

DORSET
POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER

Annual Report 2016/17

Introduction

Thank you for reading my Annual Report for 2016/17.

This has been quite a challenging report to pull together for a number of reasons. Firstly, whilst it aims to review progress against my Police and Crime Plan over the previous financial year, the year started with campaigning and PCC elections in May 2016.

Naturally I was delighted to be re-elected and given another term to continue the work that started back in November 2012. However, it also meant that my thoughts turned towards my future plans and priorities based on my manifesto commitment, and the issuing of a new Police and Crime Plan for the second term of office.

Secondly, due to unforeseen personal circumstances, I had to take a step back from the PCC role for a number of months in the autumn and winter. The sudden illness, recovery and recuperation of my wife was a different type of challenge and I am sincerely grateful to my Deputy, Colin Pipe, for standing in for me so capably.

That said, a great deal was still achieved during the year and I have tried to capture a flavour of this by focusing on some key themed areas within this report. Policing, along with the wider public sector has continued to face funding cuts, yet I have managed to balance the books whilst supporting, funding and driving change and improvements to the way policing is delivered locally.

I hope that this Annual Report therefore gives a sense of that progress in some key areas over the last year and indeed the first term of office. Many of the same challenges from the first term remain, but crime, community safety and threats to the public continue to change and evolve as well and I am determined to ensure that the police and other key partners are able to adapt and meet these challenges.

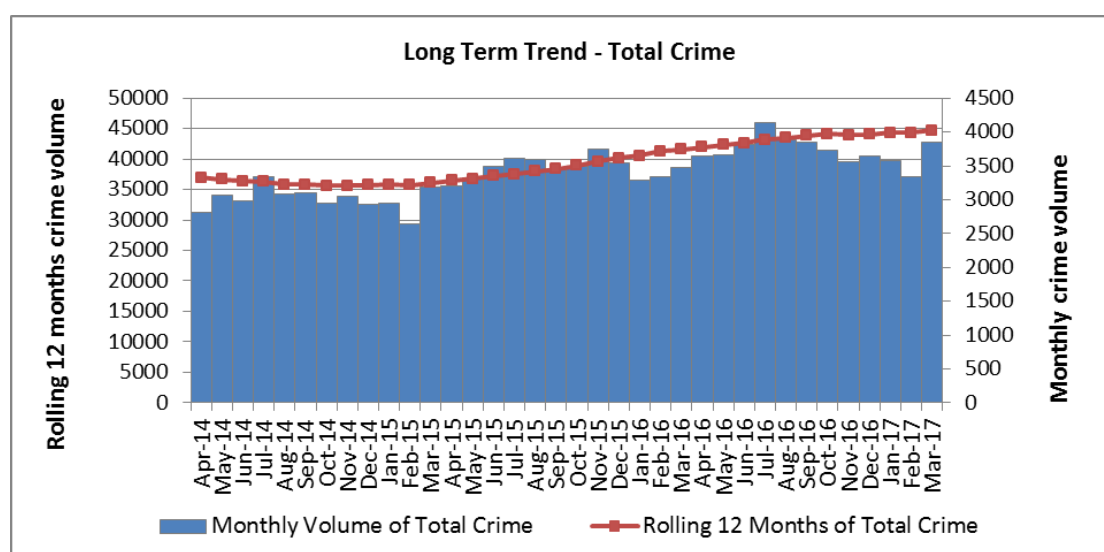
I would like to place on record my extreme gratitude to all the officers, staff, PCSOs, Special Constables and volunteers within Dorset Police who continue to work with great professionalism, diligence and integrity in what are often the most difficult of circumstances. Thank you for all that you do in making Dorset one of the safest places to live, work and visit in the country.

Thank you also to the staff and volunteers of my office – the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) – for their support in enabling to undertake my role as effectively as I can. I look forward to working closely with them over this term to deliver on my priorities.

Finally, please do continue to share your views, thoughts and concerns with me over the crime and community safety issues most affecting you. I am here to represent you and ensure that the public have a voice in shaping their local policing services and I am passionate about continuing to do that over the coming years.

