

POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – 30 JUNE 2022

ESTATES FUTURES PROGRAMME



PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide members with an update on the current position of the Estates Futures Programme and the delivery of the related commitments made in the Police and Crime Plan.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Police and Crime Commissioners, as a legal entity, own and are responsible for the police estate (both property and land). In Dorset, the day-to-day management of such is devolved to the Dorset Police Estates Team, which is under the direction and control of the Dorset Police Assistant Chief Officer (ACO). The 'Land and Property Owned and Occupied Register' is published on the [OPCC website](#).

2. GOVERNANCE

- 2.1. Governance of the police estate (and hence the Estates Futures programme) occurs through the Strategic Estates Programme Board, chaired by the ACO, and attended by the OPCC Chief Executive (CX), Chief Finance Officer (CFO) and Director of Operations (DoO). In addition, a separate Headquarters Project Board is attended by the DoO, and the OPCC is represented on the Estates Futures working group by the Governance and Contact Manager.
- 2.2. Capital and revenue decisions related to the police estates are made through the Capital Strategy Group which is chaired by the CFO, and the Resource Control Board which is attended by the CX and CFO.

3. PRINCIPLES

- 3.1. A modern estate – with buildings in the right place and fit-for-purpose – will help Dorset Police and the OPCC keep people safer and be more visible and better connected with local communities right across the county.
- 3.2. Some of the current buildings are in poor condition, not well suited to the current needs and expectations of the public and in need of urgent investment. They are also not best suited to help police officers maximise their time out in communities.
- 3.3. Modernisation and investment in the Dorset estate is necessary due to the poor condition of some of the current buildings and the ongoing maintenance costs caused by years of austerity. 'Make do and mend' is no longer a viable option.
- 3.4. Despite the initial outlays, a refreshed estate would offer value for money, by negating existing buildings' high maintenance costs and reducing energy costs through increased sustainability and use of renewables in the long term.

- 3.5. Reinvestment in the wider estate will allow Dorset Police to use new and emerging technology to better engage with communities. Using the right resources at the right time in the right place will result in improved visibility and connectivity with local communities.
- 3.6. Co-locating with public sector partners and using existing community hubs where appropriate will continue to be a priority and will further improve partnership and community working.
- 3.7. An upgrade of the estate will futureproof the organisation (in the case of the new headquarters for another 30 years), making every penny count and better enabling future challenges to be met.
- 3.8. The rebuild of Dorset Police headquarters at Winfrith will be a cost-effective solution to the existing building's high maintenance costs and health and safety issues, recognising that it will cost more to keep the current headquarters building fit for occupation than it will to replace it with another building.

4. STRATEGY

- 4.1. The Estates Futures programme addresses the Police and Crime Commissioner's vision of making Dorset the safest county by setting out the delivery of a range of benefits to communities and staff that will secure and futureproof the Dorset Police estates for the next 30 years. It will improve service delivery to the public:

Cut Crime and ASB	By maximising community policing, multi-agency working and frontline deployment.
Make Policing More Visible and Connected	By maximising technology and minimising time needed to be spent by officers in stations.
Fight Violent and High Harm Crime	By ensuring the right resources, are available in the right place at the right time.
Fight Rural Crime	By building a strong understanding of the diverse needs of rural, coastal & urban communities.
Put Victims and Communities First	By reaching, and meaningfully engaging with, more people, especially seldom heard groups.
Make Every Penny Count	By ensuring estates are fit for purpose and are in the best locations for delivering policing services.

- 4.2. The programme follows a significant period of austerity, where inward investment in police estates was not deemed appropriate given the pressures on maintaining frontline services, and the global pandemic where new ways of working have been embraced across all sectors. It also follows a change in political and operational leadership with David Sidwick being elected in May 2021, and Chief Constable Scott Chilton being confirmed in post by the Panel in August 2021. The combined impact of these factors necessitated a root and branch review of police estates be undertaken and the resulting Dorset Police Estates Strategy 2022-2025 was agreed by the Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable and subsequently published.
- 4.3. The guiding principles of the police estate, as set out in the Estates Strategy, are that it:
 - supports engagement with the public and is of the right quality and in the right place, with the aim of having a community footprint in every town so Dorset Police can better connect with the people of Dorset,

- is cost-effective and therefore the PCC will invest where it is most needed, co-locating with partners if necessary and delivering better connectivity with our communities, and
- is sustainable and improves energy efficiency, reducing carbon emissions and achieving Net Zero by 2050.

