



Police and Crime Panel

Date: Thursday, 24 July 2025
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Royal Hampshire Committee Room, BCP Civic Centre, Bournemouth, BH2 6DY

Members (Quorum: 3)

Alasdair Keddie (Chair), Elizabeth Mytton, Ben Sargeaunt, Louise Bown, David Flagg, Simon Gibson, Louie O'Leary, Karen Rampton, Peter Sidaway, Tony Trent, Sarah Williams and Carl Woode

Interim Chief Executive: Sam Crowe, 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. If you would like to attend this meeting and have any specific requirements, please contact the Democratic Services Officer named above.

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Agenda

Item		Pages
1.	APOLOGIES To receive any apologies for absence.	
2.	MINUTES To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 5 th February 2025.	5 - 12
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 Tuesday 22nd July 2025**.

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 **Tuesday 22nd July 2025**.

[Dorset Council Constitution](#) – Procedure Rule 13

5. ELECTION FOR CHAIR/VICE CHAIR

To elect a Chair and Vice Chair of the Police and Crime Panel Committee.

6. Q4 MONITORING REPORT 13 - 24

To receive the Q4 Monitoring Report 2024/25.

7. PCC ANNUAL REPORT 25 - 42

To update members on the Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report 2024/25.

8. COMMUNITY SAFETY 43 - 54

To receive a report regarding enhancing community safety.

9. STAFF HEALTH AND WELLBEING 55 - 72

To receive a report by the Director of Operations.

10. COMPLAINTS UPDATE

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

11. FORWARD WORKPLAN

To discuss the Forward Workplan.

12. 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.

13. 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.



POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2025

Present: Cllrs Alasdair Keddie (Chair), Mytton, Peter Sidaway, Tony Trent, Simon Gibson, Andrew Starr and Carl Woode

Apologies: Cllrs Patrick Canavan, David Flagg, Louise Bown and Louie O'Leary

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

Simon Bullock (Chief Executive, OPCC), George Dare (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Marc Eyre (Service Manager for Assurance), Adam Harrold (OPCC Director of Operations), Jonathan Mair (Director of Legal and Democratic and Monitoring Officer), Megan Rochester (Senior Democratic Services Officer), David Sidwick (Police and Crime Commissioner) and Julie Strange (OPCC Chief Finance Officer).

36. Endorsement of new Co-opted member

Proposed by Cllr Peter Sidaway, seconded by Cllr Tony Trent.

Decision: that Ben Sargeaunt was appointed as Co-Opted member of the PCP.

37. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 11th December 2024 were confirmed and signed.

38. Declarations of Interest

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

39. Public Participation

Questions had been received from Ms Judy Sands and Councillors Julie Robinson and Sara Armstrong.

The members of the public and councillors were thanked for their questions. The PCC highlighted the responsibility of addressing antisocial behaviour, which rested with both the Police and Local Authority. Noting that incidents had decreased by 32% overall, with a further reduction of 9% reported this year. Dorset Police had been proactive in managing hundreds of public contacts and the PCC expressed

gratitude for the information provided by community members. However, it was essential to acknowledge that operational and financial constraints limited the extent of immediate action. Ongoing investigations may be taking place, and the implementation of enhanced video response capabilities across Dorset signified their commitment to this issue. To support residents, contact and engagement leaflets were available, aimed at fostering better communication with the local policing team and residents. Community members were encouraged to engage directly with the Police and Crime Commissioner and to utilize the available leaflets, which were designed to reassure them regarding the proactive measures being taken in their area.

The Police and Crime Commissioner responded to Cllr Armstrongs questions. He emphasized that the provision of housing must not be viewed as a policing matter, and assurance was sought from the Local Authority regarding this issue. It was suggested that correspondence be initiated with Local Authority representatives to address these concerns. The operational status of Maple is to remain intact, with ongoing efforts to recommission services, ultimately leading to the establishment of a new independent service aimed at providing enhanced support for victims, including the option for self-referral. The PCC anticipated sharing further updates with the panel as developments occur. It was noted that public services were currently facing significant funding challenges, yet progress is being made, with some initiatives from Bobby Van being integrated into the response framework.

Furthermore, there was a commitment to improving outcomes in technology-enabled crimes, with domestic abuse advisers receiving specialized training that encompasses coercive control. Annual vulnerability training ensures that external sources were utilized effectively to bolster the capacity of trained first points of contact. Statistics concerning stalking incidents from April to December 2024 indicate a 7.9% positive outcome rate, highlighting an area for continued development and improvement. Training programs specifically addressed the implications of stalking, harassment, and technology offences, recognizing the long-lasting impact these crimes have on victims. The PCC remained dedicated to the practice of target hardening as a preventative measure.

The Police and Crime Commissioner responded to the member of the public's question regarding their concern about making every penny count and set out why personal security work had been completed at the PCC's private property.

No further questions or petitions had been received.

40. Budget Precept Financial Year 2025/26

The Chairman advised that the Panel should consider the PCC's proposed budget requirement and independently scrutinize its appropriateness. The options open to the Panel were to either support, not to support or veto the proposal.

The Police and Crime Commissioner introduced the report and framed the strategic need.

The Chief Constable provided a comprehensive oversight from the point of view of operations (00:40:35 on the recording). Commendable efforts had been noted across various departments, with positive feedback reflecting the commitment to delivering fair policing services to the community in Dorset. Nevertheless, the Chief Constable acknowledged the ongoing financial challenges, highlighting the necessity of judicious budgeting and the significant pressure faced by the policing team due to substantial budget cuts. With a focus on maximizing resources, the team was exploring innovative solutions, such as renegotiating contracts and leveraging technology, while also regrettably reducing the number of policing posts by 72 and anticipating a further reduction of 110 posts if unsuccessful with the proposed budget. It was clear that decisions regarding service delivery were being approached with care, fully recognizing their impact on public safety. Despite these challenges, the Chief Constable proudly noted several key improvements and a decline in crime rates throughout Dorset, reinforcing the commitment to effective policing.

The Chief Finance Officer then set out additional information which had been received since the report was published. The Final Settlement had been received and confirmed the numbers contained within the report, except for the Neighbourhood Policing Grant. This had been doubled; however, expenditure was also assumed to increase by the same amount. (01:06:16 on the recording). Further to the report previously circulated, it had been confirmed that there were no required changes, with the exception of the neighbourhood policing grant, which had increased, however, expenditure would have still risen. The main table affected in the report is shown at section 3.11. Appendix 1 to the report is also changed and the updated versions of both are appended to these minutes. In conclusion, the Chief Finance Officer had assured the committee that the level of reserves was adequate and that the budget proposals for 2025/26 were robust.

The Director of Operations shared the results from the public consultation that had been run between December 2024 and January 2025 (01:11:11 on recording).

The Police and Crime Commissioner reminded the Panel that Dorset Police was the second lowest recipient of the national funding formula, and that over half of the Force was paid for by the people of Dorset, whereas in other parts of the country it was 20%.

Questions from the Priority Leads - 01:21:35 recording (attached at appendix 3).

- Assurance that there was a proportionate increase in service delivery performance.
- Welfare of front-line officers and civilian staff.

Panel members were given the opportunity to ask questions. The PCC responded in detail to questions in relation to:

- How the commissioner held the police accountable.
- Timeframes to meet objectives whilst dealing with financial constraints
- Principle of public consultation and survey responses
- Pay ward and contingency.
- Quantifying financial risk
- Level of support from Dorset MP's.
- Queried referendum opportunities as a separate survey to the precept

- Wording of questionnaire
- How many respondents were willing to pay above what had been requested by Dorset Police.
- Service degradation

Decision: that the Police and Crime Panel support the PCC's proposal to increase the precept for 2025/26 to £96,077,904, equivalent to a Band D charge, an increase of £14 per annum or £1.16 per month.

Decision: In accordance with procedural rule 8.1 a vote was taken, the committee agreed to exceed the 3-hour meeting time limit.

10-minute comfort break 13:00 – 13:10.

41. **Q3 Monitoring Report**

The PCC gave an update on progress against the police and crime plan.

Priority one - Cut Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour – 03:04:45 on the recording

Total crime had reduced in Dorset. Year to date ASB was down by 2% and funding had been approved for Christchurch Harbour Watch. There had been an increase in business crime. The PCC talked about road safety campaigns, highlighting work towards reducing speed in local areas. He also discussed ongoing projects to support vulnerable residents.

Questions from the Priority Leads and Panel members (03:09:35 on the recording).

- Methods used to support those reluctant to report crime.
- Measurement of success of the pilot programme.
- Appropriate steps taken to speeding letters from community speed watch.
- Engagement with residents, particularly young people.
- Communication between those reporting crime and the police to be updated on the progress or the appropriate steps taken.

Priority two - Make Policing More Visible and Connected – 03:24:46 on the recording.

The latest statistics indicated an improvement in the number of police calls received, with response times for call handling reaching an impressive 92%. However, there remained room for enhancement, particularly with the average answer time. It is noteworthy that 73% of calls were answered within 77 seconds, with ongoing efforts to reduce the remaining 27%. Improvements are actively being pursued within the control centre, where a neighbourhood engagement board has been established to assess commitments and prioritize actions. These initiatives had led to significant positive changes across Dorset, notably through the introduction of community contact points and a mobile police office, which has

further bolstered community engagement and accessibility. The next steps included continued monitoring of response times and community initiatives.

Questions from the Priority Leads and Panel members (03:30:33 on the recording)

- Online availability of Neighbourhood Engagement Commitments.
- How the input was gathered from communities and residents.

Priority three - Fight Violent Crime and High Harm – 03:33:26 on the recording.

Serious violence was down, and victim support had increased to 10 years. The different types of domestic abuse were highlighted and the Police and Crime Commissioner highlighted that all needed to be looked at, exposed and dealt with. The PCC informed members that there was an approved continuation of funding for prison leavers, addressing issues of perpetrators to change their behaviours and to prevent reoffending. Operation Scorpion continued and different programmes for drug education were introduced to look at different approaches and communication. The PCC discussed Operation Encompass which had been introduced to primary schools as well as secondary. Knife crime numbers were low but the number of teenagers carrying was concerning. Stalking was now a concern, particularly online and the PCC was looking at ways to reduce the risk.

Questions from the Priority Leads and Panel members (03:40:34 on the recording).

- Encouraging to see the responses to domestic violence.
- Queried whether the drug educational programmes were pitched at both primary and secondary schools.
- Noted that there was a decrease in knife crime and an increase in carrying and whether it was more common localities and requested further detail of what work was being done with schools to raise awareness.

Priority four - Fight Rural Crime – 03:50:52 on the recording.

The PCC was pleased to report that Operation Honeybun had been successful and had taken into account 50 incidents. Heritage crime was on the rise, and this was a concern as there was a lot of heritage in Dorset. He also addressed night hawking and organised crime and informed members that more news was to follow going forward. The PCC was pleased to report that rural mounted volunteers had continued to be recruited.

Questions from the Priority Leads and Panel members (03:54:57 on the recording).

- Operation Honeybun was currently only targeted at rural areas, was there scope for expansion to more urban areas.
- Disappointed to see the level of wildlife crime

Priority five - Put Victim and Communities First – 03:57:05 on the recording.

The Police and Crime Commissioner highlighted the work being undertaken as part of priority five of the plan, providing detail to restorative justice which had been useful for victims and perpetrators, highlighting that it was victim driven and used catered support for them. The PCC informed members that funding had been approved for vital programmes for children, diverting them from antisocial behaviour. Members were informed of the nationwide charity, Hourglass, which was aimed at supporting older people from abuse and neglect. Continued efforts with community networks were taking place to improve support for victims in Dorset.

Panel members were given the opportunity to ask questions. The PCC responded in detail to questions in relation to the figures of hate crime which were significant.

Priority six - Make Every Penny Count – 04:02:40 on the recording

The Police and Crime Commissioner highlighted that 'right care, right person' had continued to develop and was on track. Members were informed of collaboration with Southwest police and the PCC highlighted the importance of collaboration and building relationships.

Panel members were given the opportunity to ask questions. The PCC responded in detail to questions in relation to the number of forces who members of the Southwest collaboration and the funding framework were.

42. Complaints Update

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

43. Forward Workplan

Cllr Keddle noted that priority leads were originally scheduled to be allocated after the meeting, however, due to a low turn out and the success of the pre-meeting which was held a week prior to the meeting, it was agreed that priority leads and the forward workplan development would be discussed and allocated at a team meeting, scheduled within the next four weeks. Cllr Keddle noted the importance of this for the OPCC to be aware and to ensure that they deliver lines of enquiry.

44. Urgent items

There were no urgent items.

45. Exempt Business

There was no exempt business.

Appendix 1
Appendix 2
Appendix 3

Duration of meeting: 10.05 am - 2.19 pm

Chairman

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Cut Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour

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

- Round five of the Op Relentless Community Fund launched
- OPCC commissioned Home Safety Leaflets for people moving home

Make Policing More Visible & Connected

Uplift and Visibility	Connectivity and Engagement	Customer Service

- Residents responded to the Annual Precept survey
- The PCC welcomed partnership work to prepare for a 'good safe summer' in Dorset

Fight Violent Crime and High Harm

Addiction	Violence Reduction	VAWG	DA & Stalking	Child Abuse	RASSO

- The OPCC and Dorset Police promoted Sexual Violence awareness week
- Stalking and Harassment was the focus for the latest VAWG improvement panel

Make Every Penny Count

Funding	Efficiency	Evidence Based Policing	Philosophy & Co-operation

- Confirmation received that government will continue to support the Hotspot Policing Fund
- The process for Priority Based Budgeting was agreed across the Alliance

Put Victims & Communities First

Philosophy	CJS & RJ	Vulnerability	Hate Crime	Young People

- Evaluation of bids undertaken for the Dorset Restorative Justice Contract
- The final phase of Right Care Right Person rolled out in Dorset

Fight Rural Crime

Rural Resources	Country Watch	Fly-tipping	Wildlife Crime	Heritage Crime

- Short films produced in collaboration to promote Heritage Watch in Dorset
- The PCC supported waste crime joint operation with Dorset Police and the Environment Agency

Police and Crime Plan Monitoring

Quarter 4 Report 2024/25

Cut Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

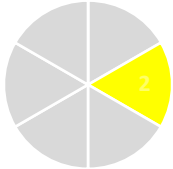
RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period



In the Spotlight	Measures of Success	Target	Current	Additional Key Indicators		Q3	Q4
“ASB in Dorset is currently at its lowest level since 2007-08, and in the last year alone has fallen by 12%, and I am determined it stays that way... my Office works hard to make a positive difference to the people of Dorset, and this fund is just one of the tools at our disposal to help make our county safer.” PCC, 17 March 2025	Total Crime	↓	↓ 11285	Non-dwelling burglary 24/25	140		↔
				Dwelling burglary 24/25	200		↔
	Total Police recorded ASB incidents	↓	↓ 2698	Killed or Seriously Injured (rolling)	63		↓
				Business Crime (YTD)	1485		↔
	Public Opinion	↑	↑ 51%	Commissioning: Crime Prevention 24/25	£1.26m		↑

Theme	RAG Q3	RAG Q4	Detail	Theme	RAG Q3	RAG Q4	Detail
Crime and ASB			The PCC <u>launched</u> round 5 of the Op Relentless Community Fund , inviting charities and community organisations to apply for funding for initiatives that will reduce ASB in their area.	Road Safety			The PCC <u>repeated his call</u> to the Government to introduce harsher punishments for drink and drug drivers, citing two recent Dorset cases.
			OPCC agreed to provide funding to Doc Bike for the provision of 250 high security Gold Secure motorcycle locks for the pilot riders course ' NextGen Riders Course '.	Fraud & Cyber Crime			Victim Support ran an insight survey, looking at ' Fraud in the Festive Season '. Responses are being used to help shape their service offering and inform ideas for comms messaging. The PCC <u>supported</u> a campaign to tackle Romance Fraud .
Burglary & Acquisitive Crime			The OPCC worked with Victim Support Dorset to purchase and distribute target hardening equipment to vulnerable victims of burglary.	Business & Retail Crime			At the Dorset Safer Business Partnership , the Force provided an update for an improved online theft pack . Work is ongoing for anticipated roll out in Summer 2025.
			The OPCC commissioned Home Safety Leaflets for people moving home, providing <u>advice on home security</u> .				The OPCC distributed a <u>Cyber Crime Newsletter</u> for business focusing on Ransomware – providing available training and resources.

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In the Spotlight	Measures of Success	Target	Current	Additional Key Indicators		Q3	Q4
“We know that Dorset is a popular destination, particularly in the summer months as millions of visitors flock to take advantage of our stunning scenery and coastline. That’s why it is important residents have confidence we are ready to tackle the extra demand.” PCC, 24 March 2025	Number of full-time equivalent police officers	↑	↔ (1406.8)	Victim Satisfaction (Whole Experience)	67.3%		↑
				Victim Satisfaction (Actions Taken)	62.3%		↑
	Percentage of People who feel Dorset Police do a good job in their area	↑ 80%	-- 64%	Victim Satisfaction (Kept Informed)	59.7%		↓
				Average 101 answer time	19.5 mins		↑
	Percentage of 999 calls answered within 10 seconds	↑ 90%	↑ 94.9%	Complaints received by Dorset Police (Q4)	313		↔
				Complaint Reviews received by OPCC (Q4)	27		↔

Theme	RAG Q3	RAG Q4	Detail
Uplift and Visibility			The PCC <u>welcomed</u> the partnership work to ensure Dorset residents, visitors and businesses can enjoy a ‘ good safe summer ’. In March, the Force hosted two events alongside BCP Council, Dorset Council, Weymouth Town Council, Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue and Business Improvement Districts to discuss ongoing efforts to ensure everyone is safe, and can feel safe, this summer. In addition to this, support and scrutiny has been provided to key initiatives such as Hot Spot Policing to aid frontline deployment.
Engagement and Connectivity			The annual <u>Precept survey</u> ran from December 24 to the end of January 25. There were 1966 responses, of which: 76% agreed that DP required additional funding, with 55% saying that they would pay the minimum <u>increase in precept</u> or more. The OPCC attended the Neighbourhood Engagement Board, which established a range of ‘task and finish’ groups to deal with updating the Neighbourhood Engagement Commitments to ensure they remained public focussed, that they aligned with the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee requirements, and to reflect the community needs in each area.
Customer Service			The OPCC has continued to scrutinise the Force's plans regarding front counter arrangements and to ensure that the use of Community Contact Points is maximised across the county.

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In the Spotlight	Measures of Success	Target	Current	Additional Key Indicators		Q3	Q4
“It is important to me as your representative in policing to show all that we are doing in Dorset to support our residents. Whether that is drug education and prevention initiatives or an insight into the victim services we commission like STARS and The Shores.” PCC, 7 March 2025	Most Serious Violence (from 2019 baseline)	↓	↓ 38	Domestic Abuse Crimes	2118		↔
				Domestic Abuse Incidents	2698		↔
	Domestic Abuse Crime and Incident Reports	↑	↔ (4816)	Violence Against the Person	4423		↓
				Domestic Violence, Sexual Harm and Stalking Prevention Orders 24/25	35		↑
	Effectiveness assessment by HMICFRS	ADQ.	ADQ.	Commissioning: Reducing Reoffending 24/25	£618k		↑

Theme	RAG Q3	RAG Q4	Detail	Theme	RAG Q3	RAG Q4	Detail
Domestic Abuse & Stalking			The OPCC continued to <u>work with</u> Victim Support throughout the mobilisation of the new standard risk DA victim service and the PCC also <u>supported</u> No More Week. The OPCC explored potential options surrounding a DA bystander awareness training.	Child Abuse			An expansion of the early years Public Protection Notice (PPN) system went live in March. This process is to ensure better information sharing between educational settings and policing when there are safeguarding concerns.
RASSO			The OPCC and Force promoted Sexual Violence awareness week, publishing <u>communications</u> and social media promoting the work of the Shores (Dorset SARC). The PCC also <u>highlighted</u> other services in support of No More Week.	Violence Reduction			The OPCC engaged with partners and scrutinised delivery of the Home Office Serious Violence Duty funding. The fund will continue into 2025/26, with Dorset receiving £354,068. The PCC <u>blogged</u> about knife crime.
Addiction and Substance Misuse			The Combatting Drugs Partnership heard that, during the quarter, 45 Alcohol Abstinence Monitoring Requirement tags (otherwise known as sobriety tags) have been issued in Dorset, with no breaches reported. The PCC <u>welcomed</u> a review into ketamine classification.	Violence Against Women and Girls			The OPCC continued with the delivery of the Violence Against Women and Girls Improvement Panel, focusing on stalking and harassment. The panel saw members scrutinise the police’s response to victims of this crime type.

