



Police and Crime Commissioner

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

Foreword from Darryl Preston, Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Welcome to the Annual Report for the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough which covers the period April 2020 to March 2021.

I am in the unusual position of reporting on a year in which my predecessor, Ray Bisby, was Acting Police and Crime Commissioner. I took over as Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough on 13 May 2021.

The last 12 months have been unprecedented for all of us. The pandemic forced us to change the way we live and work, however, throughout all of this our police officers, staff and volunteers continued to deliver the best possible service across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Throughout the pandemic, the Acting Commissioner and his team continued to support the countywide response to the challenges posed by the health emergency. Work with partners continued to ensure vital victim support services, commissioned through the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), were available throughout the pandemic, securing £700k of additional funding over the year to support domestic and sexual abuse victims. The OPCC also brought an extra £500k into the county as part of the Home Office Safer Streets fund to improve the security of homes.

Existing work with partners to reduce the likelihood of reoffending by improving pathways from prison into accommodation rather than homelessness was adapted to ensure people could be released safely and access key services throughout the pandemic.

From adjusting and responding to ever-changing government legislation, to keeping people safe and responding to normal calls for service, to managing public protests and making sure the criminal justice system continued to operate, it has been an incredibly challenging year for the Constabulary.

Throughout all of this, investment in officers continues to be a priority, both locally and as a result of the national 'uplift' programme. I am very pleased to report that we now have more police officers in our county than ever before.

Thanks to public support for an increase in the policing part of council tax for 2021/22, people can also expect an even better service from the Constabulary in the coming year. The increase allows the Chief Constable to improve and enhance services to meet growing demand.

I want to end by thanking all the officers, staff and volunteers at Cambridgeshire Constabulary who continued to demonstrate professionalism over the past 12 months.

Darryl Preston

Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

The Role of Police and Crime Commissioners

Police and Crime Commissioners are elected every four years to:

- Be the voice of the community, listen and respond to their views;
- Secure an efficient and effective police force for their area;
- Appoint the Chief Constable, hold them to account for running the force, and if necessary, dismiss them;
- Set the police and crime objectives for their force area through a Police and Crime Plan; or, if in an 'acting' position, continue to deliver existing objectives;
- Set the force budget and determine the precept (policing part of the council tax);
- Contribute to the national and international policing capabilities set out by the Home Secretary;
- Commission services to support victims of crime and;
- Bring together community safety and criminal justice partners, making sure local priorities are joined up.

The Commissioner holds the Chief Constable to account by supporting and scrutinising him in a number of ways, including regular face to face meetings and through his Business Co-ordination Board. Staff from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) also represent the Commissioner on a wide range of other boards and forums to support progress on Police and Crime Plan priorities.

Police and Crime Commissioners are not permitted by law to interfere with the operational independence of the Chief Constable and their force. All operational decisions, for example investigating an incident, or deploying staff to specific incidents, or the broader allocation of policing resources must be made by the Chief Constable.

Strategic partners, such as local authorities, Community Safety Partnerships, and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group, also have a part to play in delivering the objectives set out in the Police and Crime Plan. In order to support, challenge and find solutions to delivering those objectives, the Commissioner chairs the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Countywide Community Safety Strategic Board and the Cambridgeshire Criminal Justice Board.

The Police and Crime Panel role includes scrutinising decisions made by the Commissioner and providing checks and balances of the Commissioner’s work, but does not scrutinise the Constabulary.

The Panel is currently hosted by Peterborough City Council. Details of the Panel’s work, meetings and reports submitted by the Commissioner can be found on their [website](#).

The Police and Crime Plan 2017-21

Community Safety and Criminal Justice working together to keep Cambridgeshire safe

Police and Crime Plan – Community Safety and Criminal Justice



VICTIMS

In Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, victims and witnesses are placed at the heart of the criminal justice system and have access to clear pathways of support.

Victims and witnesses of crime can access appropriate and proportionate needs-led emotional and practical support at all stages of the criminal justice process

Victims have access to an integrated model of support services provided through a Constabulary-led Victim and Witness Hub and local contracts with specialist providers.

As the pandemic hit, staff from the OPCC supported all services to develop operational contingency plans and to change to virtual ways of working, including moving from face-to-face to telephone-based, online or virtual services. The Countywide Sexual Violence Support Service changed its entire method of support delivery within weeks of lockdown being announced. The service continued to provide Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) with staff working from home and even ran its helpline and email support service from volunteers' homes.

A number of new pathways of support were created as services embraced different ways of working and stepped in to support each other. For example, the Victim and Witness Hub provided emotional support to elderly victims of burglary while the 'Bobby Scheme' moved to new ways of working. The existing strong partnership working arrangements ensured a seamless provision throughout the year. During the summer months as lockdown eased many services started 'Walk and Talk' emotional support, rather than build up waiting lists with people keen to meet in person. Young people had counselling sessions in a camper van parked on their drive and secure online counselling rooms became the norm.

The OPCC and Local Authority hosted weekly calls with refuge managers and supported local problem solving to keep them and the Domestic Abuse Outreach Service up and running. The county's Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) also remained open quickly coming up with ways to limit contact with survivors but also capture vital evidence and provide holistic support.

