

INFORMAL POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – 9 DECEMBER 2021

USE OF THE 2021/22 POLICE PRECEPT

PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

To provide Members with a mid-point update on the how the Precept is being used in 2021/22.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Following the meeting in February 2021, the Police and Crime Panel provided formal notification of their decision to support the proposed increase in police precept equivalent to an additional £15 per annum on a Band D property.
- 1.2 Alongside this decision, the Panel set out their intention to seek assurance, through the forward work plan, that the PCC would implement the direction as set by the Minister for Policing and Fire Service and hold the Chief Constable to account for the 'operational execution' of the Police and Crime Plan. This covered both national and local priorities.
- 1.3 It is important to note that the precept was proposed by the former Police and Crime Commissioner who retired in May 2021, and that a new Police and Crime Plan was published on 29 October 2021, and therefore took effect just over halfway through this financial year.
- 1.4 The new Plan reflects the priorities of the new Commissioner and, as per the legislation, has come into immediate effect. Previous reports to the Panel have covered the performance against the old Police and Crime Plan and this detail is therefore not covered in this report. A final overview is provided at Appendix A.
- 1.5 The Panel will also be aware that the former Chief Constable also retired since the precept request was considered – with Scott Chilton taking up the role earlier this year – and, so, with a new Chief, PCC and Plan, some variation in activity is both legitimate and to be expected.
- 1.6 Members of the Panel receive reports at each meeting regarding the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan which utilises resources from both the Force and the commissioning budget to deliver the activities. Further information on how the Chief Constable has utilised the 2021/22 budget will be provided as part of the budget discussions in February.

2. NATIONAL PRIORITIES

Resources

- 2.1 The Police Officer Uplift Programme entered its second year in 2021/22, with Dorset set the target to recruit an additional 49 officers. The joint decision was taken to frontload recruitment at the beginning of the year to maximise the impact of the new officers, and so the Force remains well on track to deliver the required officers by 31 March 2022.
- 2.2 This recruitment included two officers for the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU). Additional resources have been provided to the ROCU from across the region to ensure that

it is able to counter the growth of serious and organised crime. The South West region's strong track record of collaboration has continued and Forces remain focussed on addressing matters such as county lines, fraud, rural crime and cyber-crime.

Crime Reduction

- 2.3 To account for the impact of the pandemic, and as per the national crime and policing measures, the convention is to compare current crime levels against a baseline of 2019/20:

Total Crime	6% reduction compared to 2019/20
Dwelling Burglary (excluding outbuildings)	21% reduction
Criminal damage	7.5% reduction
Theft	19.7% reduction
ASB	1.4% reduction
ASB excluding Covid related incidents	6% reduction

Procurement

- 2.4 Dorset Police signed up to Blue Light Commercial and is fully utilising the contract let in respect of the purchase of vehicles. Other procurement continues to be coordinated across the region through South West Police Procurement Department (SWPPD) which is now a collaboration of all five forces within the region following Avon and Somerset's decision to join. This creates a single approach across the region and significantly increases the purchasing power of the partnership.

Violence Against Women and Girls

- 2.5 Dorset Police instigated a 'Gold Group' to pull together our current and future activity and approaches to tackling the issues raised regarding Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) arising out of the murder of Sarah Everard. In addition to the raft of work already in place around domestic abuse, rape and serious sexual offences, stalking and harassment and female genital mutilation, honour-based violence and forced marriage; the Force reviewed its vetting procedures to ensure officers and staff who wish to join Dorset Police are subject to robust vetting procedures in a pursuit to eliminate criminal offending and misconduct. This also includes re-vetting those who transfer into Dorset from other Forces.

3. LOCAL ISSUES

General

- 3.1 In April the Force introduced a new command model consisting of two Local Police Areas (LPAs) covering Dorset and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole to provide greater focus and service delivery at a local level. The new structure supports the Force to improve their understanding and engagement with partner agencies and communities, so they can respond to public needs, keep people safe and protect those most vulnerable in our communities. It allows the LPA commanders to focus on the local issues and crimes that matter most to their communities and provide increased resilience and scrutiny.
- 3.2 In addition to these changes, each LPA Commander will benefit from increased resources within their frontline services, supported by the Police Officer Uplift Programme. This includes the expanding response resources, neighbourhood policing teams, rural policing, drone usage, increased intelligence capacity and enhanced capability to improve the Force's response to missing people and county lines. Resources and equipment will be better aligned to local priorities to facilitate an effective and robust service to the public.
- 3.3 In terms of crime resolution, performance has proved steady throughout the first six months of this financial year. Progress is tracked through the Force's Strategic Performance Board and

specific areas – such as the investigation of rape and serious sexual offences – are subject to dedicated action plans.

Rural Crime

- 3.4 The Rural Crime Team is currently in the process of significantly increasing the size and seniority of the dedicated team. This will enable increased visibility, effectiveness and closer links to rural communities. Further details will be provided as part of the Police and Crime Plan monitoring reports in future quarters.
- 3.5 The Rural Crime Team take part in regional information sharing meetings, which allows the Force to better tackle organised crime groups operating in rural settings, as well as exploring options for joint training, joint operations and standardising some processes across the region.
- 3.6 This year, the team has tackled several OCGs, completed operations (Op Shogun – night time patrols in rural areas) and Op Galileo (Hare Coursing) and have used their powers to secure Criminal Behaviour Orders to address rural crime offenders.

