



**Police & Crime Commissioner for  
Cleveland  
Cleveland Community Safety Hub**

Email: [pcc@cleveland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:pcc@cleveland.pnn.police.uk)  
Website: [www.cleveland.pcc.police.uk](http://www.cleveland.pcc.police.uk)

Acting Police & Crime Commissioner: Lisa Oldroyd  
Chief of Staff (Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer): Simon Dennis BA, Solicitor  
Chief Constable: Richard Lewis

Tel: 01642 301861  
Tel: 01642 301861  
Tel: 01642 301215

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## **Report of the Acting Police and Crime Commissioner to the Chair and Members of the Cleveland Police and Crime Panel**

**2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021**

### **Commissioner's Update**

#### **1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Cleveland Police and Crime Panel with an overview of the activity of the Acting Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) since the last meeting held on 17 November 2020.
- 1.2 The report highlights specific updates aligned to the priorities of the Police & Crime Plan, as agreed by the Panel in July 2020.
- 1.3 This report should be considered in conjunction with progress detailed in the PCC Scrutiny and Decisions of the PCC reports. Collectively, these reports provide progress in all areas of the Police & Crime Plan delivery.

#### **2. COVID 19**

- 2.1 As further measures were introduced by Government to control the spread of coronavirus, including the most recent national restrictions introduced in January 2021, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) has continued to support agile working practices enabling all team members to work remotely from home.
- 2.2 Similar to the previous reporting periods our engagement with PCC commissioned services has remained a key priority to clearly understand any additional demands and pressures faced locally as a result of restrictions. As highlighted in the last report the voluntary community sector response locally has been outstanding with them continuing to be available for the most vulnerable in our communities.
- 2.3 As the rollout of the COVID vaccination takes pace, the Chief Constable wrote an open letter asking for frontline staff including Police Officers and Police Staff to be prioritised, this was supported by the Acting PCC who

acknowledged throughout the pandemic Cleveland's officers, staff and volunteers who have faced challenging and rapidly evolving circumstances. As lead commissioner for victims services in the area the Acting PCC also calls for the timely vaccination of staff in domestic abuse refuges. Vulnerable people fleeing abuse in their own homes, as they are permitted to do under COVID rules, must have access to adequately staffed safe spaces. The Acting PCC has highlighted this matter for consideration at a local and national level including with the Victims' Commissioner for England & Wales.

- 2.4 The Acting PCC joined forces with those in the retail trade to support shop workers over the Christmas period. Figures revealed that shop workers have suffered threats, abuse and violence as they have tried to apply COVID compliance measures. Supporting a national campaign led by the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners #KeepingChristmasKind included the production of a video featuring real life cases to highlight the problem.

### **3. Investing in Our Police**

- 3.1 As noted in the previous reporting period, scrutiny in terms of the performance of the Force Control Room following concerns in relation to call abandonment rates continues. In December, 89% of 999 calls were answered within 10 seconds with the abandonment rate remaining below 1%. In terms of non 999 calls, 85% were answered within the 2 minute target with an abandonment rate of 4.7%. Now part of the Service Improvement Programme a new control room shift pattern was implemented on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021 ensuring staff are on shift at the points of highest demand. The impact of this will continue to be monitored through the monthly scrutiny programme, with further assurances required in relation to the provision of a high quality service.
- 3.2 Following a successful recruitment campaign back in November 2020, five individuals have been appointed to the Independent Ethics Committee. The Committee plays a key role in scrutinising and advising on a wide range of ethical dilemmas faced by Cleveland Police. The new recruits will ensure a more diversely representative panel enabling a wide level of challenge and debate.
- 3.3 As a result of changes made to the police complaints system by the Policing and Crime Act 2017, PCCs became responsible for carrying out reviews of the majority of complaints recorded since 1 February 2020 and handled by their police forces under Schedule 3 of the Police Reform Act 2002. Between February 2020 and January 2021, the OPCC has conducted 39 reviews. This included seven which were upheld, 32 not upheld and eight pending review. Reasons for reviews being upheld include unreasonable response including delays and not fully addressing the complaints.
- 3.4 More local, visible and accessible policing is always a theme when engaging with communities, as a result the OPCC is closely monitoring the re-introduction of neighbourhood policing teams across the area. Ward newsletters are in the process of being re-established and each ward will have identified priorities through community engagement and performance data.

