

POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – 23 September 2021

POLICE AND CRIME PLAN AND RESPONSE TO PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS

REPORT BY THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To present members with an update on the Police and Crime Commissioner's forthcoming Police and Crime Plan, as well as to provide a formal response to the Panel's recommendations regarding said Plan.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) was elected to office following the polls which took place on Thursday 6 May 2021. Soon after taking up office, he announced his intention to publish his first Police and Crime Plan by 31 October 2021. This date is approximately five months ahead of the deadline specified in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act (PRSRA) 2011.
- 1.2 Legislation sets out a range of areas that must be contained within the Police and Crime Plan – this includes, but is not limited to, the PCC's police and crime objectives; the policing that the Chief Constable is to provide; and the means by which the Chief Constable's performance in providing policing will be measured. The Plan can be revised or reissued at any time.
- 1.3 The PCC has decided that the Plan should cover a longer than ordinary period. This is, in part, in recognition of the shorter term of office brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, but also due to the ambition of his Plan.
- 1.4 Despite the legal name of the document, the Plan, as can be seen by the mandated content listed above, is better considered as an outline of a PCC's strategic intent. In that sense, it has similarities to the Corporate Plans that are required of local authorities.
- 1.5 In developing the Police and Crime Plan, the PCC is required to consider the views of the local community and victims of crime, as well as have regard to the Strategic Policing Requirement. He is required to prepare a draft of the Plan and consult the Chief Constable in preparing this draft. The draft must be sent to the Police and Crime Panel, with the PCC having regard to reports or recommendations made by the Panel. He must provide the Panel with a response about any such report or recommendations and this response must be published.

2. ANALYSIS AND PROGRESS

- 2.1 The PCC's vision is that Dorset should be the safest county in England and Wales. He believes that this can be achieved by cutting crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) and by putting victims and communities first. In particular, he has determined that with an increase in resources, the public will rightly expect that the Force reduces crime and ASB.

- 2.2 This vision has been formulated and developed throughout the last three and half years. Alongside 18 months of 'seeing practice' with Dorset Police, the PCC spoke with hundreds of people and undertook extensive research, to inform his election manifesto. Since taking up the role, the PCC has continued to receive hundreds of items of correspondence from members of the public and has received a series of detailed briefings from the Force, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and partner agencies.
- 2.3 Having considered this research, the PCC identified six priorities for his Plan. These priorities, which follow on from his election manifesto, are to:
- **Cut Crime and ASB:** The police will robustly prevent and detect crime and tackle the constant grind of ASB – so people across Dorset see a clear difference and feel safer.
 - **Make Policing More Visible and Connected:** To increase the number and visibility of police officers in our neighbourhood teams so police again fulfil a prevention role. Contact and connectivity between police and public will be improved.
 - **Fight Violent Crime and High Harm:** To tackle organised gangs, be tough on drugs and tackle high harm incidents such as child abuse, domestic abuse, hate crime and modern slavery.
 - **Fight Rural Crime:** To significantly increase the rural crime team and their capabilities and to have specific strategies for crimes and issues affecting the rural community.
 - **Put Victims and Communities First:** Support all victims – particularly those most vulnerable – and build community strength by working together and addressing needs.
 - **Make Every Penny Count:** By resourcing and transforming the frontline and reducing administration, so patrol and response teams can spend more time in communities and making residents feel safer.
- 2.4 Over the summer months, additional consultation with the public, focussing on those six priorities, was undertaken. Despite the limitations caused by COVID-19, the OPCC carried out both digital and face-to-face engagement to ensure that the Plan is best informed by the views of Dorset's communities.
- 2.5 Over 2,000 people have responded to the survey at the time of writing and were asked to rate each of the priorities out of five, with five being of most importance to the respondent, and one being of least importance. The average ratings were as follows: Cut Crime and ASB (4.5 out of 5); Make Policing More Visible and Connected (4.4); Fight Violent Crime and High Harm (4.6); Fight Rural Crime (4.0); Put Victims and Communities First (4.2); and Make Every Penny Count (4.2). This demonstrates strong support for the identified priorities.
- 2.6 When asked if the PCC's vision for Dorset to be the safest county was a suitable ambition for the Police and Crime Plan, 84% of respondents agreed. Only seven per cent of respondents disagreed.
- 2.7 Draft versions of the Police and Crime Plan have also been discussed with the Chief Constable and shared with a wide range of key stakeholders for comment, including members of the Dorset Criminal Justice Board and the county's two Community Safety Partnerships. Feedback from partners has proved valuable and has not only aided the development of the Plan, but also demonstrated strong synergy between the PCC's

ambitions and those of partner agencies. The same can be said for the local priorities identified by the PCC and the national priorities, as outlined by the Government.

- 2.8 Throughout the process of developing the new Police and Crime Plan, the PCC has strived to demonstrate that the delivery of important work, and beneficial change for the people of Dorset, had already commenced. Regular updates about his first 100 days were provided to the public and a summary of this period, which ended in late August, was published.

3. POLICE AND CRIME PANEL FEEDBACK ON THE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN

- 3.1. As requested, the Police and Crime Panel sent through their comments on the draft Police and Crime Plan on 31 August 2021. The PCC is grateful for the careful consideration of the Plan by the Panel – the detailed and insightful response is very welcome, and a number of amendments have been made to the document as a direct result of this feedback.

