

(00:38:55 on recording)

You are absolutely correct to say that I have been unequivocal about this. There is a deep attitudinal, behavioural, change that is required across our society. And, nationwide, we need to understand and then tackle the reasons behind why so many young men – and it is, typically, younger men – commit terrible crimes against women. I am told that across the UK, a woman is killed by a man every three days. It is a sobering statistic.

I have pledged to do all that I can, as Dorset's Police and Crime Commissioner, to ensure that this county is the safest in England and Wales – there is no doubt that this means that women and girls must be safe, and feel safe, whether on our streets or in their own homes.

In terms of strategy, the obvious starting point is my Police and Crime Plan. You can see that violence, domestic abuse, stalking and other high harm areas are clearly prioritised. There is also a dedicated section of the Plan that addresses Violence Against Women and Girls – this lists the following actions:

First, I will work with police and partners to counter violence against women and girls, by making our public spaces safer and by exploring behaviour changing courses to tackle hypermasculinity and misogyny.

Members will know that work has been ongoing with partners to introduce safer public spaces, particularly in areas with a vibrant night time economy. My office has submitted and supported various national bids and, as mentioned in the quarterly report, Dorset Council has just been awarded £380,000 for projects to help women and girls feel safer on our streets. The funding will pay for CCTV, and fund intervention workshops to help increase awareness, change societal attitudes and empower women and girls to feel safer. This follows a large funding award for the Bournemouth area.

Dorset Police's Operation Vigilant initiative has also been running in Weymouth and Bournemouth.

Second, I will continue to hold criminal justice agencies to account for investigative and charging decisions involving rape and serious sexual offences and to ensure that more offenders are brought to justice. I am now the Chair of the DCJB and, as part of the Wessex region, my office has co-funded an independent review of the local criminal justice agencies' response to rape and serious sexual offences. This review will be reporting to criminal justice agencies in the next month or so.

Third, I will ensure that victims of rape and serious sexual assaults are provided with the care and support that they need and that they have the confidence to report these crimes to the police.

Since taking up office, I have met with Women's Aid, You First, STARS, the Water Lilly Project, and the Chair of the Dorset Domestic Abuse Forum. At such meetings, I have been able to hear first-hand from victims about their experience,

as well as draw upon the considerable experience and insight that these organisations have offered on behalf of the victims and communities they represent

And finally, I will continue to raise awareness of honour-based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation, and work with agencies to tackle such crimes and support victims.

There is plenty more that myself and the Office could say on this topic, but hopefully that provides some reassurance of the action that we have taken and have planned. I will obviously also be holding the Chief Constable to account for ensuring that Dorset takes on board the national learning from a range of inquiries and reviews that are ongoing.

In short though, to make women and girls safer, all agencies, up and down the country, must work together to deliver the significant changes that are required. I will do all I can, alongside the Chief Constable, to make sure that Dorset Police plays its part.

(01:54:19 on recording)

First, it goes without saying that I would like to see more investigations result in positive outcomes. I am sure that all Police and Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables would echo that sentiment.

Positive outcomes are not limited to charges and summons; there are indeed a range of other measures (cautions, fixed penalty notices and use restorative justice, for instance) that can be used to successfully and proportionately conclude an investigation. The latest figures for Dorset suggest a positive outcome rate of about 10.2%, compared to the national average of 10.7%. Whilst this is still not what the public would expect, it is, I am afraid, a national picture.

This national position is complicated and there are a wide range of factors at play, such as police resourcing (I believe that the Uplift programme will help forces to make head way here); the efficiency of the court system and the need to focus the most sophisticated forensic and investigative capability on those crimes that cause the most harm.

To the public I would say three things:

- I want this to improve. I will be holding the Chief Constable to account for the performance in this area and, as Chair of the Criminal Justice Board, I will be working to bring partners together so that we can secure more positive outcomes.
- That the positive outcome data does not capture, by any means, the full story. The huge efforts that the police put into safeguarding victims of crime are not reflected in these figures. So, while it may be the case that a crime has not been formally solved, that is not to say that there hasn't been vital work to protect victims from repeat incidents and provide crucial support services. In

other words, don't let figures such as these put you off from calling the police in a time of need – they are here to help.

- And, finally, let's not underestimate the benefit of good intelligence. Many, many crimes are committed by a small minority of offenders. It might be the case that the police can't solve, for example, every shed break or bike theft, but by building up that information, it all helps the police to catch burglars and thieves; put in place preventative patrols and action; and issue advice to our communities. So, again, my advice is always to come forward and report crimes to the police.

(01:37:41 on recording)

For the benefit of those who may not have seen our recent announcement, the Chief Constable and I have recently agreed a programme of investment in the police estate – so this covers both upgrades and improvements to local police stations as well as decision to replace the HQ itself.

The investments in local stations such as better technology, more lockers and flexible working spaces will help officers reduce their time in stations each shift, plus will provide respite areas to help them deal with the aftermath of traumatic incidents.

The current police buildings that are in operation beyond their planned lifespan will be disposed of and, in particular, the 60-year-old headquarters building at Winfrith that costs more to maintain than it would do to knock down and replace with a more energy efficient and sustainable building – will be replaced.

The timelines for this are that planning permission was formally sought last month, and we are hoping for a decision by February 2022. Should this be granted as hoped for, we expect to break ground around June 2022, and that the building will be completed by the end of 2023.

Members, like the Dorset public at large, will start to see a range of communications on this project in the new year, and I confirm that I am intending a high level of transparency around this project once the initial commercial arrangements have been confirmed, and so will say more in due course.