- 3.5 Led by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Team as part of the Everyone Matters Programme, a significant amount of work has gone into the development of a Staff Networks Policy. Staff Networks provide a valuable facility by working with Cleveland Police, sharing knowledge and expertise; contributing to the formulation of policy and business change; improving awareness across the protective characteristics and working in an advisory capacity on internal and external issues. The policy has been developed in consultation with key stakeholders and clearly sets out the roles and responsibilities for network members and various departments across the force including the EDI team, Human Resources Team and Force Executive.
- 3.6 As referred to in the previous reporting period, work was ongoing in regards to positive action campaigns as part of force recruitment. Early data shows some positive success in relation to the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) where 19 BAME candidates were invited to the online assessment. 15 of these individuals passed and have continued to be supported by the positive action officers and are through to the next and final stage of the process which is interview.
- 3.6 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) commenced their Integrated Vulnerability Inspection on 2 November 2020. Covering three areas namely; Victim Service Assessment, Efficiency, and Legitimacy. The results of this inspection will not be graded; however an outcome report is expected to be published at the end of February 2021.
- 3.7 The North East Regional Special Operations Unit (NERSOU) provides specialist capabilities to tackle Serious & Organised Crime (SOC), in support of Cleveland, Durham and Northumbria Police Forces. Through collaborative governance arrangements quarterly performance reports are presented to PCCs in addition to budget and staff allocation and contextual highlights. During 2019/20 NERSOU disruption tactics have resulted in:
- 555 Arrests
  - 107 charges
  - 287 years sentenced
  - 75 adults and 83 children safeguarded
  - 57 firearms seized
  - £3,970,359 Confiscation Orders Granted
  - £557,550 Case Seized

#### **4. A Better Deal for Victims & Witnesses**

- 4.1 The OPCC continues to support victim services through remaining engaged and up to speed on new and emerging challenges placed upon them as a result of the pandemic. Monthly demand data continues to be collected and reported to the Ministry of Justice. Between October 2020 – December 2020 Domestic Abuse Services have seen an increase in referrals. Intelligence provided by service providers also suggests that cases are becoming more complex to deal with as a result of the pandemic.

- 4.2 Following a recent procurement process the OPCC have appointed Arch Teesside to deliver a Tees-wide Independent Sexual Violence Advisor Service (ISVA). The role of an ISVA is crucial in providing tailored support to victims and survivors of sexual violence. This includes emotional and practical support before, during and after a court process. An ISVA will also provide support regardless of whether the victim wishes to report to the police. The OPCC along with Arch Teesside will look to further promote the role of an ISVA during Sexual Violence Awareness Week taking place in February 2021. Support such as this is all the more important given anticipated delays in court dates as a result of the pandemic.
- 4.3 In December 2020, the OPCC were successful in securing £3,000 from the Modern Slavery Organised Immigration Crime Programme (MSOICP). The funding was secured to strengthen and enhance our approach to supporting and increasing awareness of modern slavery for families, children, children's services staff and other young people who are linked to modern slavery, especially those via the typology of child criminal exploitation. Working with specialist service providers including Barnardos with support from Cleveland Police, a series of seminars will be held. To reach as many people as possible the webinars will be recorded and shared with schools across the Cleveland area.
- 4.4 The OPCC were previously successful in securing £402k to support Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Services to address costs associated with the pandemic. This included short term disruption to income, essential costs of sustaining current activities or addressing increases in demand. This funding came to an end in September 2020. Following a further successful bid to the Ministry of Justice the OPCC secured an additional £169,675.81 to March 2021. This funding has been a substantial help to specialist services locally who have been able to retain additional staff with the appropriate skills and knowledge to continue providing high quality support. Specific examples include:
- Continuation of live chat facilities within various services, specifically over the Christmas Period
  - Additional Sexual Violence Counselling Provision
  - Dedicated Independent Domestic Violence Advisor within the Specialist Domestic Violence Court
- 4.5 In November 2020 the Ministry of Justice published a new revised version of the Victims Code of Practice. PCCs have a role in monitoring criminal justice agencies adherence to the rights within the code, therefore a dip sampling process has been agreed via the Efficiency and Effectiveness Group (a sub group of the Local Criminal Justice Board) and a report will be produced once the exercise has been completed. Rights within the code of practice include:
- To be able to understand and be understood
  - To have the details of the crime recorded without unjustified delay
  - To be provided with information when reporting the crime
  - To be referred to services that support victims and have services and support tailored to your needs