- 3.2. The PCC is especially pleased to note that the Panel has described the Plan as ‘aspiring and laudable’ and that Members are content that the Plan reflects those statements and undertakings made by the PCC during his election campaign. More specifically, the PCC has the following comments, laid out under the same headings as used by the Panel in their written response:

- **Manifesto to Plan:**

The Panel has requested greater clarity on how the PCC will determine progress against the vision to make Dorset the safest county. Further benchmarking information will be included in the final version of the Police and Crime Plan and will be shared with Members in due course.

The Panel has also highlighted the PCC’s election pledge to ‘make the police crime fighters again’ and requested further clarity on this also. The PCC agrees that this could be made clearer and the Plan now includes some additional information about this statement. In terms of what the PCC means by that phrase, he believes that this starts with placing a statement of the intent to fight crime within the Police and Crime Plan so that none of Dorset’s communities are in any doubt about the Force’s main effort, which is and will continue to be, the prevention and detection of crime.

- **Timeline:**

The Plan, for the reasons articulated at Section 1.3 in this document, was intended to cover the period of 2021 to 2028. The Panel’s analysis of this timeline is correct – in that the stated timescales do not compel any Dorset PCC (the incumbent included) to the retain this new Plan until 2028. Indeed, Police and Crime Plans are subject to annual review – bearing in mind the need to take account of emerging trends, for example – and can be reissued at any time.

The Panel has requested that the Plan be updated to cover a period of 2021 to 2029, so that it more naturally fits with the spirit of the 2011 Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act – namely, that a Plan is issued at the end of the financial year following an election. The PCC accepts this recommendation, and the document has been amended.

- **Cost/Risk:**

The Panel has sought greater clarity and assurance in relation to the costs of the Plan and any risks associated with the Plan’s implementation. The PCC believes that, based on current Force and OPCC assumptions, the Plan is affordable and achievable. As part of the budget setting and precept decision making processes,

this will be articulated in further detail and, as the Panel has requested, the PCC will ensure that the public understands how delivery of the Plan affects the precept requirements each year. The Panel, will of course be updated and involved in these processes.

All OPCC and Force risks are managed using established tools, systems and governance arrangements and confirmation of this has been added to the Plan, as suggested. Throughout the delivery of the Plan, action will be taken to mitigate identified risks, and the Panel will be updated on risks and issues, as relevant, on a quarterly basis.

- **Execution of the Plan:**

The Panel has requested further benchmarking and timeline information so that it is clear what success looks like and what projects will be undertaken when. Similarly, the Panel has rightly identified that the commitments made within the Plan will not all be carried out by the OPCC – with many areas falling under Force responsibility.

As outlined at Section 1.4, the Plan is an outline of a PCC’s strategic intent. The draft version of the Plan meets the requirements of the legislation and contains a similar level of detail as Police and Crime Plans in other areas. The Police and Crime Plan will be supported by a more detailed internal delivery plan, internal governance and monitoring processes. Progress against the Plan, and further insight into the Plan’s deliverables will be provided by the quarterly reports to the Police and Crime Panel. The PCC is committed to working with the Panel to ensure these reports meet Members’ requirements and looks forward to working with the Priority Leads to ensure they receive the detail they need.

Additionally, the PCC has accepted the recommendations made by the Panel regarding the inclusion of extra information about working with Community Safety Partnerships and the Panel.

- **Detail:**

The Panel has provided around a dozen suggestions aimed at improving the overall quality and readability of the written document. These have been incorporated into the document and the PCC is grateful for the time that Members will have spent in considering the draft Plan in such detail.

- 3.3. As requested by the Panel, the PCC will circulate the revised version of the Police and Crime Plan ahead of its publication.

4. NEXT STEPS

- 4.1. Having considered the feedback and recommendations received from the Police and Crime Panel, key partner agencies, and via the public from the summer’s consultation activity, the PCC is now working on a final draft of his Plan. This draft will include further benchmarking information, as well as updated financial information.
- 4.2. Once the final content is agreed, the document will be sent to graphic designers ready for publication by the end of October.
- 4.3. The launch of the Police and Crime Plan will be accompanied by internal and external communications activity. As part of this communications work, the OPCC will highlight the achievements already secured by the PCC and his office within his first 100 days – helping to demonstrate that the Commissioner is already delivering against his Plan.
- 4.4. The OPCC, working alongside the Panel, will develop the quarterly performance report so that progress against the new Police and Crime Plan can be monitored and

scrutinised. It is hoped that there will be an opportunity to discuss the quarterly report at the Panel's training day later this year.

- 4.5. Further formal updates on the Police and Crime Plan will be presented to Members at future meetings.

5. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1. The PCC remains on course to publish his Police and Crime Plan by the end of October 2021. This is several months ahead of the statutory deadline.
- 5.2. The PCC has consulted and engaged with the public, Dorset Police, partner agencies and the Police and Crime Panel throughout the Plan development process. He is grateful for the detailed views and recommendations that he has received – he has carefully considered all feedback received, which has helped him to advance and refine his Plan.
- 5.3. The PCC looks forward to sharing his final Plan with Dorset's communities and working tirelessly to achieve the vision that it sets out – to make Dorset the safest county.
- 5.4. Members are asked to note the report.

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