Improvements in Youth Justice

- 3.7 A number of improvements and changes have been made within the youth justice space, as well as with regard to youth safeguarding more generally. Over the past year, the Youth Justice Team has revised its policies and practices, so that more effective disposals can be identified and implemented, and also played a key role in the delivery of Op Encompass – further detail of which is provided in the quarterly monitoring report.
- 3.8 Since May 2021, the Force has supported the Youth Diversion Pilot, which has allowed the Force to identify more effective non-criminal justice pathways for vulnerable children who are on the cusp of offending. It is believed that such initiatives will reduce the number of children entering the criminal justice system in the future.

Hate Crime

- 3.9 Dorset Police continues to encourage the reporting of hate crime through media campaigns and is working to further improve the recording of crimes through additional training for Inspectors and Hate Crime Champions.
- 3.10 The Force remains committed to chairing Prejudice Free Dorset, leading projects to reduce hate crime in the night time economy, reduce hate crime in 'hot spot areas' and developing educational packages for schools and higher education. The group has also welcomed a number of new members including the National Trust, Dorset Disability Equality Forum, LGBT+ Voices Dorset Forum, the International Education Association and BU International College.
- 3.11 Further information will be provided to the Panel in the future, as outlined in the Panel's forward workplan.

Contact Management (Force control room)

- 3.12 While additional resources were provided to the contact management department, there have been challenges in recruitment in recent months, resulting in the filling of posts using agency staff and overtime, resulting in additional costs, which are reviewed monthly.
- 3.13 Unfortunately, there has also been a dip in performance, particularly in relation to 101 call answer times. This is being closely monitored by the Force Strategic Performance Board and is subject to a separate Gold Group. The recruitment position is now starting to improve and, once new trainees are in place, it is expected that this will have a direct correlation with the performance.

- 3.14 In addition to the recruitment of staff, work is being undertaken to improve the technology used by contact management staff, building on the successful implementation of the STORM system last year. The aim is to ensure the various systems remain fit for purpose while utilising new technologies such as automation and artificial intelligence as well as the adoption of Single Online Home.

Anti-Social Behaviour

- 3.15 Dorset Police takes a multi-faceted approach to anti-social behaviour (ASB) and the neighbourhood policing teams work closely with partners to tackle the issues impacting local communities. The multi-agency commitment to ASB continues to develop significantly, with such initiatives as the Multi-Agency Command Centre (MACC) which was utilised during the summer and proving so successful that it has continued into a year-round seasonal response. This approach was supported by significant financial and resource investment by BCP Council including additional Community Safety Accreditation Scheme officers and focused, targeted responses in key areas such as Bournemouth Town Centre, West Hill and Ashley Road.
- 3.16 The Force also launched Operation Relentless, its overarching ASB campaign. It is now a strong, well-recognised and understood brand which serves to set the tone and expectation for Dorset Police's commitment to tackling ASB. The branding is also used externally to support visibility and communication to the public about the work being undertaken to address ASB and to ensure the Force continues to report on progress, engage and foster understanding of the issues impacting communities.

4. OTHER ISSUES

- 4.1 The Capital Strategy Group continues to provide detailed scrutiny of the capital programme, both within the year and future years. There is strong engagement from the budget holders and a good shared understanding of the issues and implications on the revenue budget. A key focus this year has been to challenge if projects fully qualify as capital expenditure which has resulted in a couple of smaller projects being removed and returned to the revenue budget.
- 4.2 The PCC continues to lobby for fair funding for Dorset, both in relation to general funding but also regarding specific funding pots such as Safer Streets Funding and Violence Reduction Units. The Home Office has recently begun its work on the Formula Funding Review and we will monitor their work with interest.

5. RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 Members are asked to note the report.

JULIE STRANGE
CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER



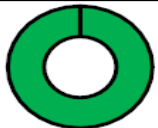
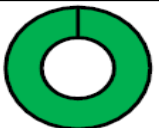

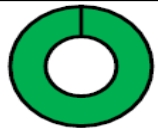

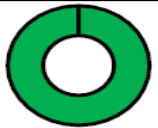




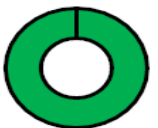
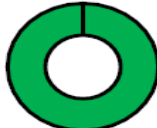


Members' Enquiries to: Julie Strange, Chief Finance Officer (01202) 229082
Media Enquiries to: Susan Bloss, Head of Communications & Engagement (01202) 229095

Appendix A



Dorset Police and Crime Panel
Police & Crime Plan 2017-21 Final Overview



 PROTECTING PEOPLE AT RISK OF HARM	Vulnerability and Violence Reduction	Complex Needs (MH; Drugs & Alcohol)	Community Safety; National/ Local	 WORKING WITH OUR COMMUNITIES	Crime & ASB	Community Engagement	Citizens in Policing
							
Headlines: 27 of the 113 commitments were assigned to Pillar One - Six commitments (two new) were the focus for the additional year of the previous PCC's term.				Headlines: 32 of the 113 commitments were assigned to Pillar Two – Eight commitments (three new) were focus for the additional year of the previous PCC's term.			
 SUPPORTING VICTIMS, WITNESSES & REDUCING REOFFENDING	Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence	Reducing Reoffending	Restorative Justice	 TRANSFORMING FOR THE FUTURE	Funding & Resources	Covid-19	Innovation & Service Improvement
							
Headlines: 18 of the 113 commitments were assigned to Pillar Three - Six commitments (five new) were the focus for the additional year of the previous PCC's term.				Headlines: 36 of the 113 commitments were assigned to Pillar Four - Seven commitments (three new) were the focus for the additional year of the previous PCC's term.			

Page 22