



DORSET

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

AGENDA NO: 11

POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – 24 SEPTEMBER 2019

UPDATE ON UTILISATION OF TARGETED PRECEPT FUNDING

REPORT TO THE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report provides an update on the outcomes that have been achieved so far as a result of the targeted Precept increases for 2019/20.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) in each force area has a statutory duty and electoral mandate to ensure an efficient and effective police service and to hold the police to account on behalf of the public. The PCC is the recipient of funding relating to policing and crime reduction, including government grant and precept and other sources of income. How this money is allocated is a matter for the PCC in consultation with the Chief Constable and in compliance with any grant terms.
- 1.2 The PCC is required to set a balanced budget in accordance with the provisions of Section 32 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. In addition, Section 26 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 establishes the PCC as a precepting authority for the purposes of the 1992 Act.
- 1.3 At the February 2019 meeting of the Dorset Police and Crime Panel, members considered a report from the PCC's Chief Finance Officer which set out the proposed precept for Dorset. Members were advised of the changing and increasing demands faced by the Force and that the precept decision for 2019/20 needed to consider both immediate and medium-term resourcing requirements to enable the delivery of the 2017-21 Police and Crime Plan.
- 1.4 The 2019/20 police funding settlement provided PCCs with the flexibility to raise the precept by £24 for a Band D equivalent property. The PCC provided his rationale for a proposed precept increase of £24 and urged members to take full advantage of this flexibility to enable the force to maintain high quality services and allow for investment in new capabilities required to meet growing demand. Extensive public consultation had shown strong support for the PCC's proposals across the county.
- 1.5 The Chief Constable detailed these demands and explained what the £24, if approved, would be used for. He highlighted six main areas of focus, namely:
 - Rural crime prevention/detection enhancement
 - Marine crime prevention/detection enhancement
 - Tackling county lines drug networks
 - Volunteer Police Cadets

- Improvements to youth justice
- The Bobby Van scheme

1.6 The Panel unanimously voted to support the increase in the precept of £24 per annum on a Band D property for 2019-20. The Panel Chair subsequently wrote to the PCC providing formal notification of the Panel's support for the precept increase and that the Panel would seek assurance that the PCC was holding the Chief to account for delivery against the above six areas of focus.

2. **PROGRESS TO DATE**

Innovation Fund and Innovation Board

2.1 The budget proposals included £1m for an Innovation Fund, comprising £500k recurring budget (provided by £500k efficiencies in Force budgets) and £500k one-off funding (£250k from the Police & Crime Plan (commissioning) reserve, and £250k from General Balances made possible because of the higher collection fund surplus for 2019/20). This Fund was identified to enable investment in new capabilities required to respond to the challenges faced by Dorset Police and as outlined to the Panel by the PCC and Chief Constable.

2.2 All members of Dorset Police can submit ideas designed to assist the Force in adapting and evolving to meet the ever-changing needs of the organisation and the people of Dorset. These ideas are considered at a joint OPCC and Force Innovation Board, which is co-chaired by the PCC's Chief Executive and Dorset Police's Deputy Chief Constable. The Board assesses the suitability of ideas; assists officers and staff take approved ideas from concept through to delivery; monitors progress of funded initiatives; and sets in place evaluation processes to ensure value for money is achieved.

2.3 To date, the Innovation Board has received over sixty ideas for consideration, and has provided funding to a wide range of initiatives, including the six areas as outlined to the Panel by the Chief Constable. Some further examples are:

- The purchase of software licences to allow information sharing via a Government cloud hosted multi-agency case management system. This will allow Dorset Police, Dorset Council and BCP Council to use the same system to manage multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs).
- The enhancement of the system used to process data taken from cellular and other digital networks. For evidential purposes, data logs taken from a variety of disparate systems (mobile phone, WiFi, ANPR, etc) are combined. This allows for the automation of this process.
- The extension to the pool of mobile phones and for the purchase of a further 200 mobile alarms that can be provided to vulnerable people, to allow for fast time safeguarding options.
- The purchase of a software product that allows for victims or witnesses to digitally sign a statement that can be taken via telephone, thus removing the necessity for this process to be conducted face-to-face.

Areas of Focus

2.4 **Rural Crime Prevention/Detection Enhancement**

The Dorset Police Rural Crime Team was established on 15 August 2016 and formed one of the PCC's commitments for his first '100 Days in Office'. At launch, the Rural Crime Team consisted of a dedicated police constable Rural Crime Co-ordinator, a PCSO Rural Engagement Officer and a rural crime analyst. Nominated officers served as a point of contact for each of Dorset's five rural sections – Bridport, Dorchester and Sherborne, Purbeck, East Dorset, and North Dorset.

In recent weeks, a second police constable has joined the Rural Crime Team, along with an additional 0.5 full-time equivalent PCSO. These new additions have increased the establishment and capacity of the Rural Crime Team, facilitating greater engagement with Dorset's rural communities. The strategic lead for rural Crime, Superintendent Caroline Naughton, is leading work to examine best practice in other force areas to ensure that Dorset Police remains at the forefront of rural crime policing and achieves the very best from the available resources.

2.5 Marine Crime Prevention/Detection Enhancement

2.6 The Dorset Police Marine Section has responsibility for policing the Force's 89 miles of coastline, out to the territorial limit of 12 miles. This includes the busy and popular Weymouth and Christchurch harbours, the small fishing ports of West Bay, Lyme Regis and Swanage, and the world's second largest natural harbour at Poole.