Martyn Underhill, July 2017

Focus on...Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)



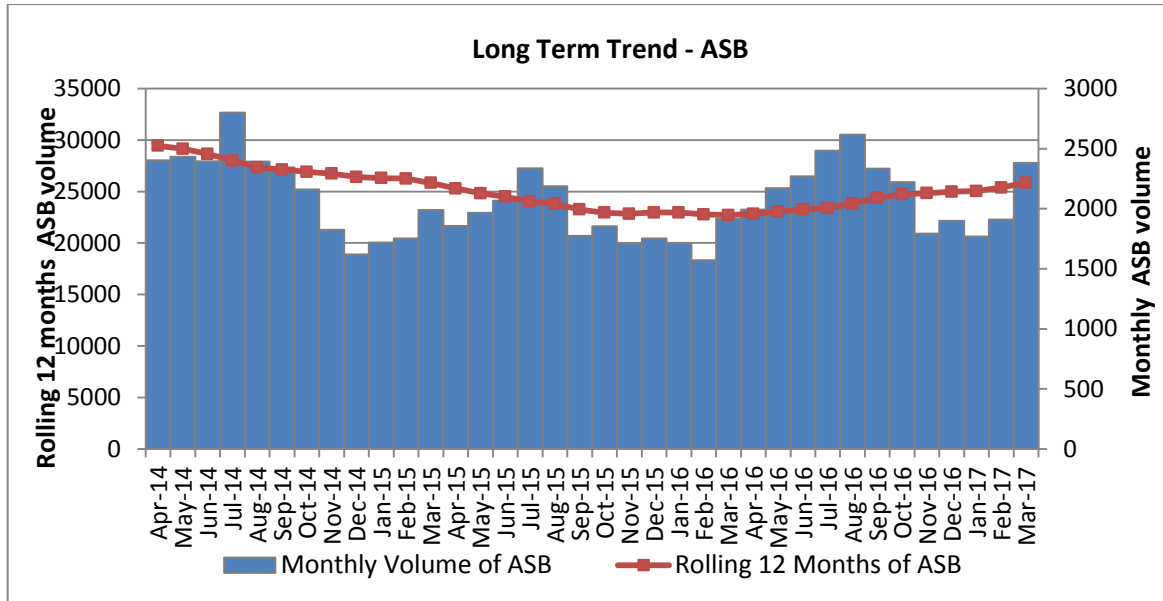
After a number of years of falling crime, Dorset has seen an increase in total recorded crime in the most recent rolling annual figures. This reflects a national trend and is primarily due to improved crime recording practices and an increase in violence without injury offences – which have included a predictable increase in child neglect cases.

Changes to Home Office Crime Recording Standards parameters have also partly contributed to increases in crime recording.

I continue to scrutinise and monitor crime recording locally to ensure that this is as accurate as possible and the true nature of crime in Dorset is reflected accordingly, which in turn helps inform decisions relating to resourcing and deployment. This was achieved primarily through jointly chairing the Strategic Performance Board with the Deputy Chief Constable, as well as regular meetings with the Force Crime Registrar throughout the year.

Despite the increase there are a number of positives to draw from the performance of the Force:

- Dorset Police force is ranked 12th nationally for having the lowest crime rate per 1,000 population;
- Dwelling burglary and vehicle crime decreased;
- Positive outcome rates improved slightly;
- Domestic Abuse, serious sexual offences and hate crime all saw increases. However, given that these are areas often suspected of being under-reported I am encouraged that more people now have confidence in coming forward to the police;
- The numbers of people killed or seriously injured on our roads reduced.



Reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB) incidents have also seen an increase in the latest rolling annual figures. ASB is recorded within three categories – personal, nuisance and environmental – with the majority of the increases relating to nuisance or environmental issues.

With many of these non-personal ASB incidents, the responsibility for the issue often does not lie with the Police. I am concerned that the impact of the funding cuts across the public sector is resulting in an increased demand being placed on the police as a result and will therefore continue to work closely with partners locally to resolve these issues.

Focus on...Mental Health

One in four people are estimated to have mental health issues at some point in their lives, and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) estimate that around 90% of the prison population has a diagnosable mental health condition, with 70% having two or more conditions.

According to a 2014 Home Affairs Select Committee review, the reality facing the police service sees mental illness as a factor in anything between 20-40% of police activity.

Policing is a 24/7 service that people in need will go to for help, and this figure will of course include some entirely legitimate use of police time. But we must accept that, as funding for health and social care is increasingly stretched, much of this police time is spent staying with people in crisis who should be in the care of other agencies.

I accept this challenge and am mindful of the difficult circumstances facing all safeguarding professionals. This said, we cannot rely on police to take on disproportionate or inappropriate responsibility.

Through chairing the national PCC Mental Health Working Group, I am particularly proud of the role I have been able to play in driving improvements in the way that services are delivered to those suffering mental illness. This culminated in the launch of the Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat in February 2014 - a set of shared national principles establishing a multi-agency response to individuals in mental health crisis.