- To be provided with information about compensation
- To be provided with information about the investigation and prosecution
- To make a Victim Personal Statement
- To be given information about the trial, trial process and your role as a witness
- To be given information about the outcomes of the case and any appeals
- To be paid expenses and have property returned
- To be given information about the offender following a conviction
- To make a complaint about your rights not being met

## **5. Tackling Offending and Reoffending**

5.1 The Safer Streets Project continues at pace with a multi agency day of action taking place in the Burn Valley area of Hartlepool including Hartlepool Community Safety Team, OPCC, Police and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation Housing Trust. The Community Safety Team exhibition trailer was deployed for the day and door knocking was undertaken of all properties in the seven streets in the Safer Streets Area. 293 properties for door knocked resulting in:

- 2 home security surveys being undertaken, with a further 25 households asking for a home security survey to be arranged in the near future.
- 1 resident being issued with a Community Protection Warning from Hartlepool Community Safety Team due to their harassment of a vulnerable family.
- 1 high risk insecure property identified and boarded up by the police
- 3 long term void properties having mental security screens installed
- 18 residents being contacted in the near future to discuss in more detail specific issues in their area that were raised as part of the door knocking specifically in relation to crime and anti-social behaviour.

5.2 Activity in the other Safer Streets Areas (Newport, Middlesbrough and South Bank, Redcar and Cleveland) include:

- Delivery of target hardening packs to residents
- Security measures assessed and new locks fitted to tenants
- CCTV in Newport and Burn Valley ground works started ready for installation
- Void properties which include the most vulnerable repeat addresses identified and screening started
- Interviews for community cohesion workers taken place in South Bank and Newport with people appointed and awaiting start date
- Mediator in post

5.3 A new Safer Streets Fund has recently been launched for 2021/22 and partnership discussions are taking place to consider future bid opportunities.

5.4 The OPCC has committed to part funding the Chances programme, together with the 4 Local Authorities, which is being delivered by Middlesbrough FC Foundation. The Chances programme is an evidence-based sport and activity programme. Chances will be delivered through the use of a Social Impact Bonds (SIB). SIB's are intended to improve the social outcomes of publicly funded services by making funding conditional on achieving results. In this instance, the Social Investor is Big Issue Invest. They pay for the project at the start, and then receive payments based on the results achieved, ultimately getting their funding back IF all outcomes are met.

The outcomes aiming to be achieved are:

- Improving Physical Literacy
- Improving School Attendance
- Reducing Not in Education, Employment or Training status
- Reducing Offending and Reoffending – this is the outcome the OPCC funding will be linked to

5.5 In September 2020 the Ministry of Justice published A Smarter Approach to Sentencing White Paper. This paper has been used as a discussion point with key partners to agree priorities for the Cleveland Reducing Re-Offending group moving forward. Priorities include:

- Community Sentence Treatment Requirements
- Integrated Offender Management (IOM)
- Out of Court Disposals
- Deferred Prosecution (Cleveland Divert)

5.6 The OPCC are currently in the process of co-ordinating a partnership bid to the Prison Leavers: Local Leadership Fund. The fund launched by the Ministry of Justice has been established in an attempt to address specific local challenges for prison leavers. At present, with partners including Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service, Public Health and a range of voluntary community sector services sector are identifying local need and evidence base to develop a submission.

