

2020 - 2021

Annual Report

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Commissioner's Introduction

Welcome to my Annual Report which takes a look back at the 2020/21 financial year – undoubtedly a challenging and difficult year for our public services as well as local businesses and communities.

The coronavirus pandemic impacted on our way of working and our way of life. For many, it was a year of profound hardship, stress and sadness; my heartfelt condolences to those who lost loved ones. While our fantastic health service took the brunt, the police, as always, were also on the frontline, protecting and serving communities.

It could never have been predicted that officers would be responding to calls about peaceful parties, groups exercising together or people socialising with family and friends, but that was what was required to keep us all safe. There is no doubt grappling with and enforcing Covid-19 legislation created significant challenges for the police nationally; overall though, I believe the approach taken was realistic and pragmatic without unnecessarily putting officers and staff at risk.

Throughout the year, I have supported the Chief Constable and been continually impressed and reassured by the response from the force. Police officers, Police Community Support Officers, staff and volunteers have stepped up to the challenge admirably and displayed great resilience and professionalism despite the potential risks to their own health and well-being. Following an inspection, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services described Kent Police's response to the pandemic as 'exemplary and high quality' - I would echo those sentiments.

Whether it be working remotely from home or hosting meetings virtually, my office also had to adapt to the circumstances and work very differently. On the whole though, with the support of my staff, business continued to be delivered as usual and I was able to effectively discharge my duties including holding the Chief Constable to account and working in partnership to prevent and reduce crime. However, it would be remiss of me to suggest that there weren't challenges, for example: my public engagement was limited and mostly had to take place online; and my Commissioning Team came under intense pressure as significant additional Government funding for commissioned and new victim services was directed through my office.

Despite the unprecedented year and demands placed on Kent Police, I am pleased that the recruitment drive continued, with the number of police officers at the end of March 2021 standing at 3,911. This is 729 more full-time officers than when I came into office, working diligently every day to protect the vulnerable and keep the county safe.

I would like to thank every Kent Police officer, Police Community Support Officer, member of staff and volunteer for their tireless efforts during 2020/21. My thanks also to the staff in my office for their hard work and continuing to support me as your elected Police and Crime Commissioner.

Matthew Scott

Kent Police and Crime Commissioner

Safer in Kent: The Community safety and Criminal Justice Plan

By law, Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) are required to publish a Police and Crime Plan that covers their term of office, and to keep the plan under constant review. PCCs also have a duty to consult with victims and the wider community on the priorities within it.

I published my 'Safer in Kent: The Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan' in April 2017, and it sets the priorities for Kent Police, partners and the Office of the PCC (OPCC), as well as the overall strategic direction of policing and community safety in the county to 2021.

I have taken the decision to formally refresh the plan annually and am committed to encouraging feedback and hearing from as many of the 1.8 million people living within the county as possible.

My fourth Annual Policing Survey was launched in June and closed in December 2019; a total of 3,648 responses were received – the highest response rate since I started the survey in 2016. Hosted for the first time on a third-party platform, Smart Survey, it was primarily made available online, with printed copies also handed out at street stalls, coffee mornings, the Kent Police Open Days and Kent County Show.

The following is a precis of the results:

Q1. How safe do you feel where you live, on a scale of 1 to 10? (1 = very unsafe / 10 = very safe)

- Respondents across Kent and Medway felt 6.4/10 safe where they live

Q2. Have you been a victim of crime in Kent in the last year?

- 19.7% of respondents indicated 'Yes' and 80.3% 'No'

Q3. If so, how satisfied were you with the service from Kent Police? (1 = very poor / 10 = excellent)

- On average victims rated the service received from Kent Police 4.5/10

Q4. Which of the following issues do you feel are the most important?

- Respondents could select up to six issues from a pre-defined list of 17; the top five were:

1. Anti-social behaviour
2. Burglary / robbery
3. Serious violence, incl. gangs / weapon offences
4. Sexual offences, including rape
5. Child sexual exploitation

Q5. If additional police officers and staff could be recruited, what would you like them to focus on?

- Respondents could select up to three areas from a pre-defined list of seven; the top three were:
 1. Preventing crime & anti-social behaviour
 2. Neighbourhood policing
 3. Investigating crime

Q6. Would you be willing to pay a little more through council tax to help fund these extra resources?

- 73.8% of respondents indicated 'Yes' and 26.2% 'No'

However, the survey formed only one element of the consultation. It also took account of correspondence received by the OPCC, feedback from engagement with partners and community organisations, emerging local threats and national guidance.

I would like to thank all those who took the time to have their say on policing and crime in the county.

My refreshed Safer in Kent Plan was considered and supported by the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel; the accompanying precept proposal was also approved. The plan was published on 1 April 2020.

As a refresh the plan was not re-written but tweaked. Importantly, the survey results showed the top five issues respondents felt were most important were already reflected in the plan (see Q4).

The following is an overview of the plan's structure with the most significant amendments noted.

Leadership

Strong ethics, transparency and integrity at all times.

Guiding principles

- People suffering mental ill health need the right care from the right person
- Crime is important, no matter where it takes place
- Vulnerable people must be protected from harm

My priorities for the Chief Constable to deliver:

- Put victims first
- Fight crime and anti-social behaviour [**added** reference to combating knife crime and tackling those who choose to carry a weapon]
- Tackle abuse, exploitation and violence
- Combat organised crime and gangs
- Provide visible neighbourhood policing and effective roads policing
- Deliver an efficient and accessible service

My commitments as PCC:

- Hold the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of Kent Police's priorities
- Enhance services for victims of crime and abuse
- Commission services that reduce pressure on policing due to mental health
- Invest in schemes that make people safer and reduce re-offending [**updated** Violence Reduction Challenge section; **added** reference to Violence Reduction Unit]
- Make offenders pay for the harm that they have caused
- Actively engage with residents in Kent and Medway

Opportunities for the future:

- Calling for more criminal justice powers for PCCs
- Lobbying for a fairer funding settlement for Kent [**updated** context around UK's withdrawal from EU; **changed** commitment to reflect future unavoidable and unexpected costs]
- Further collaboration with other organisations
- Oversight of the police complaints process [**updated** to reflect provisions enacted with PCCs taking on 'Appellate' function and greater oversight]
- Developing new crime prevention and diversion practices
- Backing volunteering

Review of 2020/21

In an unprecedented and difficult year, Kent Police stepped in when many others could not or would not, taking immediate and decisive action to keep people safe, tackle crime and address some of the problems brought about by Covid-19.

Kent Police's approach was not to 'police the pandemic', but to 'police through the pandemic'; it remained focused on maintaining a visible police presence and delivering core policing services.

Impressively, whilst members of the workforce were personally affected by Covid-19, absence levels were consistently below the national average and officers /staff continued to:

- put victims and witnesses at the heart of everything;
- provide a quality service; and
- 'do the right thing'.

Like all police forces, Kent had to adapt to protect its workforce and the public whilst continuing to serve local communities. Police stations and other work environments were made Covid secure, officers / staff were required to wear personal protective equipment and new working practices were introduced to prevent the spread of the virus. Whilst officers / staff delivering critical functions were required to attend the workplace, many were afforded maximum flexibility through home or agile working facilitated by rapidly enhanced IT provision and infrastructure. New processes were also introduced to minimise risk, such as in custody, and both internal and external meetings with other organisations were conducted using video technology.

Whilst restrictions resulted in calls to 999 and 101 reducing, there was a shift to online communication with much of the demand linked to the pandemic. Recorded crime decreased, but with victims of domestic abuse and other offences feeling trapped in their own homes and unable get support from family and friends, the force adopted innovative new practices to 'reach in' and check on the safety of the vulnerable. Anti-social behaviour (ASB) increased significantly, but over a quarter of incidents were Covid-19 related (e.g. illegal gatherings during lock down periods).