Locally, I have been determined to reduce the number of times a custody suite is used as a place of safety for those in mental health crisis. This has been achieved through the implementation of an innovative street triage service for Dorset. The project sees mental health practitioners assisting police officers on patrol, providing officers attending incidents with background medical information, advice and if needed, a full assessment regarding the mental health of a person. Primarily, this is about offering the best possible service to vulnerable members of the public as both the Chief Constable and I recognise that, despite the significant training officers receive, police cells will not be the best place for an individual experiencing a mental health crisis.

National data released in September 2016 by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) shows that in Dorset for the 2015/16 financial year, police custody was used as a place of safety under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act on just 10 occasions. This is a reduction of 83 per cent on the previous year and an overall reduction of 91 per cent since the mental health triage scheme started in 2014. Nationally, we have also seen these numbers fall by two thirds in just two years. I am delighted with this progress.

Training and awareness is also important. In Dorset, all police officers receive bespoke mental health training. Dorset officers are also now receiving an input on recognising the symptoms of acute behavioural disorder in order to

better identify those in mental health crises. This will help reduce the use of police restraint without proper understanding of the cause of behaviour or the consequences for the individual as a result.

The focus is internal as well though, with members of our emergency services statistically more likely to experience a mental health problem than the general workforce. In response, police forces have referred officers to Trauma Risk Management (TRIM) services, supported national initiatives such as 'Time to Talk Day' and set up regular appointments with mental health professionals for officers working in high risk roles, such as child protection and high tech crime.

With the Chief Constable I have also been delighted to join colleagues nationally in signing up to the Mind 'Blue Light Pledge', committing to challenging stigma and promoting positive wellbeing across their organisations.

Focus on...Supporting Victims

Increasing support available to victims was another key priority throughout my first term and will remain a core focus going forward.

Through the many victims surgeries I have held as Commissioner, it was and remains abundantly clear that being a victim of crime can be deeply distressing and receiving the right support can go a long way. I was the first PCC to locally commission the services of the independent charity Victim Support. Funding allotted to the charity facilitated the doubling of the team to ensure that Victim Support could be more effective than ever before for local victims.

From inception, the service has received 36,750 referrals from Dorset Police, of which 25,857 identified needs. 1,462 children and young people have received support from specially trained case workers, alongside 1,222 victims of domestic abuse and 4,171 families following burglaries. In total, 9,140 hours of face to face and telephone support has been provided.

Alongside victim care, I was determined to tackle the uncertainty that can create unnecessary anxiety for victims. I commissioned the Dorset Police Victims' Bureau to provide a dedicated team who actively work to keep victims informed during the course of the investigation. They inform victims when a suspect has been arrested, charged or bailed, and notify victims of the bail conditions and the decision regarding case disposal.

Focus on...Road Safety

Dorset Police invests significant resources into policing our roads and officers and staff work hard to catch offenders who break the law. Teams visit schools to educate young people on road safety and dedicated officers and special constables within our No Excuse team target those who flout the law. The team has also recently launched 'Operation Dragoon' which specifically targets the most prolific offenders in the county.

Nevertheless, speeding, drink/drug driving, careless driving, using a mobile phone at the wheel and not wearing a seatbelt are still the five main causes of fatal road traffic collisions. All of these are preventable and all down to poor driver behaviour and decision making.

Robust police action is taken to tackle these issues and I will always support the Force's efforts in this area. Such efforts have included the relaunch of the No Excuse Team, Community Road Safe Evenings and increased provision of Drug Driving testing kits to the police. However, enforcement and driver education are only part of the picture. They do not provide an alternative to the principle that drivers of all vehicles have a fundamental responsibility to behave with due care and attention, to drive safely and ensure they do not put themselves or others in danger.

Drink Driving

Without justification or clear rationale, the drink drive limit in England and Wales remains out of kilter with European standards.

We know that any level of blood alcohol impairs driving. Yet from speaking with local residents throughout my time as Police and Crime Commissioner, it is clear that nobody conclusively knows what they can 'get away with' under the current rules

A lower alcohol limit, where one drink could cost you your license, would more effectively deter motorists from drinking at all before getting behind the wheel. We've already seen this trend in Scotland, where since lowering the legal limit the number of drink driving offences has fallen and more importantly, attitudes have shifted.