Police and Crime Plan Monitoring

Quarter 4 Report 2024/25

Fight Rural Crime

RAG Status	
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In the Spotlight	Measures of Success	Target	Current	Additional Key Indicators		Q3	Q4
“Waste crime is often more than what it appears on the surface. It is multi-layered, takes many forms and is linked to other, serious types of illegal activity. It is everyone’s duty to be vigilant and report any activity that seems suspicious, to help us keep Dorset a pleasant place...” PCC, March 2025	Total Rural Crime and Incidents	↓	↓ 43	Number of fly tipping scenes attended by coordinator	136		↔
	Rural Resources	↑	↑	Rural Crime Team Engagement events in County LPA	13		↔
	Rural Public Opinion	↑	↔ 61%	Poaching incidents and crimes	12		

Theme	RAG Q3	RAG Q4	Detail	Theme	RAG Q3	RAG Q4	Detail
Rural Resources			The PCC <u>supported</u> a mobile operation with the Force and the Environment Agency to inspect vehicles suspected of waste crime and or metal theft. The operation resulted in 30 vehicles being stopped and two vehicles seized , with two others being cautioned.	Country Watch			Dorset Police have distributed 320 Rural Crime Packs to date. The packs include property marking kits and signage to deter potential offenders.
Heritage Crime			The OPCC, Police and Historic England commenced work towards the production of short films to promote the Heritage Watch scheme in Dorset.				Dorset Police commenced training for the distribution of the Rural Crime Packs for broader teams, including NPTs in Blandford and Dorchester. The packs are also being highlighted to Young Farmer groups, Kingston Maurward College and livery events.
Fly-Tipping			A comprehensive <u>news article</u> by the PCC with the Environment Agency on Waste Crime was added to the Country Watch Dorset website in March 2025. It was <u>reported</u> that fly-tipping fines in Dorset have increased by 78 per cent following a joint funding initiative between Dorset Council and the OPCC.	Wildlife Crime			The Rural Crime Team had a <u>successful outcome</u> in court in March, with an offender being found guilty of trespassing with the intent to pursue hares with dogs. It was the first conviction of its kind in Dorset, using new legislation under Section 63 of the 2022 Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act.

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In the Spotlight	Measures of Success	Target	Current	Additional Key Indicators		Q3	Q4
"I am absolutely committed to ensuring victims of crime have access to the best services in Dorset and that's why I am so pleased to continue the positive working relationship we have built with Victim Support over the years." PCC, 24 March 2025	Number of victims supported by OPCC commissioned services	↑	↑	Victim Support – Cases Created	2927	↑	↔
				Victims' Bureau – Contact	4754	↑	↓
	Victim Satisfaction	↑	↑ (67.3%)	Recorded Hate Crime	196	↑	↔
				Recorded Hate Incidents	37	↑	↑
	Legitimacy Assessment by HMICFRS	ADQ.	ADQ.	% people feeling safe in Dorset	92%	↑	↑
				Commissioning: Victim Services 24/25	£2.14m	↑	↑

Theme	RAG Q3	RAG Q4	Detail	Theme	RAG Q3	RAG Q4	Detail
Criminal Justice Service and Restorative Justice	↑	↑	Members of the OPCC and Dorset Police evaluated bids for the Dorset Restorative Justice Service . The new contract will run for five years from commencement.	Support for Young People	↑	↑	The Violence Reduction and Prevention Team finalised the preparations for the youth participation survey and associated work, designed to better understand young people's views on policing.
Victims and Community	↑	↑	The PCC <u>commissioned</u> Victim Support Dorset to provide a range of services to support victims of crime across the county. The new service was commissioned for five years and will ensure support is available for victims of crime in Dorset.	Vulnerability	↑	↑	All four phases of Right Care Right Person have been implemented, with phase four, being launched on 20 January 2025. This phase was to ensure that patients with physical or mental health concerns are transported by the appropriate agency.
			The OPCC continued to engage with the APCC Victims' Working Group on preparations to implement the Victims and Prisoners Act . The first tranche of measures from the Act commenced on 29 January 2025.	Hate Crime	↑	↑	Victim Support ran an insight survey, looking at 'Hate Crime at Work' . The responses are being used to help shape their service offering and inform ideas for comms messaging.

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In the Spotlight	Measures of Success	Target	Current	Additional Key Indicators		Q3	Q4
“Asking the people of Dorset to contribute more towards policing our county is not something I take lightly. I share your frustrations and vow to continue the fight, lobbying government relentlessly for a fairer funding deal to ensure our county has the police force they need and deserve.” PCC, 5 February 2025	Money secured from competitive national funds	↑	↔ £1.63m	Total Commissioning Spend by OPCC (2024/25)	£4.02m	Green	↑
	Budget Forecast	SEE FINANCE SLIDES	SEE FINANCE SLIDES	Innovation Bids Submitted (since 01/04)	8	Green	↑
				Small Grant Bids Awarded 2024/25	0	Green	↔
	Efficiency assessment by HMICFRS	ADQ.	ADQ.	Absence Rates for Officers (Q3)	5.1	Green	↑
				Absence Rates for Staff (Q3)	3.4	Green	↔

Theme	RAG Q3	RAG Q4	Detail	Theme	RAG Q3	RAG Q4	Detail
Evidence Based Policing	Green	Green	As part of Project Evolve, the ongoing work to deliver better efficiency and service delivery to the public, the PCC supported the Chief Constable’s decision to redeploy constables from Neighbourhood Enforcement Teams to Local Policing Area teams, to provide a more visible and connected frontline.	Philosophy and Co-Operation	Green	Green	The PCC <u>welcomed</u> the continued co-operation between South West forces, with the latest phase of Operation Scorpion seeing more than 30 warrants executed across the region, and 36 people arrested. 2,240 suspected cannabis plants were destroyed and £57,335 cash was recovered.
Funding	Amber	Amber	The PCC welcomed the news that the Home Office would continue with the <u>Hotspot Policing</u> funding, providing Dorset with £1m to target problem areas. Police and Crime Panel members voted to approve the PCC’s proposal to increase the precept at the February meeting.	Efficiency	Green	Green	Senior leaders from both Dorset and Devon & Cornwall OPCCs joined those from Dorset Police and Devon & Cornwall Police to sign off the process for Priority Based Budgeting . This process will see detailed reviews undertaken of Strategic Alliance business areas to ensure the continued smooth working of shared services and to identify possible saving opportunities.

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RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period

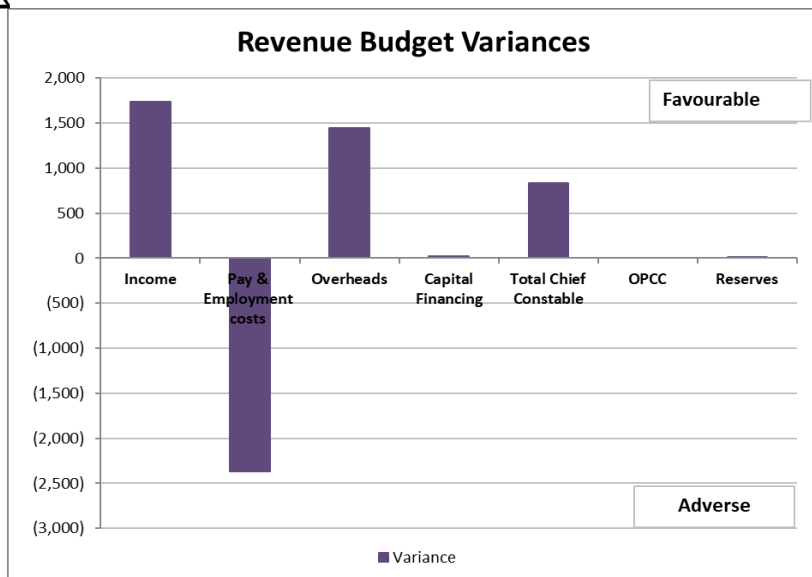


2024/25 QUARTER 4 FINANCIAL REPORT- OVERVIEW

The overall revenue spend for the year was £171.0m against a budget of £171.9m, a favourable variance of £0.832m or 0.48% before carry forward requests were considered. This is a significant achievement from the position at Q2 when an adverse variance of £2.3m was forecast.

Carry forward requests and approved contributions to earmarked reserves totalled £0.613m resulting in £0.219m being transferred to General Reserves. They are now equivalent to 3.55% of net revenue expenditure.

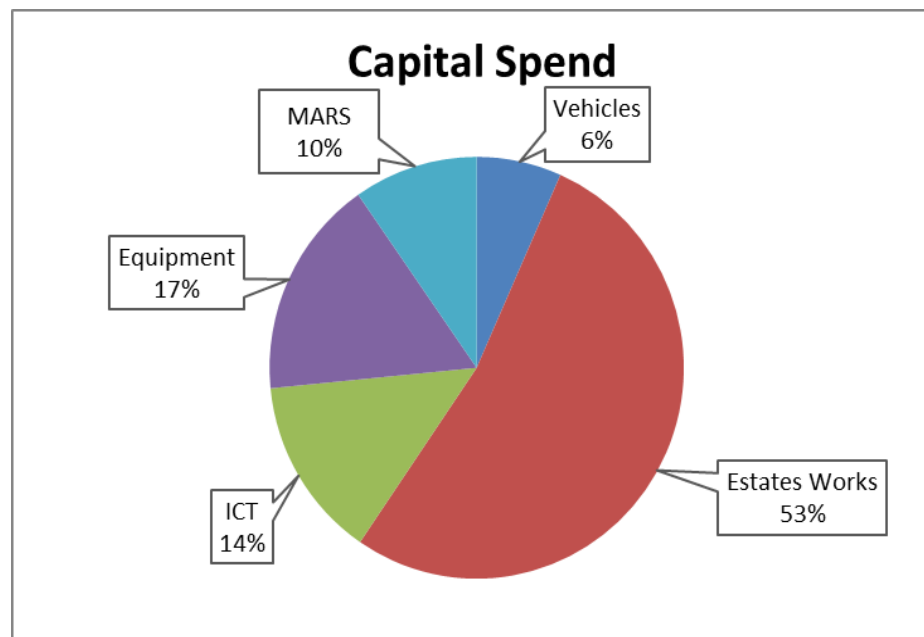
The graph below summarises the outturn revenue variances for the year to 31 March 2025.



CAPITAL

The Capital Programme expenditure totalled £9.778m against a revised budget of £13.121m for the year. The variance of £3.343m is made up of further slippage of £1.840m and underspends of £1.503m. This reduced both the borrowing and revenue contributions required in 2024/25 however both will be required to fund schemes in 2025/26.

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	Draft Outturn	Variance fav / (adverse)	Ref	Revenue Commentary
Chief Constable	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's		
Income	(32,865)	(35,308)	(37,042)	1,734	R1	R1. Increased investment income has been achieved as a result of interest rates remaining higher for longer than forecast and higher cashflow. Additional income received to pay for additional posts.
Pay & Employment costs	148,852	151,106	153,473	(2,367)	R2	R2. The higher than budgeted pay award cost nearly £0.5m after allowing for the additional grant. Ill health retirements were also higher than budgeted. Major operations have increased overtime costs. Of the £4.5m savings built into the budget, £0.9m have not been achieved but MARS savings have now been factored in.
Overheads	47,174	46,846	45,401	1,445	R3	
Capital Financing	6,030	6,352	6,333	19		
Total Chief Constable	169,190	168,996	168,165	831		R3. Reduced costs of premises including utility costs and some once off rate rebates. Savings in IT network costs, fuel and fleet repairs.
OPCC	3,267	2,792	2,792	0		
Total Net Revenue Expenditure	172,457	171,788	170,957	831		R4. The final variance of £0.832m is equivalent to 0.48% of the total net budget. Of this, £0.613m has been transferred to the Budget Management Reserve for use in 2025/26 and £0.219m has been transferred to General Reserves. This means General Reserves were equivalent to 3.55% of net revenue expenditure
Reserves	(582)	87	86	1		
Net Budget	171,875	171,875	171,043	832	R4	

RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period

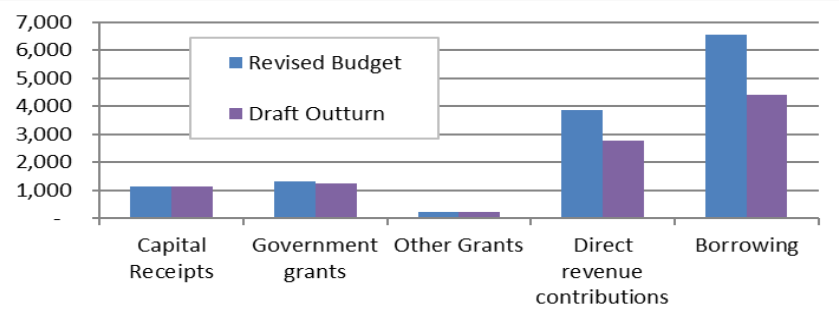


CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING

2024/25	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Draft Outturn	Variance Fav / (Adverse)	Capital Programme Commentary
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	
Capital Investment					
Vehicles	1,434	954	648	306	The final year end variance was made up of £1.8m slippage (in addition to slippage already removed from the programme and built into 2025/26) and £1.5m of underspend. It has been agreed that £0.5m of this underspend can be used for other projects which are currently under budgetary pressure.
Estates Works	7,996	7,357	5,172	2,185	
ICT	5,094	2,343	1,362	981	A reduction in the number of vehicles replaced has resulted in an underspend in the vehicle budget.
Equipment	976	1,920	1,649	271	
MARS	0	947	947	0	The underspends within the Estates budget primarily relate to the new HQ build and Ferndown projects. Slippage in the firing range project, the SEC roof and electricity infrastructure will be carried forward.
Slippage	(400)	(400)	0	(400)	
Total Capital Programme	15,100	13,121	9,778	3,343	There is some additional slippage across the ICT project portfolio and underspends on the replacement of PCs, some of which will be carried forward to deal with the upgrade to Windows 11.
					The costs of MARS has been funded using the Flexible use of capital receipts directive.

CAPITAL FINANCING

Sources of Finance				
Capital Receipts	-	1,129	1,132	(3)
Government grants	-	1,322	1,235	87
Other Grants	-	243	243	0
Direct revenue contributions	4,369	3,867	2,767	1,100
Borrowing	10,731	6,560	4,401	2,159
Total Capital Funding	15,100	13,121	9,778	3,343



Source	Revised Budget	Draft Outturn
Capital Receipts	1,132	1,129
Government grants	1,235	1,322
Other Grants	243	243
Direct revenue contributions	4,369	3,867
Borrowing	10,731	6,560

RAG Status	
This Period	Last Period



USABLE RESERVES

2024/25	Opening Balance at 1/4/24	Budgeted transfer to/(from) reserves	Actual Transfer to/(from) reserves	Forecast Closing Balance at 31/3/25	Reserves Commentary
Reserve	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	
Budget Management Fund	819	(184)	429	1,248	- This table sets out the reserves position following the allocation of the underspend set out on the revenue page. - The Budget Management Reserve released £184,000 of previous carry forward requests and was increased by £613,000 of the 2024/25 underspend to cover known costs in 2025/26. - Delays in some of the OPCC commissioned projects resulted in funding being transferred to the Police and crime reserve. - A new Strategic Change has been created for cost of project implementations which have been delayed. This will enable projects to be completed in 2025/26. £813,000 of revenue contributions to capital were not required this year due to slippage in the capital programme so have been set aside to fund schemes in 2025/26. - The General Fund Balance has increased by the planned contribution and remaining underspend and is now equivalent to 3.55% of Net Revenue Expenditure. - No significant capital receipts were received apart from the sale of a boat which was used to part fund the purchase of a replacement vessel. Capital receipts were used to fund the one off costs of the MARS.
Police and Crime Plan Reserve	461	412	412	873	
Violence Reduction Reserve	770	(104)	(104)	666	
OPCC Legal Reserve	250	17	17	267	
OPCC Reserve	416	15	15	431	
Regional Collaboration Reserve	34	0	(1)	33	
Strategic Change Reserve	0	324	324	324	
Revenue Funding for capital	0	813	813	813	
Forensic Capability Network Reserve	268	(3)	(3)	265	
Workforce Change Reserve	643	(300)	(300)	343	
Learning & Development Reserve	46	(9)	(9)	37	
PEQF Reserve	47	(47)	(47)	0	
Total Earmarked Reserves	3,754	934	1,546	5,300	
General Fund Balance	5,778	100	319	6,097	
Total Revenue Reserves	9,532	1,034	1,865	11,397	
Capital Receipts Reserve	3,617	(947)	(947)	2,670	
Total Usable Reserves	13,149	87	918	14,067	



POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – 24 JULY 2025

ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

To update members on the Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report 2024/25.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Under Section 12 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (the Act) the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is required to report to the Police and Crime Panel on the exercise of his functions in each financial year. Specifically, the Annual Report should report on:

- (a) the exercise of the PCC's functions in each financial year; and
- (b) the progress which has been made in the financial year in meeting the police and crime objectives in the PCC's Police and Crime Plan.

1.2 The Annual Report is an important summary document of PCC activity over the course of the last financial year, and complements the more detailed quarterly performance reports submitted to the Panel.

1.3 The Annual Report has been designed to be accessible and easy to read. Members will note the consistency of style and approach utilised across the Police and Crime Plan, the Annual Report, and the quarterly update reports to the Panel.

1.4 A draft of the Annual Report for 2024/25 has previously been circulated for the Panel's consideration. In accordance with the Act, Panel members were invited to review the report and to make any recommendations to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for consideration in the final editing process.

1.5 A final review of the Annual Report was undertaken earlier this month and the finished document is included at Appendix 1.

2. NEXT STEPS

2.1. The final version of the Annual Report 2024/25 will be published on the PCC's website. The Report, along with previous Annual Reports, can be found [here](#).

3. RECOMMENDATION

3.1. Members are recommended to note this update.

ADAM HARROLD
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

Members' Enquiries to: Adam Harrold, Director of Operations (01202) 229084
Media Enquiries to: Susan Bloss, Head of Communications & Engagement (01202) 229084

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FOREWORD

I hope that you find this document to be an informative and insightful summary of the work undertaken by me and my team during the 2024/25 financial year. Once again, we have been very busy working on your behalf to make Dorset a safer place to live, work and visit. I am pleased to report that progress has been made across all of the priorities of my Police and Crime Plan and this activity will be maintained throughout my tenure as your Police and Crime Commissioner.

Following meaningful progress across all areas of the Police and Crime Plan, the Plan was refreshed in 2024 after my re-election. However, the priorities in the plan remain the same and reflect the issues and concerns you have raised with me. These areas of focus have ensured Dorset remains one of the safest places in the country. To keep ranking in the top ten safest places to live, is testament to the hard work and dedication of all the officers, staff and volunteers in Dorset Police and the staff and volunteers in my Office, who work hard every day on your behalf to make a positive difference.

Overall, crime is falling, positive outcomes are on the rise and anti-social behaviour is at its lowest level since 2007/08 and as you read through this report, you will find more and more examples of similar achievements - the continuing success of Operation Scorpion and Operation Viper which continue to disrupt drugs supply in Dorset and across the South West, shutting down county lines and safeguarding vulnerable people, and the introduction by Dorset Police of the Enhanced Video Response initiative which gives victims of crime the chance to speak to an officer via a video call rather than in person. The initiative is victim-led, giving each victim greater choice in how they interact with Dorset Police.

These are just some of the high-impact examples of how we are making Dorset a safer place to live, work and visit.



And finally, a thank you to the residents and communities of Dorset. I am your voice in delivering this Plan, I am your voice in policing, so please do continue sharing your views with me about crime and community safety. You can find contact details for my office on the back cover of this report or on my office [website](#).

I look forward to another positive year ahead as we drive towards Dorset being the safest county.

DAVID SIDWICK
Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner
JUNE 2025



THE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN

THROUGHOUT MY TENURE AS POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER, I HAVE CONTINUED TO CONSULT WITH MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PARTNER AGENCIES TO ENSURE MY POLICE AND CRIME PLAN STAYS RELEVANT.

This ongoing exchange of information, has ensured that the priorities of the Plan continue to be an accurate reflection of policing, crime and safety issues that are the most important to Dorset's communities.

In 2024, the Plan was refreshed upon my re-election, and a number of changes were made to recognise the work that had been done in my first term of office, for example, around supporting young people, and offering better visibility of initiatives to tackle violence against women and girls - making

greater strides into bringing forward more programmes and initiatives that address prevention, intervention and diversion.