However, staff across the system found working from home and providing emotional support to often highly anxious and traumatised victims a challenge. The OPCC worked with a clinical psychologist to develop virtual training and support sessions for staff initially in the Victim and Witness Hub and then wider services. These sessions reinforced their knowledge on trauma-informed practice but also enabled them to deal with their own welfare and put coping mechanisms in place. The feedback was amazing with staff appreciating the investment in them professionally and personally. Over the year, all commissioned services reported rising numbers of victims of crime accessing support. Support sessions increased in length and complexity with victims reporting heightened anxiety and a lack of access to positive coping mechanisms.

Extraordinary Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Funding

During the year the OPCC led successful partnership bids for additional funding worth more than £700k to help services flex and respond to the pandemic. This included:

- Three additional Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVAs) funded for two years – worth £220k;
- Awarding more than £375k to 12 organisations, eight of whom had not previously been receiving funding, including two organisations that specifically support victims from protected groups;
- Additional Rape Support Fund monies – worth £123k.

Victims and witnesses are treated with respect and their needs are acknowledged during the criminal process

The Cambridgeshire Criminal Justice Board (CCJB) has continued to bring criminal justice agencies together through the pandemic to work through issues that would otherwise act as a barrier to effective justice. This has required the CCJB to bring partners together more frequently, to work through the challenges in delivering an efficient and effective criminal justice system.

The roll out of a new video platform has enabled the Courts to remain open for business and has played a vital role in keeping justice moving, whilst protecting court users.

A core focus of the CCJB has been the impact of the pandemic on victims and witnesses. Victim and Witness Care Co-ordinators in the Victim and Witness Hub continued to support victims and witness and provide updates in relation to the progress of the case. The Victim and Witness Coordinators have continued to liaise with witnesses to secure their availability for court and ensure any special measures are put in place. These staff work in partnership with their CPS colleagues and the Witness Service.

The criminal justice system has not been able to progress cases at the same rate and as such there is a backlog of cases waiting to be heard. This has led to an increase of victims and witnesses within the system. Recognising the challenges, the Acting Commissioner provided an additional £90k of funding to provide additional resources to ensure that victim and witnesses are kept up to date and engaged with the criminal justice process whilst backlog caused by the pandemic is reduced.

OFFENDERS

Over the reporting year, staff from the OPCC provided leadership and support to ensure effective partnership working for the safe resettlement of those leaving prison, making sure that people re-entering communities have had access to vital services in order to help prevent them from re-offending. They liaised closely with partners to ensure effective information sharing and that emerging issues were addressed. The OPCC continued to support the partnership forum enabling it to meet as regularly as weekly when needed during the pandemic to respond to the constantly changing landscape. For example, supporting effective links between services so that people can access accommodation on release from prison if they would otherwise be homeless. Accommodation is a key pathway to preventing reoffending and throughout the pandemic it has been important to ensure people can follow the health advice. An example of innovative partnership working includes enabling access to prison video technology so that housing assessments can be undertaken remotely. This close working has also enabled continuity from prison into the community whilst addressing individual health needs.

Police enforcement disrupts offenders and deters would-be offenders & Offenders are brought to justice while ensuring the best outcomes for victims

Tackling and investigating crime is a core policing role. The Constabulary sets out how it will tackle offending in its Corporate Plan – a copy of which can be found [here](#).

During the reporting year, there were 5 operational priorities for Cambridgeshire Constabulary around combatting acquisitive crime, tackling serious and organised crime, reducing harm to communities, safeguarding the vulnerable and increasing public satisfaction.

The new force approach to out of court disposals (OOCs) introduced at the end of 2019 has been fully embedded as business as usual this year. OOCs are used to divert low level offending out of the court

system by offering referrals to partner agencies to support people from reoffending by addressing their needs. These include housing, drug or alcohol misuse and financial management. The process has been supported with funding from the Commissioner to provide additional officers in the Constabulary's Out of Court Diversion suite and ongoing support from Outside Links (a service providing continued support for both men and women who have resided at HMP Peterborough, or those in the community) to support those identified in needing support through the Out of Court Disposal process. Between 1st October and 31st December 2020, 234 referrals were made by the Constabulary to the Outside Links Service.

All agencies coming into contact with offenders ensure they address the causes of criminality

With a number of new strategies being introduced over the reporting year by government, including in the areas of sentencing, offender management and probation, local work has reflected this national focus on preventing reoffending.

An updated local needs assessment was commissioned in order to provide an evidence base for the incoming Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan and to inform future commissioning and partnership working. The results reinforced the need for focus on key areas such as accommodation, substance misuse, and education, training and employment. It also highlighted the complex needs of people within the criminal justice system and the need to work effectively across the whole system.

The OPCC has continued to support the Mental Health Treatment Requirement project for females in Peterborough which has been in place since September 2019. This diverts vulnerable offenders at risk of short prison sentences towards community sentences, requiring and supporting them to access treatment for their mental health issues to reduce their reoffending.

Partnership working is underway to implement the new national Integrated Offender Management (IOM) strategy locally. The aim of the IOM Strategy is to make communities safer by reducing reoffending. There is a particular focus on Neighbourhood crimes: robbery; burglary; theft of vehicles; theft from person. Each Police Force area will work with partners to ensure two core pillars of activity are undertaken: joint supervision of offenders by Police & Probation; Access for offenders to rehabilitative services. Cambridgeshire is well-placed to deliver against the new strategy.