Kent Police, like all forces, adopted the Four Es approach in policing the regulations, with enforcement through Fixed Penalty Notices being a last resort:

1. Engage	2. Explain	3. Encourage	4. Enforce
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Sadly, there was an increase in assaults on officers, with a minority using Covid-19 as a means of intimidation by coughing or spitting at them. The force's robust approach was to arrest, charge and put those responsible before the courts.

As a result of the pandemic, Kent Police introduced new practices and innovated at pace. With the easing of restrictions, the force has continued to exploit many of the developments for the benefit of its workforce and to better protect and serve Kent and Medway.

My priorities for the Chief Constable to deliver:

Considering the enormity and complexity of policing across the county, from numerous possible options, the following have been selected to illustrate how the Chief Constable has delivered on my priorities.

• Put victims first

Being a victim of crime or witness can affect people in very different ways, but as their initial contact is often with the police it is my expectation that they are at the heart of everything Kent Police does. Victims and witnesses must be treated with dignity, fairness and respect so that they have the confidence to report.

- The force sensitively conducts three satisfaction surveys - with victims of hate crime, domestic abuse and rape.

	April to March	
	2021	2020
Overall satisfaction of hate crime victims	80.7%	79.5%
Overall satisfaction of domestic abuse victims	88.0%*	86.6%
Overall satisfaction of rape victims with being treated fairly	87.7%	92.5%

*In April and May 2020 no surveys were conducted due to Covid-19

- The force utilises virtual evidence (live links) for both officers and victims. It has four remote vulnerable victim suites for those requiring an enhanced service or who are too vulnerable to give evidence in a court setting. The Witness Care Unit managed several home-links where victims were able to give evidence from a safe environment, as well as arranging live links from around the world, including Australia, Egypt and Germany.

• Fight crime and anti-social behaviour

Crime and ASB are issues that residents care deeply about and it is my expectation that Kent Police has the right resources with the right skills to investigate and bring to justice those who harm local communities.

- Kent Police recorded a 14.6% decrease in victim-based crime compared to 2019/20 (23,948 less victims). Offences that saw a decrease include:
 - burglary residential (-32.2%, 2,418 fewer victims);
 - vehicle crime (-36.9%, 4,196 fewer victims); and
 - theft & handling (-33.6%, 11,193 fewer victims).

Whilst ASB increased by 61% compared to 2019/20 (21,692 more incidents), 25.4% were Covid-19 related (e.g. illegal gatherings during lock downs).

- Formed in February 2019, the Chief Constables' Crime Squad is a dedicated team of 32 officers who investigate linked offences of burglary and robbery. In 2020/21, the team executed over 170 warrants, made more than 260 arrests, laid in excess of 730 charges and secured over 460 years in court sentences.

- **Tackle abuse, exploitation and violence**

There is no place for abuse, violence or exploitation in our society and it is my expectation that Kent Police protects the most vulnerable and supports those who may be too afraid to seek help.

- Kent Police recorded a 1.7% decrease in violent crime compared to 2019/20 (1,425 fewer victims):
 - violence with injury fell by 16.2% and violence without injury by 8.3%, but stalking and harassment increased by 30.2%;
 - sexual offences decreased by 14.2% (932 fewer victims), including 150 less victims of rape;
 - robbery decreased by 35.2% (661 fewer victims).
- Knife crime continued to be a focus, with over 400 fewer victims than 2019/20. A broad range of activity in 2020/21 yielded the following results – in excess of:
 - 3,700 arrests
 - 6,000 stop and searches
 - 420 cash seizures
 - 3,400 drug seizures
 - 1,800 weapons seized

- **Combat organised crime and gangs**

Organised crime and gangs present considerable challenges, and it is my expectation that Kent Police deploys the right resources to disrupt and investigate organised criminality in order to keep the county safe.

- Formed in April 2020, the dedicated County Lines and Gangs Team has demonstrated outstanding results - in excess of:
 - 260 arrests;
 - 150 warrants executed
 - 300 charges laid
 - 60 weapons seized
 - 140 years in court sentences

The force was also able to declare two Districts – Swale and Tonbridge and Malling – county lines free.

- Organised crime groups have continued to be relentlessly targeted; examples of the results achieved include:
 - The conviction and sentence of 3 males running a drugs line into Medway. They used kidnap and witness intimidation to conduct their criminal enterprise and were sentenced to 15, 14 and 10 years.
 - Investigation of a drugs line supplying Class A drugs in Kent, Essex and the Metropolitan Police area, with an estimated turnover of approximately £1.5m. Thirteen defendants were convicted at Maidstone Crown Court with custodial sentences totalling 69 years.

- **Provide visible neighbourhood policing and effective roads policing**

Neighbourhood policing is fundamental to policing in the county and it is my expectation that Kent Police engages with local residents and works with partners to improve the quality of life within local communities.

- The Maidstone Task Force was launched in October 2020 and has responded to the concerns of the community, making over 100 arrests, conducted 200 stop searches, completed over 200 intelligence reports and seized in excess of £17,000 under the Proceeds of Crime Act.
- The Road Safety Unit provides a visible and high-profile presence delivering enforcement and education in relation to the ‘fatal four’ – mobile phones, seatbelts, drink/drug driving and speeding. Based on unvalidated 2020 data, the number of people killed or seriously injured on Kent’s roads fell by 52 compared to 2019. Whilst the reduction cannot be attributed to work of the team alone, their engagement, enforcement and education will undoubtedly have had an impact.

- **Deliver an efficient and accessible service**

Kent Police must be efficient and effective, and it is my expectation that they exploit collaborative opportunities with Essex Police, as part of the Seven Force Strategic Collaboration and with other public sector organisations.

- In 2020 Kent Police commenced a project to rationalise its estate. This included a decision to sell Sutton Road, Maidstone; the Command Team has moved to existing estate at Northfleet and other departments will be relocated. Collaborative opportunities with partners are also being explored and will be progressed where they deliver financial savings and/or an improved service. The project will deliver an innovative reconfiguration of the estate and a significant reduction of 190,000 sq. ft. in space used with targeted savings in excess of £2m per annum for reinvestment into frontline policing.
- The number of 999 emergency calls received by Kent Police was 315,930, a decrease of 28,819 on 2019/20. The percentage answered by staff in the Force Control Room (FCR) was 99.2% and the average answering time was 10 seconds (compared to 99.2% and 11 seconds in 2019/20).

The number of 101 non-emergency calls received was 374,689, a decrease of 95,625 on 2019/20. The percentage answered was 94.8% and the average answering time was 57 seconds (compared with 91.1% and 1 minute 23 seconds in 2019/20.).

In addition, 30,734 online crime reports were submitted to the force and 51,305 Live Chats received. This compares to 24,299 and 17,121 respectively in 2019/20.

My commitments as PCC:

• **Hold the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of Kent Police's priorities**

As your PCC, one of my key duties is to be democratically accountable for the provision of an efficient and effective police force by holding the Chief Constable to account.