The following pages detail the work undertaken for each priority.

Strategic Policing Requirement

The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) sets out those threats which, in the Home Secretary's view, are the biggest threat to

public safety and must be given due regard by PCCs when issuing or varying Police and Crime Plans. It supports PCCs and Chief Constables to plan, prepare and respond to these threats by clearly linking the local response to the national, highlighting the capabilities and partnerships that policing needs to ensure it can fulfil its national responsibilities.

A revised version of the SPR was last published in 2023 – this set out seven identified national threats as follows: Serious and Organised Crime; Terrorism; Cyber; Child Sexual Abuse; Public Disorder; Civil Emergencies; and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).

The PCC regularly seeks assurance that the Force has sufficient capacity and capability to meet these responsibilities. Information

relating to child abuse, cyber crime and VAWG is covered in more detail within this document and the Police and Crime Plan – though it is also important to highlight that the Force continues to deliver upon its VAWG action plan.

The Force continues to work alongside the South West Regional Organised Crime Unit to tackle drugs, fraud, cyber crime, and crime relating to organised immigration. Preparing for national incidents of public disorder and maintaining the required numbers of specially trained officers also continue to be an ongoing focus.

Equally, the Force works closely with the Local Resilience Forum to prepare for emergencies, participating in a programme of joint exercises and training to ensure SPR capabilities are met.

MAKE EVERY PENNY COUNT

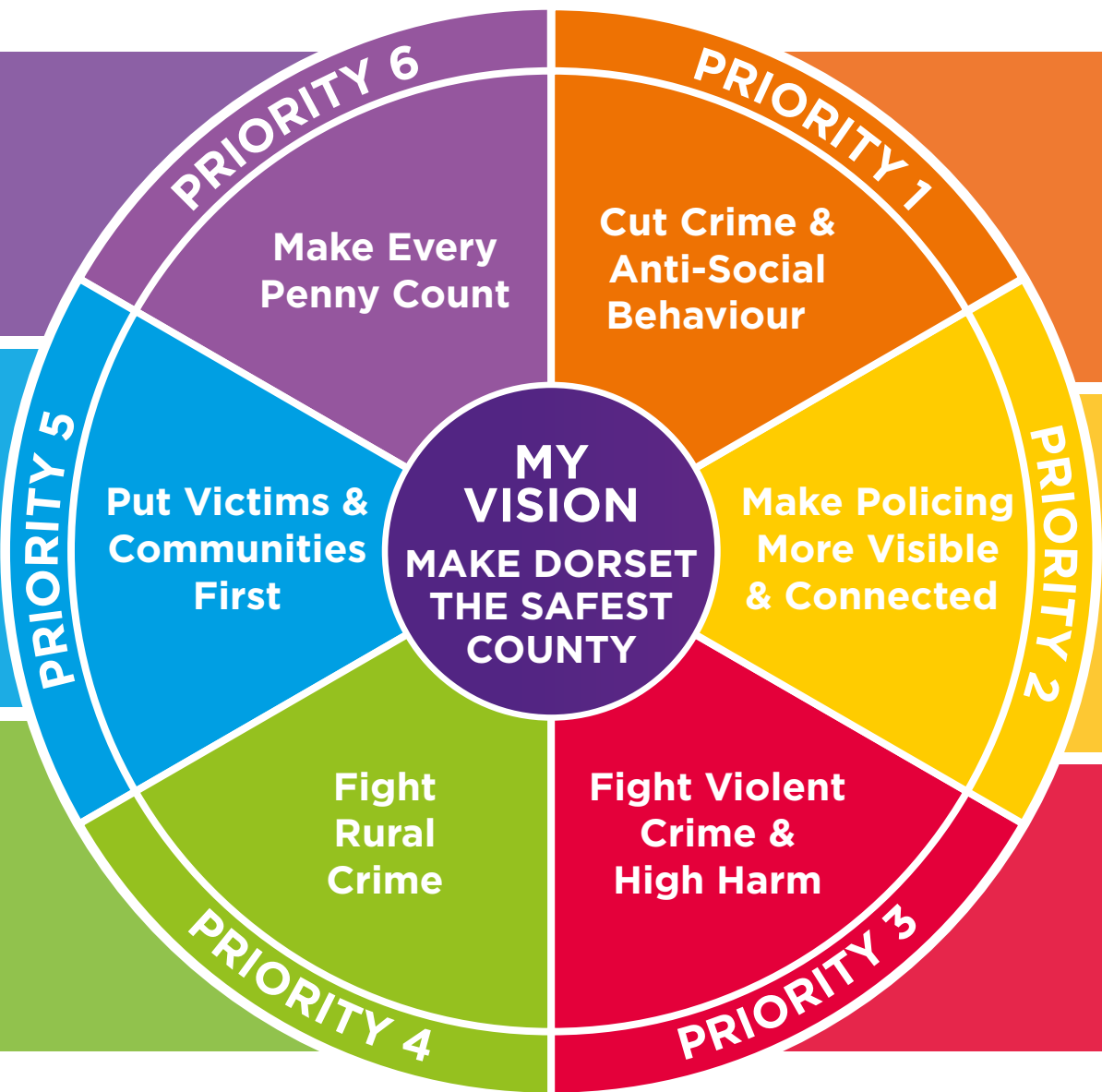
Raising awareness around issues of police funding, especially around the national funding formula. To maximise efficiency and efficacy in policing, to ensure that the robust oversight of financial, audit and governance arrangements continue. **See Page 24 for further information.**

PUT VICTIMS & COMMUNITIES FIRST

To have an embedded 'victim first' philosophy and approach to ensure the best possible outcome for those who need help and support. To work with vulnerable individuals and communities to tackle issues such as fraud, addiction, gambling and homelessness. To provide more support for young people, and build on programmes and initiatives that address prevention, intervention and diversion. **See Page 20 for further information.**

FIGHT RURAL CRIME

To maintain the Rural Crime Team and ensure that they continue to work ever-more closely with the rural communities they serve. To tackle issues that blight our countryside, like fly-tipping, wildlife crime and heritage crime as well as build on the successes of the Country Watch scheme, designed to bring rural communities together. **See Page 16 for further information.**



CUT CRIME & ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The police will provide a robust focus to cut crime and anti-social behaviour, so people across Dorset see a clear difference and feel safer. To tackle the issues that affect the people and communities of Dorset, burglary and acquisitive crime, business crime and shoplifting in order to make our communities 'feel' safer. **See Page 6 for further information.**

MAKE POLICING MORE VISIBLE & CONNECTED

To ensure that there are greater levels of police visibility and connectivity across the county. To build upon the work of the Neighbourhood Policing Teams and ensure that the people and communities of Dorset 'know their police'. To maximise the use of technology to ensure officers' time is spent as productively and efficiently as possible and that people receive a good service from the police. **See Page 10 for further information.**

FIGHT VIOLENT CRIME & HIGH HARM

To tackle Violence Against Women and Girls from a multi-agency, partnership perspective. To continue the tough approach on drugs and violent crime, to drive out organised crime groups and to hit hard those involved in county-lines and drug related criminality. **See Page 12 for further information.**

CUT CRIME & ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB)

THE POLICE WILL PROVIDE A ROBUST FOCUS TO CUT CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, SO PEOPLE ACROSS DORSET SEE A CLEAR DIFFERENCE AND FEEL SAFER. THEY WILL TACKLE THE ISSUES THAT AFFECT THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES OF DORSET, INCLUDING BURGLARY AND ACQUISITIVE CRIME, BUSINESS CRIME AND SHOPLIFTING IN ORDER TO MAKE OUR COMMUNITIES FEEL SAFER.

Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Focus

- Safer Streets Funding from the Government enabled licensed premises to scan the IDs of pub and club patrons to identify fake IDs, stop underage drinking and deter individuals who repeatedly cause issues from entering premises. The scanners are rotated on a needs basis to help safeguard our communities and provide some reassurance to the public in Dorset.
- An evaluation of the effectiveness of the PCC commissioned ASB mediation service in Dorset concluded that there were no further calls to the Police in 69 per cent of cases where mediation was delivered. The positive work by Restorative Solutions led to reduced pressure on frontline officers and call centre staff.
- The PCC launched a further round of the Operation Relentless Community Fund. A total of nine successful applicants were awarded funding totalling £39,554. The supported initiatives included; CCTV, security gates, diversionary activities for young vulnerable people, community clean-ups, and outreach programmes.
- The PCC provided an additional £100,000 funding to further enhance the existing frontline patrols. This resulted in additional summer patrols in Bournemouth town centre and targeted patrols in Weymouth town centre over the Christmas period.
- Dorset Police responded to the latest police inspectorate recommendations on ASB including delivering training to the

staff responsible for recording the reports of ASB and crime and officers working in communities. The monitoring of ASB and related crime has improved as a result.

Fraud and Cyber

- The PCC and Dorset Police continued to publish their cyber crime e-newsletter, informing businesses about preventative cyber security measures they can follow to better protect themselves from cyber offences such as hacking and phishing, with a further five issues shared this year to businesses in Dorset.
- Dorset Police welcomed a new Cyber Crime Protect and Prevention Officer who has spent time engaging with local businesses and building stronger relationships in the business community.
- The PCC worked with Age UK and Dorset Police to facilitate call blockers for vulnerable older people in Dorset. The project aims to protect vulnerable older individuals from the growing threat of fraudulent callers, a problem that often leaves victims feeling isolated, emotionally devastated, and financially exploited.

Burglary & Acquisitive Crime

- The PCC launched a home safety initiative, designing and printing home safety leaflets which were shared with estate agents for distribution when selling or letting properties to new homeowners. The leaflet includes Dorset Police advice and top tips for residents on how to keep their homes and property safe and secure.

- The OPCC secured funding through the Home Office Safer Streets Fund to help secure the homes of vulnerable victims of burglary. In addition to the equipment, crime prevention leaflets were provided to neighbouring properties of a burglary, informing how to protect their property and the support available.

- Additionally, Victim Support have also received funding via the OPCC to deliver target hardening equipment and support to victims of burglary and vulnerable people.

Business & Retail Crime

- The PCC continued to chair the Dorset Safer Business Partnership (DSBP), which focused on increasing business crime reporting, police engagement and visibility, prevention and cyber crime awareness and training.
- The PCC continued to support and promote Operation Shopkeeper which targets high harm prolific offenders. Over the last 12-months, Op Shopkeeper targeted 32 prolific offenders, resulting in total custodial sentences of 12 years and 10 months, with three perpetrators receiving custodial sentences over two years. Furthermore, Op Shopkeeper secured long term prevention orders against shoplifting offenders to prevent re-offending, with orders totaling 29 years.
- The PCC continued to support Operation Spotter which is led by the Neighbourhood Policing Team in Bournemouth and involves dedicated officers carrying out targeted work in plain clothes to apprehend shoplifters.
- The PCC supported and promoted the ShopKind campaign and is a ShopKind Champion himself. The ShopKind campaign unites the retail sector to tackle violence and abuse against shopworkers by asking people to 'ShopKind' when in stores.
- The PCC continued to hold the Chief Constable to account to improve retail crime reporting to make it easier and quicker for businesses to report shoplifting. An automated solution is expected to be rolled out by summer 2025.

Road Safety

- Due to the efforts of Dorset Road Safe Partnership, over the past year there has been a positive reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured in Dorset. In addition to this, the number of people injured remains on track for an overall 40 per cent casualty reduction by 2030, based on the 2015 - 2019 average.
- Dorset now has 86 Community Speed Watch (CSW) Teams, with around 1,300 volunteers helping to keep the county's roads safe. The PCC continued to support CSW and took time to visit many of the teams this year and promote their important contribution to road safety via social media and newsletters.
- The PCC continued to support the Force's summer and winter drink/drug drive campaigns. In support of the national drink and drug drive campaign Operation Limit, the PCC and Dorset Police encouraged communities to report a drink or drug driver and work together to prevent a collision happening in their area. During December, Dorset Police received over 300 calls concerning drivers under the influence of alcohol or drugs, with officers attending 129 incidents, successfully locating reported vehicles 90 times and subsequently making 36 arrests.
- The PCC supported Operation Tramline, a week-long campaign using an HGV to identify mobile phone use and bad driving behaviour and raise road safety awareness.
- The PCC provided £7,625 funding to DocBike for 250 high security motorcycle locks to complement their 'NextGen Riders Course' with locks being awarded to candidates who completed the course. Stolen motorcycles are often used in criminal activity and are more likely to be involved in collisions where injury is caused.



FOCUS ON

HOTSPOT POLICING

FOLLOWING A SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL TO THE HOME OFFICE, £1MILLION WAS AWARDED TO DORSET FROM THE HOTSPOT RESPONSE FUND AND A FURTHER £1MILLION HAS BEEN ALLOCATED FOR 2025/26. THIS ORIGINALLY FORMED PART OF A NATIONAL HOME OFFICE PILOT WITH AN AIM TO INCREASE HIGH-VISIBILITY PATROLS THAT TACKLE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB) AND VIOLENT CRIME ACROSS IDENTIFIED HOTSPOT AREAS IN THE COUNTY.

As a result of this funding, in April 2024 Dorset Police identified over 30 hotspots for targeted patrols and launched Operation Track within these areas, including Bournemouth, Weymouth and Poole. Hotspots were selected through analysis of data which showed persistently high levels of crime, and the patrols formed part of a strategy in reducing crime through resources and activities in the identified hotspots.

Over 6,000 patrol hours were completed, with a future aspiration of a further 9,000 hours for the coming year. As a result of the additional hotspot patrols, there have been 199 stop and searches, 159 arrests and 177 uses of ASB powers (Section 35 dispersal orders). In addition to the patrols, hotspots were supported by dedicated engagement events including Community Contact

Points, offering opportunities to speak to Neighbourhood Policing Teams and briefing communities on the project and other policing activity in the area.

Operation Track has seen positive results with 70 per cent of hotspots seeing reductions in serious violent crime and 67 per cent of hotspots seeing a reduction in ASB in 2024, compared with the previous year.

Moving forward, the patrols will expand to additional hotspots, identified by further data analysis, in Dorchester, Blandford, Swanage and Wimborne, and will also feature a higher focus on knife crime reduction as this initiative aims to help hit the Home Office's national target of halving knife crime during the next decade.



PRIORITY 2

MAKE POLICING MORE VISIBLE AND CONNECTED

TO ENSURE THAT THERE ARE GREATER LEVELS OF POLICE VISIBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY ACROSS THE COUNTY. TO BUILD UPON THE WORK OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING TEAMS AND ENSURE THAT THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES OF DORSET 'KNOW THEIR POLICE'. TO MAXIMISE THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY TO ENSURE OFFICERS' TIME IS SPENT AS PRODUCTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY AS POSSIBLE AND THAT PEOPLE RECEIVE A GOOD SERVICE FROM THE POLICE.

Customer Service

- The OPCC created a Contact and Engagement leaflet for distribution to key stakeholders, which is hosted on the OPCC website and has been handed out at PCC engagement meetings. Signposting information was also given via numerous PCC Newsletters and guest blogs.
- Following a change in legislation and subsequent review, the OPCC took responsibility for the administration of complaints misconduct panels. The newly constituted panels are chaired by Chief Officers as opposed to a Legally Qualified Chair.
- A formal update was provided by the Force following the conclusion of the front counter pilot scheme. The pilot was delivered during peak summer months to offer the public the opportunity to use the front counter facility at Dorset's busiest time of the year. to use the front counter facility. The results of the pilot scheme showed that the front desks received only minimal use by residents and visitors, so it was concluded that other methods of public contact should be progressed and, therefore, plans to build upon the Community Contact Points and other mobile options were progressed.

Engagement and Connectivity

- The OPCC has reached out to specific communities, such as Age UK, Wessex Jewish News, rural groups and Dorset farmers to provide crime prevention advice and offer visibility and reassurance of the ongoing good work being delivered in Dorset.

- The Safer Schools and Communities Team continues to provide robust and engaging educational presentations about the risks of carrying knives and weapons.
- During a targeted week of national anti-knife crime campaigning, eight local secondary schools engaged with the Team and some 770 students were reached.
- Over the summer, the PCC and OPCC were present at, and engaged with, the public at eight different summer events across Dorset, including Bournemouth Air Festival, Gillingham and Shaftesbury Show, Bourne Free and Dorset County Show, a 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 on policing and the Police and Crime Plan priorities.
- Over 2000 residents responded to our Annual Safety Survey and over 1000 face-to-face discussions took place with OPCC staff during this period. All the feedback, comments and concerns were recorded and have been used to shape the direction of communications and engagement from the OPCC.

Visibility and Uplift

- The PCC and Force provided updates regarding policing in the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole area. This included a Facebook Live meeting and detailed a range of operations and initiatives designed to tackle criminality and improve police visibility.

For example, the Force's 100 days of summer patrols (as seen in the Dorset and BCP areas) and work of BCP Council's dedicated Community Safety Accreditation Scheme officers.

- The PCC and his senior management team scrutinised the Force's arrangements and mitigations following the Mutual Agreement Resignation Scheme (MARS) scheme to

ensure that there remained a focus on visible and community policing. Whilst the scheme was solely aimed at members of police staff and, so, police officer numbers are unaffected, the PCC was keen to ensure unnecessary administration and tasking was not passed to frontline officers as a result.

FOCUS ON

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

THE WAY IN WHICH FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT IS MADE WITH LOCAL POLICE OFFICERS HAS CHANGED OVER RECENT YEARS, AND THE INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF COMMUNITY CONTACT POINTS IS A RESPONSE TO HOW THE PUBLIC WANT TO ACCESS THE SERVICES DORSET POLICE PROVIDE.

Community Contact Points are run regularly by local Neighbourhood Policing Teams across the county. These contact opportunities are drop-in events with local police teams where residents can raise concerns, report crime and discuss incidents face-to-face.

With each event advertised on the Dorset Police website and social media platforms, the process to find out when and where the next Community Contact Point is simple and completed by entering your postcode on the homepage of the Dorset Police website.

Posters are also put up in the locations where the Community Contact Points are held, so keep an eye out in shop windows and on local notice boards.

Over recent years, there has been a significant reduction in front counter use making them more expensive and inefficient to resource. Whereas Contact Points are held locally, in the places residents visit regularly, at local supermarkets, local libraries or in coffee shops, or coffee shops.

Contact Points are held where our residents are, meaning people can go and speak with those who police their local area without having to make a separate journey to a police station. Indeed, since 2023 police neighbourhood teams have engaged with 15,160 people via Community Contact Points and with more and more engagement happening online, changing the methods of contact and reacting to the way in which the public want to engage is vital if policing is to stay in-touch with those it serves.

Neighbourhood Policing Teams are the backbone of community policing and being able to engage with local officers and staff that work in the communities where you live and work is very important.

We would encourage residents to find out what your local Neighbourhood Engagement Commitment is, who is on your local policing team, what your local policing priorities are and when and where your next Community Contact Point is – all of which can be done simply by putting in your postcode or local area into the Dorset Police [website](#).

PRIORITY 3

FIGHT VIOLENT CRIME & HIGH HARM

TO TACKLE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS FROM A MULTI-AGENCY, PARTNERSHIP PERSPECTIVE. TO CONTINUE THE TOUGH APPROACH ON DRUGS AND VIOLENT CRIME, TO DRIVE OUT ORGANISED CRIME GROUPS AND TO HIT HARD THOSE INVOLVED IN COUNTY-LINES AND DRUG RELATED CRIMINALITY.

Addiction and Substance Misuse

- The PCC in his role as the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners Joint Chair of Addictions and Substance Misuse national portfolio, has continued to raise awareness of the dangers of addictive substances. This includes a series of press releases and blogs highlighting the damage of ‘illicit gateway’ drugs and he continues to lobby for change including supporting the reclassification of Ketamine from a Class B to a Class A drug. The PCC also continues to support prevention initiatives to educate young people on the dangers of illegal drugs.
- As chair of the Combating Drugs Partnership, the PCC continued driving forward the implementation of the Government’s ‘Harm to Hope’ strategy in Dorset, focusing on three main ambitions – breaking supply chains, delivering a world class treatment and recovery system and achieving a generational shift and downward demand for drugs.
- In Dorset, Operation Scorpion, the southwest regions border-less approach to tackling drug crime, continues to target illegal drugs and county lines in Dorset, with a focus on tackling visible street dealing, clear-out the drug gangs and deal with associated crime. Alongside Operation Viper, Dorset’s own anti-drug crime initiative, have resulted in more suspected drug dealers facing consequences, illegal drugs taken off the streets, dangerous weapons being confiscated, vulnerable people safeguarded, and residents and communities being made safer.
- The PCC continues to endorse and support organisations who educate and help young people to stay safe by educating them on how child exploitation and grooming happens, and how it is linked to county lines and illegal drugs, lived experiences and education on alcohol, vaping and gambling. An example of this is our work with Talkabout

Trust to deliver education to schools around Dorset on the effects of drugs, alcohol and vaping.