The Acting Commissioner provided Crime and Disorder Reduction Funding to the value of £115,011 to support people facing multiple disadvantage under the Making Every Adult Matter approach which aims to develop better coordinated approaches to multiple disadvantage that can increase wellbeing, reduce costs to public services and improve people's lives. From April 2019 to December 2020 118 individuals were referred.

Support for those leaving prison continued with £10,000 funding towards the countywide Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer from the Commissioner. A member of OPCC staff continued to chair the Criminal Justice Housing Pathways Task and Finish group.

The OPCC continued to work with colleagues in Jobcentre Plus, the prison and probation to identify new opportunities to support people as they leave prison with education, training and employment opportunities.

Funding worth £340,000 was also provided to the county's Youth Offending Service to support the SAFE (Safer Relationships for Exploited Children) Team over a 2-year period. Through the programme, 'Trusted' professionals engage with young people with complex needs who are assessed as being at moderate or significant risk of being criminally exploited. SAFE workers support the young people to remove themselves from risky environments and lifestyles and therefore reduce the likelihood of them getting involved in crime, either as a victim or offender.

97 referrals have been accepted by the SAFE team since its inception in 2019. As of December 2021, there were 65 young people currently receiving SAFE intervention. Evaluation has found improvements in reports of safety, wellbeing, self-esteem and self-efficacy from both the young people and their carers.

Recognising the importance of strengthening prisoner's family ties to prevent reoffending and reducing intergenerational crime, the Commissioner also provided a small amount of funding to rollout 'Storybook Mums and Dads' in HMP Peterborough. The programme enables parents in prison to make a video recording of bedtime stories and messages for their children, helping to heal rifts and build relationships.

COMMUNITIES

One of the Acting Commissioner's key responsibilities was to listen and respond to the concerns of people living in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Throughout the reporting year, and in line with social restrictions, members of the public were encouraged to voice their concerns through 1-1 surgeries held virtually, surveys, telephone calls and online meetings. Regular briefing sessions were also offered to local councillors, community representatives and local MPs online so that issues could be shared. A new standing agenda item: 'Views from the Public' was established at the Acting Commissioner's monthly Business Co-ordination Board for public concerns to be put to the Chief Constable. The responses provided are made available on the Acting Commissioner's website for the public to view.

Following the Chief Constable's announcement in October 2020 regarding proposed changes to Neighbourhood Policing, the Commissioner proactively engaged with the public and key stakeholders including Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) to seek their views in a number of ways including through direct correspondence and via a radio phone-in.

Other examples of targeted engagement include a Hate Crime Virtual Round Table, co-chaired with the Chief Constable in October 2020 for those representing minority and hard to reach communities; and a virtual event for people living and working in rural communities co-hosted with the Regional Crown Prosecution Service to discuss hare coursing, machinery and livestock theft as well as reassuring people about available victim support services.

The Acting Commissioner listened and responded to members of the public in a number of ways:

- Ensuring the voice of the public is evident in the Police and Crime Plan;
- Influencing, challenging and supporting national, regional and local policies and initiatives;
- Enabling and supporting volunteers;
- Finding solutions to complex problems through partnership working;

- Ensuring that all information is easily accessible and transparent

A new accessibility tool, [Recite Me](#), was added to the Acting Commissioner's website in order to enhance accessibility allowing users to customise content in a way that works best for them.

The website was subsequently awarded the CoPaCC Open and Transparent Quality Award 2021 in March for meeting the statutory requirements on openness and transparency. Award criteria included the availability of information, the timeliness of its publication and its ease of use.

- 1,075 pieces of correspondence received
- 125 Facebook posts reaching 125,335 people
- 15 Instagram posts reaching 365 followers
- 3 radio interviews
- 2 briefings with local MPs
- 3 seasonal newsletters reaching approximately 20,000 people each time
- 11 public surgeries (held online due to Covid-19 restrictions)
- 7 Police and Crime Panel meetings and 1 Confirmation Hearing
- 30 Freedom of Information requests
- 282,172 Twitter impressions with over 3,500 followers
- 18 media interviews

[Increase public involvement to improve community understanding and resilience](#)

The Acting Commissioner and Chief Constable remained committed to providing a policing service that is as effective and efficient as possible while continuing to build trust and confidence in communities. This is reflected in the increase in reported victim satisfaction which improved over the reporting period from 77.2% to 81.7%.

Local issues such as road safety cannot always be solved by policing alone therefore the Acting Commissioner continued to work with partners and volunteers in the community to find solutions and resources. July 2020 saw the adoption of [Vision Zero](#), a countywide road safety strategy based on the principle that no person should be killed or seriously injured as a result of a road collision. A key element of the strategy is the involvement of local road users and communities across the county.

Funding was maintained for a Road Casualty Reduction Officer, which increases the Constabulary's capacity to work with local partners educating road users about road safety, and to the Road Victims Trust to enable the provision of 1-1 emotional and practical support for bereaved families.

In July, the Acting Commissioner, working with the Constabulary, Cambridge City Council and Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators successful bid for £546k from the Home Office Safer Streets fund. Despite the challenges imposed by Covid-19, hundreds of residents have benefited from improved security in areas of highest need.

[Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Against Scams Partnership](#) (CAPASP) continued to grow throughout the year with supporters increasing from 80 to 106 with growth in areas where participation was previously low. With Covid-19 providing a unique opportunity for scammers to capitalise, the partnership focussed on building community resilience against potential scams. Monthly newsletters and regular scam alerts were sent to approximately 400 subscribers, and a regular slot was broadcast on BBC Radio

Cambridgeshire's mid-morning show allowing partners to share the latest scam warnings and preventative tips.