It is vitally important that accountability arrangements are visible and accessible to the public in order to build and maintain trust and confidence. Below is an overview of my governance arrangements:

Key Principles: dynamic & risk-based; takes account of, & has due regard for each parties distinct role	
Informal Interaction (Daily)	Spontaneous discussions between the OPCC & Kent Police.
Joint PCC & Chief Constable Briefing (Weekly)	A closed briefing which enables dialogue & discussion on a routine frequent basis.
Performance & Delivery Board (Quarterly)	Held in public & enables me to formally hold the Chief Constable to account for delivery of the priorities & related matters.
Joint Audit Committee (Quarterly)	Combined committee with Kent Police. Scrutinises internal processes, spending & risk management policies.
Kent Police Culture Board (Quarterly)	A Chief Constable chaired meeting, but I have a standing invitation. Continues development of a culture consistent with the Mission, Vision, Values & Priorities.
Kent & Essex Collaboration Oversight Meeting (6 monthly)	Co-chaired by myself & the Essex Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner. Keeps collaboration under review & holds both Chief Constables to account.
Complemented by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The OPCC conducting checks / audits • Feedback from Independent Custody Visitors • My completion of the Chief Constable's PDR • Regular meetings with public bodies & inspectorates • Objective assessments by HMICFRS 	

Whilst there was a move from physical to virtual necessitated by Government measures, I am pleased to report that on the whole these arrangements continued with challenge and support remaining 'business as usual' despite the pandemic. Reflecting the criticality and nature of the situation, the only additional arrangements introduced were a weekly briefing between myself and the Chief Constable focused on the force's response to Covid-19 and my Chief Executive attending weekly Gold meetings.

As one of the principle ways I hold the Chief Constable to account, Performance and Delivery Board meetings were held on 3 June, 30 September, 9 December and 10 March 2021. With the exception of the 3 June meeting they were all hosted online using Teams Live, allowing members of the public to observe proceedings in 'real-time'. Due to the impact of the pandemic, I took the decision to minimise additional demand on the force and require verbal updates only from the Chief Constable.

Further information about my [Performance and Delivery Board](#) can be found on the OPCC website.

Extension of Chief Constable's contract

In August 2020, I took the decision to extend the contract of Chief Constable Alan Pughsley QPM.

Mr Pughsley became Chief Constable in January 2014; the 'three x one-year' contract extensions take his term of office to 3 January 2025.

I will continue to hold Mr Pughsley to account on behalf of the people of Kent, including in public at my Performance and Delivery Board, and I expect the high standards of personal and professional integrity and ethics within the force to continue. The Chief Constable fully understands that if Kent Police falls short of what the public expects then I will continue to challenge and ask difficult questions.

Visible policing

From my conversations with residents right across Kent, I know that the number one thing they want to see is local policing.

Through the Government's national uplift programme and funding raised through the Council Tax precept, the force continued to recruit officers in 2020/21.

Whilst some of those recruited replaced officers that left during the year, officer strength (i.e. actual number of officers) as at 31 March 2021 stood at 3,911 Full Time Equivalent (FTE)¹.

The deployment of officers is always a matter for the Chief Constable, and Mr Pughsley QPM has made it clear that any uplift will be invested in the front-line. As well as a number of teams receiving additional officers, the increase allowed the force to create a new Schools Unit. Whilst primarily focused on secondary schools and their cohorts, the team has a footprint in primary settings as well as higher education, with a named officer acting as a single point of contact for staff, students and parents.

I am also pleased to report that the Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) strength as at 31 March 2021 was 336 (FTE)¹.

Kent Police now has the highest number of officers in its history and 729 more full-time officers than when I came into office in spring 2016. This is a fantastic achievement and I would like to congratulate the Chief Constable and thank all the officers and staff involved for their dedication and hard work. Throughout the year I have had the pleasure of attending a number of socially distanced Passing Out Parades as officers have completed their initial training. It is always a pleasure to witness the next generation of officers begin the next stage of their careers with the force.

¹ [Police workforce, England and Wales: 31 March 2021](#)

- **Enhance services for victims of crime and abuse**

It is my responsibility to commission support services for victims of crime across the county, whether they report to the police or not. I am committed to providing and enhancing those support services so that victims and witnesses are treated as individuals, and services are tailored to their needs.

I have a dedicated Commissioning Team who are responsible for commissioning services as well as managing and monitoring contracts and service delivery. They are also responsible for attracting additional funding to Kent through bid writing. I also have a dedicated Victims Hub in Ashford - Compass House - which houses a number of services enabling closer working and a more joined up approach to supporting victims and witnesses. It also provides safe spaces for victims to receive much needed support and give evidence at court.

Funding

Annually, the OPCC receives approximately £2.1m of government grant from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) to deliver core victim services. I match fund this with £2.1m of my own budget. During 2020/21 a number of funding streams were offered by the Government and my team worked hard to ensure that Kent and Medway received its fair share to enable new services to be delivered and organisations affected by the pandemic to continue their important work. Overall, my team were successful in securing over £1.2m additional funding to support services for victims and witnesses in 2020/21.

Covid-19 Response

The year was of course dominated by the pandemic and on 16 March 2020 the Prime Minister announced the first national lockdown. It was recognised that the announcement would place unprecedented demand on victim services, particularly in relation to domestic abuse and sexual violence. As a result, victim services and community-based support services funded by me not only needed to quickly adapt to

deliver support remotely, but also consider how they could meet the increased demand.

My Commissioning Team immediately engaged with all the commissioned and grant funded services to understand how they were adapting, the support that could be provided and the risks they were facing. This enabled a clear picture of delivery, demand and associated risks to be developed; on a number of occasions the detail was reported nationally to the MoJ to support decision making and the allocation of additional funding.

As a result of this work, the OPCC was awarded £624,000 in May 2020 through the MoJ Extraordinary Fund. This was split as follows:

- £468,000 to support domestic abuse (DA) organisations' response to increased pressure resulting from Covid-19;
- £156,000 to support sexual violence (SV) organisations.

Following a further evidenced submission to the MoJ on the impact on DA / SV services, the OPCC was awarded another £215,334.86 in funding to enable them to continue responding effectively to victims.

Services that benefitted from this funding ranged from trauma counselling to a new Adolescent to Parent Violence Programme. The OPCC worked alongside providers to ensure they delivered the required services and achieved positive outcomes.

Case study: *A female client was the victim of rape and had physical disabilities which were exacerbated by the attack. The client was afraid to leave her house and unable to access support networks, her sleep was impacted, she had increased anxiety and felt ashamed and guilty. Through counselling the client was able to find ways to manage her fears allowing her to feel more secure in her home, manage her sleep better and work through her sense of shame and guilt, recognising that she was not at fault. She has reported reduced anxiety and started to re-engage with her support networks.*

PCC Emergency Fund

Recognising the difficulties facing commissioned services, I identified £100,000 from my own funds to create a PCC Emergency Fund. Reserved for existing services it was used to either:

- support extra capacity to deal with current and predicted future demand resulting from Covid-19;
- to set up new projects specifically aimed at addressing gaps in support resulting from Covid-19.

Examples of services funded include:

- Extra therapy sessions for clients with experience of sexual violence to reduce waiting times.
- Adapted delivery of a therapeutic service supporting children and families struggling with the impact of domestic violence and abuse.
- Increased capacity for a domestic abuse helpline.
- Support for service providers in adapting to remote working.
- Provision of additional trauma counselling.

Specialist ISVAs

The OPCC was successful in being allocated £240,802 from the MoJ to recruit four specialist Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs) for the period July 2020 to March 2022 (extended to 2022/23). The funding provides two dedicated ISVAs that support student victims of sexual violence and two that support victims of exploitation associated with gangs.

ISVAs are trained to look after victims, coordinating needs and risk-based support and explaining their options in relation to the criminal justice process and what happens if they report to the police. They provide impartial, practical and emotional support to meet the needs of the victim or survivor.

These are very specialist areas of work and the gangs work in particular has been challenging. However, good progress has been made and with funding for a further two years it is expected that the caseload will increase.

Safer Streets 1

The OPCC was successful in acquiring £111,000 from the Governments Safer Streets Fund (Round 1) focused on improving communities through situational crime prevention.

An area in Gillingham North was selected to receive the investment as it met all of the requirements. The funding enabled partners to work holistically to tackle acquisitive crime and improve the local area, with positive outcomes achieved including:

- o over 1600 door to door engagements;
- o 594 properties receiving a crime prevention product;
- o the removal of over 40 tonnes of waste.