An additional police constable has now been selected and will be in post this month. The post will be based within Neighbourhood Policing and will be the central Subject Matter Expert and lead for marine crime prevention and engagement with the marine community. This is also an increase in police officer establishment.

2.7 Tackling County Lines Drug Networks

County lines, which is a priority for the Force and Dorset's CSPs, is the term used to describe urban gangs supplying drugs to other parts of the UK using dedicated mobile phone lines. The gangs are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults in order to move and store drugs and money. To do this they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence and weapons.

An operating base is an essential feature of county lines gangs. They will regularly exploit vulnerable people, by building up a debt or using threats and violence in order to take over a person's home. This practice is commonly referred to as 'cuckooing'.

Following the precept uplift, there are a number of areas that Dorset Police has invested in around vulnerability, not least a full time D/Supt in Gemma Morris, who has moved into a supernumerary position to drive the vulnerability agenda, working alongside the Head of Public Protection.

The PCC has also commissioned a new role of Child Exploitation Transformation Lead. This role will focus on children at risk or linked to exploitation, be hosted by Dorset Council, and will be tasked and managed through the new pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership.

The Force has recently received a successful peer review from the National County Lines Coordination centre. There is significant Pursue activity both locally, regionally and nationally and Dorset was highlighted as one of the most proactive Forces in the South West for the commitment to the National Crime Agency's National County Lines Intensification weeks of activity. There is another week of activity in October which will see a committed and sustained enforcement week of action.

The Neighbourhood Policing Teams are focused on community vulnerability and there is ongoing work regarding wider engagement with partners in order to develop a multi-agency approach. All partners recognise that County lines is a complex problem, which requires an extensive partnership response and to ensure Dorset is a toxic environment for the out of area perpetrators.

2.8 Volunteer Police Cadets

The national Volunteer Police Cadet (VPC) Scheme aims to encourage good citizenship in young people by providing them with an opportunity to engage with local policing priorities and support the communities in which they live. Young people from all backgrounds are encouraged to join, including those who may be most vulnerable to the influences of crime and social exclusion. For this reason, VPC schemes can provide Forces with an opportunity to provide key crime prevention advice to young

people, as well as the potential to positively influence behaviour. Dorset Police was the only remaining Force in England and Wales without a cadet scheme.

The PCC and Chief Constable committed to introducing a VPC scheme within Dorset, having been impressed with the results from other areas and, starting in Autumn 2018, the OPCC set about introducing the county's first unit, with the assistance of the national VPC team and in close liaison with staff at Bourne Academy.

The OPCC successfully secured start-up funds from the national team, agreed use of an exceptional venue and recruited a team of adult volunteers to lead the unit. It was intended to launch the scheme with a unit of around 30 young people, however twice that number applied within the first few weeks. Consequently, a decision was taken to immediately implement a second unit.

The two units in Bournemouth were formally handed over to the Force on 2 September 2019, the Force having now introduced and recruited a Cadet Co-ordinator within the Citizens in Policing team. The Force is looking at how it can expand the scheme across Dorset.

2.9 Improvements to Youth Justice

A Force 'task to finish' group has focused on improving the timeliness of youth justice decision making and ensuring meaningful diversion action is undertaken. There is a focus on working with partners to ensure criminal justice investigations and outcomes are prioritised.

There is additional work ongoing with the Force's Prevention team child centred policing lead and Youth Services to look at the youth diversion options going forward, which will focus on when a youth diversion should be used, whilst also identifying the need to ensure any gaps in service provision can be considered.

At the same time, the OPCC has undertaken a review of existing services, and considered commissioning options. As a result a range of pilot activities, including mentoring and training for young people who are referred through the YOS, will be starting for one year in October 2019.

2.10 Bobby Van Scheme

Bobby Van Schemes – mobile units that provide home security, crime prevention advice and reassurance for vulnerable members of the community – operate in numerous areas across the UK. Van operators visit people's homes and undertake a range of activities, such as fitting new door and window locks, installing security lighting, and educating homeowners in practical ways they can help to prevent crime. Schemes differ from county to county, but Bobby Van operators can also undertake fire safety work, provide advice about fraud and cybercrime, and signpost vulnerable people to other agencies as required.

There is compelling evidence, from other schemes, that Bobby Vans can help to reduce the incidence of repeat burglary and re-victimisation. The OPCC began to scope a Dorset scheme in late 2018, working with neighbouring forces to best understand the equipment, training and skills required for the van operators. With the OPCC's scoping work complete, the project was formally handed to the Force for implementation.

The Force has secured a project manager to oversee the scheme's delivery. A van has been carefully specified, and procured, and the van operative has been recruited and is currently undergoing his initial training. It is anticipated that the van will be fully operational by March 2020.

3. **CONCLUSION**

- 3.1 This report provides an update regarding the Innovation Fund, and the progress that has been achieved so far against the areas of focus as highlighted by the Chief Constable at the Panel meeting of 7 February 2019.
- 3.2 The PCC will continue to hold the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of efficiency savings and ensure that the Force delivers fully on these six areas. Pertinent updates will be provided to the Panel through the quarterly monitoring reports and further detailed budgetary information will be provided by the Chief Finance Officer in the usual fashion.
- 3.3 Members are **recommended** to note the contents of this report.

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