The Acting Commissioner continued to manage an Independent Custody Visitors' Scheme (ICV) with volunteers paying unannounced visits into police custody to check on the welfare of detainees as well as the standards of facilities. A full report on ICV activity is provided in the attached Appendix.

Countywide Watch Schemes are supported by the Acting Commissioner to enable local issues to be flagged by volunteers so that action can be taken where it is most needed. A Watch Coordinator, funded by the Acting Commissioner continues to sit within the Constabulary to support communities to set up both Speedwatch and Neighbourhood Watch schemes.

There are now 184 Speedwatch groups with 2,100 volunteers across the county. The schemes were suspended in October 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions. An HGV Watch scheme, still in its infancy now has 12 groups and 84 volunteers.

The reporting year was incredibly challenging for businesses across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough as premises closed down during the various lockdowns. Throughout this period, the Acting Commissioner continued to meet business representatives regularly and virtually to make sure any local needs were shared with the Chief Constable.

The Acting Commissioner continued to be the voice of those living in rural communities, making grant funding available to Cambridgeshire Countryside Watch to provide practical and emotional support and advice to their 2000+ members. He also continued to engage directly with key stakeholders at a local, national and regional level to understand the issues rural communities face, supporting partners to take action and lobbying for change at a national level.

Inspire all public servants to maintain the highest levels of ethical behaviour to ensure public confidence and trust

The Constabulary continues to strive to be more representative of the community it serves and has taken positive action regarding recruitment and retention. It is also committed to retaining and progressing officers and staff to ensure excellence in policing.

One of the Acting Commissioner's priorities was to further strengthen the way in which the Constabulary's use of its stop and search and use of force powers is scrutinised, and also to understand the extent of the communities' views and concerns regarding the use of these powers.

In October 2020, the Constabulary sought volunteers to join a newly formed independent panel. Volunteers were asked to review the Constabulary's tactics on a quarterly basis including the method and legality of stop and searches and the appropriateness of any use of force. By examining body worn video footage, the Panel will be able to provide feedback to the current Commissioner and the Constabulary. Feedback received from any of the scrutiny sessions, either positive or negative, will be fed back to help shape the Constabulary's policing policy in these areas. The Panel has been in place since January 2021 and has received training from the Constabulary on the law, policies and practices relating to stop and

search and use of force. Once Covid restrictions are lifted, the Panel will be able to undertake scrutiny of actual cases to date.

Police and Crime Commissioners have a legal duty to monitor all complaints against the Constabulary's officers and staff, whilst also handling any complaints made against the Chief Constable. Over the reporting year, the Acting Commissioner's office undertook a series of random sampling of complaints to monitor the way in which the Constabulary responds to these and the lessons learnt. Further assurance regarding complaint handling was gained during the year through the Acting Commissioner being represented on the Professional Standards Department (PSD) Governance Board.

During the year, six complaints were received against the Chief Constable, none of which related to conduct matters, and none of which were upheld. All of the complaints related to the handling of operational policing. No complaints were recorded by the Police and Crime Panel (the body responsible for handling complaints against the Acting Commissioner) for matters relating to the Acting Commissioner Ray Bisby. A total of 36 complaint reviews were received and reviewed by the OPCC during the period. The majority of complaints received and recorded by PSD related to Police powers, policies and procedures and delivery of duties and service. The OPCC did not uphold any of the reviews as it considered, the outcome (the rationale with regards to the handling of the complaint provided by the Constabulary to the complainant) was both reasonable and proportionate.

Youth and Community Fund

The Acting Commissioner's Youth and Community Fund continued to help youth and community groups deliver activities to divert young people and vulnerable adults away from offending and re-offending. Flexing to respond to needs throughout the pandemic, £59,450 was awarded by the Acting Commissioner to a number of voluntary and community organisations for projects and initiatives such as bikes for care leavers to provide them with free transport allowing them to access work and education opportunities and towards the setting up of a new award scheme to celebrate the contribution of young people during the pandemic.

A full list of all projects granted through the fund can be found here: <https://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/accessing-information/money/grants/youth-fund/>.

TRANSFORMATION

The advent of the pandemic created an unprecedented year for all those delivering public services requiring the Commissioner and his team to work differently within each of their statutory powers and remits. Throughout the reporting year, the team has moulded and flexed itself with input and actions at the right pace and right time within the framework of the Police and Crime Plan.

In the first few weeks of the pandemic, the OPCC saw the secondment of Chief Executive Dorothy Gregson, a trained clinician, to Public Health England (PHE) to support the countywide response. An existing member of staff took over for the secondment period, one member of staff was redeployed to the Special Constabulary, the Commissioner's Communication's Manager engaged early with countywide and

partnership work through the 'Warn and Inform' call of the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and his Communications Officer joined the countywide multi-agency intelligence cell for a period of two months.