Current Government thinking is that rigorous enforcement and severe penalties for drink driving were more effective than changing the drink drive limit. However, we haven't achieved any consistent reduction in drink drive related deaths since 2010 and I question the 'either/ or' approach when both would seemingly provide the strongest deterrent.

I will therefore continue to lobby the Government to lower the drink drive limit to finally send a clear message to drivers that the only safe amount to drink and drive is none.

Focus on...Service Improvement

An essential part of my role is to challenge the Chief Constable and Dorset Police to continuously review and improve their service to the public. Clearly this is made even more challenging in a climate of reduced funding and resources. Some key service improvements over the last year include:

Working with the Alzheimer's Society to create safe havens as part of the wider 'dementia friendly' programme for services and organisations.

The relaunch of the Dorset Police website, making it easier to use, simpler to access relevant information, and developing more 'do it online' facilities – providing more contact options for the public as well as reducing demand in other areas of the business such as call handling.

Creating a new Cyber-Crime Prevention Officer role within the Dorset Police Cyber-Crime Unit, a dedicated resource to help equip members of the public and local businesses with the information and guidance needed to reduce the risk of becoming a victim of on-line crime.

Expanding the Paedophile On-Line Investigation Team (POLIT) to provide an even more robust response to those who view or distribute indecent images of children or who groom, incite or facilitate sexual activity with children through use of the internet.

Launching the 101 Service Improvement Panel, responding to public concerns over the 101 non-emergency telephone service and driving improvements accordingly.

The formation of a dedicated Rural Crime Team to provide dedicated points of contact and a more proactive response to crime and community safety matters most affecting members of our rural communities.

Carrying out a fundamental review and restructure of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) to ensure that the right resources are available to support me in delivering my Police and Crime Plan, whilst also providing value for money.

Finally, whilst I do not generally measure the success of Dorset Police through external inspectors, I am pleased that, in 2016, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary observed that they were "very pleased with the overall performance of Dorset Police", finding that the extent to which the force is: effective at keeping people safe and reducing crime; efficient at keeping people safe and reducing crime; and legitimate at keeping people safe and reducing crime are all good.

Focus on...Funding and Resources

Austerity has been in place longer than PCCs and has resulted in unprecedented cuts to police funding and resources throughout my terms in office. I have continuously lobbied for fairer funding for policing in general, and Dorset Police specifically – one of the lowest funded forces per head of population in the country.

I have welcomed the Government's review of the police funding formula which has long placed rural forces such as Dorset at a disadvantage. Yet I remain frustrated at the lack of progress so far and the potential direction of travel of the review. Academics from Plymouth University, commissioned by the National Rural Crime Network, reported last year that police funding criteria may still disadvantage rural forces, particularly those with sparse populations.

This is because the Home Office appears to favour using the number of crimes recorded in an area as the principal basis for allocating money. This would mean funding would be disproportionately influenced by volume crimes such as shoplifting. By definition, there are far more of these crimes in urban areas than in rural ones. However, such crimes are not an accurate measure of policing demand and do not reflect its growing complexity or the unique challenges faced by rural areas.

The report also argues that rural areas face additional burdens that should be factored into funding, such as:

- Rural forces often have to 'plug the gap' left by other services such as health and social care whose services can be stretched in isolated areas. Additional responsibilities linked to people with mental health difficulties are particularly noticeable, especially with regard to dementia and missing person cases due to elderly populations;
- Rural forces have to shoulder the cost of significantly higher round-trip distances when attending incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour as well as to road traffic incidents;
- As rural forces tend to have lower officer numbers, the burden per officer is up to 65 per cent higher than for forces nationally, representing an additional challenge for delivering services as well as posing risks to officer and staff welfare;
- Rural forces, particularly those with coastal areas and tourist attractions such as National Parks, experience larger seasonal variations in incidents of crime, ASB and road traffic incidents due to influxes of holiday-makers.

The Government's approach of counting reported crime works against rural forces and skews funding towards areas with high volumes of thefts. This approach doesn't reflect the demands on rural policing or the specific challenge of policing rural populations. The demand placed on our police to protect the public are also growing and ever more complex. It is therefore more important than ever to put forward the case of rural forces and ensure our voice is heard. Along with other Police and Crime Commissioners from other rural areas, I will continue to do exactly that.