- The PCC also holds the joint lead for Gambling Harm and, over the past year, progress has been made in addressing gambling-related issues with the PCC securing a meeting with the gambling minister to discuss government plans and how they can contribute. Additionally, a meeting was held with the Department for Culture, Media, and Sport to discuss introducing a gambling levy to provide recovery programmes and to emphasise the need for more to be done in the area of prevention.
- The PCC agreed a refreshed gambling checklist to assist in a greater understanding of the issue of gambling and related criminality, building gambling into plans, strategies, and commissioning activity to provide better access to training and treatment.

Violence Reduction

- The Violence Reduction and Prevention team has been established with the role of assessing the local needs related to serious violence, identifying gaps in provision and creating a strategy to drive forward a violence reduction approach which meets the needs of Dorset. The PCC has continued to lobby government for a Violence Reduction Unit which comes with additional funding for initiatives designed to reduce serious violence.
- The PCC has continued to work with key authorities in the delivery of the Serious Violence Duty to ensure partners are delivering the requirements, as well as scrutinise spend and interventions. The ongoing positive impact of the initiatives funded through the Serious Violence Duty has resulted in the full allocation being offered for the next financial year.

- Dorset has one of the lowest knife-crime rates in the country and has seen an 8 per cent reduction in knife offences during this period. Projects funded included the development of a resource for schools to support those engaged in sexually harmful behaviour, an awareness campaign on the dangers of carrying a knife, targeted youth worker support for young people who have experienced serious violence and prevention education initiatives in schools across the county.

Domestic Abuse & Stalking

- Due to the Victim Services contract coming to an end, a new service provider was sought in order to ensure that there was continuous support for the ‘standard’ risk victims of domestic abuse. Victim Support Dorset will now provide tailored emotional and practical support to victims of domestic abuse for the next five years.
- The PCC provided funding for the Independent Stalking Advocacy Caseworker (ISAC) until 2025/26 – the role supports those who are at risk and experiencing stalking behaviours, advocate on their behalf and provide safety planning as part of a risk-lead service. ISACs work closely with the Police, Probation Service, the Crown Prosecution Service, local authorities and other local support agencies.
- The OPCC continues to support, monitor and encourage schools and early years settings to adopt Op Encompass, which is a statutory obligation on police forces to share notifications when the police have attended a domestic abuse incident where a child is present.

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

- OPCC staff attended an Essential Insights event about honour based abuse and forced marriage. This event helped to raise awareness on the subject, dealt with issues around ‘stereotyping’ and gave advice on how to support victims. Work is ongoing with Dorset Police in relation to honour based violence.
- The OPCC held a VAWG conference in July 2024. The event was aimed at front line professionals, such as teachers, social workers, and other practitioners, and focused on those working in an ‘early years’ setting. Themes around appropriate behaviours, sexual violence, current trends and the work of various services that are available across Dorset were discussed and debated. Speakers at the event included professionals from key partners agencies, such as the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) and the Sexual Trauma and Recovery Service (STARS).

- The Home Office Safer Streets Fund saw additional CCTV installed in hotspot areas of Weymouth and Bournemouth. Bournemouth, covering areas that have a increased night-time economy. The fund also enabled the launch of the BCP Unity Promise, where businesses and organisations pledge to advocate for the safety of women and girls when out enjoying the local nightlife.

Rape & Serious Sexual Offences

- The OPCC worked closely with NHS England and Dorset Police to recommission the Dorset SARC Service. The new service will continue to deliver a high standard of care for victims of rape and sexual assault.
- In addition to the above, the OPCC continue to work with the SARC provider and NHS England in respect to the incoming new forensic standards required to be met by SARCs, with the PCC funding essential building works to ensure compliance can be achieved.
- The PCC continued the commissioning of Circles Southwest to deliver behaviour changing courses for prison leavers and young people on bail for sexual offences. This service also included providing training for professionals to identify and tackle harmful sexual behaviour.

Child Abuse

- The OPCC is continuing to fund a children’s ISVA (Independent Sexual Violence Advisor) through STARS Dorset. An ISVA is an adviser who works with people who have experienced rape and sexual assault, irrespective of whether they have reported to the police.
- The OPCC has been scrutinising Operation Encompass which is a statutory obligation on police forces to share notifications with schools and early years settings when the police have attended a domestic abuse incident where a child is present. This review group has included school and early years representation from both BCP and Dorset Councils as well as safeguarding leads from schools and nurseries. The review group has highlighted some examples of good practice and some opportunities to improve the Op Encompass process within Dorset, which will be implemented over the coming months.

Modern Slavery

- The OPCC has been working to better understand the local issues surrounding modern slavery, analysing available data both locally and nationally. Once complete the OPCC will explore opportunities to install initiatives, policies and processes to reduce risk and harm associated with modern slavery.

FOCUS ON

THE VAWG SCRUTINY PANEL

IN JULY 2023, THE PCC ESTABLISHED THE VAWG IMPROVEMENT PANEL TO SCRUTINISE DORSET POLICE RESPONSES TO VAWG CASES, EXPLORING AREAS SUCH AS, STALKING, HARASSMENT, DOMESTIC ABUSE, AND SEXUAL OFFENCES.

The panel is held quarterly chaired by the OPCC, with representatives from local authorities, independent victim services and volunteers, who carry out reviews of police contact related to VAWG incidents. Core members are representatives from BCP Council, Dorset Council, Victim Support, The Shores - SARC, OPCC volunteers, DA Forum representatives, You Trust, BCHA and STARS.

Each meeting, the members consider six cases and victim phone calls to Dorset Police addressing a certain crime type including Stalking and Harassment, Domestic Abuse, Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) and Child Exploitation. The crime types are rotated on a quarterly basis.

Following review, the members provide constructive and critical feedback on the cases provided, with findings being utilised to inform and promote good practice, policy development, and identify training needs.

The panel members score the victim experience on a scale of 1 - 5 (1 - poor - 3 satisfactory - 5 excellent) and highlight areas they feel should be recognised as positive or share feedback on how they believe it could have been managed differently.

Since the panel's inception, six meetings have been held reviewing cases of RASSO, Stalking & Harassment, Domestic Abuse, Public Space and Tech Enabled crimes. To date, the findings have been mostly positive with the average outcome for the victim experience being scored 4 or 5, satisfactory or above. Positive feedback from the panel is shared in a monthly newsletter for frontline staff with critical learning points identified and reflected on by the Force VAWG lead, for reviewing systems and processes.

The panel will continue to aim to improve the best possible outcomes for VAWG victims in Dorset.



FIGHT RURAL CRIME

TO MAINTAIN THE RURAL CRIME TEAM (RCT) AND ENSURE THAT THEY CONTINUE TO WORK EVER-MORE CLOSELY WITH THE RURAL COMMUNITIES THEY SERVE. TO TACKLE ISSUES THAT BLIGHT OUR COUNTRYSIDE, LIKE FLY-TIPPING, WILDLIFE CRIME AND HERITAGE CRIME AS WELL AS BUILD ON THE SUCCESSES OF THE COUNTRY WATCH SCHEME, DESIGNED TO BRING RURAL COMMUNITIES TOGETHER.

Rural Resources

- Operation Ragwort was established by the five PCCs and five Chief Constables in the region to target serious organised crime in the rural community. A police operation was held in May 2024, where Dorset Police supported Wiltshire Police and the Environment Agency to target organised crime groups. In March 2025, the PCC attended a joint policing operation where police officers and the Environment Agency stopped vehicles suspected of being used in waste crime and metal theft.
- Operation Honeybun was run in relation to van breaks and tool thefts. The RCT led on it and worked in conjunction with Wiltshire Police and several other forces. There were approximately 50 incidents in total recorded. Three suspects were arrested with one person remanded in custody. This activity directly led to a significant series of vehicle theft and van breaks to stop. There are ongoing investigations across the forces, to seek prosecution.
- Over the past 12 months, the Rural Mounted Volunteers completed 837 hours of patrol over 311 duties. As a result of these patrols, volunteers submitted 27 intelligence reports, three potential poaching/hunting offences, 11 fly-tips were reported to the council, and 74 engagements with people in rural areas whilst on duty.

Country Watch Dorset

- The OPCC continued to utilise the Country Watch Dorset website to provide regular news updates and items to highlight rural crime issues and prevention advice including articles on the work of the Dorset Partnership

Against Rural Crime (PARC). Updates included articles published during Rural Crime Action Week 2024, on waste crime operations, fly-tipping prevention resources, duty of care requirements for the disposal of waste, livestock worrying and successful investigations and arrests.

- In June 2024, the OPCC produced a Rural Crime Prevention leaflet which offered advice on crime prevention and how to share intelligence and report rural crime, especially for farmers and those living in rural areas. The leaflets have been distributed by Dorset Police, the OPCC and the members of the Dorset PARC at various rural shows and events. The leaflet is available to download on the news page of the [Country Watch Dorset](#) website.
- The PCC became a board member of the National Rural Crime Network (NCRN) whose purpose is to highlight that the scale, cost, and social impact and effects of rural crime are underestimated and not fully understood. The network includes a wide range of member agencies including NFU, CLA, CrimeStoppers, Rural Services Network, and other rural PCCs. The PCC has both supported and suggested campaigns and has lobbied for and promoted the need for any power tools over the value of £300 to be forensically marked when they are sold.

Waste Crime & Fly-tipping

- The PCC worked with partners to tackle waste crime and fly-tipping as part of the Dorset PARC. He attended a joint operation in March 2025 which ensured that those who handle or transport waste have the correct licences and permits to do so. This resulted in 30 vehicles being stopped, four enforcement actions taken, plus intelligence gathered and

education/information given to the public to increase awareness of metal theft.

- The PCC lobbied local MPs and the National Rural Crime Network to recognise the need for greater resources to target organised criminals involved in waste crime.
- The OPCC secured funding via the Home Office Safer Streets Fund to purchase 950 Theft and Burglary Prevention packs to be distributed across rural areas across Dorset. These packs have been distributed in person via Dorset Police to rural properties, such as farms and riding stables, with the aim to reduce the risk of burglary and theft. Residents were also provided with crime prevention advice and given 'SelectaDNA' kits to enable them to mark up to 50 items of their property, keep it protected and make it easier to identify and recover if stolen. Through this funding, 100 signs have also been purchased and installed in rural areas marked with the 'SelectaDNA' equipment to act as a deterrent against burglary and theft.

Wildlife Crime

- The Dorset PARC held a meeting in September 2024 focussed on how to raise awareness and target wildlife crime. Partners agreed to focus on reducing the risk of members of the public inadvertently harming wildlife through leisure activities such as landing kayaks on beaches where seals are resting or letting dogs off the lead where they disturb ground-nesting birds on protected sites.
- The Dorset Rural Crime Team had a successful court outcome, the first of its kind in Dorset where new legislation was used to prosecute an offender who was found guilty of the offence of 'trespassing with the intent to pursue hares with dogs'. Dorset Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner were pleased to note that the offender received a significant fine and a criminal record.
- The PCC has responded to the consultation by the Sentencing Council on hare coursing guidelines highlighting the need for changes to the outdated legislation including higher levels of harm factors for impact on victims as well as the wildlife, higher sentence levels, additional aggravating factors, and the use of ancillary orders such as dog disqualification orders.

Heritage Crime

- The PCC added Heritage Crime to the Police and Crime Plan as a priority area in the refreshed Police and Crime Plan. The PCC lobbied local MPs to raise the need for Historic England to be recognised as a statutory body in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Historic England is the government's statutory adviser on the historic environment; championing historic places and helping people to understand, value and care for them – including introducing and promoting the prevention of heritage crime.
- Through the PARC, Dorset Police have begun to work with Historic England to improve the flagging and monitoring of heritage crime offences.



FLY-TIPPING

THROUGH THE DORSET PARTNERSHIP AGAINST RURAL CRIME (PARC), THE OPCC WORK TOGETHER WITH A RANGE OF AGENCIES AND ORGANISATIONS, INCLUDING BCP AND DORSET COUNCILS, DORSET POLICE, AND THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY, TO TARGET AND REDUCE FLY-TIPPING AND THE ASSOCIATED CHALLENGES THAT CAUSE HARM TO WILDLIFE.

Fly-tipping is the illegal disposal of household, industrial, commercial or other 'controlled' waste - which includes garden refuse and larger domestic items such as fridges and mattresses.

In April 2024, the OPCC co-funded an Assistant Enforcement Officer (AEO) role within Dorset Council to attend incidents of fly-tips, obtain evidence, investigate and make a case for a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) to be issued. Investigations have also led to vital intelligence being gathered and vehicles used in offending being seized and destroyed. The AEO post has enabled a more proactive approach to environmental crime because there are now greater evidence gathering opportunities that were not possible before.

There are a number of priorities for the PARC including, targeting resources effectively to enable landowners and farmers to reduce risks of fly-tipping and promote awareness of advice and support. The AEO has worked to establish connections with private landowners such as Lulworth Estate, Gascoyne and Ilchester Estates, the National Trust and is working closely with their teams, issuing signage and informing them of how the AEO can assist partners in driving down incidents of fly-tipping.

Since the introduction of the AEO role, there has been a significant increase in the number of reports of fly-tipping due to increased awareness on how to report. Also,

as a result of the work, there has been a 78 per cent increase in FPN's issued and a large increase for household waste duty of care applications. This post has been a great asset in tackling fly-tipping and the OPCC has agreed to continue the funding for another year to ensure further development and improvements in this area. The OPCC will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the post and the work being carried out.



PUT VICTIMS AND COMMUNITIES FIRST

TO HAVE AN EMBEDDED 'VICTIM FIRST' PHILOSOPHY AND APPROACH TO ENSURE THE BEST POSSIBLE OUTCOME FOR THOSE WHO NEED HELP AND SUPPORT. TO WORK WITH VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES TO TACKLE ISSUES SUCH AS FRAUD, ADDICTION, GAMBLING AND HOMELESSNESS. TO PROVIDE MORE SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, AND BUILD ON PROGRAMMES AND INITIATIVES THAT ADDRESS PREVENTION, INTERVENTION AND DIVERSION.

Criminal Justice Service and Restorative Justice

- In January 2025, a new service provider for the restorative justice contact was sought. Restorative Solutions will be providing help and advice to victims of crime later in 2025.
- As well as restorative justice cases, for post-conviction serious crimes, the current service has delivered a range of awareness raising courses on topics such as retail crime, hate crime, and assaults on emergency workers for lower-level offences through referrals via the Force's adult out of court resolution route.

Hate Crime

- The OPCC senior management team became members of a Dorset Police working group to deliver the Police Race Action Plan.
- Following the Chief Constable's acceptance of Institutional Racism, the OPCC became members of the Police Race Action Plan working group, the purposes of which, in line with the national plan, is to help build a police service that is anti-racist and trusted by Black people. This local (and national) focus is because Black people are over-policed, under-protected, under-represented and have more negative experiences of policing in Dorset both internally and externally, and Dorset Police is unable to explain why. The working group is helping to drive through a programme of work, further detail of which can be found on the [Dorset Police website](#).

- The OPCC continue to work with Dorset Police to build connections with community groups. The PCC and representatives from the OPCC met with Community Action Network and Dorset Police to discuss outcomes from focus groups held during 2024 and ideas for initiatives and collaboration going forward to reduce offending and support victims.
- The OPCC continue to work with the People First Forum and jointly fund, along with BCP, the Independent Learning Disability Advisor and Witness Preparation and Profiling Service. This service provides appropriate support and guidance to enable individuals with learning disabilities that have been impacted by crime and anti-social behaviour to access the justice system, give their best evidence in court and feel safer within their communities.

- After a period of review, the Hate Crime Awareness Course, offered as an out of court resolution through the OPCC Restorative Justice contract with Restorative Solutions, continued this year. This course is based on restorative principles and works with offenders to reflect on their actions and understand the consequences of their behaviour with a view to reducing further offending.

Victims and Communities First Philosophy

- New commissioned services have been put in place in order to support victims of crime, with carefully chosen expert providers. The work of Victim Support has been secured to give tailored, practical support to those in need for the next five years.

- The OPCC continued to work with the Police, Ministry of Justice and other criminal justice partners to ensure the best possible service is provided to victims of crime, in line with the Code of Practice to Victims of Crime and the 12 rights that victims are entitled to under the Victims and Prisoners Law 2024.

- The OPCC provided updates on the Use of Police and Powers Scrutiny Panel to Dorset Police for review and action, as required, ensuring learning is taken on board and appropriate action taken.

Support for Young People

- The PCC contributed £81,927 to the Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service. This funding has enabled the delivery of interventions to prevent young people reoffending. The OPCC has continued to be an active member of the Youth Justice Board which has oversight of the Youth Justice Service, ensuring the best possible outcomes for the children and young people supported by this service.
- The PCC continues to fund prevention education initiatives for the children and young people of Dorset. This has included education provided by the Safer Schools Team, Talk about Trust who have delivered education related to addiction and substance use, and STAR's who have provided education on consent.

Vulnerability

- The OPCC jointly funded an interactive 'Keeping Safe' event for adults and young people with learning disabilities. The event

covered a range of topics including safe places, hate crime and how to recognise fraud, the role of a PCSO, Police and the use of drones as well as a visit from the local Fire and Rescue Service.

- OPCC funded an awareness raising film for the 'Herbert Protocol', particularly focused on helping police find individuals with dementia or other cognitive conditions who have gone missing. The Herbert Protocol involves carers and family members completing a form in advance with detailed information about the person, which can be readily provided to the police if a missing person situation arises. This pre-gathered information helps expedite the search and locate the person more efficiently.

- The National Partnership Agreement: Right Care, Right Person has been fully implemented by Dorset Police. It is a framework for how the police and health services should improve the response to people with mental health needs. Dorset Police has agreed with local health partners the process to deliver this in Dorset and all four phases have been implemented.

- The PCC provided a funding contribution of £25,000 a year, for two years for Mental Health Treatment Requirements (MHTRs). MHTRs are one of three types of Community Sentence Treatment Requirements used by the courts with offenders, the other two are Alcohol treatment Requirements and Drug rehabilitation requirements and either of these can be combined with a MHTR to support the offenders needs and reduce the risk of reoffending.





FOCUS ON

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

AS PART OF THE PCC'S COMMITMENT TO PROACTIVELY ENGAGE WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AND LISTENING TO THEIR VIEWS, A YOUTH PARTICIPATION STRATEGY HAS BEEN DEVELOPED. THIS STRATEGY OUTLINES THE PCC'S COMMITMENT TO CO-CREATE SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AND HELPS TO EMBED THE NATIONAL CHILD CENTRED POLICING STRATEGY.

This strategy sets out a three-year plan to build on existing, well-established structures which support decision makers to listen to the voice of children and young people across Dorset. We are committed to getting things right so we will ensure we grow our approach, allowing time for regular evaluations and improvements.

We have worked with partners to create a strategy which works with well-established groups who are already creating safe spaces for young people to share their voice with trusted adults. This approach helps us to

listen to a wider breadth of voice and the voice of marginalised young people who may not normally feel safe to share their views with policing bodies.

To ensure the OPCC's Youth Participation Strategy is meaningful for young people, voice is not enough. We will strive to facilitate a two-way ongoing conversation where young people see their influence on decision making. As part of our approach, the PCC has committed to creating a feedback loop by responding to children and young people through regular "You Said, We did" updates.



PRIORITY 6

MAKING EVERY PENNY COUNT

RAISING AWARENESS AROUND ISSUES OF POLICE FUNDING, ESPECIALLY AROUND THE NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA. TO MAXIMISE EFFICIENCY AND EFFICACY IN POLICING, TO ENSURE THAT THE ROBUST OVERSIGHT OF FINANCIAL, AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS CONTINUE.