4.4. The programme also addresses the Police and Crime Plan, specifically priority two to 'make policing more visible and connected', with some of the detailed commitments including:

- to invest in technology and analysis capabilities, as well as improve processes, so that officers' time is spent as efficiently and productively as possible,
- to take action to improve the mental and physical wellbeing of officers and staff, so that they are best able to perform their role in challenging and demanding circumstances,
- to review the current use of police estates, to ensure that front desks are accessible and being used effectively, that key facilities are suitably located, and that officers have a footprint within each of Dorset's towns, and
- to examine... the best use of force estate to make sure that taxpayer money goes as far as possible.

5. CAPITAL PROGRAMME

5.1. Dorset Police has a footprint in every town, with 54 locations spread across the county. The estates strategy sets out the continuing commitment to ongoing collaboration, partnering and co-location with other public sector organisations where appropriate, and recognises the strategic intent to continue to move away from standalone leasehold sites.

5.2. Police estates have a complex mix of uses, and many of these are highly regulated and with strict security and operational requirements. Aside from buildings that house traditional corporate functions such as ICT, finance, HR, administration, communications, analysis and management, Dorset Police also houses a contact centre for emergency call handling, telecoms masts, three custody suites, an armoury and firearms training range, gyms for physical fitness and Taser training, forensics and evidential property hubs, dog kennels and workshops for vehicle maintenance.

5.3. Both Dorset Police and the OPCC acknowledge that budgetary constraints of the previous decade have meant the maintenance and development of police estate has not always kept pace with the changes in modern operational policing or the changes in working styles accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic or ambitions towards achieving a Net Zero carbon emissions status.

5.4. The Estates Futures programme initiated in 2021, and in due course will positively impact every police station within the county. It includes a range of major capital investments carefully designed to improve locations strategically important to policing delivery, making every penny count and offering a better working environment for staff and officers and improved connectivity with the public, and is prioritised on cost effectiveness in improving service delivery to the public. By way of example, these include:

5.5. **Ferndown Hub:** a significant refurbishment programme is underway and will complete by Autumn 2022. The building, once complete, will offer a range of new facilities to cater for police officers and staff, including a Taser and officer safety training court, new forensics laboratories, IT communication rooms, as well as meeting and break out rooms. Ferndown will also feature a Smart Working Zone, where visiting officers and staff can touch down, plug into laptop docks and have casual meetings. There will also be extra desk spaces, a large dining area, new changing rooms, and extra car parking. The building will have

essential upgrades and renovation throughout to ensure it meets modern specifications, which include new site Wi-Fi, heating system upgrades, the installation of two lifts and new carpets and redecoration throughout.

- 5.6. **Learning and Development Unit (LDU):** the LDU building is overdue improvements in its infrastructure, including a replacement roof, heating and ventilation systems. This work offers an opportunity to improve sustainability with photovoltaic solar panels and other lower carbon technologies. The building will be fully refurbished to meet accommodation demands for training, including upgrades to provide a more flexible and usable conference/lecture theatre and a bespoke communications room which will allow better use of digital technology (voice and video recording). The programme will also enable better configuration of space in line with new Smart Working standards. This programme of work will initiate in 2024/25, with a two-year duration.
- 5.7. **Other major capital projects:** which include, the headquarters rebuild, the firing range upgrade, the public support unit building roof replacement, the upgrade of heating system in the Weymouth custody suite, all of which are due for commencement in 2022/23.

6. PARTNERING AND COLLABORATION

- 6.1. Dorset Police and the OPCC are committed to ongoing collaboration and continue to explore further partnering and co-location possibilities with local councils and other emergency services.
- 6.2. To date the programme of collaboration with public sector partners has resulted in around one-half of the total of Dorset Police buildings, being occupied by partners, including Police Stations, Safer Neighbourhoods Teams sites, and administrative and specialist buildings.
- 6.3. The most recent collaboration is in Boscombe, at 'It's All About Culture', a charity started in 2013 as a community-led grassroots charity, dedicated to community cohesion, social inclusion and the general wellbeing of the people of Boscombe and the surrounding area. The Positive Action team and Neighbourhood Policing Teams have weekly presence, providing the opportunity for supporting, engaging with and learning from the community, and also providing an opportunity for the Force to attract and support recruits from a diversity of backgrounds.
- 6.4. Co-location is not just cost-effective, it creates a presence that is embedded in communities, providing local understanding, reassurance and driving collaboration across agencies that is beneficial for safeguarding vulnerable people. As a result, Dorset Police and the OPCC are continually looking for future co-location opportunities and support the sharing the police estate where we it improves functioning and the delivery of policing and community safety.
- 6.5. Current conversations include with Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service as part of their estates review, and with partners in north and west Dorset, notably Sherborne and Wimborne, to identify opportunities to optimise joint working and collaboration.

