

## Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner

### Annual Engagement Report

1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019

#### Vision

Upon re-election, PCC Martyn Underhill pledged to publish an Annual Engagement Report to evidence engagement activities carried out by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). This is the second such report; the other can be viewed [here](#).

In 2018/19, we engaged with over 5,000 people face-to-face at summer events, speaking engagements, conferences, community meetings, PCC surgeries and online via the Precept survey. We reached over four million people via our social media channels. We delivered two formal public consultations this year: the Devon & Cornwall and Dorset Police Merger Proposal and the Precept consultation, which received a combined figure of 9,000 responses from local people.

The Merger Proposal consultation had 4,969,600 engagements with tweets across the four organisations. There were a further 431,638 engagements on the corporate Facebook accounts (29 June and 28 August).

These facts and figures represent our best year so far for engagement. We will not be complacent; we will strive to enhance and broaden the way in which we engage with Dorset's residents and communities in 2019 and beyond.

In order to act as the conduit between the public and the police, PCCs have a statutory responsibility to effectively engage with the public and obtain the views of the community. As a result of this engagement, local policing priorities can then be established by the PCC on behalf of Dorset residents in the Police and Crime Plan, to which Dorset Police is held to account.

The PCC acts as the representative and voice of local people and aims to ensure that the communities it serves receive dynamic and responsive policing. Various methods are adopted to consult and inform residents of Dorset that policing by the consent model that operates in the UK is being supported.

The Annual Engagement Report allows for greater transparency, accountability and public scrutiny of the PCC's current engagement approach, empowering residents to become more involved in generating new ideas to more effectively bring policing to the heart of all communities in Dorset.

The OPCC has recognised the need to exert more effort and be more creative in reaching certain groups. Being committed to ensuring that all members of the community are given the opportunity to engage with the Office will help the Office best understand community



views and, so, better hold the Force to account. The position of the OPCC is that no person or group of people is hard to reach – it just depends on the approach that is taken.

## Engagement Activity

Below is a summary of the key strands of engagement activity that have been delivered by the OPCC during the 2018/19 financial year.

### Public Consultation

Public consultation on policing and community safety issues provides residents and partners with an opportunity to scrutinise, inform and influence outcomes. By collecting a wide spectrum of perspectives, initiatives and proposals are better exposed to the people they will affect prior to implementation and therefore take into account local needs.

### Policing Precept Consultation

The PCC is responsible for setting the policing element of local council tax and is required in statute to consult with residents on this issue. This year, Dorset OPCC achieved the highest number of responses it has ever had to the annual precept consultation – 4,829.

This year the Government, once again, placed the responsibility for the majority of this year's settlement with Police and Crime Commissioners. Rather than providing a much-needed, balanced funding settlement for policing, the Government advice was to increase the policing precept up to the maximum of £24\* per year.

The rise in demand and the ever-changing complexity of crime also drove the PCC's decision to ask the residents of Dorset to support the maximum increase.

The Commissioner wanted to be reassured that he had garnered public opinion with regard to raising the precept and the consultation serves that purpose. The consultation results also provides helpful information to the Police & Crime Panel, assisting them in their deliberations when considering whether or not to support the proposed precept rise.

Around 85% of residents agreed that policing needed more investment and a large proportion told us that this investment should come from central government, not the local council tax.

Additionally, over two thirds (69%) said they would pay an additional £2 per month, per Band D property, for policing services.

The raise in council tax this year has kept Dorset Police solvent, and has allowed for a small amount of growth in staffing and initiatives for the first time in a decade.