Funding

- The OPCC was successfully awarded funding totalling £560,000 from the Home Office to deliver year 2 of the Immediate Justice Scheme and expand the remit to wider cohorts, including young people, through partnership with the Dorset Youth Justice Service.
- The OPCC continued working with local authorities to deliver successful initiatives under the Home Office Safer Streets Fund, with year 2 funding totalling £319,000. The OPCC originally bid in partnership with the local authorities to enable us to deliver a wide range of preventative initiatives to help keep woman and girls safe within the night-time economy.
- In partnership with Dorset Police the OPCC was awarded £1million from the Home Office Hotspot Policing Fund. This fund saw targeted patrols delivered in hotspot areas identified through data analysis.
- The PCC spoke with Dorset’s MPs and issued a public statement outlining the challenges that the outdated police funding formula caused Dorset. Force and OPCC Executive also raised concerns that the anticipated use of the funding formula to cover mandated national insurance increases would result in further shortfalls for Dorset.

Efficiency

- Following the completion of the new Police HQ building, the OPCC Treasurer reviewed and updated the Capital Receipts Strategy, allowing the method of paying back its capital borrowing to better recognise the

significantly longer life of this notable asset rather than follow the normal asset lifespan projection of 10 years.

EVR

- Dorset Police’s Enhanced Video Response (EVR) initiative, which allows victims to speak to Dorset Police officers via video chat, has led to quicker arrests and higher positive outcome rates since being launched. Since being trialled in 2023 and its formal launch the following year, 11,254 victims have requested to use EVR, which gives the public greater choice in how they would like to interact with Dorset Police. This is particularly important for some victims, who may not want a police officer or marked police car at their home.

Philosophy and Co-operation

- Following re-election, the PCC undertook a review of the Police and Crime Plan to ensure it still represents his strategic direction and is reflective of the concerns of the communities we serve. Updates to the Plan included, specific areas for key topical issues, such as; Rape and Serious Sexual Offences and Heritage Crime, and updates relating to the work surrounding substance misuse.
- The PCC and members of the OPCC Senior Management Team attended the annual Southwest Police Collaboration planning day. At this event, PCCs across the region discussed how collaboration and sharing of intelligence is not only tackling complex cross-border issues, and building safer communities, it is providing opportunities to work together to deal with topical local and national issues.

FOCUS ON

BUDGET OUTTURN

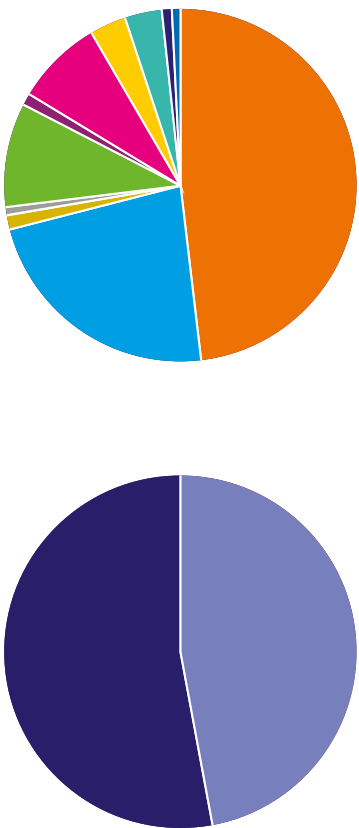
TOTAL EXPENDITURE £m

Police Officer Pay & Allowances	103.4
Police Staff Pay & Allowances	51.4
Police Pension (Injury and Ill Health)	2.6
Training & Development	1.6
Premises	20.8
Transport	2.4
Supplies & Services (e.g. IT services, licence fees, equipment, uniform and other office costs)	17.3
Capital & Borrowing Costs, contribution to reserves	7.1
Regional and National Collaborations	7.5
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner	1.8
PCC Commissioning and Grant Funding	1.6
Total Expenditure	217.5
Specific Grants and Income	-34.8
TOTAL	£182.7

FUNDING SOURCES £m

Government Core Grant	86
Council Tax Precept	96.7

Net Revenue Budget £182.7



	BAND A	BAND B	BAND C	BAND D	BAND E	BAND F	BAND G	BAND H
2024/25 Charge	£195.72	£228.34	£260.96	£293.58	£358.82	£424.06	£489.30	£587.16
Annual Increase	£9.33	£10.89	£12.44	£14.00	£17.11	£20.22	£23.33	£28.00
2025/26 Charge	£205.05	£239.23	£273.40	£307.58	£375.93	£444.28	£512.63	£615.16

ANNUAL ENGAGEMENT REPORT

THIS IS THE EIGHTH ANNUAL ENGAGEMENT REPORT, DESIGNED TO ALLOW GREATER TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND PUBLIC SCRUTINY OF THE PCC'S CURRENT ENGAGEMENT APPROACH, EMPOWERING RESIDENTS TO BECOME MORE INVOLVED IN GENERATING NEW IDEAS TO BRING POLICING MORE EFFECTIVELY TO THE HEART OF ALL COMMUNITIES IN DORSET.

The PCC acts as the representative and voice of local people and aims to ensure that communities receive a dynamic and responsive police service. Various methods are adopted to engage, consult and inform residents that the policing by consent model operating in Dorset, and across the UK, is supported by both the PCC and his office.

What did we do in 2024/25?

Over the last year we have conducted several surveys with Dorset's residents and communities including Precept, Violence Against Women and Girls and our Annual Community Safety survey. Responses to surveys have helped guide OPCC investments in tackling anti-social behaviour, with Operation Track, and shoplifting with the creation of Operation Shopkeeper, which has seen a dedicated police unit created to target

persistent, prolific thieves as well as ensure undercover operations take place in hotspot areas to catch offenders in action.

Those who engage with the OPCC have also been able to influence work being done to help protect women and girls from violence ensuring that funding secured by the OPCC under the Safer Streets scheme has been put into education and training, CCTV in popular night-time economy areas and ID scanners to increase the detection of fake IDs, to help stop underage drinking.

The Commissioner regularly attends community group meetings, conferences, face-to-face meetings and events across the county and directly engages with residents and stakeholders to ensure there are opportunities to find out more about the work of the OPCC.

ALSO THIS YEAR

Our Engagement

- There have been eight scrutiny panels held. These panels are administered by the OPCC and attended by independent members of the public, to help the PCC hold Dorset Police to account. With residents being actively involved and participating in the process, it ensures scrutiny is thorough and takes into account the experiences of diverse groups across Dorset.
- Residents can engage directly with the OPCC via telephone, website contact forms and by post. In 2024/25, the OPCC was contacted 3686 times by members of the public. The nature of public correspondence received is wide-ranging, from general comments to requests for information.
- There have been 85 PCC newsletters written and dozens of press articles, comments and opinion pieces written on a wide variety of policing issues over the last year. All of the newsletters are available on the PCC's website and were sent out to almost 9,000 Dorset Alert members. The PCC has also appeared in over 20 videos talking about a range of policing issues.
- The PCC joined members of Dorset Police to broadcast live-streamed engagement events

to talk with members of the public about the precept, and policing in both the BCP and Dorset areas. The PCC also led a scrutiny/feedback group session with Dorset Alert members to discuss precept and policing in 2025.

- The OPCC has grown and improved its social media reach this year by joining more Facebook community groups and sharing information about surveys and funding opportunities with the aim of reaching beyond our most engaged with audiences.
- Our engagement, in all its forms, helps the PCC to raise the issues that are important to the public directly with the chief constable. Indeed, all of our communications in 2025 will take inspiration from the top five issues our residents and communities have told us are priorities for them namely, anti-social behaviour, illegal drug use and associated crime, burglary and theft, knife crime, violent crime and VAWG/sexual assault/rape/stalking.
- The feedback we receive has led to changes in force systems and processes, as well as investment and resourcing in areas of policing that matter to the residents and communities of Dorset.

Our Social Media

 2,900 FOLLOWERS	 118,549 WEBSITE VIEWS
 6,700 FOLLOWERS	 OVER 9,000 local residents receive regular news and newsletters via the Dorset Alert system. You can sign up here .
 842 FOLLOWERS	



GOVERNANCE & SCRUTINY

Use of Police Powers and Standards Scrutiny Panel

- The Use of Police Powers and Standards (UPPS) Scrutiny Panel has been established as the independent overarching scrutiny panel. The panel meets quarterly to discuss issues such as the disproportionality of stop and search and use of force activity, public contact through the 101 and 999 service, and complaints handling by Dorset Police.
- The Force has its own Independent Scrutiny Panel which reports into UPPS on the outcome of their review and independent scoring of Body Worn Video (BWV) footage of stop and search and use of force cases. A member of the UPPS is also a member of this panel. This provides the panel with additional assurance. Additionally, a sub-group of panel members independently dip sample complaints against the Force on a quarterly basis, with feedback from this group contributed to the decision by Dorset Police to increase resource in the Professional Standards Department focussing on making customer service improvements.
- The Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Sub-Group also reports into the UPPS panel. The group comprising partners working in the field as well as OPCC volunteers scrutinises a dip sample of 101/999 calls and scores these based on how they feel the member of the public has been treated.

Out of Courts Resolution (OOCR) Scrutiny Panel

- The OPCC also administers the Out of Court Resolutions (previously Out of Courts Disposals) Scrutiny Panel which meets quarterly and considers a sample of cases of Out of Court Resolutions to determine if they are appropriate. OOCRs allow the police to deal quickly and proportionately with low-level, often first-time offences including child offenders, thus preventing their entry into the formal criminal justice system.
- The panel has continued to follow best

practice by scrutinising cases on themes agreed by members beforehand, such as cases involving women and ethnically diverse individuals, cases involving possession of weapons, assaults of emergency service workers and cases involving Restorative Justice.

- The panel will also consider cases selected at random to ensure clear objectivity. Over the past 12 months the panel had been pleased to note the improvements in the Performance Update reports.

- Feedback from both the UPPS and OOCR Scrutiny Panels helps to inform how Dorset Police might further improve the service it provides and helps to increase transparency and public confidence in the police.

Independent Custody Visiting Panel

- It is a statutory duty for every PCC to have an Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) Panel. Volunteers from local communities, who are security cleared and trained, make unannounced visits to detainees held in police custody to ensure their rights have been given and to check on their welfare. These visits can take place at any time, day or night. During the 2024/25 year, there have been 104 visits made, with 18 per cent taking place between the hours of 21:00 and 09:00. During the visits 303 detainees were spoken to.
- The past year has seen two refresher training sessions provided to ICVs as well as delivery of an induction session for six new ICVs.

Complaint Reviews

- To ensure the PCC is satisfied Dorset Police are handling complaints appropriately, the OPCC commissions the service of a Complaints Review Officer who has responsibility for reviewing complaints if the complainant is dissatisfied once the case has been closed by Dorset Police.

There has been a total of 105 complaint review requests during the 2024/25 period, with 75 per cent determined to have been dealt with appropriately. In those cases that are determined not to have been dealt with appropriately, recommendations are made to the Force so that the correct steps can be taken.

- Feedback from the complaint reviews contributed to the decision by the Force to introduce further resource into the Professional Standards Department to focus on making improvements to customer service.

PCC Challenge

- The PCC continues to receive updates on performance relating to a previous challenge issued to the Chief Constable regarding stop and search disproportionality. This year the Chief Constable acknowledged institutional racism within Dorset Police and launched the Dorset Police Race Action Plan, which was co-designed with both internal and external Black communities, demonstrating their commitment to deliver positive change.
- This decision was based on a broad evidence base, including the examination of data, listening to what had been shared in focus groups, learning about the experiences of ethnically diverse colleagues and hearing

what Dorset's Black communities have said. The PCC and the OPCC team will continue to monitor progress being made against the Race Action Plan.

Police and Crime Panel

- Dorset Council has responsibility for the Dorset Police and Crime Panel held four times a year. The panel members primarily focus their attention on important strategic actions and decisions made by the PCC. In February 2025, the panel approved plans for this year's policing precept.

Independent Audit Committee

- The Independent Audit Committee meets on a quarterly basis and provides comment, advice and assurance on matters relating to the internal control environment of the Force and the OPCC. It has oversight of general governance matters and comments on any new or proposed PCC policies, strategies or changes to existing relevant policies and strategies which, in the opinion of the Chief Financial Officers, are significant with regards to financial risk and probity. The Committee is comprised of five independent members recruited for their skills and expertise in the area. The reports made to each committee meeting are publicly available on our [website](#).





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DORSET POLICE & CRIME PANEL – 24 JULY 2025

ENHANCING SAFETY FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

REPORT BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND HEAD OF POLICY & COMMISSIONING

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report provides a detailed response to the Dorset Police and Crime Panel's request for further assurance on measures to enhance the safety of women and girls. It outlines the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) oversight, public engagement, commissioning and partnership working, as well as reflections on adopting best practice.

The PCC ensures Dorset Police addresses the safety of women and girls through scrutiny and by monitoring performance. This includes tracking a comprehensive suite of indicators – such as domestic abuse and sexual assault outcomes, stalking arrest rates, and victim satisfaction. The Force Performance Board also conducts thematic “deep dives” to explore areas like victim disengagement and best practices in case handling. Public perception is a critical metric, with insights derived from surveys, victim feedback, and consultation with third-party organisations.

Public trust is shaped more by lived experience than by statistics. The PCC engages extensively with the community through correspondence, forums, targeted campaigns, and social media. The OPCC runs an annual safety survey and partnerships with charities, educational institutions, and women's networks further strengthen engagement.

The OPCC collaborates with statutory and voluntary agencies to tackle violence against women and girls (VAWG) across both urban and rural communities. The VAWG Scrutiny Panel, which reviews case handling and provides recommendations for improvement to the Force, was established by the PCC. The OPCC also supports education-based interventions and community safeguarding schemes like the Pineapple Project.

Dorset Police faces significant budget constraints. VAWG initiatives do not have ringfenced funding and many rely on limited-term grants like the Safer Streets Fund. Funding gaps challenge the sustainability of night-time safety patrols, CCTV coverage, and victim support services. The PCC continues to seek additional investment opportunities and collaborates with councils to enhance public space safety through Community Safety Accreditation Schemes (CSAS) and targeted patrols.

The safety of women and girls remains a top priority in Dorset. Through strong governance, broad engagement, collaborative partnerships, and creative resourcing, the PCC aims to foster safer communities. However, ongoing financial limitations and the need for sustained cultural and systemic change remain key challenges to long-term progress.

PURPOSE

This paper responds to the Dorset Police and Crime Panel's request for further assurance on community safety as it impacts women and girls. Building on previous written papers and verbal updates, and the PCC's December 2024 blog, this paper outlines current oversight, public engagement, financial context, partnership activity, and potential adoption of best practices from elsewhere. It also outlines a response to the following Key Lines of Enquiry:

- I. How is the PCC ensuring that the Chief Constable is addressing continuing concerns about women's safety, based not only on available data but also public perception?*
- II. How does the PCC engage with the public to understand the perception on safety and what measures are being taken to improve public confidence?*
- III. What are the financial challenges in this area and what additional resources can be given to increase safety both in and around key venues and on public transport?*
- IV. How is the PCC already working in partnership and what further can be done to develop a collective approach from all partners to tackle inappropriate behaviour towards women?*
- V. What is the PCC's views on the initiatives adopted in Westminster and what appetite is there to consider a similar strategy across Dorset?*

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The safety of women and girls in public and private spaces remains one of the most pressing challenges for policing and community safety. In Dorset, while significant progress has been made, the persistent disparity between recorded crime data and the lived experiences of women and girls suggests that much more must be done.
- 1.2 As a result, the Police and Crime Panel has received numerous and frequent updates on the PCC's work in this area, including an update on stalking, domestic abuse, and coercive control at the last Panel meeting in February.
- 1.3 The Panel has also specifically referred to the PCC blog of December 2024. This blog sits alongside numerous others, including in the last quarter: [the support available to victims of stalking](#); [the comprehensive service provided by Victim Support to victims of domestic abuse](#); [an overview of two specialist initiatives](#) – the Unity Promise in the BCP council area, and the Pineapple Project in the Dorset council area which focus on education, prevention and changing attitudes towards violence against women and girls; and [the work of the VAWG scrutiny panel](#).
- 1.4 Given that previous work mentioned, and recognising that both the Panel and members of the public have already had detailed information on the various initiatives underway, this paper will default from the usual position of providing a comprehensive overview of the services offered, and instead directly focus on each of the key lines of enquiry in turn, as per the Panel's specific request for further assurance.
- 1.5 Through this paper, the PCC therefore seeks to offer continued assurance to the Panel and public alike that women's safety remains a high priority and to outline the delivery challenges and opportunities for further action.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Improving women's safety cannot be approached purely through a criminal justice lens. A whole-system, multi-agency strategy is essential, particularly when it comes to addressing the societal and environmental factors that enable violence, harassment, and fear to persist.
- 2.2 Across Dorset we have a clear commitment to tackling violence against women and girls. Our approach reflects the national direction, recognising the many forms of violence against women and girls including a focus on areas of greatest risk to them. Areas such as domestic abuse, stalking, harassment, child abuse and exploitation, rape and sexual offending are key priorities for us all, with relentless work underway to protect and achieve justice for those affected.
- 2.3 The role of the PCC in this space is two-fold: to provide visible leadership and to act as a bridge between the police, partners, and the public. This includes advocating for and distributing funding, setting strategic priorities through the Police and Crime Plan, and ensuring the police service remains focused on keeping women and girls safe, despite an increasingly challenging delivery environment and financial context.
- 2.4 The challenges impacting the voluntary and community sector should be specifically highlighted. Whilst Government funding for universal victims' services has not met pace with demand, economies of scale of delivery and a relentless focus on efficiency has meant that to a degree there has been some mitigation. However, specialist services such as rape crisis centres, stalking and domestic abuse advocacy workers, and the provision of safe spaces for women are typically delivered by an under-funded third sector, which does not have the advantage of operating at scale, or with shared back-office systems or support services.
- 2.5 Whilst evidence from national reviews such as the HMICFRS thematic inspection into violence against women and girls (2021) and research conducted by organisations including YouGov and UN Women UK shows that public confidence remains deeply affected by both actual experiences and perceptions of safety, it should be recognised that Dorset faces unique challenges and opportunities.
- 2.6 As a county with urban centres, a thriving night-time economy, and large rural and coastal areas, a tailored approach to women's safety must be taken that recognises both geographic and demographic diversity, and takes account of significant populations changes during the course of the year as populations well over the summer period. Bournemouth and Poole face different issues from Bridport, Portland, or Shaftesbury – but all communities deserve a strategy that works for them.

3. GOVERNANCE

How is the PCC ensuring that the Chief Constable is addressing continuing concerns about women's safety, based not only on available data but also public perception?

- 3.1 The primary method of oversight and scrutiny of Dorset Police performance remains through the Force Performance Board, chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable and attended by the OPCC's Chief Executive and Performance Manager. This Board sets and

scrutinises monthly delivery against the performance metrics and targets for Dorset Police in line with the Force's strategic vision and purpose and the priorities of the Police and Crime Plan.

3.2 Dorset Police has specific performance targets for a range of metrics aligned to tackling and reducing violence against women and girls, including but not limited to:

- Improving serious sexual assaults positive outcome rate
- Improving rape positive outcome rates
- Maintaining domestic abuse positive outcomes rates
- Improving the arrest rate of high-risk domestic abuse perpetrators
- Reducing the incidence of Outcome 16 (where a suspect is identified in a case, but the victim doesn't support further police action)
- Improving the stalking positive outcome rate
- Improving stalking arrest rates
- Improving file compliance submissions to CPS
- Improving management of high harm offenders
- Improving the use of civil orders (domestic violence prevention notices and orders, sexual harm prevention orders, stalking prevention orders)
- Improving victim care quality
- Improving victims' overall satisfaction rate
- Improving community perception of fairness
- Improving gender representation across ranks and roles.

Each one of these metrics is produced monthly and any performance exceptions are considered by the Board.

3.3 Additionally, the Board will undertake 'deep dives' into specific thematic areas – for example in recent months, the Board has:

- Considered evidence behind why victims typically disengaged from supporting police investigations and set out a range of opportunities to address these and drive further gains in positive outcome rates and achieving justice for victims.
- Identified specific teams across Dorset Police who were performing better in regards to rape and serious sexual offences outcomes, and codified their best practice including achieving earlier and more detailed advice from CPS as cases are being built, and strengthening processes around effective supervision and decision making.

3.4 As articulated under paragraph 3.2, several of the metrics relating to tackling violence against women and girls are specifically focussed on public perception, whether on an individual basis (through collected victim feedback, such as satisfaction rates and complaint figures), a community basis (via third-party services, focus groups or scrutiny panels) or on a wider basis (through surveys, for instance).

3.5 Of course, the Force and OPCC also make use of a variety of additional resources to assess public perception. This includes the broader consultation and engagement work undertaken by the OPCC (see section 4); information provided by charities, thinktanks and advocacy organisations; research by academic partners; and national surveys, such as the Crime Survey of England and Wales; and media analysis.