Safer Streets 2

The success in Round 1 led to further successful bids to the Safer Streets Fund (Round 2) announced in the summer of 2021. The successful areas are: Ramsgate £387,077.85; Canterbury £382,358; Medway £123,303. Kent was one of a small number of areas to be successful in two bids – reflective of the evidence base and quality of submissions.

Core Contracts

The OPCC has a number of core contracts over at least three years with providers for essential victim services. The contracts were commissioned at different times and are all subject to performance and contract management by my office, including formal monthly and quarterly meetings.

Victims Support (£1.1m)

My core Victim Referral service continues to be provided by Victim Support. This service enables victims to seek help and support regardless of whether they have reported the crime or not. Over 100,000 referrals were received during 2020/21, with 93.5% of victims being satisfied with the service. This contract also includes funding for a Stalking Advocate and Hate Crime Advocate who deal specifically with victims of stalking and hate crime respectively.

Restorative Justice (£0.2m)

Restorative Justice can be a very powerful tool in reducing reoffending. It enables victims to tell offenders the real impact of their crimes, get answers and possibly receive an apology. It also gives offenders the chance to understand what they have done, take responsibility for their actions and consider ways to make amends for their behaviour.

The service is provided by Restorative Solutions and delivered through a combination of highly skilled staff and volunteers. Referrals received have ranged from 'low level' ASB to complex domestic abuse cases initiated by the victim.

Independent Sexual Violence Advisor Service (£0.45m)

The ISVA service supports victims of rape and sexual violence and is run by Family Matters, a Kent based organisation. In 2020/21 they received nearly 1,800 referrals, of which 70% received support remotely.

Victims' were 100% satisfied with the support provided and outcomes were positive with:

- o 100% improvement in health and well-being;
- o 90% feeling better able to cope with managing aspects of everyday life;
- o 94% having increased feelings of safety.

Violence Reduction Fund

This was borne out of my 2018 Violence Reduction Challenge that looked at the nature of violent crime in Kent. One of the recommendations was to allocate part of my commissioning budget for early intervention and diversion.

As a 3-year fund this was open to statutory organisations, voluntary groups and charities. The following organisations continue to receive funding:

Organisation	Project Brief	Amount
Total Insight Theatre	School inputs	£9,507
Crimestoppers Fearless	School & professional inputs	£35,000
Rising Sun	Adolescent girls project	£35,000
Forward Trust	Mentoring initiative	£34,780

Uprising	School & youth setting inputs	£32,000
Folkestone Youth Project	The Shed youth project	£7,850
Reform Restore Respect	School inputs	£10,000
Kent Police	Mini-Cadets: In school programme (8-10yrs)	£36,814

As with all OPCC funds, allocations are subject to performance monitoring:

- o Total Insight have delivered approximately 5 school inputs; however, service delivery has been impacted by school closures.
- o Crimestoppers Fearless have hosted 22 professional sessions and 17 school workshops (face to face or virtual dependent on restrictions).
- o Rising Sun have reached 59 girls for their 10-week programme; all reported improved resilience and awareness of risky behaviours.
- o Forward Trust has had 34 referrals to its mentoring scheme and delivered 80 mentor sessions.
- o Uprising delivered 6 young people sessions and 3 professional sessions; mentoring is also above expectations with support to 18 young people.
- o Folkestone Youth project opened The Shed but with a reduced offer of just 1:1 sessions to 15 young people and some small group work.
- o Reform Restore Respect only deliver face to face inputs but have reached 10 schools and over 500 young people.
- o Kent Police Mini-Cadets has been piloted in a North Kent school. The aim is to reach two further schools by October.

Volunteer Police Cadets

The OPCC supported the Police Cadets with a grant of £40,000. The scheme aims to encourage the spirit of adventure and good citizenship, whilst providing a practical understanding of policing and inspiring young people to participate in their community.

There are 10 units and the scheme is hugely popular with over 360 Cadets and a waiting list.

St Giles Trust

The OPCC has funded the St Giles Trust since 2017. In collaboration with the Violence Reduction Unit four key projects received funding in 2020/21.

They were:

Neck of the Woods	Outreach work in West Kent; prevention and diversion activities for those at risk or at the early stages of offending.
Schools SOS+ project	School inputs and professionals training; awareness of gangs, county lines, knife crime and child sexual exploitation.
Peer Mentoring	Mentoring for young people identified as part of a gang to support their diversion / safe exit.
Specialist Girls & County Lines East	Help for females identified as part of a gang to support their diversion / safe exit.
	Two Caseworkers providing 1:1 support to those identified as part of a county line in East Kent.
Custody Scheme (VRU funded)	Caseworkers attending custody suites and providing intensive mentoring and support to those involved in county lines activity at a "teachable" moment.

It was a challenging year for the projects due to lockdown restrictions. All worked collaboratively with my Commissioning Team to develop alternative delivery methods, including virtual. Unfortunately, the Caseworkers were unable to attend custody suites making time critical engagements very difficult. However, the average caseload across all projects totalled 130, of which an average of 20 were actively engaged per quarter.

Despite lockdown, the Neck of the Woods project reached 182 young people and mentored several individuals. As a result, the majority reported higher levels of engagement with statutory services, improved resilience and decreased levels of risk-taking behaviour.

The Schools SOS+ project was particularly impacted by the two periods of lockdown and associated school closures. However, with schools re-opening in March 2021 bookings increased significantly as there was recognition of the need to reinforce safety messages around knife carrying and gang related behaviours.

Crime Reduction Grants

Each year a portion of my total commissioning budget is awarded to the Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and other third-party providers / groups. The money has to be spent on projects that support delivery of the priorities in my Safer in Kent Plan.

The total allocation across the 14 CSPs was £558,385. £404,698 was approved for main business cases and a further £38,606 from tactical pot requests, equating to £443,304 worth of projects. The tactical pot is a portion of the funding that CSPs can set aside to address emerging risks in their area.

The main themes of CSP projects were as follows:

- Youth related - preventative and diversionary schemes (e.g. outreach work by Brogdale CIC; safety in action and crime prevention talks by Reform Restore Respect, Excelsior and Salus).
- DA related - One stop Shops, support for DAVVS in West Kent, Homestart in Folkestone and a group perpetrator programme by CDAP.
- Training – for professionals in Modern Slavery, ASB, crime prevention, and Protection Against Stalking.
- Community Engagement - clean sweep operations, information centres and crime prevention education.
- Victim services and mental health - mediation programmes and trackers for those identified as vulnerable and who may go missing.
- Crime prevention activities - OSARA training and equipment to design out crime, mobile and static CCTV cameras. Dartford and Gravesham also continued to use the funding to support their CCTV monitoring operation.

The third-party grants are provided to statutory boards or other partnership groups with the aim of

delivering a multi-agency approach to tackling crime, ASB, vulnerability and other societal issues linked to crime and disorder.

In 2020/21, recipients included:

Service	Amount
Young Persons Substance Misuse	£92,626
Kent Youth Justice Team	£275,106
Medway Youth Offending Team	£90,353
Kent Drug & Alcohol Action Team	£301,449
Medway Drug & Alcohol Action Team	£59,041
Kent Safeguarding Children's P/ship	£45,934
Kent & Medway Adult Safeguarding P/ship	£38,576
Medway Safeguarding Children's P/ship	£15,433
Kent Criminal Justice Board	£40,000
Safer Kent	£20,000
Crimestoppers: local & national	£60,366

Victims Specialist Services

I also set aside over £300,000 for organisations that provide specialist support to victims of crime, especially of domestic abuse. These services were complementary to the core victim services contract and ensured that enhanced support was available for specific groups or those with specialist needs.