7. VISIBILITY

- 7.1. The estates review, conducted as part of the Estates Futures programme, highlighted several operational drivers for improvement across the entire estates' footprint, and set out a number of initiatives designed to increase the visibility of Dorset Police officers and staff in communities. Principal amongst these is:
 - supporting the national Police Uplift Programme and the long-term retention of staff and officers as an employer of choice, and

- strengthening the introduction of the two Local Policing Areas.
- 7.2. Although the significant investment in Ferndown, to facilitate the increase in new officers bought about by the national Uplift programme began ahead of the Estates Futures programme, the longer-term capital work has now been folded within it.
 - 7.3. The Uplift programme refers to the national recruitment of 20,000 additional officers (increasing the overall police officer establishment) in the three years to March 2023. At the same time, Forces have been asked (and are now mandated) to ensure that any officer completing their three-year probation will have also gained a graduate-level qualification.
 - 7.4. A dedicated initial training campus has therefore been created in Ferndown, with classrooms, break-out areas, quiet study areas and an upgrade to the gym and physical training space to facilitate the classroom, study and practical requirements of the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) scheme.
 - 7.5. After approximately 34 weeks of initial training and tutoring, student officers will gain independent patrol status, and be placed within local policing command (thereby enhancing local visibility) for the duration of their probation where they will complete their on-the-job learning, leading to a degree at the end of their three years.
 - 7.6. To achieve better visibility in communities, at the beginning of 2021, Local Policing Areas (LPAs) were introduced, aligned to the two councils in Dorset – BCP and Dorset (County) – to allow the Force to work closer with its partners and provide a localised service that works for communities.
 - 7.7. Local police estates are subsequently being optimised to support these operational policing and neighbourhood teams. To deliver this, the relevant teams helped to shape an underpinning standard that would be achieved in local police estates. At the same time, in light of the global pandemic, the opportunity was taken to review the existing ways of working across Dorset Police, to ensure officers and staff continued to operate within the requirements of their role.
 - 7.8. The ‘Space Standards’ policy sets out that workspaces should be demonstrably secure, inclusive and enabling, adaptable to changing circumstances, sustainable and well-supported. They must also meet all pertinent national standards including Workplace Regulations.
 - 7.9. The ‘New Ways of Working’ (NWoW) approach gives officers and staff guidance on when, where and how they should work, within the parameters of the needs of their role and of the Force. The five principles of NWOW are:
 - That work takes place at the most effective locations and at the most effective times, respecting the needs of the task, community, the individual and the team.
 - A ‘Flexibility First’ approach, where flexibility is the norm rather than the exception. Limitations on flexibility will be based on clear operational need, with different levels of flexibility being available to individuals based on their duties, workload and location.
 - A shared and agreed approach to agile working allows individuals the ability to be adaptable whilst balancing the requirement to meet business needs
 - That managing performance focuses on results and outcomes rather than presence. Employees are trusted to undertake their work and will be valued for their performance and achievements.
 - That technology should deliver simplicity, flexibility and empowerment for staff to enable transformational change and objectives.
 - 7.10. Practically, the Estates Futures programme has delivered, and continues to deliver, a series of estates and technology investments, through the prism of the space standards policy and

the new ways of working approach. These investments serve to amplify the visibility of LPA officers and staff, by providing:

- Better lockers, changing rooms and operational spaces, allowing officers to swiftly parade with their squad, be briefed, and deploy at the beginning of shifts.
- Touch Down desks and Smart Working Zones, allowing officers to quickly and efficiently undertake tasks and activities that must be carried out on police premises, hence improving turnaround time and time travelling between stations.
- Self-vend/self-pay mini-markets and wellbeing spaces, allowing officers the space to decompress after managing difficult or traumatic incidents such as fatal road collisions, and redeploy where appropriate.