3.6 In addition, it is important to stress that individual Force strategies and plans are increasingly informed by the voice of the victim, as are OPCC commissioned services – again, ensuring that public perception, as well as criminal justice data, is used to assess performance.

4. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

How does the PCC engage with the public to understand the perception on safety and what measures are being taken to improve public confidence?

- 4.1 Although policing spends much of its time considering how public trust and confidence might be improved, the reality is that this is not as simple as one might expect. For example, a reduction in crime may not necessarily result in improved public confidence if those members of the public do not recognise the improvement that has been made. Our perception of crime, like that of other public services, is largely dependent upon our own experiences and so individuals may not feel safer, even if the statistics suggest that they are. It is understood then, that much of our work in this space will not have an immediate impact, nor indeed a tangible impact at all, instead the objective being that an ongoing shift in culture and increase in understanding will progressively improve the comparative levels of public confidence.
- 4.2 With that said, the PCC uses multiple channels to understand and improve public perception, including face-to-face and online surveys, attending community forums and meetings, and targeted campaigns.
- 4.3 It is also important to note that – although not outlined in detail here for the sake of brevity – the PCC and OPCC regularly contribute to the engagement activities carried out by the Force and other partner agencies. This includes the dissemination of partner campaigns via OPCC channels, the provision and undertaking of PCC quotes and interviews, and other activities such as helping with the logistics of events, or perhaps the PCC delivering speeches at events, to list a few examples.
- 4.4 In terms of specific engagement activity that the PCC undertakes, this is extensive and ongoing. First, as the Panel will be aware and, is outlined within the Annual Report, the PCC is directly contacted by thousands of members of the public each year. As expected, a proportion of this correspondence will naturally include information, questions and ideas from residents and organisations relating to violence against women and girls. Key themes from external correspondence are collated and information is used by the OPCC to inform scrutiny activity and ‘sense-check’ the work of the Force.
- 4.5 The information provided via public contact is supplemented not only by the many and varied public meetings that the PCC attends each year, but also specific engagements with relevant charities, women’s networks, educational establishments and community groups about violence against women and girls. Naturally, such meetings provide an insight into public perception, while also giving the PCC an opportunity to talk through the positive work being implemented in Dorset.
- 4.6 Of course, OPCC maintains and monitors a range of engagement platforms, with several thousand social media followers. Members of the public using those channels are directly engaged with as appropriate and key issues, in particular about feelings of safety, are escalated to the PCC. Similarly, the OPCC attends a wider variety of public events to seek the public’s views and discuss safety matters and public perception is also fed into the OPCC via our community volunteers and our scrutiny panel members.
- 4.7 On top of this engagement activity, the Panel will be familiar with the extensive surveying undertaken by the OPCC each year. This includes an annual safety survey which is used to understand public perception about the police and feelings of safety. This survey captures public perception data on those crime types most commonly identified with violence against women and girls, such as domestic abuse, sexual assault, stalking and drink spiking. Whilst these are not exclusively offences relating to violence against women and girls, women and girls are disproportionately affected by these crime types.

4.8 As noted throughout this paper, the PCC does not work alone in his efforts to engage the public and improve public confidence, with both local Community Safety Partnerships identifying VAWG as a priority area to tackle. Indeed, OPCC and partners work together to change public perception through various means, such as education and co-ordination of safe spaces. Examples of this are:

- **Walk and Talk Scheme** was piloted across 2023 and 2024 by Dorset Police in Weymouth, Portland and Dorchester. This scheme offers the opportunity for members of the public to walk areas they feel unsafe in with officers, describe their thoughts and concerns, and hopefully witness that it isn't unsafe. The take-up of these pilot schemes was disappointingly poor and as a result the Force Lead is currently considering different approaches to the scheme.
- **Women running at night survey** by Dorset Police. This was delivered to better understand the experience of female runners, especially after dark. The survey received 422 responses from across Dorset, and some of the key findings from the survey include:
 - 80% of women change their route due to safety concerns
 - 92% avoid certain areas when running
 - 61% have experienced or witnessed inappropriate behaviour when running
 - 57% have experienced verbal abuse
 - 63% have experienced wolf whistling / cat calling
 - 30% have had their path blocked
 - 27% have been followed
 - 9% have been touched

Survey respondents also reported that these incidents are not contained to the evening or night, and that they are also harassed at all times of the day. The next steps for this project are being developed by the police lead.

5. PARTNERSHIP WORKING

How is the PCC already working in partnership and what further can be done to develop a collective approach from all partners to tackle inappropriate behaviour towards women?

- 5.1 Violence against women and girls, and indeed the safety of all in our communities, remains a key priority for statutory partners across Dorset. It is recognised that success is rarely achieved alone so partners, both statutory and non-statutory, work alongside communities to achieve our ambition.
- 5.2 The partnership delivery landscape in Dorset is well established and the OPCC and police work closely with Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole and with Dorset to proactively maintain community safety and prevent crime and disorder – through community safety partnerships, a multi-agency safeguarding hub, both adult and child safeguarding boards, and a variety of other partnership structures.
- 5.3 Whilst it would be the preference of both Dorset Police and the OPCC for there to be a single VAWG strategy and action plan, supported by a shared KPI suite, policing absolutely recognises partners' view of the necessity to have bespoke tactical plans for specific local issues, demographics, communities, and geographies. The PCC also recognises partners' view that to not have these specific, local plans would weaken and not strengthen the collective partnership response to VAWG.

- 5.4 Likewise, it is understood that partners do not currently support the production of a pan-Dorset set of KPIs, albeit this is with a clear rationale of guarding against the risk of masking hot spots and trends which require a specific and local targeted response.
- 5.5 The OPCC, however, continues to work hard to bring different groups together to build consensus, and to share understanding and prioritisation at a strategic, rather than tactical level. Last year, for example, the OPCC organised a conference for professionals working to tackle VAWG. The event, specifically for education professionals included teachers, childcare staff, and others in the sector, was focused on keeping our children and young people safe, with a particular emphasis on early years children (aged 0-11 years old).
- 5.6 Speakers at the event covered a broad range of topics including a case study example of a child in an early year setting displaying concerning behaviour, where professionals were reminded to be alert to the signs which could be linked to domestic abuse or sexual assault. A Detective Inspector presented on the work of the Child Abuse Team. The Forensic Paediatrician from the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) explained their work and dispelled myths around child examinations. This was followed by staff from Paragon, who explained the work they undertake as Young Person's Domestic Abuse Advisors and STARS attended to share the work they are undertaking to raise awareness for the support available to victims. Attendees were then welcomed to network, engage and discuss together their experiences and support each other.
- 5.7 There was representation from a wide range of organisations, including: Respected, The Pineapple Project, Acts Fast, Safempowerment, STARS, Paragon, The Shores (SARC), Dorset Police and the OPCC. The event included engagement stands for attendees to have an opportunity to learn about the great work and services available to support them, share ideas and feedback.
- 5.8 The OPCC has also set up a VAWG Scrutiny Panel, which reviews the handling of public contact relating to VAWG cases such as rape, stalking and domestic abuse to ensure these reports are being handled appropriately. This Panel includes membership from a variety of statutory and non-statutory groups including:
- Dorset Police VAWG Lead
 - Dorset Police Strategic Lead (for the respective area)
 - Local Authority DA Leads
 - Dorset Domestic Abuse Forum Chair
 - STARS Dorset
 - Paragon
 - Victim Support
 - BCHA
 - Dorset SARC
 - Independent Member (x2)
- 5.9 The Panel considers cases on a quarterly basis, and a redacted example of a case is outlined below for insight into the work undertaken by the panel.

VAWG Scrutiny Panel Case Example

The victim was approached by a vehicle whilst out walking. The vehicle had its window down and the victim witnessed a male without any trousers on and appearing to be masturbating. The victim carried on her journey on foot and minutes later, the suspect reappeared in his vehicle and stopped the victim again.

Police officers located the suspect an hour later in his vehicle and he was arrested for outraging public decency. The suspect admitted the offence.

Officers attended the victim's home address to obtain a witness statement and complete a victims' needs assessment. The victim was provided with information about Victim Support and relevant material to help support her later giving evidence at court. The Victim was updated as to the outcome of the interview and that the suspect was charged.

Overall, the VAWG panel felt the incident was handled sensitively and calmly and from the early stages police staff checked the victim's welfare on several occasions, had a good level of empathy and seemed to put her at ease. Only one area was found for improvement, which was in relation to follow up support, in acknowledgement that sometimes victim might not feel the impact of the events until a later date, and it should have been made clearer that support could be access at a later point if needed.

5.10 As a result of this overview and scrutiny, the OPCC provides case specific feedback to Dorset Police for learning. This has included, for example, feedback regarding control room processes and systems, such as concerns regarding callers hearing a dial tone when placed on hold, the need for a more empathetic response, and reassuring callers that officers are on route.

5.11 In the event reoccurring issues are identified, which has not occurred to date, these will be formally raised with the Force Lead to establish relevant action to resolve.

5.12 **Safer Streets Fund**

In addition to the above, the OPCC, in partnership with the Local Authorities, bid for round 5 of the Home Office Safer Streets Fund, subsequently being awarded £785,055.

5.13 The fund invited PCCs, in collaboration with local partners, to bid for initiatives to tackle VAWG, improve safety, and the perception of safety in areas identified as problematic. Round 5 of the fund was focused mainly on VAWG but also included burglary and acquisitive crime.

5.14 The fund included initiatives such as:

- **CCTV – Bournemouth**

16 CCTV cameras installed across Bournemouth, including Horseshoe Common and Westcliff. These areas were identified as key routes out of the night-time economy (NTE) with poor lighting and natural surveillance.

- **CCTV – Weymouth, and Town Council Connectivity**

Dorset Council purchased five redeployable CCTV cameras for Weymouth, installing them on key routes out of the NTE to provide additional surveillance for previously unobserved routes. The hope is that this will provide a visual deterrent for potential offenders as well as enabling identification of crime and suspects.

The grant also funded CCTV connectivity for Town Councils across Dorset, to the Dorchester control room. Previously, Town Council CCTV was not monitored and used retrospectively only, whereas the new connection provides 24/7 monitoring. The following areas have been connected to the Dorchester Control room: Blandford, Gillingham, Lyme Regis, Swanage, Sherborne and Wimborne.

- **Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Unity Promise – Bournemouth**

This saw 40 venues across Bournemouth sign up to actively promote safety in the NTE, reassuring their employees and customers that they take women's safety

seriously. This includes training for staff in bars, pubs and nightclubs in how to recognise unhealthy behaviour and steps to protect potential victims.

- **Alcohol & Consent Training – Across BCP**

STARS Dorset were commissioned to provide educational inputs for 15 to 20-year-olds, focusing on consent, respectful relationships and bystander awareness training. Recruiting three additional roles, this education saw more than 2,900 students engaged with a further 62 consent events delivered.

- **Community Guardianship Intervention**

Security staff recruited to conduct patrols every Friday and Saturday night in Bournemouth from 10pm to 2am. Further expansion saw patrols started on Tuesday and Thursday nights. The interactions with the patrols have covered a variety of issues ranging from picking up broken bottles, waiting with drunk people until their lift turns up, helping to call taxis for people who are stranded, guiding people in the right direction for their hotels, calling ambulances for people who have been hurt in a fight and providing ad hoc support as needed.

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

LSAVI is a self-assessment tool designed to help licensed premises provide a safer and more secure environment for their managers, staff, customers and local communities, covering topics such as, VAWG, drink spiking, CSE, violence, ASB, theft and burglary. Visits have been undertaken by the Licensing team and Dorset Police's Alcohol Harm Reduction team to encourage engagement.

- **The Pineapple Project – Weymouth, Portland & Dorchester**

Expansion of the Pineapple Project in Weymouth, Portland & Dorchester. The aim of the scheme is to safeguard young women in the community by partner shops and premises offering a safe space for women and girls should one be needed. 17 venues across Weymouth, Portland and Dorchester have gone through the vetting process, and the team have also visited schools and colleges where they have engaged with hundreds of young people to highlight the support they offer.

6. FINANCIAL CHALLENGES

What are the financial challenges in this area and what additional resources can be given to increase safety both in and around key venues and on public transport?

- 6.1 The financial predicament of Dorset Police is a matter of record, and Panel members are well versed in the challenges – suffice to say then that Dorset Police have had to, and are planning to, achieve over £15m pounds in savings through 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26, against a current operating budget of £183m.
- 6.2 The financial challenges in this area, therefore, are no different from other priority delivery areas. It should also be recognised that VAWG is a multifaceted issue and as a result does not have a specific or ringfenced budget allocation in its own right. That is not to say that funding is not prioritised for VAWG offences, quite the opposite in fact, with crime types such as domestic abuse and sexual violence prevention and victim services being prioritised across policing and partner agencies. However, the root causes of violence against women and girls are broad and investment is required right across the public and private system to drive improvements.
- 6.3 Indeed, were this a police funding issue alone, the challenges might arguably be more easily articulated and addressed. However, it is well recognised that wider societal and public health factors are at play – be that the education and support provided to boys

and young men, the impact of adverse childhood experiences, addiction, media/social media influence, and many other factors besides.

- 6.4 Specifically on budgets though, the cycle of competitive bidding, and time-limited and new funding initiatives is challenging and creates an environment of uncertainty, making it difficult to embed long-term solutions and develop sustainable partnerships with the private and voluntary sectors. By way of example, this paper articulates how a suite of initiatives designed to improve the safety of women at night have been piloted through various grant schemes, such as Safer Streets Fund, in very recent years. However, following the cessation of that funding, it has not always been possible to fully mainstream the delivery of those initiatives within existing budgets. That means that several of the various schemes and initiatives listed throughout this paper, whilst still operational, are not as fully funded as they once were and so have reduced in operation and scale over recent years.
- 6.5 Similarly, these funding constraints are also felt at the national level, and there has been some reduction in the delivery of national schemes in recent years, such as the:
- Railway Guardian app operated by British Transport Police, which allows users to share their journey with trusted contacts, and to directly contact BTP staff; and the
 - Enough campaign, which encourages everyone – but particularly men – to recognise, and safely call out and intervene when they witness inappropriate behaviour towards women and girls, often from within their own peer groups.
- 6.6 Even with a tighter, more local focus, the issue of safety is not merely the responsibility of the OPCC or police. Public place safety is hugely influenced by local authority investment and budgets. However, it is fully recognised that enhancing safety of women and girls by improving the physical infrastructure – for example through better lighting, CCTV, availability of bus or private hire services – requires significant capital investment, and that retrofitting existing venues or transport areas can be prohibitively expensive.
- 6.7 It is also equally realised that enhancing staffing for visible patrols, or dedicated contact or safety points, particularly those associated with the NTE, will require funding costly overtime, or increasing provisions for staff working at unsocial hours, and this can also be prohibitively expensive. However, the PCC assists with some of these budgets where possible. For example, the PCC provides annual funding towards CSAS schemes in Boscombe, Poole and Weymouth, which provide high visibility patrols during the day and night-time hours. These employees are council staff who have been accredited with limited police powers to deal with lower-level crime.
- 6.8 Equally, the OPCC, alongside partner agencies, will continue to explore opportunities to bid to Government funds to enable us to deliver evidence led programmes of work to prevent crime (see paragraph 5.12 onwards for further detail).

7. 'AFTER DARK' STRATEGY

What is the PCC's view on the initiatives adopted in Westminster and what appetite is there to consider a similar strategy across Dorset?

- 7.1 In March 2025, Westminster City Council launched its inaugural 'After Dark' strategy and implementation plan to improve the city's evening and night-time environment. The draft strategy closed for public consultation on 22 June, and at the time of writing, the final version of the strategy is planned for publication and implementation.
- 7.2 This strategy includes:

- Enhanced safety measures including expanded CCTV, better lighting and greater protections for women and vulnerable individuals.
- Dedicated Late-Night Entertainment Zones to encourage new live music and entertainment venues to set up away from residential areas.
- Improved accessibility and more family friendly or non-alcoholic activities.
- Support for LGBTQ+ venues.
- Improved night-time public spaces with amenities and inclusive design to create a welcoming environment for all.

- 7.3 The Westminster strategy appears to offer a comprehensive approach to managing the night-time economy by balancing safety, inclusivity, and economy. Given Dorset's existing initiatives and challenges, developing a localised version of this strategy might be beneficial, and would build on the existing work underway in BCP and Dorset to maintain a vibrant night-time economy whilst maintaining a clear commitment to safety, inclusivity, and diversity.
- 7.4 Given such a strategy would be local authority-led and recognising that both BCP Council and Dorset Council are well placed to lead the development of such a strategy, and undertake a broad public consultation, both Dorset Police and the OPCC would be content to be key delivery partners – in particular, contributing to the safety and enforcement aspects of the strategy.
- 7.5 When focusing on the section relevant to policing and crime prevention, it is evident that some of the activities detailed in the 'After Dark' Strategy align to the work delivered across the county over the last two years through the Home Office Safer Streets Grant (see paragraph 5.12).
- 7.6 Therefore, in the absence of a specific strategy, it offers reassurance that partners in Dorset can evidence they are prioritising and delivering initiatives and embedding best practice locally to help reduce VAWG and help make women and girls feel safer when out in our communities.

8. RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Members' Enquiries to: Adam Harrold, Director of Operations (01202) 229084

Media Enquiries to: Susan Bloss, Head of Communications & Engagement (01202) 229094

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POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – 24 JULY 2025

POLICE HEALTH AND WELLBEING

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a detailed update on officer, staff, and volunteer health and wellbeing, addressing key questions raised by the Dorset Police and Crime Panel. It explores how the PCC is holding the Chief Constable to account in creating a positive and resilient organisational culture while ensuring the accessibility and effectiveness of support services.

Policing in the UK continues to be a high-pressure occupation, with frequent exposure to trauma, public scrutiny, and evolving demands. This occupational stress has led to increased risks of burnout, mental ill health, and workforce attrition. In Dorset, data indicates higher-than-average long-term sickness absence, particularly due to mental health issues, which have accounted for over 55% of officer sickness days in recent reporting periods. Additionally, staff surveys reveal low morale, high stress levels, and a sense of feeling undervalued, though some indicators suggest officers also feel supported and fairly treated.

The need to improve employee health and wellbeing is included within the Dorset Police and Crime Plan 2021–29, with an additional strategic focus on improved resourcing, and the use of technology to reduce pressure on staff.

Dorset Police's wellbeing strategy, co-developed with Devon & Cornwall Police, includes a structured delivery plan and engagement with staff. The Force operates a dedicated wellbeing team, an internal occupational health service, and various initiatives, including Trauma Risk Informed Management (TRiM), psychological surveillance, and peer support. Innovative tools like trauma tracking, investigator wellbeing packs, and virtual events such as "Wellfest" further support this agenda. The Force approach aligns with national frameworks, such as the Policing Vision 2030 and the National Police Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2024–26, which advocate for holistic, inclusive, and preventative approaches across the employment journey – from recruitment to retirement.

Technology plays a critical role in improving workforce wellbeing and operational efficiency. Programmes such as Robotic Process Automation, Enhanced Video Response, and the Digital Evidence Management System help reduce administrative burden and streamline operations. The Force has also embraced flexible and remote working practices where feasible, contributing to improved work-life balance.

Governance of health and wellbeing is maintained through several oversight boards, including the Strategic People Board and the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Board. These forums enable data-driven decision-making and targeted interventions. The OPCC regularly scrutinises performance through these boards and other internal processes. Future challenges include addressing persistent funding constraints, technological capacity, cultural stigma around mental health, and the need for more inclusive strategies reflecting a diverse workforce. Rising NHS wait times and mental health treatment delays also limit external support options.

In conclusion, the PCC and Dorset Police demonstrate strong and sustained commitment to workforce wellbeing, recognising it as vital to public service delivery. Continued investment, cultural change, and collaboration will be essential to sustaining progress and supporting those who serve and protect the community.