Drive efficiency and effectiveness in policing through local, regional and national collaboration

Whilst Cambridgeshire has a strong and established history of collaboration with Bedfordshire Police and Hertfordshire Constabulary, (known as the BCH Strategic Alliance), it was recognised that the approach to commissioning of services from BCH collaboration needed to be strengthened. An integrated planning cycle was therefore agreed in May 2020 to enable Cambridgeshire service requirements to be more effectively fed into the planning process for the separate BCH units. Through BCH, each of the three local forces continue to receive outstanding support across a range of functions. The functions provided to Cambridgeshire by BCH collaboration are Joint Protective Services, Operational Support and organisational support functions such as human resources and ICT.

There are also well-established arrangements across the region for collaboration with a 7Force structure (including Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent, Norfolk and Suffolk). In January 2020, procurement across all forces went live and benefits are already starting to be seen through projects such as PEQF, a new, professional framework for the training of police officers and staff.

In response to a national College of Policing change to recruit training, all forces were required to deliver recruit degree training in partnership with a Higher Education Institution partner. This represented a significant change for all police services which required consideration and planning beyond just recruitment and training. Sharing this procurement process across the 7 forces reduced time and improved the quality of the final contract which was awarded to Anglia Ruskin University in March 2020 at a value of just over £51m over 5 years.

A programme to align vetting across 7Force was developed and implemented with a new cloud hosted Case Management System to standardise the process. Other programmes running over the reporting year included a driver management system to record all drivers of police vehicles, their training and driving history; new anti-corruption software; a small team of Chief Firearms Instructors; a new forensic case management system and a Digital Asset Management System (DAMS) to enable the transfer of digital material from members of the public or other 3rd parties into the investigative and criminal justice system.

Work with partners to realise the benefits for community safety which can be derived from improved governance and integrated delivery

Partnership working across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough remains key to tackling community safety issues. Community safety is delivered in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough through six Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) all operating within district and unitary council boundaries. CSPs are made up from local authorities, representatives from the Constabulary, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service, the Probation Service, Clinical Commissioning Group and the voluntary sector. The Commissioner has been actively represented at numerous CSP meetings during the year and continues to chair a Countywide Community Strategic Safety Board (CCSSB) supporting CSPs and high-risk delivery groups in line with the Countywide Community Safety Agreement. The CCSSB pulls together the efforts of these partnerships and boards to protect vulnerable communities, develop preventative and early intervention approaches to tackling crime and look at ways to build resilience within communities.

Continue to drive transformation within Cambridgeshire Constabulary

In July 2020, Cambridgeshire Constabulary held a joint formal consultation with the OPCC on proposals for a new police station on the outskirts of Milton, Cambridge. 120 feedback forms were received during the consultation and 70% of respondents agreed that a police hub was a good use of the Milton site

A planning application was then submitted to Greater Cambridge Shared Planning in September 2020 which was subsequently granted in March 2021.

The new station will be a base for the local community policing team and will enable officers to respond to local population growth and the challenges of modern-day policing, as well as providing 24 new custody cells.

The Constabulary continues to deliver a demand-led, victim-focused service which provides much needed support to the frontline and new and innovative ways of working to tackle the increased demand for service.

In October 2020, the Chief Constable announced proposals for a new Neighbourhood Policing model which aimed to manage the financial challenges faced by the force. The proposals included the reduction and realignment of PCSOs to all neighbourhoods across the force, the removal of the community safety role and a change to the opening hours of enquiry offices across the force, to assist in saving £1.7m in 2021/22.

As a result of the proposals, the main north and south public Enquiry offices at Thorpe Wood and Parkside Police Stations maintained seven day a week provision and a team of police officers to provide people in each local authority was set up to provide an appointment-based service to allow members of the public to speak to an officer.

The proposals also led to the development of Area Command Cells and Neighbourhood Support Teams to deliver consistent and efficient neighbourhood policing across the whole force with Continuous Professional Development Units (CPDU) to support officers with ongoing operational competence and training.

The Force will continue to receive the ring-fenced funding from Government to deliver its contribution to the 20,000 national uplift programme across the country. 62 of those officers are already in force and a further 62 anticipated in 2021/22, and 82 in 2022/23 (subject to confirmation) enabling the continuation and enhancement of the neighbourhood policing commitment to our communities.

The Constabulary continues to use a STRA process (Strategic Threat and Risk Assessment) to determine operational requirements and this informs all business planning on an annual basis. Whilst a two-centre policing model is currently in operation, with the county being split between north and south, deployment of officers is allocated where it is required through a one team approach, where all specialist and relevant resources are made available when required. The Force also runs a monthly Change Board where national, regional and local initiatives, risks and opportunities are discussed.

Identify the best way for fire and policing to work together in the future.

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 provides a framework for joint working between emergency services. In Cambridgeshire, a [memorandum of understanding](#) on police/fire/ambulance joint working was signed in December 2017. A proposal for the Commissioner to take on the governance of fire was approved by the Home Secretary in March 2018. Following a series of legal challenges by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority the Home Secretary's decision was upheld in the courts. However, owing to the time that had passed the Home Office has decided that it will need to revisit the issue after the PCC elections in May 2021.

In March 2021, the Home Office published its findings following a review of the role of PCCs. As part of this it stated that it will be launching a consultative White Paper on fire reform later this year.

Tackling Crime

The last year was unprecedented in terms of the changing demands on policing as a result of the pandemic. With this came the requirements on the police to enforce the various lockdown restrictions, while still responding to the usual calls for service.