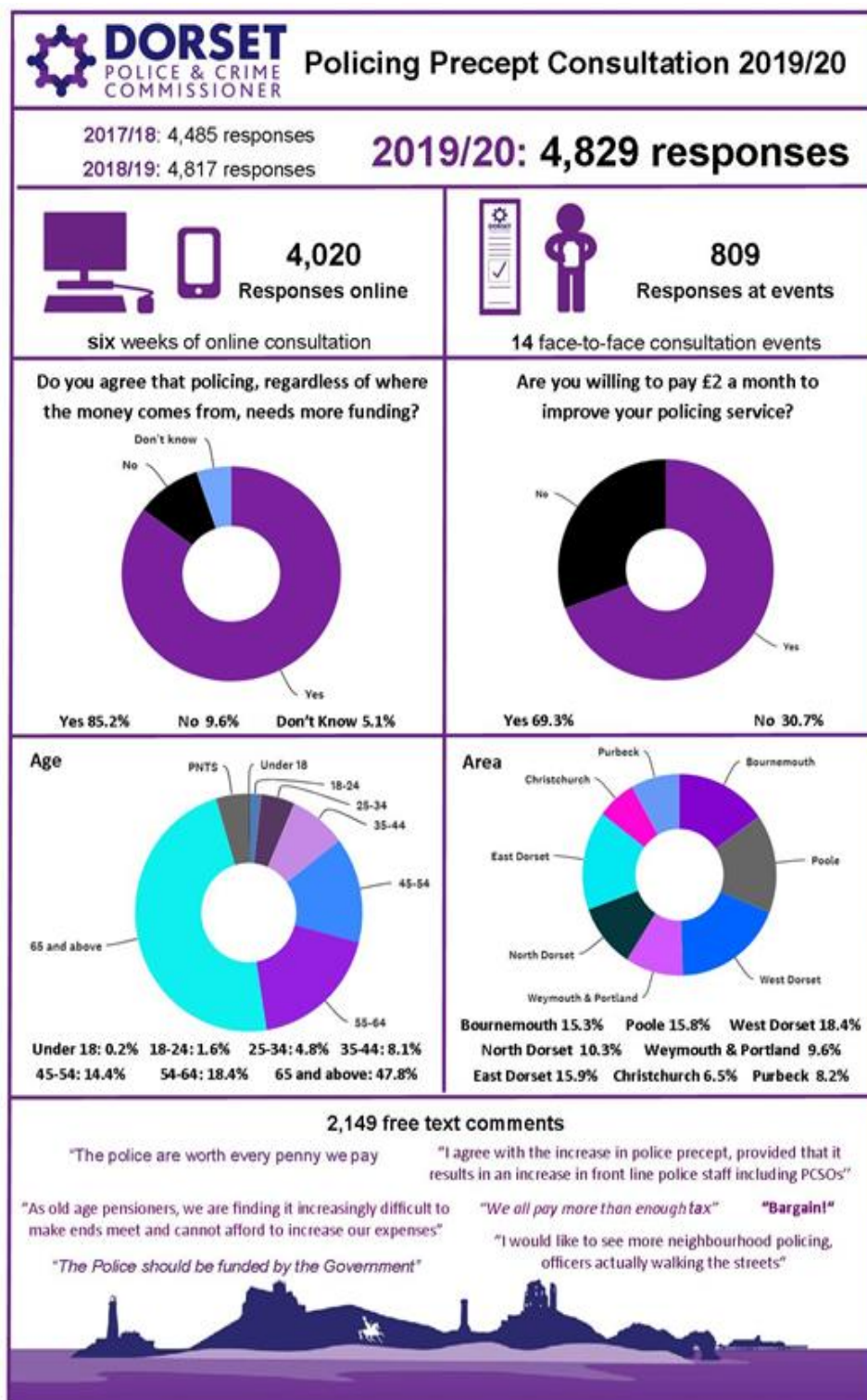
A £1m Innovation Fund has also been set up – funded by a combination of recurring efficiencies in the Force's budget and from a surplus of previously uncollected council tax receipts. The Fund will pay for initiatives such as extra officers in the rural and marine crime units, improving road safety and tackling County Lines drug gangs.

In 2019/20 the first Dorset Police volunteer cadet service will be established to help young people play a role in their communities and a Bobby Van scheme will be introduced to help vulnerable and older people across the county.