The following organisations received funding:

- Choices (£34,000): intensive specialist support for victims with learning disabilities, mental health needs or autism.
- Dads Unlimited (£30,000): 1:1 mentoring service to help men rebuild their lives following abusive relationships.
- Dandelion Time (£30,000): therapeutic programme for children and families affected by abuse.
- DAVSS (£16,800): court support for victims of DA in West Kent.
- DAVSS (£4,880): support services for men experiencing DA.
- NSPCC (£50,000): therapeutic programme for children aged 4 to 17 affected by sexual abuse.

- Rising Sun (£49,898): project targeting adolescents who had experienced violence within their home.
- Rubicon Cares (£50,000): 1:1 specialist trauma counselling for victims.
- SignHealth (£41,785): support for deaf victims of DA and sexual violence.
- Brake (£5,000) - emotional, physical, practical and advocacy support for those bereaved or seriously injured in road crashes in Kent.

Despite the challenges and the need to quickly adapt delivery models, outcomes were impressive; an example is given below:

Rubicon Cares

Supported 673 clients with the following results:

- 100% improvement in managing / reducing trauma symptoms such as flashbacks, nightmares, panic attacks and disassociation leading to better general health and well-being;
- 87% reduction in medication;
- 92% increased involvement in local community;
- 93% improved relationships / family dynamics;
- 92% improved day to day functioning (e.g. able to manage daily chores);
- 92% improved ability to manage challenges such as starting employment;
- 89% improved employment / education opportunities;
- 96% improved sense of resilience and safety.

All the providers reported an increase in demand for therapeutic services. This has been taken into account when developing my commissioning approach for 2021/22.

• **Commission services that reduce pressure on policing due to mental health**

More than a third of Kent Police's time is spent dealing with individuals and cases involving mental health issues. To put it another way, over 33 police officers out of 100 spend their whole shift dealing with mental health incidents rather than tackling crime or ASB in local communities. Vulnerable people must be

protected from harm, but this clearly isn't always best for the individual or fair on police officers, who are not healthcare professionals.

National influence

PCCs are represented at a national level by the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC). A portfolio approach means that individual PCCs have responsibility for leading on specific national policy development areas - I continued as the lead for Mental Health.

Whilst the pandemic disrupted my national work, wherever possible activity and engagement continued virtually. Examples included:

- Discussing with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) how to integrate NHS Volunteer Responders into supporting mental health.
- Meeting with the NPCC, DHSC, Home Office and NHS England to discuss changes to the Mental Health Act.
- Regularly liaising with the NPCC and College of Policing to maintain a clear picture of demand nationally and plans to effectively manage.

Inquiry into Mental Health & Covid-19

In October 2020, due to anecdotal reports of police forces experiencing a growth in mental health demand, I initiated an inquiry to establish whether those with mental health problems were getting the right care, from the right person at the right time during the pandemic.

An initial call for evidence was issued in September 2020 seeking feedback from PCC colleagues, police forces, health practitioners and mental health support services. Findings from the submissions included:

- changes in the type of demand;
- reports of a new cohort of people who previously had no mental health related issues;
- limited capacity in mental health settings due to social distancing; and
- no identified link between demand and geography (e.g. rural vs urban police forces).

To establish further evidence and best practice, I commissioned a second phase involving a series of roundtables. Invitations were sent to frontline officers, mental health professionals, PCC colleagues and importantly, those with lived experience.

The outcome was a set of broad recommendations for i) the Government and the sector to develop and improve the response to mental health; and ii) to help agencies prepare and respond to such situations in the future.

Copies of the [Phase One Report](#) and the [Phase Two Report](#) can be found on the APCC website.

Mental Health Crisis Care Board

Following a review of the Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat governance arrangements, the Crisis Care Board which I chair became the strategic decision-making body for Kent and Medway.

Representation on the Board includes Chief Executive (or equivalent) representation from Kent Police, Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust, South East Coast Ambulance Service, Kent County Council and Medway Council.

To enable partners to focus on the pandemic and vaccination programme, I took the decision to cancel the April 2020 and February 2021 meetings.

However, meetings in July and October focused on:

- a Section 136 Deep Dive report and recommendations;
- pathway developments;
- the core principles of prevention, response and recovery; and
- the provision of Safe Havens across the county.

There are now five Safe Havens across the county offering non-referral based, open access alternative out-of-hours mental health support.

The [Folkestone Haven](#) is run by the charity Hestia. It opened on 6 April offering telephone support, but from 1 July began offering face-to-face support.

The [other four Safe Havens](#) are provided by Mental Health Matters and located in Canterbury, Maidstone,

Medway and Thanet. They opened virtually on 20 April and from the end of July began offering face-to-face support.

I would like to recognise and thank partners and their staff for the support they have provided to those with poor mental health throughout what has undoubtedly been a challenging and difficult year.

- **Invest in schemes that make people safer and reduce re-offending**

The allocation of funding to Kent Police, community safety partners, voluntary, charity and community group's helps to support individuals turn their lives around, and to tackle the harm caused.

Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)

The countywide VRU was set-up after the OPCC secured funding from the Home Office in September 2019. The introduction of VRU's in 18 local areas nationally is part of a focus on early intervention, as set out in the Government's Serious Violence Strategy published in April 2018.

While Kent has not experienced the same levels of serious violence as some other areas, issues around violent crime cannot be resolved by Kent Police simply arresting more people.

The Kent and Medway VRU is a partnership between the police, local councils, health service providers and other key partners. It aims to tackle the root causes of violence using a multi-agency, health based preventative approach with a focus on:

- Identifying the major causes of violence in Kent and Medway.
- Coordinating activity across the county to tackle violence and deliver long-term reductions.
- Involving communities and building capacity to deliver the best solutions to reducing violence in public spaces.

Despite Covid-19 and lockdown restrictions creating challenges to the delivery of front-line services and ability to engage with local communities, the VRU has

had many successes and supported numerous projects. They include:

- in a 'UK first', purchasing and distributing more than 500 emergency trauma packs across public spaces in the county;
- commissioning NurtureUK - a charity that aims to reduce the number of exclusions - to work with 10 schools offering bespoke consultancy, training for staff and workshops for parents; and
- linking in with the Kent Police Integrated Offender Management Team to expand the use of Buddi tags to anyone under the age of 25 who is most at risk of exploitation or a violence offence.

Case study [Rowan School]: 'Working with the VRU has enabled us to collaborate via multi-agency working to ensure that we are supporting pupils and their associates who are either involved in, or at risk of serious youth crime. The VRU have put us in contact with SALUS; they have offered 1:1 mentoring and small group work sessions, with a focus on reducing youth crime, building self-esteem and identifying and reducing exploitation.'

The county will receive nearly £1.8m from the Home Office to help fund the VRU in 2021/22.

This is excellent news. Kent Police has worked hard to reduce violent crime and their efforts are being rewarded. Last year the number of knife crime offences which involved serious injury or death fell by nearly 13%. There was also a reduction in the number of county lines drug gangs, but there is more to be done and I welcome the continued support of the Government.

Safer Streets Funding

The OPCC submitted a bid and was successful in securing £111,000 from the Governments Safer Streets Fund (Round 1) focused on improving communities through situational crime prevention.

Residents in an area in Gillingham North benefitted as the funding was used for crime prevention activity until the end of March 2021. This included:

- Removal of fly-tipping and increased waste and recycling collections.
- Installation of CCTV.
- Graffiti removal and installation of additional street litter bins.
- Community clean up and planting.
- Crime prevention equipment and advice on safety / security.
- Community signposting and referring.

Through the Medway Task Force and the VRU, Kent Police and Medway Council work together to prevent crime and ASB. However, I am delighted this additional money was used in a targeted way to make the area around Gillingham High Street even safer and more pleasant for local residents.