As people spent more time at home, typically levels of calls to the police were lower and the number of offences recorded as crimes by the Constabulary during the year from April 2020 to March 2021 reduced by 11.8% when compared with the previous year. This mirrors national trends. The Office for National Statistics has stated that the majority of the fluctuations nationally can be attributed to the introduction and subsequent easing of national lockdown restrictions throughout the year. Despite these fluctuations in crime levels, the Constabulary's focus has remained on keeping people safe and there has been concerted police activity across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to tackle crime in our communities. Improvements in some key areas were seen before the pandemic so it is likely this continued activity has also had a positive impact. Demand across other crime types is expected to increase as lockdown restrictions are relaxed further.

Before the pandemic, levels of dwelling burglary had been falling locally as a result of sustained police focus. This continued as people spent more time at home resulting in a reduction of 39.7%. Crime prevention work through programmes such as Safer Streets (see page 12 for more details) and partnership work with local Neighbourhood Watch schemes led to improved communication with the public. Similarly, following sustained police activity to tackle keyless vehicle thefts, theft of motor vehicle offences recorded by the police decreased by 22%.

Tackling **Violent Crime** continues to be one of the Constabulary's key priorities. Over the reporting year, officers used a range of tactics to tackle and reduce this issue including prevention activity with schools, holding dedicated operations and taking part in national initiatives such as knife and firearm surrender schemes. 2020/21 also saw a 13% reduction in **Knife Crime** and a 16% reduction in recorded possession of weapons offences.

Conversely some crimes that can be more hidden or often occur in the home increased or remained high. **Domestic abuse** increased, in line with the pre-pandemic trend. Increases, which have flattened out more recently, are likely to be due in part to the Constabulary improving recording practices and a willingness of victims to come forward. Similarly, a significantly higher number of **child sexual abuse** crimes were recorded by the police. Increased reporting was seen as children and young people returned to education settings and were able to come forward for support. Significant increases in **stalking and harassment** offences are largely due to changes in recording processes. **Drugs offences** also remained high, linked to

proactive police activity. Reduced demand for other crime types during the pandemic has meant more resources have been available for operations and other police activity to target drugs possession and supply. This targeted work has meant that Cambridgeshire has recorded a higher increase in drugs offences than most other forces in the country.

The Constabulary was also able to improve how it manages crime investigations and engages with victims. The proportion of crimes resulting in a prosecution possible outcome rose to 13%. The Constabulary’s work to develop alternative pathways to prosecution through the courts to address early offending behaviour, including Out of Court Disposals (see page 13 for more details) and other diversionary activity for young people, also significantly contributed to this improvement.

Demand on policing...

On a typical day in Cambridgeshire:



Amongst other crimes, officers will deal with:	
Anti-social behaviour	37
Burglaries	6
Domestic incidents	45
Missing from home	12
Covid	37
Incidents with a mental health marker	29

Cambridgeshire’s **Rural Crime Team** (RCAT) continued to support people living and working in rural parts of the county recording their best results in terms of tackling hare coursing in six years.

Between April 2020 and March 2021, the team responded to 1,196 incidents of hare coursing, a reduction of 16 per cent from the previous year and the lowest since 2014/15. They seized 93 vehicles, issued 138 Community Protection Warnings, issued 17 Community Protection Notices, issued 165 dispersal notices and seized and rescued 20 dogs.

More detail of the Constabulary’s overall performance including prosecution possible rates can be found here: <https://s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/media.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/uploads/2021/04/21-04-13-BCB-Agenda-Item-7.0-Police-Crime-Plan-Annual-Performance-Report.pdf>

CRIME STATISTICS (2019/20 vs 2020/21)

Type of offence	% change	No of offences 2019/20	No of offences 2020/21
All crime	-11.8%	67,882	59,883
All violence against the person	+ 8.5%	20,775	22,549
All sexual offences	-0.1%	2,049	2,047
All robbery	-28.6%	749	535
Theft offences	-32.7%	26,810	18,054
All criminal damage	-17.5%	7,882	6,499
Other crime against society	+6.1%	9,617	10,199

HMIC Assessment

The Constabulary is graded as ‘Good’ in all three assessment areas, namely the extent to which the force is effective at reducing crime and keeping people safe; that it operates efficiently and sustainably; and that it treats the public and its workforce legitimately.

It was also noted that since their last inspection the Constabulary ‘... has improved how it investigates crime’. This is all against a background where Cambridgeshire, in line with other areas, is seeing shifting demand with more hidden, harmful and impactful crimes taking place, such as sexual assaults, domestic abuse, modern slavery, child exploitation, county line drug crimes, and serious and organised crime.

The reports can be accessed here: <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/police-forces/cambridgeshire/>.

Public Contact

Cambridgeshire Constabulary promote a range of ways in which the public can contact them.

The Demand Hub, based at force headquarters, has a team of call handlers answering both 999 and 101 calls for service 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Split into four different teams, the Hub provides:

- Trained dispatch and communications operators who manage the dispatch of officers to jobs;
- Call handlers and web-chat operators in the Police Service Centre (PSC), answering 999 and 101 calls as well as dealing with general enquiries;
- An Investigation Management Unit (IMU) and an Incident Resolution Team (IRT) who schedule appointments with victims and offenders.

With the development of online reporting, web-chat and social media management, the Demand Hub is able to liaise with multiple members of the public at once.

Average time to respond:

999 calls: 117,315, of which 94.5% were answered within 10 seconds.