Annual Accounts 2016/17

The Group Comprehensive Income and Expenditure account is shown here in subjective format, with a comparison between actual spending for the year and budgets agreed by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

2015-16		2016-17			Difference () = over £'000
Actual £'000		Original Estimate £'000	Final Estimate £'000	Actual £'000	
2,916	<u>Police and Crime Commissioner</u>	2,987	3,219	2,643	576
	<u>Police Force</u>				
120,266	Employees	127,321	124,266	117,390	6,876
4,533	Premises Related Expenses	4,784	4,784	5,146	(362)
1,510	Transport Related Expenses	1,481	1,479	1,477	2
7,534	Supplies and Services	7,472	6,879	8,012	(1,133)
11,673	Third Party Payments	14,165	14,114	11,637	2,477
7,990	Capital Charges	823	823	6,683	(5,860)
156,422		159,033	155,564	152,988	2,576
	<u>Income</u>				
(34,270)	Specific Grants	(30,002)	(26,288)	(27,113)	825
(3,276)	Reimbursements & Contributions	(2,417)	(2,796)	(4,000)	1,204
(5,987)	Customer & Client Receipts	(4,455)	(4,132)	(4,604)	472
112,889	Net Cost of Service	122,159	122,348	117,271	5,077
(43)	Net (gain) / loss on disposal of non-current assets	0	(40)	(240)	200
383	Trading Account Deficit / (Surplus)	0	0	0	0
6	Interest Payable	8	8	6	2
(191)	Interest on balances	(130)	(130)	(151)	21
41,982	Pensions Interest Cost & Expected Return on Assets	0	0	42,872	(42,872)
0	Impairment - Icelandic Banks	0	0	0	0
155,026	Net Operating Expenditure	122,037	122,186	159,758	(37,572)
	Principal Sources of Finance				
(41,472)	Home Office Grant	(41,236)	(41,236)	(41,236)	0
0	Revenue Support Grant	0	0	0	0
(17,432)	Non Domestic Rates	(17,333)	(17,333)	(17,333)	0
(52,335)	Council Tax Precept	(54,583)	(54,583)	(53,373)	(1,210)
(7,340)	Legacy Council Tax Grants	(7,918)	(7,918)	(7,918)	0
(118,579)	Total Funding	(121,070)	(121,070)	(119,860)	(1,210)
36,447	(Surplus) / Deficit for the year	967	1,116	39,898	(38,782)
(7,990)	Depreciation and impairment of fixed assets	(823)	(823)	(6,683)	5,860
43	Net gain / (loss) on disposal of fixed assets	0	0	240	(240)
0	Revenue Financing of Capital	0	0	0	0
2,280	Statutory provision for repayment of debt	0	0	2,305	(2,305)
120	Voluntary provision for repayment of debt	120	120	120	0
349	Collection Fund Adjustment Account	0	0	(1,175)	1,175
(32,029)	Appropriations to / (from) Pensions Reserve	0	0	(34,459)	34,459
254	Appropriations to / (from) Accumulated absences Account	0	0	(348)	348
(2,943)	Transfers to / (from) Specific Reserves	(264)	(264)	0	(264)
(3,469)	Reduction / (Increase) in General Balances	0	149	(102)	251

The full Annual Accounts are available [here](#).