7.11. Longer-term, the Ferndown Hub reinvestment work (outlined in paragraph 3.5) will also increase the location's ability to serve as an operational hub when the headquarters build is complete and the Force's training campus can move from Ferndown to Winfrith. This will further increase visibility as more frontline units become deployable from Ferndown (beyond the current position of LPA, patrol and the tactical firearms units).

8. CONNECTIVITY

8.1. Dorset Police and the OPCC remain committed to ensuring high levels of meaningful engagement with communities right across the county. At the same time, it is important that this engagement be aligned to how communities wish to engage, whether online, via telephone, or in-person.

8.2. Needs and evidence-based analysis of crime and contact information has been undertaken as part of the estates review to inform choices for investment to best connect with the people of Dorset. Additional consideration has been given to maximising the opportunities of using mobile engagement (drop-ins, pop-up events and mobile stations) to minimise the need for members of the public to travel, by officers attending locations such as community hubs, youth clubs, church halls, supermarkets, libraries, and shopping centres where they already attend.

8.3. The OPCC previously introduced Neighbourhood Engagement Contracts which set out eight minimum standards and common objectives for each Neighbourhood Policing Team to achieve within their area. These cover off how policing teams will engage with communities through meetings and partnership events, as well as being contactable and connected via social media. These are refreshed annually and published on the Dorset Police website under the details for each team.

8.4. As part of the estates review, a series of analyses were undertaken looking at a range of data including:

- a geographic analysis of non-emergency demand data (calls and emails),
- a network analysis of police vehicle utilisation across the primary road network, and
- a heatmap analysis of the current mobile engagement locations

This was to ensure that the estate provision and connectivity through engagement locations was delivering total coverage across the county. As a result of this analysis, a decision was taken to increase the volume and number of locations that neighbourhood teams used to engage with communities and at events, in particular in the north and west of the county.

8.5. The below chart sets out the number of engagements undertaken by Dorset Police, by location, from October 2021 through March 2022. The split between the two LPAs is roughly 50/50, with 341 total engagements undertaken in the County LPA during this time, compared to 355 in the BCP LPA:

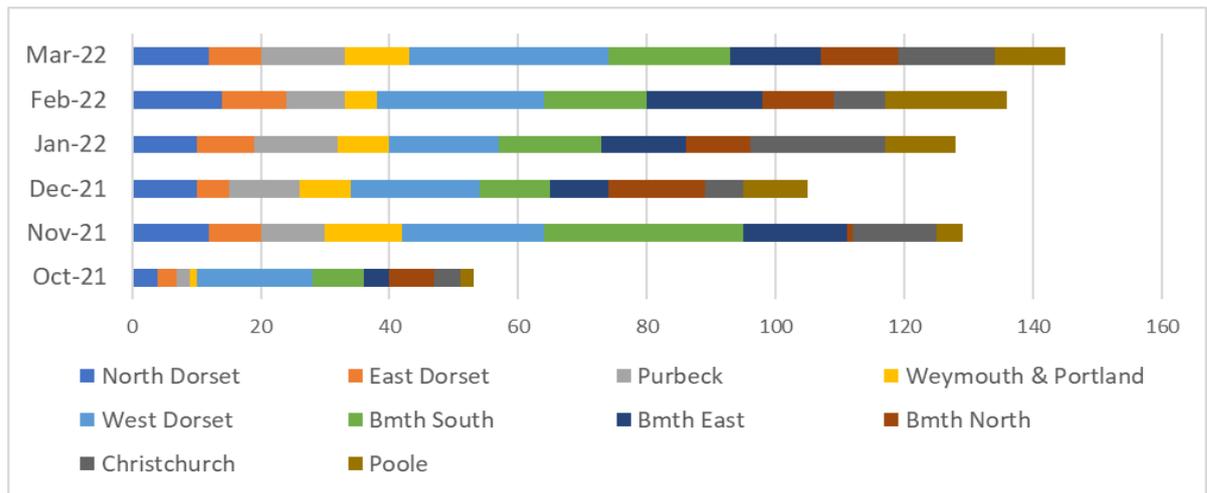


Chart 1: Dorset Police Engagement, October 2021 to March 2022.

