placed from an alliance, regional and national perspective to take advantage of technology developments as they arise, rather than seeking to play a leading part in actively developing technology ourselves.

6.3. This continues to be a well governed endeavour, with OPCC represented at the strategic decision-making level and taking an active role in shaping the use and implementation of technology within Dorset Police, in line with the Police and Crime plan priorities.

7. RECOMMENDATION

7.1. Members are recommended to note the paper.

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