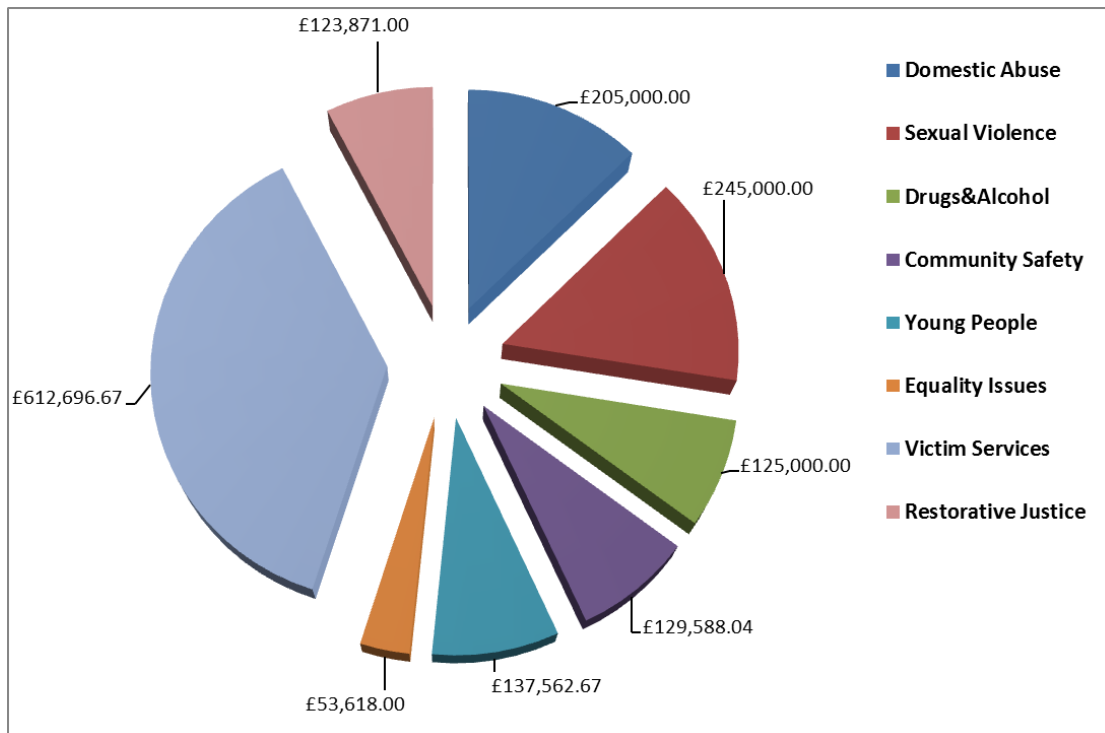
Budget and Precept 2017/18

In February I set the annual police budget, including the council tax element of police funding (the precept), which increased by 1.98%. This decision was unanimously supported by the Police and Crime Panel and, in line with the most recent central government funding settlement, offset cuts to maintain a similar overall budget as the year before.

More importantly, nearly 4,500 local people took part in my precept consultation, with 80% supportive of the small increase in order to support Dorset Police. Your continued support for the police in difficult economic and social circumstances is invaluable and I hugely appreciate it.

In raising the precept I specifically agreed to invest this money in three key areas which are increasingly impacting on residents locally - protecting adults at risk of harm; dealing with common, non-emergency crimes; and embracing new technology to meet the challenges of modern policing.

Focus on...Grants and Commissioning



In 2016/17 I committed £1.6 million of funding to services locally, either through commissioned services or the issuing of smaller grants to projects and initiatives.

The chart above shows a breakdown of this spending by themed areas, all of which supported the key priorities and objectives contained in my Police and Crime Plan 2013-2017.

Over 25 commissioned services were supported across the year, including the following:

- Drug Intervention Programme – working with those addicted to drugs and alcohol;
- Safe Schools and Communities Team – providing community safety education and training, restorative justice, and responses to school or internet-related issues affecting young people;
- Dorset Rape Crisis – contributing to the core costs associated with running the Dorset Rape Crisis Support Centre;
- Street Triage – providing frontline police officers with direct access to mental health practitioners and associated information, advice and, where necessary, assessments when responding to incidents;
- Footprints – supporting those who leave custody with the transition back into the community.

Over 40 projects were also supported with small grants of anything between £50 to £3,000 across the County. Details of all the initiatives that were supported are available on my website.

In support of the new Police and Crime Plan I have carried out a review of our commissioning and grants processes to ensure that future funding support is even more needs led and directly in support of my key priorities and commitments.

Find out more...

In addition to the information supplied in this report, you can find a wealth of further information about me and my work online, including:

[Police and Crime Plan](#)

View the current Plan and updates on progress against the key themes, priorities and commitments.

[Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021](#)

Who we are and what we do

OPCC Staffing Structure
Independent Audit Committee
Ethics and Appeals Committee
Independent Custody Visiting Scheme

[OPCC information](#)

What we spend and how we spend it

Annual Accounts and Annual Governance Statement
Expenditure over £500
Contracts
PCC and Deputy PCC Salary, Expenses and Allowances

[Financial information](#)

Commissioning & Grants

Major Grants and Commissioned Services
Community and Small Grants

[Funded projects](#)

Police and Crime Panel

The scrutiny body responsible for holding me to account for discharging my statutory responsibilities and delivering on my Plan priorities.

[Dorset Police and Crime Panel](#)

Looking Forward

My Police and Crime Plan for 2017-2021 will be the focus for the second term of office. Regular updates on progress will be published on my website:

[Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021](#)

There are four main Pillars to the Plan which encompass the specific commitments and objectives that I set out in my manifesto ahead of being re-elected in May 2016. These Pillars are:

- Protecting People at Risk of Harm
- Working with our Communities
- Supporting Victims, Witnesses and Reducing Reoffending
- Transforming for the Future



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Accessibility Statement:



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