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide members with an update on the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC's) work to hold the Force to account for promoting and improving the health and wellbeing of officers, staff and volunteers. This paper also seeks to address the Key Lines of Enquiry as provided by the Dorset Police and Crime Panel:

- I. What scrutiny has been undertaken on the impact of reductions in staffing levels and multi-role deployments on officer wellbeing and operational effectiveness?*
- II. How is the PCC holding the Chief Constable to account for ensuring a positive culture of leadership and wellbeing, including monitoring and mitigating the risk of burnout, trauma-related absences, and workforce attrition?*
- III. How does the PCC evaluate the accessibility and effectiveness of support services currently in place for staff, and remove any barriers to access the available support (stigma; workload; confidentiality concerns)? Are there mechanisms in place to ensure that support is proactively targeted rather than reactive?*
- IV. How does the Commissioner balance productivity / efficiency / wellbeing in meeting the priorities as set out in the Police and Crime Plan? To what extent does a reduced workforce require a consideration of prioritisation of targets within the plan?*
- V. How can efficiency be achieved through technology and other different ways of working?*

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Police officers – and indeed many police staff and volunteers – operate under intense pressure, often in complex situations and emotionally charged circumstances. Tasked with, among other things, protecting the public, enforcing the law, detecting and preventing crime, and maintaining social order, police personnel are regularly exposed to trauma, high-stakes decision-making, and significant personal risk.
- 1.2. This means that the psychological and physical toll of modern policing cannot be overstated. Officers, staff and volunteers are routinely exposed to traumatic incidents, including violent crimes, fatalities, domestic abuse, and serious road traffic collisions. Repeated exposure to such events increases the risk of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)¹, anxiety, depression, and burnout. Recent research and reviews, including those conducted by policing organisations², has revealed concerning levels of poor mental health within the police service. Despite a traditionally stoic culture within policing which can unfortunately discourage open discussions about emotional struggles, there is a growing acceptance that proactive mental health support is not only beneficial but necessary.
- 1.3. Alongside trauma exposure, morale within police forces in England and Wales has also become an increasing area of concern. Well documented funding limitations, reductions in workforce size, pay and remuneration decisions and increased public scrutiny have created

¹ [NHS](#)

² [Police Federation England and Wales](#)

an environment where many police employees feel undervalued and overstretched. At times, this can lead to feelings of frustration, helplessness, and professional dissatisfaction. Poor morale can directly impact productivity, decision-making, and public trust and confidence.

- 1.4. Moreover, rising demand on the police places additional strain on wellbeing. While crime levels in some areas have stabilised or declined, the nature of crime has evolved. Police forces are now dealing with more time-consuming investigations, sometimes compounded by delays within the wider criminal justice system. These demands can reduce time for recovery and reflection, increase shift lengths, and lead to disrupted sleep and work-life balance – factors which all contribute to declining physical and mental health outcomes, set within the context of what has been described as a national health crisis³.
- 1.5. Recognising these challenges, there has been a growing need to prioritise police health and wellbeing. This includes access to confidential mental health support, resilience training, peer support networks, and occupational health services that are responsive and properly funded. A healthy, resilient police workforce is not only better equipped to serve the public but is also more likely to remain in the profession, reducing turnover and preserving organisational knowledge. Indeed, the Dorset Police and Crime Plan 2021-29 contains various commitments relating to health and wellbeing.
- 1.6. This paper will outline the current position in Dorset Police and the steps being taken to protect and support officers, staff and volunteers – while also addressing the Police and Crime Panel's Key Lines of Enquiry.
- 1.7. As a final note to this introduction, the issue of police funding has a major impact upon all policy areas, health and wellbeing very much included, and is a topic that has been subject, and will continue to be subject, to much public discourse. For the purposes of this paper, it is assumed that the reader is aware of that wider context and, so, detailed discussions concerning police budget limitations, though relevant, are not repeated within this document.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Such is the importance of employee health and wellbeing, especially within the emergency service arena, that there are many national, regional and local strategies and plans that focus on this area. This is in addition to the broader considerations affecting the health and wellbeing of the UK population. The following section will outline several of the most relevant strategies in policing, alongside a summary of highlight data.

Dorset Police and Crime Plan 2021-29

- 2.2. It is well understood that Chief Constables are directly responsible for the independent operational delivery of policing services. The role of Chief Constable is broad, but naturally includes “leading, inspiring and engaging the Force, communicating a clear direction, and setting... a workforce culture that promotes wellbeing⁴”.
- 2.3. The PCC's role is to hold the Chief Constable to account and, with respect to health and wellbeing, this is captured in the Police and Crime Plan both directly and indirectly. Most prominently, there is a commitment in the Plan to “ensure the Force takes action to improve the mental and physical wellbeing of officers, staff and volunteers so that they are best able to perform their role in challenging and demanding circumstances”. More broadly, key themes within the Police and Crime Plan – such as efficiency, under Make Every Penny Count – are focussed on saving officer, staff and volunteer time; introducing evidence-based approaches

³ [Department of Health and Social Care](#)

⁴ [College of Policing](#)

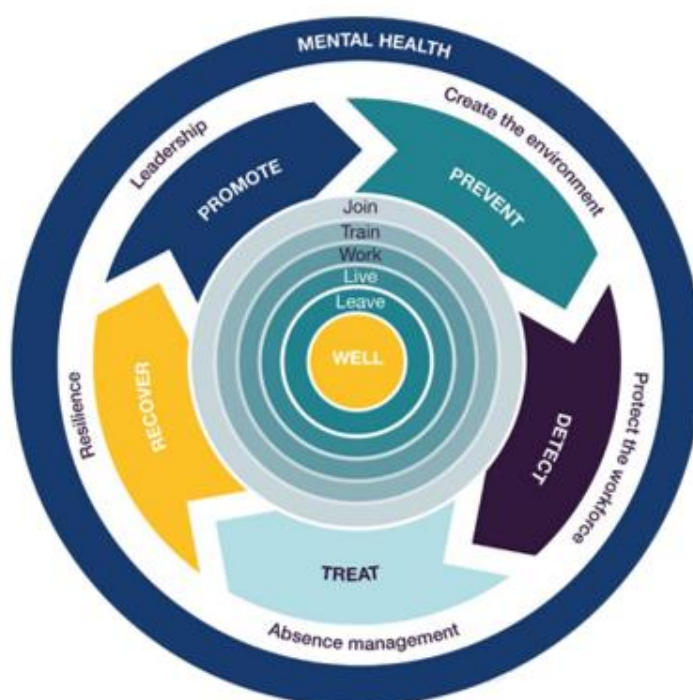
and transformative technology (such as robotic process automation); attracting further resource and, for instance, releasing the workforce “from the burden of bureaucracy”⁵.

- 2.4. In short, the PCC recognises that the health and wellbeing of the police service is of vital importance to the communities it serves. His approach, as set out in the Police and Crime Plan, both focuses on the specific leadership, cultural and service functions that help to deliver a healthy workforce, but also the efficiency and resourcing gains that can help to reduce the pressures on officers, staff and volunteers in the first place.

National Strategies

- 2.5. The **Policing Vision 2030**, produced in collaboration between the National Police Chiefs’ Council, Association of Police and Crime Commissioners and the College of Policing. The Vision provides an over-arching, longer-term vision to that the police service is well placed to deliver on local and national priorities. The vision is “by 2030, to be the most trusted and engaged policing service in the world working together to make communities safer and stronger”⁶ and is supported by five pillars. One of the pillars, to develop and inspire our workforce and evolve our culture is underpinned by an objective to “safeguard the workforce with a strong focus on both their physical and mental health and wellbeing”.
- 2.6. In support of this objective, is the **NPCC National Police Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2024-26**. The stated strategic objective for policing is to “Create, promote, and maintain the conditions for the police family, (police officers and police staff, employed or volunteers, and their families), to live healthy lifestyles in healthy environments, reducing injury, illness and suicide as far as possible, in order to maximise wellbeing, work ability and a sense of belonging”⁷.

National Police Health and Wellbeing Strategic Model



⁵ Pg. 22, [Dorset Police and Crime Plan 2021-29](#)

⁶ Pg. 3, [Policing Vision](#)

⁷ Pg. 5, [National Police Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2024 - 2026](#)

The National police health and wellbeing strategic model outlines ‘the holistic and integrated approach that forces should adopt to optimise workplace wellbeing and work ability’. At the centre of the above graphic is what is referred to as the ‘employment journey’, broken down into five key areas, namely: joining, training, working, living and leaving. To ensure that optimal workplace wellbeing is present throughout the employment journey, the model outlines the key elements that support organisational wellbeing, as follows:

- **Promote:** This element concerns the organisational culture and the need for leadership to promote a healthy lifestyle, and a safe, respectful work environment. This will encourage employees to make healthy lifestyle choices, live healthier lives and be more productive. It is expected that leaders ‘role model’ behaviours that promote wellbeing.
- **Prevent:** All police officers, staff and volunteers should be aware of the need to create a workplace environment that is conducive to wellbeing. Education and training are critical for effective prevention, providing people with the tools and knowledge to manage and take mitigating action for themselves and those they lead.
- **Detect:** Detection of the early signs of poor health and wellbeing is an important component of protecting the workforce. This is a key part of a safe working environment, in which the potential for the occurrence of ill health is recognised and acted upon.
- **Treat:** Early detection allows for early intervention, to enable optimal recovery. Treatment activity focuses on the restoration of health and wellbeing and the alleviation of symptoms of ill health. It includes access to effective self-help measures and support, alongside medical diagnosis, and treatment.
- **Recover:** Recovery combines personal resilience with organisational attributes, such as manager skill sets to support ill health at and diverse health and wellbeing services. The aim is an effective and swift return to employability and full productivity.
- **Mental Health:** Improving mental health and wellbeing is the overarching aim of the strategy. It builds on the cross-government outcomes strategy, No Health Without Mental Health. As far as possible mental ill health must be prevented.

Local Strategy

- 2.7. The Force’s strategy (which is co-produced with Devon & Cornwall) sets out to align with the abovementioned national strategy, ensuring consistency with the direction set across England and Wales and, also, across the Strategic Alliance.
- 2.8. The Force aims to educate and enable people to live healthy lifestyles in healthy environments; promote good health through strong leadership and a culture of wellbeing; and minimise the occurrence of ill health by raising awareness and empowering risk reduction. The Force sets out that wellbeing support will encompass prevention, early detection, and treatment of ill health. In addition, best practice rehabilitation will facilitate effective and timely return to full deployability and productivity.
- 2.9. The Force recognises the importance of listening to officers, staff and volunteers, and has put in place steps to strengthen employee voice and engagement through ongoing pulse surveys, engagement forums, and participation in the national annual workforce survey.
- 2.10. The Force has determined that the health and wellbeing interventions it provides must meet the following principles:

- Evidence-based;
- Follow a 'plan, develop, deliver, evaluate' model;
- Involve collaboration, coherence, and effective communication; and
- Be designed for all; they will be inclusive and destigmatising.

2.11. As outlined at section 2.4 and the following boxout, the national health and wellbeing strategy promotes a holistic approach to organisational wellbeing. The model maps out five key areas of the 'employment journey', all of which are incorporated with the Force approach.

The Employment Journey

The five key areas of the employment journey are described as:

Join Well – Starting your career with the right wellbeing support.

Good wellbeing begins at recruitment, ensuring that the job specification is appropriate, and that the person specification is commensurate with the demands of the role. In recruiting, the Force will make clear to job applicants the requirements of roles and the capabilities and capacities that will be assessed during selection. Joining the force is supported by suitable induction.

Train Well – Building resilience and understanding wellbeing throughout training

For police officers, staff and the volunteers, including the Special Constabulary, training must place health, safety, and wellbeing at its core. In addition, the avoidance of unlawful discrimination necessitates the identification of reasonable workplace adjustments and support to implement them successfully. Ongoing training helps individuals to better understand their responsibilities and supervisors to provide appropriate guidance, support and intervention.

Work Well – Providing ongoing support throughout your career

Working well is concerned with safe systems of work based on risk management and health needs assessments.

Live Well – Ensuring your wellbeing is supported outside work too

Living well recognises the interaction between work and lifestyle. A culture of wellbeing should facilitate a better understanding of self and the adoption of health behaviours to underpin a sustained quality of life at individual and social levels.

Leave Well – Helping you prepare for retirement or career transition

Last, but not least, leaving well recognises the importance of people leaving the police in a state of positive wellbeing. This contributes to a sense of being valued by the Force. People leaving the police should feel equipped to move forward with the next phase of their lives. There is also a duty to society to ensure that people leave in the best possible health and potentially enriched and enabled as a consequence of their time in the police.

2.12. The local strategy is underpinned by detailed delivery plans, which are the subject of discussion and review at the Strategic People Board.

Health and Wellbeing Data

- 2.13. There are a variety of measures that can be used to determine organisational health and wellbeing performance – with no one measure providing a complete picture of efficacy and efficiency. For the purposes of this paper, a small selection has been included, although it should be recognised that it is not always appropriate, or especially helpful, to compare the following information with broader health and wellbeing datasets or other industries. This is because the police workforce – and the roles undertaken by much of that workforce – is not necessarily representative of the working population as a whole.
- 2.14. For policing, the latest available national absence data captures long-term absence rates as of 31 March 2024⁸. Long-term absence is any absence that has lasted for more than 28 calendar days, as at the end of the reporting period.
- 2.15. The data for all forces in England and Wales:

	Sickness	Maternity/ Paternity leave	Career break	Suspended	Grand Total
Officers	2.1%	1.0%	0.5%	0.5%	4.0%
Staff	2.0%	1.3%	0.2%	0.2%	3.7%
Total	2.0%	1.1%	0.4%	0.4%	3.9%

- 2.16. The data for Dorset Police only:

	Sickness	Maternity/ Paternity leave	Career break	Suspended	Grand Total
Officers	2.5%	0.8%	0.3%	0.4%	4.1%
Staff	2.6%	1.1%	0.3%	0.0%	3.9%
Total	2.5%	0.9%	0.3%	0.2%	4.0%

- 2.17. Overall, this data shows that Dorset Police's level of long-term sickness absence was higher than the national average, for both officers and staff – 2.5% of the workforce on average, as opposed to 2% of the workforce on average nationally.
- 2.18. When considering these figures, it is, however, important that the wider context is considered – in terms of numbers, this rate represented 37 officers and 32 staff on long-term sickness. For these numbers to align with the national average this would equate to only seven fewer officers and seven fewer staff. Furthermore, the overall long-term absence rate, when taking into consideration maternity/paternity, career break and suspensions shows that Dorset is close to the national average at 4.1%.
- 2.19. In terms of the reasons for sickness absence, the following two tables show the frequency of reasons for absence for Dorset, along with the percentage of days lost:

2024 Percentage rates of sickness by reason for sickness occurrence:

Sickness Reason 2024	Officer instances of sickness	Staff instances of sickness
Respiratory	26.7%	26.4%
Mental Health	18.3%	12.5%
Digestive disorders	17.4%	14.5%
Muscular-Skeletal	8.9%	9.4%

⁸ [Police workforce open data tables](#)

2024 Percentage of all sickness days lost by category:

Sickness Reason 2024	Officer % of Total sickness days	Staff % of Total sickness days
Mental Health	54%	38.7%
Muscular-Skeletal	10.5%	13.1%
Respiratory Conditions	9.6%	17.2%

- 2.20. These two tables clearly demonstrate that while respiratory conditions (such as colds, flu and coronavirus) are the most common reason for sickness occurrence, that mental ill health is responsible for the largest percentage of sickness days lost.
- 2.21. It is also clear that long-term mental health absences appear to affect the officer cohort at a greater rate than staff. Comparisons between officers and staff do need to be treated with some care, however, bearing in mind that there are notable differences in protected characteristics between the two groups.
- 2.22. This percentage of sickness due to mental health has also increased in recent years. For officers this percentage was 39.5% in 2020/21, it then decreased to 36.8% in 2021/22, before increasing to 48.6% in 2022/23, and then 55.7% in 2023/24.
- 2.23. Looking into the officer data a little more deeply, during 2024/25, 211 officers recorded at least one day of absence for mental health reasons. Duplicate records where officers have more than one occurrence during 2024/25 have been taken out to only show total headcount:

Mental Health	Headcount
Anxiety	39
Depression	13
Other mental disorders (inc. bipolar, schizophrenia, hypomania)	2
Other stress	139
Post Traumatic Stress	18
Total	211

Police Morale

- 2.24. Each year the staff association for police constables, sergeants, inspectors (including chief inspectors), and special constables, the Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW), conducts a Pay and Morale Survey among its membership. The 2024 results were published earlier this year⁹.
- 2.25. As has been the case for some time now, the headline results make for sobering reading for police leaders – with high levels of pay dissatisfaction and low levels of morale being reported.
- 2.26. The Dorset Police Federation published the local results on 1 May – with 259 responses received from Dorset Police officers¹⁰, representing 19% of the officers working for Dorset Police. Using this information, it is possible to compare the Dorset responses with the national figures:

⁹ [Police Federation England and Wales](#)

¹⁰ [Dorset Police Federation](#)

Measure	Dorset	National
Worse off financially than five years ago	81%	79%
'Never' or 'Almost Never' cover essentials	18%	15%
Intend to leave within two years	26%	23%
Low morale	58%	57%
Disrespected by government	94%	84%
Wouldn't recommend joining	79%	75%
Don't feel valued	79%	73%
Workload 'too high' or 'much too high'	56%	63%
Very/extremely stressful job	45%	44%
Experiencing mental health issues	85%	80%

- 2.27. The information indicates that Dorset responses broadly mirror national financial, morale, and stress challenges, but with a heightened risk of experiencing mental health issues. Dorset respondents reported less workload pressure compared with the national figures, but notably more respondents felt disrespected by government.
- 2.28. Although arguably less well-reported, the public service union, Unison, also undertake a Police Staff Pay and Morale Survey. Although Dorset data has not yet been made available, the headline figures from the last survey¹¹ indicate that police staff respondents share similar sentiments to those of the police officers completing the PFEW survey.
- 2.29. For instance, 64% reported low morale, a fifth of police staff members who responded are either intending to leave policing in the next two years or are actively looking for a new job now and a strong majority do not feel valued at work or respected by the government. Otherwise, headline figures include that 75% say that their pay has not maintained their living standards, 73% said there were insufficient staff in their workplace to get the job done and 35% said they were pressured to work long hours.
- 2.30. Of course, while the figures contained within the Police Federation and Unison surveys are concerning, it is also important to say that there is also ample information to suggest that many Dorset Police employees have positive feelings towards the organisation. For instance, the HMICFRS PEEL workforce survey¹² found that 72.5 percent (709 of 978) of respondents felt proud to be a member of Dorset Police and 74.8 percent (731 of 978) of respondents agreed the force treats them fairly. Furthermore, the survey found that 76.5 percent (748 of 978 respondents) agreed that their line manager helped them to achieve their full potential.

3. CURRENT ACTIVITY

- 3.1. As already outlined in this paper, health and wellbeing is an area of critical importance to the Force and so, unsurprisingly, a considerable amount of activity is undertaken to support the workforce. The following section of this report seeks to summarise key activity and information and is not intended to be exhaustive.

Wellbeing Structure and Resourcing

- 3.2. The strategic alliance Health and Wellbeing function reports into the Head of Operational Human Resources, who in turn reports into the Assistant Chief Officer.

¹¹ [Unison 2024 Police Staff Pay and Morale Survey](#)

¹² [PEEL 2023–25: Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy – An inspection of Dorset Police](#)

- 3.3. There is a dedicated wellbeing team for both forces, comprising a Wellbeing Manager, a sergeant and four wellbeing practitioners. Additionally, the Force has a health and fitness lead and a dedicated Trauma Risk Informed Management (TRiM) manager.

Trauma Risk Informed Management (TRiM)

The trauma management model called TRiM has been used within Dorset for around a decade. This proactive programme provides support and signposting for those who have been involved in traumatic incidents. It involves a confidential meeting with a trained colleague to talk through a traumatic incident to assess how well recovery is progressing, signposting to specialist support when appropriate.

TRiM is not classed as a preventative measure but is considered an early intervention that identifies possible harmful reactions and addresses them appropriately. The intent is to capitalise on the natural processes that occur after traumatic events, such as meeting in groups; talking the event through; and looking after each other. There is a strong focus on removing the stigma attached to the normal experience of strong emotions following distressing and/or abnormal events.

TRiM should help towards keeping people working and prevent long-term absence through psychological injury by identifying psychological problems at an early stage.

There are over 20 TRiM practitioners in Dorset Police, each trained to undertake assessments that can indicate those personnel more at risk of developing post trauma reactions and those that may require treatment.

TRiM interventions are put into place ideally 72 hours, and then 28 days, after the traumatic incident has occurred. This is in accordance with the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidelines on managing trauma reactions.

Treatment can be rapidly put into place for identified employees as appropriate providing considerable benefits both to the individual and also the organisation.

Between April 2024 and March 2025, 214 incidents were followed up in Dorset with 991 employees contacted and 55 assessments taking place. Around 35% of individuals assessed are referred on for additional psychological support.