*\*£24 a year refers to a Band D council tax rating*



[Consultation Results](#) (graphic below)





## Devon & Cornwall and Dorset Police Merger

### Public Engagement and Survey

Devon & Cornwall Police and Dorset Police have been in a strategic alliance since 2015.

Due to our similar policing styles, values and priorities - as well as strong links with communities and the shared rural, coastal and urban geography - the two Forces considered going beyond the existing alliance to examine the prospect of merging.

As the merger was a voluntary proposal, there was no legal requirement for a consultation; however, there was a legal requirement for the PCCs to seek views of the public. In discussion with the Home Office it was agreed that engagement with stakeholders across Cornwall, Devon and Dorset was vital and therefore a comprehensive consultation was undertaken with the people of Dorset and Devon and Cornwall.

The aims of the engagement were:

- To seek the views of staff, the public and stakeholders on the possible merger, including any areas of policing where they would like to see investments being made
- To promote the engagement as widely as possible to those who live and work in the three counties and raise awareness of the proposal to change
- To ensure that engagement took place with a proportionally representative cross-section of our communities



Details of the consultation are set out below and more information can be found online [here](#).

### Results and Findings

Overall, 11,828 people completed the survey across Dorset, Devon and Cornwall: 10,037 respondents indicated that they were members of the public and 1,789 indicated that they were members of police staff. Responses were collected by mixed methods, including a telephone survey representative of the population, an open online survey and face-to-face surveying at engagement events.

Promotion of the survey was significant and wide-reaching, with media coverage across all major platforms in the two force areas and social media reach (both from the four corporation soles and independent sources such as online media) complementing this traditional media coverage. A large number of events were also attended, allowing the public to both ask questions and have a say.

73% of Dorset residents who completed the survey said they could see the benefits of the merger over working together in a strategic alliance. However, the combined public responses to the three headline questions were as follows:

- As the police forces already work closely together, a merger seems like the next logical step:  
Agree – 45%, neutral – 13%, disagree – 41%, don't know – 1%
- I don't mind how the police are organised, as long as my community is safe:  
Agree – 57%, neutral – 10%, disagree – 32%, don't know – 0%
- I can see the benefits of the merger over working together in a strategic alliance:  
Agree – 45%, neutral – 14%, disagree – 38%, don't know – 2%

A dedicated website at [www.futurepolicing.co.uk](http://www.futurepolicing.co.uk) featuring the survey, proposal, benefit, FAQs, press releases and blogs from the PCCs was created and a link was placed on the homepage of the official websites of both Forces and Offices of the Police and Crime Commissioner.



Following the Devon & Cornwall Police and Crime Panel meeting in October 2018, PCC Alison Hernandez (Devon & Cornwall) decided not to support the submission of the proposed merger full business case to the Home Office.

Both Chief Constables were supportive of the business case, as was PCC Martyn Underhill (Dorset); however, the [proven business case](#) could not progress without the approval of all four corporations sole.

### Ongoing Public Engagement

In order to stay up to date with the progress on meeting the priorities of Dorset Police, residents can visit the interactive Police and Crime Plan on our website. All updates can be viewed and you can browse by time period or use the filter options to find out more about your specific policing interests, from rural to cybercrime. Visit the [Police & Crime Plan](#) to learn more about the activity carried out by the OPCC on behalf of the public.

### Scrutiny Panels

Scrutiny panels are administered by the OPCC, with the help of independent members of the public, to enable the PCC to hold Dorset Police to account. With residents being actively involved and participating in the process, it ensures scrutiny is thorough and takes into account the experiences of diverse groups across Dorset.

18 scrutiny panels were held in total from 1 April 2018 - 31 March 2019, compared to 11 in 2017/18. More information can be found [online](#).

### Public Contact

Residents are able to engage directly with the OPCC via telephone, website contact forms and by email. In 2018/19, the OPCC was contacted 763 times in total by members of the public. The nature of public correspondence received is wide-ranging, from general comments to requests for information.