101 calls: 250,596 of which 87.1% were answered within 30 seconds.

Web chats: 37,853 with an average 41 seconds taken to respond.

In the 12 months ending March 2021, the Constabulary received 117,315 emergency 999 calls; 94.5% of those calls were answered within 10 seconds, with callers typically only waiting 4 or 5 seconds for their call to be answered. Only 0.2% of callers abandoned after the 10 second threshold. A further 250,596 non-emergency 101 calls were received; 87.1% of those calls were answered within 30 seconds, with typical wait times of around 12 seconds. Fewer than 2% of 101 calls were abandoned after the 30 second threshold. It is difficult to infer the nature of those abandoned calls, given that members of the public contact the Constabulary using the non-emergency number for a wide range of reasons; however, recent analysis found some evidence of callers making a second call or switching to a different contact method (e.g. web chat or online reporting tools).

Once answered, all non-emergency calls are triaged and risk assessed at that first point of contact. In some cases, the query can be dealt with by the first call handler; however, where appropriate, callers reporting an incident or a crime will typically be transferred internally to another call handler so that the relevant details can be taken and the report logged. Callers often have longer wait times on secondary lines and abandonment rates are higher. However, while holding for an operator, callers are advised of alternative contact methods, and recent analysis did provide evidence of demand being diverted to web chat or online reporting tools. Callers are also given the option of receiving a call back.

People and Resources

The Acting Commissioner received £156.5m of funding for the period of this Annual Report year, including £4.1m Specific grant funding (April 2020 - March 2021).

The net budget requirement (for Cambridgeshire Constabulary and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner) was £152.4m.

In Cambridgeshire, police funding comes from two main sources: a central Government grant (54%) and the remaining funding coming from the precept (policing part of council tax).

Each year, the Commissioner receives the funding and is responsible for how it is spent, consulting with the Chief Constable to decide how the money is allocated for policing. The Chief Constable has responsibility for the financial management of Cambridgeshire Constabulary within the agreed budget allocation, for example how many police officers and staff are recruited.

For the financial year April 2020 until March, 2021, the government funding settlement was delayed due to the December 2019 General Election. In order to set the precept (policing part of council tax), the Acting Commissioner asked members of the public for their views on supporting police funding in a short survey launched in January 2020. As a result of the survey, the precept was increased by 83p per month (based on a Band D property). The increase enabled the Constabulary to ensure officers have access to the equipment, training and support they need in order to keep people safe.

Constabulary Officer and Staff Numbers

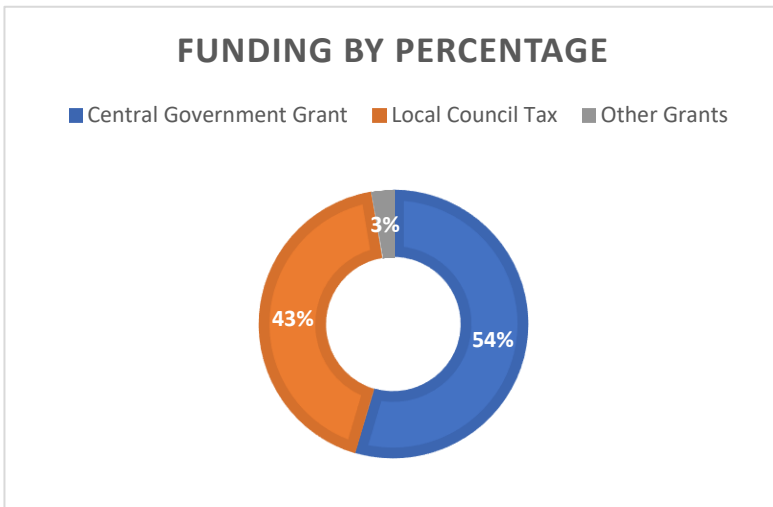
Officer recruitment over the reporting year was unprecedented with the first-year allocation of 62 officers from the national uplift programme, a further 62 anticipated in 2021/22, and more in 2022/23. These record numbers of recruits continue to strengthen neighbourhood policing in communities.

Role	Full Time Equivalent 31/03/2020	Full Time Equivalent 31/03/2021	Variance	Headcount 31/03/2021
Special Constables	193	168	-25	168
PCSO	72.8	66.51	-6.29	70
Staff	831.74	829.81	-1.93	923
Officers	1,543.49	1,622.95	+79.46	1,652*

**includes 231 officers that are in units shared with other forces.*

In Cambridgeshire, 95% of officers are front-line (with the national figure standing at 92%) and there are 2.84 officers per 1000 population (national 3.54). The Constabulary has continued to receive ring-fenced funding from government to deliver its contribution to the 20,000 national uplift programme.

Funding	£m
Central Government Grant	85.4
Local Council Tax	67.0
Other Grants	4.1
TOTAL	156.5



Spend

The Statement of Accounts for 2020/21 provides the detail of expenditure during the financial year and are available on the Commissioner's website, here: <https://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/accessing-information/money/financial-accounts/>

A full list of **Victims' services** funded by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner during the reporting year is available here: <https://s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/media.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/uploads/2021/04/Victim-Services-Awards-2020-21.pdf>.

A full list of **Crime and Disorder Reduction Grants** – Attacking criminality and reducing reoffending – awarded during the reporting year can be found here: <https://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/accessing-information/money/grants/crime-disorder-grants/>.