Great feedback was also received:

- ✓ *A partially sighted resident stated that they had never experienced anything like it, describing the project as "brilliant" and "exceptional community engagement". They said "the creativity and innovation was mind blowing" and the "officers were friendly, gave very good explanations of the products, talked naturally and were not bothered about the cold." They "felt safer having had the experience" and were "very impressed".*
- ✓ *A vulnerable resident, was very happy to receive a purse chain and SelectaDNA on the doorstep. After a quick chat, it became apparent that they would benefit from a doorbell camera and defendastrip, which they accepted, along with a referral to Kent Fire & Rescue Service.*
- ✓ *Another resident stated that receiving SelectaDNA had made their day.*

- **Make offenders pay for the harm that they have caused**

An important principle of criminal justice is to ensure that those who cause harm give back to victims and the community they have hurt.

Restorative Justice

Launched in October 2017, Restorative Solutions provide this service. It can be a very powerful tool, offering a safe and controlled way for victims and offenders to engage in conversations.

RJ is free, entirely voluntary and can be used at any point during the criminal justice process - or even after someone is found guilty - provided both the victim and offender are willing. It is not an alternative to a court sentence and does not result in the offender having their sentence reduced.

215 referrals were received in 2020/21, with nearly 300 victims offered support. The impact of Covid-19 was felt acutely by the service due to restrictions limiting face to face engagement. As a result, there was increased contact by phone, email and online.

Further information on [Restorative Justice](#) can be found on the OPCC website.

Pension Forfeiture

Where a police officer is convicted of an offence, and the offending can be shown to be linked to their role as an officer, I have the ability to apply to the Secretary of State for a Certificate of Forfeiture. This allows me to consider retaining around 60-65% of the amount that Kent Police - and therefore, ultimately, the public - have paid into the officer's pension.

I was first granted a Certificate of Forfeiture in December 2017, and it continues to be a focus. The OPCC currently has three 'live' cases where forfeiture has been granted.

• **Actively engage with residents in Kent and Medway**

Listening to residents and ensuring their needs are met is one of my main jobs.

As a result of Covid-19, engagement in the true sense of the word was much harder. However, the OPCC and I continued to engage via the website which on average 1,100 people visited per month and various social media platforms. The corporate [@PCCKent](#) Twitter account grew to more than 11,600 followers.

The OPCC also launched on [Nextdoor](#), regularly posting and reaching over 30,000 of the 220,000 Kent residents signed up. The [Facebook page](#) remained steady and I hosted several Facebook Live Panels, including one on mental health and another on domestic abuse.

The OPCC also posted videos at least once a week across all social media platforms, via a [YouTube](#) channel. The number of people following the OPCC on [Instagram](#) tripled to over 300.

My fourth Annual Policing Survey was launched in June and closed in December 2019. Amongst other matters, it sought residents' views on the priorities for my refreshed Safer in Kent Plan. Hosted online via the OPCC website, a total of 3,648 responses were received – the highest response rate since I started the survey in 2016. A [copy of the survey and report on the findings](#) can be found on the OPCC website.

For the first time, I also created a survey to specifically understand business crime in the county. Hosted online, the survey opened on 21 September 2020 and closed 3 January 2021. A key aim of the survey was to better understand how much crime is committed against businesses in the county, and why some of it is not reported to the police. 247 businesses responded and a [report on the findings](#) can be found on the website.

The OPCC also produced a regular e-newsletter which was circulated to 3,300 subscribers, twice as many as the previous year.

In addition, I hosted and participated in a number of events through Microsoft Teams, including with several Rotary Clubs and a virtual Synagogue ceremony, as well as meeting with charitable partners and service providers.

Whilst large events such as the Kent Police Open Days and the Kent County Show were cancelled, when restrictions allowed, I visited a number of Community Speedwatch Groups and went on several socially distanced walkabouts with local MPs and councillors. I also joined meetings and had

conversations with Government Ministers, including the Home Secretary, Rt Hon Priti Patel MP, and the Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service, Kit Malthouse MP.

Feedback from officers and staff is vital and so when permitted I continued to engage with them directly, spending time with the Town Centre Team in both Maidstone and Dartford, the Rural Crime Squad and the Dog Unit as well as hosting online meetings with the Kent Police Federation, UNISON, and staff support associations.

I also engaged with the local media, speaking regularly to Kent Online, KMTV as well as BBC Radio Kent, BBC SE Today and Meridian

Alongside my plan, I published [Safer in Kent: Backing Young People](#) which sets out how I will support the vast majority of young people who are good citizens, who want to be involved and want to have a say over what happens in their communities. Despite the circumstances, I am very pleased to have been invited to deliver a Citizenship Action talk at Ebbsfleet Academy and to have also taken part in an online event with a group of Volunteer Police Cadets.

Opportunities for the future:

• **Call for more criminal justice powers for PCCs**

2020/21 was my third year as chair of the Kent Criminal Justice Board (KCJB). The Board brings together chief officers from criminal justice agencies and wider partners and has responsibility for overseeing criminal justice across Kent and Medway with the purpose of delivering effective, efficient and fair justice.

After a successful 2019/20 where the Board delivered a tangible increase in the number of early guilty pleas and became the best nationally for Magistrate Court trials going ahead as planned, the criminal justice system faced its greatest ever challenge. As a result of the pandemic, the need to maintain social distancing and constant cleaning, particularly in courthouses, caused unprecedented issues.

Understandably the Board focused on getting courtrooms open again as quickly as possible. Kent was one of the first areas to get Magistrates business back up and running and continues to lead in the use of video technology. Getting Jury Trials back up and running was far more difficult; however, with jurors watching trials by video from other rooms within court buildings and more recently the introduction of protective screens, the Crown Court is now back to operational capacity.

The pandemic resulted in delays to court proceedings and while Magistrates business is now close to pre-pandemic timescales, there remains a back log in Crown matters. This issue has constantly been raised with senior Ministers and HM Courts & Tribunal Service with a desire to create a Nightingale Court; I am pleased to report there are now two extra jury courtrooms operating in a hotel just outside Maidstone and the search continues for another suitable venue.

With the criminal justice system back up and running, the Board has started to focus again on other issues, including how the system can better manage cases involving people with poor mental health, the needs of women in the criminal justice system and accommodation as part of the plan to reduce reoffending.

I remain firmly of the belief that further devolvement of criminal justice powers has the potential to improve the journey of all service users, as well as outcomes across the criminal justice system. Therefore, I welcome the opportunity to contribute to the [Home Office PCC Review \(Part 2\)](#) which will consider how the role can be sharpened and expanded and look forward to receiving the recommendations.

• **Lobby for a fairer funding settlement for Kent**

During the year, my Chief Finance Officer (CFO) and I had discussions with the Home Office around the financial implications of a number of large policing operations of national importance that were specific to Kent.

In total, the OPCC was successful in bringing in £24m of funding to offset the costs and ensure there was minimal impact on Kent's taxpayers.

The funding received was as follows:

EU Transition	£19m
Napier barracks	£0.85m
Border Closure with France	£1.2m
Policing Operations	£3.2m

I also obtained additional funding for victim services in Kent to help support victims through the pandemic and beyond. This included funding for the provision of ISVAs and to support domestic violence and sexual violence services to manage the increased demand and adapt their services as a result of Covid-19.

With growing demand and pressure on policing, as well as the unique 'Gateway to Europe' issues, it is likely that Kent Police will incur further costs. I firmly believe it is not fair that local Kent residents' taxes should be used to fund nationally significant events. As a result, I will remain in close dialogue with local MPs, Ministers and the Government to highlight local challenges in an effort to ensure any associated costs are not funded from local people's pockets.

• **Collaborate further with other organisations**

BlueLight Commercial

When I became Chair of the National Commercial Board in November 2019, the case for change in procurement and commercial activity was strong and it was recognised that policing needed an organisation to work across all forces.

BlueLight Commercial was established in 2020 by the Home Office, to work in collaboration with blue light organisations and local/national suppliers, to help transform their commercial services. It is set up as a not for profit, private company limited by guarantee.