- 3.4. There is also a Welfare Team and Dorset Police also employs a part-time police chaplain, who oversees the other 10 volunteer chaplains who support a range of activity across the Force. Additionally, the Force has six local wellbeing groups, which focus on supporting several large and unique business areas, such as contact management.
- 3.5. Additionally, the Force has safeguarding and deputy safeguarding leads for learning, alongside a suite of wellbeing and support materials hosted and developed by Dorset Police and the University of South Wales. Various Force leads meet fortnightly to discuss student progress, health and wellbeing and retention matters.
- 3.6. The Force has a dedicated wellbeing budget which is used to support a range of wellbeing initiatives from local wellbeing grants through to the provision of 'Mental Health for manager' inputs and resilience building workshops.

Internal Occupational Health Unit Service

- 3.7. The Alliance Occupational Health (OH), Welfare & Wellbeing service offers support to Dorset, Devon and Cornwall officers, staff and volunteers. Current practice is evidence-based to meet

national standards, with a network of counsellors and clinical psychologists offering early psychological support to the workforce.

- 3.8. Since 2019/20 OH has seen a significant rise in demand in terms of new annual management referral rates across both Forces. For Dorset, the average number of new referrals per quarter stood at 68.25 in 2019/20 compared with 103.5 average referrals per quarter in 2024/25. Of these, there was an average of 32.5 new referrals principally related to stress/mental health per quarter in 2019/20, with the corresponding figure standing at 63.25 in 2024/25. In summary then, notwithstanding officer uplift numbers, it can be seen that referrals have increased since 2019/20, with a greater proportion of said referrals relating to stress/mental health. The 2024/25 figures do not represent the peak for referrals – for Dorset this was 2023/24 (110.5 average new referrals per quarter).
- 3.9. In the face of this rising demand, the service was also impacted by some complexities concerning a regional data management system and resourcing fragility in the sector – with recruitment and retention of specialist OH staff proving challenging at a local, regional and national level.
- 3.10. A Gold Group was stood up to improve OH timeliness, which is further detailed under section 4.5 of this report.

Health and Wellbeing Initiatives

- 3.11. In terms of wellbeing initiatives on offer to the workforce, these are extensive with many having been in place for several years. Some of the newer developments are noted below:
- Health Surveillance – the Alliance continues to work to deliver an effective Psychological Health Surveillance package centred on suitable and sufficient risk assessment and well-defined populations at risk. There are currently 400 Officers and staff in the Dorset programme – including those in areas such as roads policing and the Paedophile Online Investigation Team, for example – with the intent to introduce a diagnostic stage so that the scheme can be rolled out further.
 - Trauma Tracker – the Police Traumatic Events Checklist is being used to assist in a pilot to increase awareness around incidents, with a framework to empower a more effective line manager investment following stressful exposures. In Dorset, this has been developed into a trauma tracker and will allow the traumatic incidents that individuals officers attend to be tracked, taking into account cumulative effect, to inform line managers and assist with meaningful welfare checks. This was launched in February 2025, with the intention to move to a position of early intervention rather than reacting to mental health crisis.
 - Trauma Impact Processing Techniques – this evidenced-based skill set of techniques to help individuals process trauma is being rolled out to control room staff. Other key groups like roads policing and the collision investigation team are being considered for later in 2025.
 - Pause-Point – this national recommended project is being rolled out as a pilot to teams across Public Protection Unit. This is providing managers with additional training around how the brain reacts to stress and trauma and a structured plan of welfare meetings with staff focused individual's wellbeing. For those staff exposed to traumatising material on a daily basis (for instance, those investigating child sexual exploitation evidence) Pause Point proactively allows for staff to be placed in an alternative role for a period of time when necessary.
 - Oscar Kilo Van Tour – the OK Van Tour took place for five weeks. There was a strong footfall seen throughout the tour, which was promoted and supported by the Wellbeing

team, OK9 Dogs, volunteers, Federation and Unison Representatives, chaplains and other staff. In Dorset there were over 730 interactions with staff and over 160 individuals choosing to have 'Health Lifestyle checks' using body composition scales.

- Op Hampshire – a dedicated Op Hampshire intranet site has been established in force. Operation Hampshire is the [nationwide strategy](#) to help forces understand, support and seek justice for all types of assault and hate crime directed at officers, staff and volunteers. Op Hampshire does not advocate for special measures for police victims but provides a structure to ensure that the correct response is provided for the people who serve and protect the public.
- Wellfest – the Force continues to invest in and deliver an annual virtual, interactive festival of wellbeing called 'Wellfest'. Wellfest was expanded in 2024. A two-week event saw 8000 tickets prebooked given a wide range of wellbeing topics and over 5000 attendees. Customer feedback was extremely positive with 95% of returns identifying the experience as very satisfying or extremely satisfying. Ongoing development in this area highlights the Alliance forces as significant innovators, investing in practice that promotes mental health in the profession.
- Investigator wellbeing pack – this has been developed specifically for investigators and includes a range of models, information and resource links for our investigators who we know are under significant pressure. Alongside this, a detectives retention working group, chaired by a Superintendent, has been established to look at the short and long term issues affecting the retention of PIP level 2 investigators.
- Health Screening and Education Programme – in response to feedback from the Police Superintendents Association concerning the demands of multi-role pressures at Superintendent and Chief Superintendent rank, and considering similar pressures on other senior leaders, a bespoke programme is currently underway. Informed by medical reports, educational inputs are provided so that attendees are provided with an honest assessment of their personal health and empowered to take proactive preventative action, if necessary, to promote optimal health.
- Misconduct Peer Support – this peer support programme is for all individuals subject to a gross misconduct notice or a victim or witness in a gross misconduct case. This was launched in Dorset in June 2025 after a successful trial in Devon and Cornwall and is managed by the wellbeing team.
- Physiotherapy Services – Nuffield Health continue to offer a high-quality capability with great availability and access across the Alliance. This capability offers early intervention designed to align with NHS care, with accredited clinicians in place to offer therapy underpinned by NICE guidance.
- Hot Weather Response – officers, staff and volunteers have worked and, according to forecasts will continue to work, in exceptionally hot and dry conditions this year. Naturally, frontline employees are less able to follow the advice given to the general public (such as remaining in shade or wearing looser clothing) and so the PCC has confirmed funding for refreshments and other resources to be made available this summer. Details are currently being finalised with Force wellbeing colleagues.

3.12. As identified by the Panel's Key Lines of Enquiry, a key focus for the much of the activity listed above and other existing initiatives used by Dorset Police is to remove the stigma – particularly within the emergency services arena – associated with ill health and seeking support. Reassurances about confidentiality are regularly provided.

3.13. One of the ways that the Force and OPCC works to address this stigma is through regular communication and engagement activity. This can be achieved through events such as the

aforementioned Wellfest, Change Your Mind 999, or the [On Track Mental Health Event](#), via Force peer support groups and networks and regular campaigns. In recent months this has included the dissemination of [wellbeing films](#) launched by Oscar Kilo, the National Police Wellbeing Service; launch of the National Suicide Action Plan; menopause awareness and support sessions; and many other updates besides. All of this activity is designed to not only signpost to help and support, but also to embed a culture in which employees feel comfortable and confident in seeking assistance.

Change Your Mind 999

Presented by the Dorset Police Men's Health Forum, the Change Your Mind 999 conference, is one such example of work being undertaken to challenge the stigma associated with mental ill health.

Change Your Mind 999 took place last September and was sponsored by Assistant Chief Officer Jo Mosley. The conference provided a safe space to discuss experiences around the issues that confront frontline responders, including stress, anxiety, depression, stigma, and male suicide, alongside the need for increased wellbeing and culture change.

The evening featured Ben Pearson from TV's Interceptors on The Job That Broke Me; Dorset Police supervisors on stress and stigma; author Steve Whittle on reducing male suicide and mental health stigma; and the renowned travelling psychologist Hugo Metcalf on wellbeing and culture change. The invitation was open to all officers and staff within Dorset Police, and their partners should they choose, as they often form an essential part of individuals' support networks.

Efficiency, Technology and New Ways of Working

- 3.14. In terms of efficiency, the Panel has previously been sighted on Project Evolve, which continues to identify ways in which the Force can work more effectively and brings together workstreams with the common aims of:
- Continuing to improve service by putting the public first;
 - Ensuring every penny of public money is spent wisely; and
 - Making it easier for employees, staff and volunteers to do an even better job.
- 3.15. As part of Evolve, and through the work associated with the Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme, the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, an internal leadership review, and Op Frontline, the Force has been able to release officers back into neighbourhood and operational roles, to relieve pressure on frontline colleagues. Evolve is also focusing on ensuring specialist investigative teams are adequately resourced; and the arrival of a new Police Staff Investigator cohort later this year will also help to increase investigative capacity across the county.
- 3.16. The Panel received a significant update on the police use of technology in December 2024, which provided 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. The framing of this paper, in line with the Panel's Key Lines of Enquiry, was focussed on efficiency and improved performance, but the crossover with the health and wellbeing agenda is clear. First because, as outlined in section 2.3, the Police and Crime Plan addresses health and wellbeing under the theme of efficiency, but also because so many of the examples cited are designed to reduce demand – a key pressure affecting the health and wellbeing of the workforce.

- 3.17. Case studies outlined within the paper¹³ include Robotic Process Automation (a series of automations seeking to reduce manual activity for officers, staff and volunteers, increase productivity and reduce errors); digital solutions, such as Pronto, GoodSam and Enhanced Video Response (enabling policing activity to be completed remotely in order to provide both a superior service to the public, while also reducing the need for unnecessary travel); and the Digital Evidence Management System (again, streamlining time consuming evidence collection, storage and system processes).
- 3.18. Of course, beyond the demand reduction benefits that technology can bring, there are also ample examples of technology being used specifically to support health and wellbeing initiatives. Indeed, most of the examples listed at 3.11 are either cyber-enabled or cyber-dependent – for instance, Wellfest is delivered via online conferencing technology and the trauma tracking process is delivered by automation in the first instance.
- 3.19. In recent years, and especially since the Covid-19 pandemic, many public sector organisations have also embraced ‘New Ways of Working’, including Dorset Police. Of course, for frontline officers, staff and volunteers, there are obvious restrictions on where, when and how certain tasks can be completed. Nevertheless, the ability for much of the workforce to complete jobs more flexibly and from the most effective locations has proven health and wellbeing benefits. The Panel has previously received detailed updates on New Ways of Working, but the principles agreed across the alliance remain as follows:



4. GOVERNANCE AND SCRUTINY

- 4.1. Health and wellbeing data and performance is subject to considerable scrutiny, with a well-established governance process.

Force Level Meetings

- 4.2. Oversight of organisational HR activity and performance, of which Health and Wellbeing is one core component, is undertaken by the Strategic People Board. This is an Alliance meeting chaired by the Assistant Chief Officers of both Dorset Police and Devon & Cornwall Police. The Board considers policies and procedures for approval and receives reports from

¹³ Pg 33-47, [Dorset OPCC Police Use of Technology Report](#)

several sub-groups – including the Retention Working Group; the Employee Engagement Working Group; and the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Board, among others. Dorset OPCC is represented at this Board.

- 4.3. As would be expected, given that workforce health and wellbeing is crucial to the operational efficacy of the organisation, key workforce data is reported to the Force Performance Board, which is attended by the PCC's Chief Executive, and the Dorset Strategic Workforce Demand Group. Significant developments are subject to deep dives at the Force Performance Board to ensure a wider awareness of the relevant issues and a collaborative approach to problem solving.
- 4.4. Reporting on workforce data, including retention (or workforce attrition) levels, is also subject to scrutiny via the Resource Control Board, which is attended by the OPCC Chief Executive and Treasurer, and the OPCC has also been briefed on the Student Officer Retention Plan. Similarly, an ongoing review of on-call rotas is expected to be reported back to this forum in due course.
- 4.5. As previously outlined to the Panel, decisions relating to staffing numbers, which can impact employee health and wellbeing, are informed by a detailed BRAG assessment. For example, the reduction of police staff following the Mutually Agreed Resignation scheme was underpinned by an understanding of the demand and resourcing issues affecting departments and commands across the Force. This meant that critical areas of business, such as the Force Control Room, were excluded from the scheme and staff have been reorientated into areas with the most critical need.
- 4.6. The Force can also establish Gold Groups to respond to more critical areas of concern. As set out at sections 3.6-3.9, the increase in management referrals to Occupational Health at the same time as delays had been reported between referral and appointment has led to a Gold Group being established. This group has already had a marked impact, with wait times reduced from eight weeks to five; significantly fewer referrals awaiting appointments; a resourcing plan in place; and other service improvements, such as efforts to reduce unattended appointments. Additionally, a review of referral guidance and more effective communication with line managers has helped ease the most acute impact on the service.

Police and Crime Plan Delivery

- 4.7. The priorities and commitments within the Police and Crime Plan are underpinned by a detailed delivery framework and, as required, supporting project and/or programme plans. These are monitored through Force Boards, quarterly data updates, PCC-led scrutiny panels and other arrangements as might be necessary and appropriate.
- 4.8. The commitment to "ensure the Force takes action to improve the mental and physical wellbeing of officers, staff and volunteers so that they are best able to perform their role in challenging and demanding circumstances" is no different. Indeed, it is hoped that this paper – despite by no means being an exhaustive list of activity – provides evidence of both the action taken by the Force and, also, the information being considered and monitored by the OPCC.
- 4.9. In terms of the wider Plan and the impact of productivity, efficiency and wellbeing in meeting the PCC's six priorities, this is established during the production of the Police and Crime Plan and as part of the ongoing review process. As set out in legislation, the PCC is required to consult with the Chief Constable in preparing the draft Plan or when varying said Plan. Naturally, there is ongoing dialogue between the Chief Officers and the OPCC Senior Management, but operational viability was a specific consideration when first launching the PCC's Plan in 2021 and, again, in refreshing the document in 2024. In other words, the Chief Constable has confirmed that the commitments within the Plan are achievable and, where relevant, advised the PCC on the timescale for delivery.

- 4.10. Naturally, workforce numbers and availability affect the ability to deliver commitments as swiftly as the Force and PCC would wish and there is a dynamic approach to agreeing targets and milestones subject to resourcing.

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

- 4.11. Given that the health and wellbeing of the workforce is critical, it is unsurprising that it is also a feature of the HMICFRS inspection regime.
- 4.12. Information concerning wellbeing is included within the Force Management Statement (FMS). The FMS is a self-assessment that Chief Constables prepare and provide to HMICFRS each year. It is central to forces' strategic, financial and workforce planning processes and includes considerations, such as current and projected demand; workforce assessment (including wellbeing); prioritisation and planning and risk management. The HMICFRS require the FMS to inform inspections of forces' efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy, thematic reports and to inform HM Chief Inspector's 'Annual State of Policing' report¹⁴.
- 4.13. The latest PEEL Report for Dorset was [published](#) in April 2025. Within the report, the Force was graded as adequate for the category of 'Building, supporting and protecting the workforce', with a single area for improvement listed as 'the force needs to make sure that the occupational health unit effectively supports the well-being of the workforce'. The main findings in this area included:
- Workloads in some teams are high, and personnel are working on complex cases that affect the workforce's well-being;
 - The force gives support to those in high-risk roles and who might experience potentially traumatic incidents;
 - The force supports its new recruits and makes efforts to retain them;
 - The force is improving its systems and processes for personal development reviews to make sure that development review meetings add value to officers and staff; and
 - The force creates opportunities for personnel to develop and is promoting equality, diversity and inclusion through positive action.
- 4.14. The PEEL report and FMS are useful documents that can aid the OPCC's scrutiny activity, as well as to provide additional information and context for the purposes of assessing best practice and ongoing performance.

5. OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES AHEAD

- 5.1. A thorough analysis of the future opportunities and challenges associated with health and wellbeing could command a separate report in and of itself. For the purposes of this paper, however, a summary of some of the key areas will be outlined. Naturally, most of these considerations are true across wider society and not simply policing.

Resourcing

- 5.2. Although this paper has sought not to repeat the well-rehearsed debate on Dorset Police's funding, it is nevertheless the case that one of the most prominent areas of opportunity and challenge remains that of resourcing. A prolonged period of funding cuts and increasing costs has suppressed staffing numbers and hindered the capital expenditure programme – the former often resulting in increased workloads, the latter making it difficult to 'invest to save' and embrace beneficial technology as quickly, or thoroughly as desirable. Of course, this remains an area of considerable opportunity and where funding is made available – whether

¹⁴ [Force Management Statement: Guidance and Template for Forces](#)

through Uplift or the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, for example – this can result in positive change.

Technology

- 5.3. While it can be challenging for public sector organisations to take a lead on technological innovation, there is little doubt that considerable opportunities lie ahead. The use of wearable tech, artificial intelligence and health data can be used to tailor personalised wellness programs; genetic testing and biometric scans can be used to offer insights and customise employee health plans; applications and software platforms can incorporate ‘nudge’ techniques to promote healthy habits; and remote technology not only facilitates flexible working, but also virtual appointments. Of course, aside from the financial cost of such innovation, organisations need to be mindful of factors such as digital overload and associated privacy concerns.

Culture and Personal Resilience

- 5.4. Despite the extensive activity outlined in this paper, and the overwhelming evidence that sets out the importance of embedding the principles of health and wellbeing in the everyday conversations that happen within policing, there remains a deep-rooted stigma around showing vulnerability or asking for help. Policing culture has traditionally prized personal resilience or toughness, and this sense of stoicism and having a ‘stiff upper lip’ still pervades. As a result, changing the culture within policing can be slow and met with resistance. It remains the case that some officers, staff and volunteers may distrust or disengage from wellbeing programs, seeing them as tokenistic or intrusive, and others may see engaging with welfare and support services as somehow career limiting, or badging them as someone not cut out for the rigours of policing.
- 5.5. Policing leadership is taking active steps to address this, and many Chief Officers now speak openly about their own struggles with physical and mental health, for example. Similarly, it is also anticipated that as younger generations enter the police workforce, there will be a resulting shift in expectations around wellbeing, transparency, and support in any event. This cultural evolution may encourage a move away from the traditional ‘tough it out’ mindset and promote more open conversations about stress, trauma, and support-seeking behaviour, which it is hoped will have positive results in the comparatively high levels of stress, fatigue, poor morale and disillusionment experienced within policing.
- 5.6. Dorset Police, like the wider public sector, is also working to better reflect the communities it serves, aspiring for a more diverse workforce. Of course, this will also require nimble health and wellbeing strategies and practice as different communities can experience health and wellbeing differently too. Women, people with disabilities or neurodiversity, ethnic minority groups, and members of the LGBTQ+ community may all face additional pressures such as discrimination, exclusion, or lack of representation. Inclusive wellbeing strategies must address these inequalities to ensure that all members of the Force feel safe and supported. Of note, is the significant increase in the number of individuals with diagnosed neurodiverse needs within policing. The National Police Autism Association (NPAA) was set up as a national group for those in policing with, or supporting those affected by, neurodivergent conditions such as autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). While the number of those within policing with neurodiverse needs is not currently known, in August 2024, the NPAA had around 2800 members across UK policing.

Treatment and Society

- 5.7. Dorset Police, like any employer, is affected by not only the general health and wellbeing of the wider population, but also the quality and timeliness of treatment. As detailed in this paper, the Force has implemented strategies and plans to not only help prevent injury and illness, but to identify health and wellbeing issues as soon as possible. And, while the Force

also funds several treatment initiatives, delivered by the private sector, this is clearly limited in scope. The Panel will be aware that NHS waiting lists are considerably higher today than in previous years, with over seven million cases (over six million unique patients) waiting to start treatment as of April 2025¹⁵ and 59.7% of patients waiting 18 weeks or less to start consultant-led elective treatment¹⁶. There are also well-publicised delays in mental health treatment and support¹⁷. Naturally, access to swifter treatment represents a considerable opportunity for all employers, the Force included.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1. As set out within this document, there is a considerable and sustained focus on health and wellbeing within policing. This is demonstrated through activity, plans and strategies from the local through to the national level.
- 6.2. The PCC is clear that the health and wellbeing of those who keep our communities safe is of paramount importance and has set out his approach within the Dorset Police and Crime Plan. He recognises the many benefits that improvements in this area can bring to officers, staff, volunteers, and, naturally, the wider public.
- 6.3. The PCC, along with his office, will continue to scrutinise Force performance in this area to ensure delivery of the commitments within the Police and Crime Plan.

7. RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1. Members are recommended to note the paper.

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¹⁵ [Nuffield Trust NHS Performance Dashboard](#)

¹⁶ [Nuffield Trust NHS Performance Dashboard](#)

¹⁷ [Rethink Mental Illness, New Analysis of NHS Data on Mental Health Waiting Times](#)