### Surgeries

The PCC has a statutory duty to obtain the views of the community about matters concerning the policing of their local area under the terms of the 2011 Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act. Obtaining the views of victims of crime is included as a specific duty for the PCC.

Residents are able to meet the PCC face-to-face and in confidence in PCC surgeries, enabling them to raise their concerns with the PCC, who will try to help resolve any issues they might have. 17 surgery appointments were held in 2017/18. 21 surgery appointments were held by the PCC between 31 March 2018 and 1 April 2019, which is a 23.53% increase on last year.

You can find out more about PCC surgeries [online](#).

### Speaking Engagements

The Commissioner regularly attends community group meetings, conferences and events across the county to give residents and stakeholders opportunities to take part in Q&As and find out more about the work of the OPCC.



The PCC is proud to have been able to directly engage face-to-face with over 4,000 residents during the 2018/19 financial year - an increase of approximately 1,000 people on that of last year.

### Social Media

Social media channels are used by the OPCC to generate regular two-way engagement, giving the public an opportunity to interact with the work of the Office in an accessible way, and receive responses to specific comments or queries.

	31 March 2018	1 April 2019	Percentage increase
<b>Facebook followers</b>	1,404	1,804	<b>+29%</b>
<b>Twitter followers</b>	4,754	5,379	<b>+13.2%</b>

#### [Facebook](#) statistics for 2018/19

Total reach – 411297  
 Total impressions - 611366  
 Total Facebook posts (outbound) – 215  
 Total Engagements – 44851

#### [Twitter](#) statistics for 2018/19

Total impressions – 871254  
 Total Tweets (outbound) - 736  
 Total Replies - 625  
 Total Engagements – 26064

#### [Instagram](#) statistics for 2018/19

Posts (outbound) - 22  
 Engagements (not including stories) - 585

The OPCC's social media statistics have improved across the board in 2018/19; the only exception is the change to the number of outbound Facebook posts, which went from 375 in 2017/18 to 215 posts in 2018/19. This reflects the change of use to favour Twitter. 371 posts were made on Twitter in 2017/18 and 736 were posted in 2018/19.

### 2017/21 Engagement Objectives

The OPCC will strive to continue to improve upon the ways in which we inform and involve local communities. Our specific objectives going forward will focus on the following groups:

1. **BME** – Collate existing intelligence, contact and consultation with local groups to establish objectives for specific minority ethnic groups, primarily focused on increasing accessibility, opportunities to actively participate in service delivery and public confidence. Engagement activity will be strategically designed to reach a diversity of residents.
2. **Youth** – Establish the OPCC within the youth community as a bridge between them and the police, ensuring they are aware of the functions of the OPCC that can benefit them.
  - a) To obtain a clearer picture of young people's views on crime and community safety by using existing intelligence and through proactive consultation.





- b) Using this data, to identify gaps in service delivery and establish solutions based on inputs from young people in Dorset.
  - c) c) To empower young people to become involved in service delivery where projects or initiatives will benefit their peers.
3. **Elderly** - Contribute to improving Dorset Police's response to elderly abuse and other age-specific crimes, by engaging with older people and their networks to identify patterns, trends and gaps in services/information provision.
  4. **Rural** – Work with, support and scrutinise the work of the Rural Crime Team to monitor trends, champion rural issues at a strategic level and help improve public confidence within rural communities.