5.7 Contact has been made with the Beacons Counselling Trust who provides support in relation to gambling related harm. Through partnership working between the Beacons and the Liaison and Diversion Service based in police custody work is ongoing in terms of adapting the current screening tools to include more information and signs related to gambling related problems. In addition to this some joint communications work is being planned to further raise awareness of the harms caused by gambling.

5.8 The Middlesbrough Council area have been chosen by the Home Office and Public Health England to pilot a new system wide approach to tackling drugs. Project ADDER (Addiction, Diversion, Enforcement and Recovery) will see the Police, Council and Health Services come together working in partnership to address the route causes of drugs misuse and the breaking down of supply chains. The Project will run for three years and bring Home Office investment of £1.325million.

5.9 Project outcomes include:

- A reduction in the rate of drug related deaths
- A reduction in the prevalence of drugs use
- A reduction in the level of drug related offending
- A reduction in reoffending for prolific offenders who are motivated by drugs
- Increase in the number of drug users engaging in treatment and recovery support, deriving benefit from doing so; and also completing treatment
- Reduction in drugs supply to local areas.

5.10 Further project updates will be provided in future panel reports.

## **6. Working Together to Make Cleveland Safer/Securing the Future of Our Communities**

6.1 Cleveland's first Youth Commission has recently launched five online surveys covering the areas identified as priorities by Youth Commission Members:

- Hate Crime and Online Crime
- Drugs and Alcohol Issues
- Youth People and their Relationship with the Police
- Youth Activates and Preventing Offending
- Mental Health Awareness

6.2 The results from these surveys will be presented at an online conference on 3<sup>rd</sup> March attended by the OPCC, Police and partners. The Youth Commission is also involved in Stop and Search scrutiny and have question and answer sessions scheduled with Local Chief Inspectors from each of the Local Policing Areas. They are also developing a Mental Health Tree Project using OPCC funding granted by the Young PCC as part of World Children's Day. It is hoped this will be launched in March pending COVID restrictions.

6.3 Engagement with key partners has commenced on the draft Cleveland Serious Violence Strategy including presenting as Cleveland's Community Safety Partnerships. Once final, a serious violence working group will be created to drive forward delivery of the strategy. The Strategy will enable partners across Cleveland to:

- Create a better understanding of the problems
- Work closer with our communities and partners
- Identify what works
- Adapt and change practice where and when needed.

The benefits of this approach are:

- Reduce all serious violence including knife crime
- Reduce hospital admissions
- Ensure community and partners confidence
- Support victims, offenders and communities impacted

- Promote better life choices for Cleveland residents.
- 6.4 A draft terms of reference has been drafted and shared with the areas Voluntary Development agencies in relation to the creation of a Community Safety Network. The purpose of this network is to bring together agencies within the voluntary community sector with the aim of maximising their contribution to tackling community safety issues and concerns.
- 6.5 The OPCC continues to Chair the Tees Rural Crime Forum where a multi-agency action plan has been developed focusing on:
- Improving public confidence in our rural communities
  - Better understanding of our rural communities
  - Improving awareness within the wider workforce regarding rural crime
  - Disrupting criminal activity in rural areas
  - Developing best practice in relation to rural crime.
- 6.6 As part of OPCC scrutiny around Force response to vulnerable victims and community engagement it is important that the OPCC understands the opinions of partner agencies dealing with vulnerable victims in order to focus scrutiny questions on relevant themes. In order to inform this scrutiny process an online consultation was undertaken during December 2020 and January 2021 with agencies from across Cleveland who support vulnerable victims to better understand if partners feel that the Service Improvement Programme is delivering the improvements needed.

23 responses were received from across a wide range of different support areas including:

- Domestic abuse (11)
- Sexual abuse/ exploitation (9)
- Hate Crime (6)
- Adult social care & domiciliary care (6)
- Honour Based Violence/Female Genital Mutilation/Forced Marriage (4)
- Fraud (3)
- Child Sexual Exploitation / Child Criminal Exploitation (5)
- Mental health (1)
- General victim services (1)

The responses are being used to inform questions for the next scrutiny session on 26<sup>th</sup> January.

**Lisa Oldroyd**  
**Acting Police and Crime Commissioner**