The upward trajectory of these engagements is set to continue as the current schedule embeds and further opportunities are identified.

- 8.6. Separate geographic analysis has highlighted that some rural and isolated communities are located more than 10 miles from a police location with a front counter service, and therefore would benefit from the additionality of an alternative method of engagement.
- 8.7. The Rural Engagement Van was launched on 20 June and will be deployed by the Rural Crime Team to priority areas beyond a 10-mile radius from a police front counter service. The initial areas that will be attended include Lyme Regis, Swanage, Gillingham and Shaftesbury, Sherborne, Highcliffe and Christchurch. Further areas under consideration include Beaminster (as a route to cover West Dorset) and Wareham, Blandford, and Winton. The van will visit these locations across on three days per week, with the days in between being used to conduct enhanced crime prevention advice and follow up with things like tack and equipment marking to ensure that communities receive the best service.

9. TECHNOLOGY

- 9.1. Although not part of the Estates Futures programme, Dorset Police and the OPCC will continue to innovate and drive the use of technology to fully exploit the capabilities of the police estate and maximise visibility and connectivity with the people of Dorset.
- 9.2. The recent introduction of further mobile technology, including the Pronto software application that provides mobile access to policing systems and replaces core paper forms is one example, as is the introduction of an electronic pocket notebook that accurately records data, intelligence and photos recorded by officers and shares these quickly with colleagues and partner agencies as needed. A final example is the recent acquisition of 400 biometric fingerprint readers, which allow officers to scan fingerprints from suspects at the roadside rather than having to travel to a custody suite.
- 9.3. All of these technology innovations free up officer time by preventing travelling to police estates, thereby maximising visibility and connectivity.
- 9.4. Additionally, the recent introduction of the Single Online Home platform in Dorset will see core benefits to the Force's website, thereby improving both visibility and connectivity. Single Online Home is the approach taken by forces to offer a consistent approach to online communications, by using the same platform for all police websites. By offering the same 'digital front counter', Forces will ensure consistency (with local tailoring where needed) to the public, and better scalability and optimisation of processes to drive service improvement to the public.

- 9.5. Put simply, rather than having to manage the upkeep and development of locally owned websites, forces are able to use a common platform which benefits from centrally managed maintenance and development. Core 'onboarding' to Single Online Home occurred in May 2022, which saw some improvements to the existing public contact forms on the Force website. Full onboarding will commence in August, and complete by March 2023.

10. SUSTAINABILITY

- 10.1. Dorset Police and the OPCC are committed to delivering a sustainable estate that improves energy efficiency, reduces carbon emissions, and achieves Net Zero by 2050, in line with Government targets.
- 10.2. Major capital projects are the primary opportunity to deliver manifest changes to estates sustainability, and the proposed new headquarters build will deliver a 40% reduction in CO2 emissions from the building regulations baseline, provide an all-electric-design, and use no fossil fuels in its MEP design (mechanical, electrical, plumbing). At the same time the design will deliver a 40% reduction in water consumption from the regulations baseline through low flow sanitary ware and use of native species in planting.
- 10.3. Furthermore, major capital works to replace existing roof structures have specified the use of photovoltaic panels, that are rated to reduce energy consumption by 40%. These repairs will also provide better insulation to the existing buildings, improving energy efficiency and sustainability in terms of the continuation of the use of the buildings.
- 10.4. Once the new build is complete, the environmentally considered ecological replanting of the Winfrith site for the conservation of birds and wildlife will also aid improving biodiversity.
- 10.5. Having the right estates in the right places, combined with making the best use of co-located premises and facilities with partner agencies – including touch down and smart working zones – plus the implementation of better mobile technology to minimise officers' time spent in stations will reduce the need for travel and hence fuel use and vehicle wear.
- 10.6. Gradually replacing the existing pool car fleet (not operational vehicles) with fully electric vehicles and increasing the number of electric vehicle charge points across the Force estate will also increase the proportion of miles travelled under electric power.
- 10.7. The nature of policing means services are delivered 24/7 across a range of police estates. Whilst more efficient heating and lighting systems have and are being implemented, for this reason, it is challenging to derive the same kinds of returns that can be made by other sectors. However, the ongoing commitment is clear, and all options will continue to be considered and evaluated.

11. RECOMMENDATION

- 11.1. Members are recommended to note the paper.

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