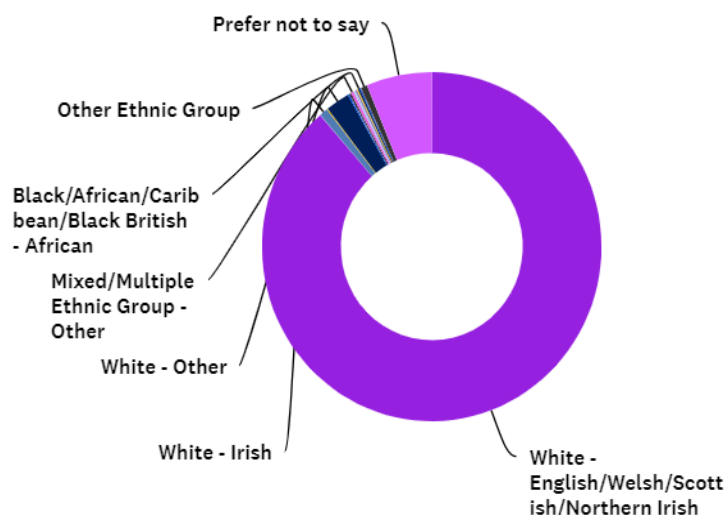
## 2018/19 - Progress against the Objectives

### BME

The OPCC have recruited more BME [volunteers](#) in 2018/19; a third of our volunteers now identify as having a BME background. We have been asking all our volunteers, including our BME volunteers, to give us their feedback on new materials, initiatives and OPCC campaigns. Their individual experience, thoughts and opinions are important because we want to ensure that our communications are easy to understand, inclusive and engaging.

This year the OPCC has been working with [Prejudice Free Dorset](#) to develop a charter to ensure that organisations and agencies seek to promote inclusive communities across Dorset. The Prejudice Free Dorset Group works to challenge prejudice in Dorset so that all individuals can go about their daily lives safely and with confidence.

The results of this year's Precept consultation are encouraging, in that the range of ethnic groups/backgrounds has widened.





ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ White - English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish	88.60%	4,073
▼ White - Irish	0.80%	37
▼ White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.09%	4
▼ White - Other	2.28%	105
▼ Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Group - White and Black Caribbean	0.11%	5
▼ Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Group - White and Black African	0.07%	3
▼ Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Group - White and Asian	0.15%	7
▼ Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Group - Other	0.28%	13
▼ Asian/Asian British - Indian	0.20%	9
▼ Asian/Asian British - Pakistani	0.04%	2
▼ Asian/Asian British - Bangladeshi	0.07%	3
▼ Asian/Asian British - Chinese	0.04%	2
▼ Asian/Asian British - Other	0.11%	5
▼ Black/African/Caribbean/Black British - African	0.20%	9
▼ Black/African/Caribbean/Black British - Caribbean	0.09%	4
▼ Black/African/Caribbean/Black British - Other	0.04%	2
▼ Other Ethnic Group	0.61%	28
▼ Prefer not to say	6.22%	286
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>4,597</b>

## Youth

The OPCC are working with staff in Dorset Police's Children & Young People directorate to develop a youth strategy for policing in Dorset, based on the national Child Centred Policing Strategy. We have been working with the Safe Schools Teams to get a clearer picture of young people's views on crime and community safety and through their evaluation mechanisms we will be working with them to help develop youth led solutions to emerging trends and concerns.

2019 will see the [launch of the first Dorset Police Cadet Scheme](#). This has been implemented by the OPCC and, as such, has given us a unique opportunity to engage directly with a range of Dorset's younger people, and tell them more about the work of the OPCC.

The cadets will [become directly involved in projects and initiatives which will benefit their peers](#) and they will be able to take part in fun activities, boost their confidence and help their community.

The result of our PR & communications around this scheme has been such that two cohorts are being established in Bournemouth and Poole and some 60 cadets have been recruited – far above the expected level of interest.

## Elderly

In 2018/19 the PCC and his Office attended numerous events throughout the year, including PROBUS, Discussion Clubs, Neighbourhood Watch groups and U3A groups in order to both listen to the thoughts of our older communities and to give updates on the work of the OPCC.

Those engagement opportunities gave us the chance to identify gaps in services and information and, as a result, we were able to introduce the work of our colleagues within the Force - for example, the OPCC arranged for various colleagues to speak with our older communities, including [Cybercrime Prevention](#), Drone Unit, Road Safety Teams and Neighbourhood Policing Teams.