Appendix 1

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Custody visiting Scheme

Annual Report – April 2020 to March 2021

Introduction

Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) are volunteers representing the local community who make unannounced visits to police custody where they check on the rights, entitlements and welfare of detainees as well as the conditions of custody. This public oversight helps to prevent harm, it provides public reassurance that custody is safe and contributes to the UK's human rights obligations. More information on [the scheme](#) and how it is run is available on the OPCC website.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Custody Visiting Scheme

The Covid-19 pandemic had an impact on the running of the ICV Scheme, particularly at the start of the pandemic when national and local guidance was developing rapidly. Decisions affecting the running of the scheme were all focused on ensuring the welfare of ICVs, detainees, custody staff and other visitors. Therefore, at the start of the pandemic the decision was taken to halt custody visits. As it became clear the pandemic would have a long-lasting impact, work was taken to innovate, learning from other areas to ensure ICVs could still speak to detainees about how they are treated in custody. The approach continued to be flexible, depending on the level of risk, and the available resources. In April 2020 visiting was replaced by telephone calls directly to the custody suite by the scheme manager, speaking to custody staff. The scheme manager also conducted review of custody records to ensure the rights and entitlements were being observed.

ICVs and the Scheme Manager felt strongly that it was important to find safe ways to speak directly to detainees, therefore in July 2020, ICVs began making unannounced telephone calls into custody speaking to detainees over the phone. In September 2020 a “hybrid” approach of physical visits mixed with telephone visits began with those ICVs who felt safe to do so. As the risk from Covid-19 grew, the decisions were taken to revert solely to telephone visits, which continued past March 2021.

As the process of telephone visiting was established and embedded, both staff and ICVs grew in confidence and the system became more effective. Training was given to ICVs to support telephone visiting, ensuring they were confident with new processes.

While it is clear that a return to physical visiting is the primary goal, this will be done when the risk to ICVs, detainees, staff and visitors to custody is gone. There were some unexpected positives resulting from telephone visiting – the format made it more accessible to ICVs without easy access to private transport, or who had dependents which limited their free time. Using the format of virtual panel meetings also removed the burden of ICVs travelling to evening meetings, reducing time commitments, costs and impact on the environment. These positive aspects of remote visiting and remote panel meetings cannot be overlooked and the scheme manager will work with ICVs to see how some of the positive aspects can be retained moving forward.

Custody Visiting Data

The ICV scheme collects a range of data from visits, reporting back at panel meetings and to ICVA. Due to the disruption of the Covid-19 pandemic, data is not representative of a normal year, and due to changes in visiting methods throughout the year, data is not always comparable throughout the year. While overall figures are recorded, the key information is the findings from visits, which have continued to inform ICVs, the OPCC and the Constabulary to recognise positive practice and improve processes where necessary.

In 2020-21, ICVs carried out 25 visits across all suites including telephone visits which were recorded as a single visit, but covered both suites. ICVs spoke to 56 detainees and observed 15 of the 138 detainees in custody at the time of visits. 68 detainees were not available to speak to (they may have been asleep, in interview, speaking to a solicitor or with a healthcare provider). Visits were carried out on various days throughout the week, and with a concerted effort to visit on different days, including weekends.

While the time spent on visits has been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, the ICVs have continued to give an impressive amount of time to the running and development of the scheme, ensuring detainees are treated with respect and have their rights upheld. Volunteers report back on every visit, including anything positive, negative or general comments. The highlights and recurrent themes are summarised below:

Things that are going well:

- Detainees self-report being treated well by custody staff. When asked by ICVs how they feel they have been treated, detainees continue to report they have been “treated well” and “well looked after”.
- Further to self-reporting, ICVs regularly noted positive observations about the treatment of vulnerable detainees by custody staff. Being on the telephone, ICVs have heard positive interactions between staff and detainees, and continue to be impressed by the ability of custody staff to build rapport with detainees.
- Custody staff have been keen to contribute to ICV training, and have pro-actively offered to accommodate shadowing opportunities for ICVs, regularly taking extra time to explain things to new ICVs.
- The ICV scheme manager was invited to give input at training for custody staff.
- The introduction of a fresh food option for detainees continues to be popular with detainees.
- The culture of openness and transparency in Custody is evident at every rank, with staff always willing to engage, and open to trialling new ways of working.
- Staff continue to find innovative ways to provide services in custody, particularly when it comes to supporting detainees to have access to reading materials or activities to pass time in custody.
- Custody staff were quick to implement and enforce Covid-19 safety measures, problem solving issues quickly when they appeared.
- Detainees were proactively offered PPE.
- Availability of Health-Care Professionals (HCPs) improved dramatically on previous years.

Room for improvement:

- Delays waiting for interpreters remains an issue, despite improvements on previous years.
- Staff consistently flagged estates and IT issues. Delay’s in resolution of these was due to waits for specialist equipment or contractors. It was positive to hear staff praising the response and support

received from senior officers, and saw issues resolved quickly where it could be resolved internally.

- ICVs noted that CCTV systems across all suites were ageing. Custody are working with the estates teams to look at options.
- Detainees could sometimes spend longer in custody due to the virtual courts process. The staffing of virtual courts was a particular issue but saw a resolution mid-way through the year. Issues are now primarily as a result of the wider system, and out of the control of custody – e.g. waiting for transport to prison when a person is convicted via a virtual court.

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