With every PCC being a member, the support of Chief Constables and strong backing from the Home Office, BlueLight Commercial has a strong mandate for change to deliver commercial excellence in policing.

As Chair of the BlueLight Commercial Board, I am pleased to report that in 2020/21 work in key areas began to bear fruit, with deals struck on fleet and in car CCTV. It also demonstrated agility in developing supply chain resilience, for example in personal protective equipment, and police forces started asking for support on local issues. In addition, collaboration was secured with fire and rescue services, non-Home Office forces and policing abroad.

I am tremendously proud of what BlueLight Commercial achieved in its first year and I'm sure in 2021/22 it will achieve further savings and improvements in policing's commercial capabilities.

Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority (KMFRA)

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 (PCA2017) introduced a raft of measures to enhance collaborative working between the emergency services. As well as a new statutory duty on emergency services to keep opportunities to collaborate under review, it included provisions enabling PCCs to take on different levels of responsibility with regards to the governance of fire and rescue in their area.

The KMFRA is made up of 25 elected councillors from Kent County Council and Medway Council; with legislation updated in light of the PCA2017, I was also formally appointed as a Member in February 2020.

The KMFRA is responsible for the provision of fire and rescue services throughout the county and recognises the county is changing rapidly with more housing, busier roads and an ageing population. It has invested in training and equipment so firefighters have what they need to tackle fires and other emergencies as quickly and effectively as possible. It also continues to do all it can to ensure that local people and businesses have the information and support they need to keep themselves safe. For example, whilst curtailed somewhat by the pandemic, it has an active school's education programme.

Kent Fire and Rescue Service remains one of the leading fire services in the country; as a member of the KMFRA, I know it is determined to maintain the high-quality service that the people of Kent and Medway want and deserve.

• Oversight of the police complaints process

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 introduced significant changes to the police complaints system which came into force on 1 February 2020.

The OPCC became the 'Relevant Review Body' for all low-level complaints against Kent Police, and I now have a legal duty to hold the Chief Constable to account more closely for performance in this area.

The OPCC recruited a new Reviews Officer who started in September 2020. The workload has been significant, with an increase from the previous year. Previously, Kent Police Professional Standards Department (PSD) handled these reviews (then called appeals) and averaged 80-100 a year. Since February 2020, when the regulations changed, the OPCC has received over 140, despite there being very few initially as complaints were still working their way through the previous system. Despite the increase the OPCC has ensured internal deadlines are adhered to, with a maximum six-week turnaround.

As result of the changes, Kent OPCC - in line with others in the region and across the country, as well as PSDs - has seen almost a 200% increase in complaints correspondence. This presented a significant challenge in light of the pandemic and the already high demand on staff time. Two new caseworkers were therefore recruited to assist with this workstream, and also support me in my interactions with residents, elected members and community groups across Kent.

I continue to hold the Chief Constable to account for performance on complaints, through the Joint Audit Committee, and Boards such as the Use of Force Scrutiny Panel where there is attendance at a senior level from OPCC staff. There is also the legal requirement for both Kent PSD and the Independent Office for Police Conduct to report on cases that are still active after 12 months (excluding ones where there are issues relating to on-going court proceedings) which enables me to pay particular attention to timeliness.

The reforms also simplified what constitutes a complaint. Whereas previously police forces needed to assess whether a 'complaint' received met the stringent definition in the Police Reform Act 2002, the Act has been updated and the new definition is 'any expression of dissatisfaction with a police force which is expressed (whether in writing or otherwise) by or on behalf of a member of the public'.

• Develop new crime prevention and diversion practices

Problem Solving Task Force

Funded through the council tax precept, the Problem Solving Task Force is a unit of specially trained PCSOs who aim to prevent persistent and long-standing issues of crime and ASB.

Officially launched in February 2021, the countywide team consists of experts trained in resolving long-term problems and working with partners to prevent crime, disrupt offenders and put a stop to the most harmful ASB. They also provide increased visibility and support other operational priorities.

As a result of the team's work and joined-up approach, positive results include:

- Assisting with a warrant that led to the dismantling of an Ashford county line.
- Issuing Community Protection Warnings to young people involved in ASB in Ramsgate. Since receiving the warnings, the individuals have not been involved in further incidents.
- Arranging the removal of graffiti from locations in Winterstoke Gardens and Victoria Parade, Ramsgate.
- Arranging the removal of fly tipped rubbish in Tankerton.

Residents and businesses told me that crime prevention and dealing with ASB were among their top priorities. I'm delighted to have been able to support the creation of the Problem Solving Task Force. The team is doing excellent work to support local communities and help improve the quality of life.

'I didn't know that' project

Following its success in 2019/20, I provided funding for this project which is run by Reform, Restore, Respect.

The project delivered a number of 90-minute workshops to Year 6 pupils in primary schools as well as workshops to older age groups in secondary schools, colleges, youth hubs, behavioural units and pupil referral units.

The content of the Year 6 workshops reflected issues that could directly affect them as they 'transitioned' from primary to secondary, where, as the youngest age group they could easily be led astray by older students or external negative influences.

Older age group workshops were led by a reformed individual who, by his own admission, had 'made wrong decisions in life' and served a custodial sentence. Using personal experience he emphasised that crime was wrong, gangs were not cool, drugs were a menace, all forms of violence were completely unacceptable and the consequences of breaking the law. Through videos, media images and interaction, the workshops impacted on the young people's negative thought processes and showed them that crime was not an option.

Whilst clearly impacted by school closures, feedback from the workshops was positive and I have funded the project again in 2021/22.

• **Back volunteering**

I consider it really important to provide young people with opportunities to get involved in activities which support community policing and to learn about responsible citizenship. That is why I am committed to supporting the Volunteer Police Cadets and provided a further grant of £40,000.

The scheme is open to young people aged 13 to 17, who live in Kent irrespective of background or financial circumstances, including those vulnerable to crime or social exclusion. As at 31 March 2021, there were 363 cadets - with a waiting list - located at ten units across the county: Dover; Canterbury; Tonbridge; Maidstone; Medway; Gravesend; Swanley; Sittingbourne; Thanet; and Ashford.

I'm very supportive and appreciative of the work of Special Constables; unpaid volunteers who wear a uniform, have the same powers as regular officers and put themselves in harms way like their paid colleagues - but all because they just want to give something back to their communities. As at 31 March 2021, there were 367 Special Constables who provided a fantastic 108,141 hours of policing in 2020/21.

In 2018/19 the force introduced Community Police Volunteers (CPVs) and the programme has continued to develop in response to increased demand. As at 31 March 2021, there were 123 trained CPVs providing direct support to specialist policing teams such as the Joint Response Unit and Rural Task Force, as well as performing roles in areas such as Security, Equine, Canine and Aviation.

As at 31 March 2021, Kent Police had 155 internal volunteers in roles conducive to the skills they bring, who provided 9,555 hours of support. Examples include roles within the FCR, Recruitment and Local Policing Teams.

More information on [volunteering opportunities](#) can be found on the Kent Police website.

I have also provided grant funding to charities and organisations across the county who rely on volunteers within local communities to deliver their services.

I'd like to thank the Special Constabulary, Community Police Volunteers, Volunteer Police Cadets and all other volunteers who do not wear a police logo, such as South East 4x4 Response and Kent Search and Rescue, for their time and for all their hard work in helping keep the county safe.

Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs)

I am responsible for the ICV Scheme which sees volunteers making unannounced visits to police custody suites to check on the welfare of detained persons (DPs), ensuring they have received their rights and are held in satisfactory conditions.

When the pandemic struck, it was decided that physical visits should be suspended in line with national guidance. Working closely with Kent Police, the OPCC ICV Scheme explored the use of technology and quickly developed a Standard Operating Procedure for virtual custody visits, whereby ICVs could engage with DPs remotely to discuss their treatment in custody.