As a result of our effective communication & engagement with older people, the 2019/20 Precept consultation was completed by 2,199 residents over the age of 65. We are pleased to have such an impressive level of engagement with our older communities, but we aim to improve on that in the coming year.

## Rural

In 2018/19 the OPCC has continued to [support the work of the Rural Crime Team](#). The OPCC has attended numerous events with the team and there have been a number of [press articles](#) and [PCC blogs on rural subjects](#).

The OPCC supported a number of National Rural Crime Network surveys, including the annual [National Rural Crime Survey](#) and largest ever survey into [crime and anti-social behaviour \(ASB\)](#) in rural areas in England, Wales and Northern Ireland to find out how the police can better serve rural communities.

We also supported the NRCN [Day of Action](#), the [Rural Domestic Abuse survey](#) and linked their work to the Crime Stoppers campaign on Fly-tipping.

We believe that we have championed rural issues, both at a grassroots and strategic level, and have helped to improve public confidence within rural communities.

## 2019/20 - Engagement Objectives: plan of activity for 2019/20

### BME

1. In 2019/20 the OPCC will continue to work with [Prejudice Free Dorset](#) to develop a charter to ensure that organisations and agencies seek to promote inclusive communities across Dorset.
2. We will continue to seek out meaningful opportunities to engage with BME communities across Dorset. We will work with our colleagues in the Force, with the Dorset Police BME Staff Support Network and with our external partners, [DREC](#) and [Prejudice Free Dorset](#), to engage with our BME/Multicultural communities and attend at least two community events.

### Youth

1. The Force undertakes more direct engagement with children and young people than the OPCC and therefore our 'engagement' role in this context is one of understanding how the Force engages with young people and scrutinising that approach, rather than making direct engagement itself. To this end, we are aware that the Force's Children & Young People (CYP) directorate are planning a series of engagement/consultation events in 2019/20, which the OPCC may be asked to fund. This will give the OPCC the opportunity to work within the youth community as a bridge between youth groups and the police, ensuring they are aware of the functions



of the OPCC that can benefit them. In particular, the PCC is keen to address Youth Diversion and Education on subjects such as knife crime and county lines at these consultation events.

2. We are aware the Youth Parliaments across Dorset have been deferred because of the Local Government Review (LGR) and, once they are reintroduced, we will work with the CYP team to ensure the OPCC has a voice in future conversations/consultations.
3. The new academic year (2019/20) CYP survey will contain questions set by the OPCC.
4. 2019 will see the launch of the first [Dorset Police Cadet](#) Scheme. This has been implemented by the OPCC and, as such, has given us a unique opportunity to engage directly with a range of Dorset's younger people, and tell them more about the work of the OPCC. The cadets will become directly involved in projects and initiatives will benefit their peers, and in 2019/20 we will be engaging with the 60 strong cohort via a cadet survey to canvass their thoughts and opinions on crime, and their communities.

### **Elderly**

1. In 2019/20 we will endeavour to strengthen the relationship we have with [PROBUS](#) and we will commit to sending out at least two bi-annual 'Questions for Discussion' on specific issues that are known to affect older people, namely cybercrime, fraud, theft, burglary and abuse.
2. In 2019/20 we will work with the Dorset Police Cyber Protect Officer to raise awareness of his role, and his work with older communities. We will promote the work of Action Fraud in the protection of the individual from fraud and cybercrime via 4 PCC blogs covering different aspects of the crime.

### **Rural**

1. The OPCC will continue to support the Rural Crime Team and assist with disseminating their crime prevention messaging across the rural communities of Dorset.
2. We will continue to support the engagement work of the [NRCN](#) and encourage our rural communities to engage with their research. We will continue to promote the National Rural Crime Survey and, where appropriate, we will work with our partner agencies to implement the recommendations made by the report.
3. We will work on a shared PR campaign with the NRCN to promote the Multi-Agency Fly-Tipping Working Group ([DFWG](#)) to raise awareness and gain public support.