Recognising the personal challenges facing ICVs, volunteers were given the choice as to whether they wished to take part in virtual visits. Despite some technical issues, eleven ICVs participated in virtual visits across nearly all of the county's custody suites.

Virtual Visits (VVs) were hosted via Microsoft Teams and required a smart phone, tablet, laptop or other video conferencing equipment. On occasion, there were technical difficulties that resulted in calls being terminated and re-scheduled, or discussions with DPs taking place via telephone.

ICVs spoke to an average of two (and up to four) DPs per VV and completed a report form. Conversations largely remained the same, with additional questions around Covid-19 practices within the suite, and whether DPs had been offered disposable masks, hand sanitiser, handwashing and shower facilities. This information was used to identify areas of good practice and improvement.

Kent was one of only a few areas to facilitate this approach and between April 2020 and March 2021, ICVs conducted 137 VVs.

I would like to extend my thanks for the support and excellent work of my Scheme Manager and the ICV's in what was a difficult and unique set of circumstances. Further information on [ICVs](#) can be found on the OPCC website.

Ministry of Justice Grant for Victim Services – Funding Recipients²

	£
Initial Referral and Needs Assessment Services for victims of crime	
Core Victim Services - <i>Victim Support Contract</i>	899,032.00
Core Victim Services - <i>Increasing referrals</i>	14,966.00
Core Victim Services - <i>DA Packs</i>	13,104.00
Services for Restorative Justice Interventions	
Restorative Solutions	207,000.00
Services for victims of Sexual Violence	
Family Matters - ISVA and CISVA Services	350,550.00
Family Matters - Gangs and Students ISVA	51,600.50
EKRCC -Gangs and Students ISVA	51,600.50
Family Matters	10,000.00
Dandelion Time - Therapeutic programme for families affected by abuse	15,000.00
Services for victims of Domestic Abuse	
Rising Sun & Choices DA Service	49,898.00
SignHealth	41,785.00
Dads Unlimited 1-1 Mentoring Service	7,650.00
DAVSS - Transforming Lives of DA Victims through COVID-19	8,191.00
Dandelion Time	5,000.00
Dads Unlimited	2,035.94
Victim Support - Annual Fee	127,840.00
Dandelion Time - Therapeutic programme for families affected by abuse	15,000.00
DAVSS - Supporting Male DA Victims by Volunteering, Sharing & Learning	4,880.00
Rising Sun - Guiding Lights	35,000.00
DAVSS - Support to Court Project	16,800.00
Services for victims of Road Crime	
Brake	5,000.00
Other Services for victims of crime (not mentioned above)	
Victim Services - <i>Hate Crime Advocate</i>	37,462.00
Victim Services - <i>Stalking Advocate</i>	35,414.00
Rubicon Cares - Trauma Counselling	23,171.06
Rubicon Cares - Trauma Counselling for people affected by crime	50,000.00
Choices	34,000.00
Core MoJ Grant	2,111,980.00
CSA Uplift - Services for Victims of Child Sexual Abuse	
Family Matters - ISVA and CISVA Services	99,650.00
NSPCC	50,000.00
MoJ Funding excluding Covid specific funding	2,261,630.00

	£
COVID-19 - Commissioned Services for victims of Domestic Abuse	
Rising Sun Domestic Violence	47,186.81
Victim Support	41,569.16
Dads Unlimited	8,555.09
Choices DA Service	64,366.90
Look Ahead	18,096.22
Oasis DA Service	32,427.58
Clarion Housing	30,482.36
DAVSS	56,489.28
Crimestoppers Trust	7,050.00
Restorative Solutions	21,755.00
ADDITIONAL COVID-19 - Commissioned Services for victims of Domestic Abuse	
Rising Sun Domestic Violence	15,312.00
Dads Unlimited	21,326.67
Choices DA Service	10,157.00
Look Ahead	2,610.00
Oasis DA Service	2,790.00
Clarion Housing	4,980.00
DAVSS	22,286.00
Restorative Solutions	12,375.00
Victim Support	24,941.00
COVID-19 - Non Commissioned Services for victims of Domestic Abuse	
Fresh Visions People Ltd	59,520.00
Health Action (HACO)	10,405.40
SATEDA	61,637.00
The Mary Dolly Foundation	24,840.00
ADDITIONAL COVID-19 - Non Commissioned Services for victims of Domestic Abuse	
Fresh Visions People Ltd	31,680.00
Health Action (HACO)	9,400.00
SATEDA	16,168.00
The Mary Dolly Foundation	18,633.19
COVID-19 - Services for victims of Sexual Violence	
Rising Sun	2,593.06
Victim Support	41,569.17
Family Matters	37,004.18
East Kent Rape Crisis Centre	3,205.00
Dandelion Time	69,693.76
NSPCC	1,934.84
Rubicon Cares	22,176.00
ADDITIONAL COVID-19 - Services for victims of Sexual Violence	
NSPCC	500.00
Total MoJ Funding	3,117,345.67

² Under Section 3.2 of the MoJ's Grant Agreement for victim services, PCCs must specify the Support Services they have commissioned or provided with a Grant, including referral services, in any Annual Report they produce pursuant to Section 12 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

Key Financial Information 2020/21

On 22 January 2020, the Policing Minister announced the police grant allocation for each force area. It is usually announced pre-Christmas but due to the general election was delayed. The headlines nationally were:

- £750m additional funding for the police service to recruit 20,000 officers.
- £50m retained by central Government to support recruitment of officers.
- Of remaining £700m, £532m via un-ring-fenced core grant, £168m ring-fenced for successfully meeting recruitment targets paid quarterly in arrears.
- No other inflationary increases in core grant.
- £10 precept flexibility for all PCCs, or equivalent.
- Flat cash pension grant allocations compared to 2019/20.
- Reduction of 74% to capital grant funding to PCCs.

The settlement outlined the Policing Minister's expectations in return for the additional funding invested in policing. These were:

- I. Forces to recruit an additional 6,000 officers by the end of March 2021 (Kent Police was expected to recruit 147 of these).
- II. A further planned £30m savings from procurement in 2020-21. With 'go-live' scheduled for 1 June 2020, Blue Light Commercial as the new national body to deliver these savings. Also hoped the new company could make £20m of savings per year once fully established and further potential savings in back office functions in the future.
- III. Continued improvements in digital, data and technology solutions to maximise the benefits of mobile working.
- IV. Continued pursuit of best value from the investment in police technology. The Home Office to work with the sector to draw up a detailed plan which would be overseen by the ministerially chaired, Strategic Change and Investment Board.

Locally, as a result of the settlement, the funding received by Kent was as follows:

Table 1: Funding Settlement

Funding Stream	2020/21 (£m)	2019/20 (£m)	Change
Police Core Settlement	115.5	107.1	8.4
Ex DCLG Funding	71.6	67.0	4.6
Specific Grant: Officer Uplift	4.1	0.0	4.1
Legacy Council Tax Grants	13.3	13.3	0.0
Pension Grant Allocation	3.4	3.4	0.0
MoJ Victims Funding	2.2	2.1	0.1
HO Capital Grant	0.3	1.1	(0.8)
Central Government Funding Total	210.4	194.0	16.4
Council Tax Precept	130.3	121.9	8.4
Collection Fund Surplus	1.0	1.2	(0.2)
Council Tax Funding Total	131.3	123.1	8.2
Total	341.7	317.1	24.6

The 2020/21 settlement provided more funding than previously expected due to the significant increase in police officers that was being driven nationally.

With the precept flexibility, I empowered the Chief Constable to:

- increase the number of PCSOs by 36, including 15 dedicated to crime prevention;
- recruit a further 34 new police officers on top of the 147 funded by the Home Office as part of the national increase;
- provide for around 100 new civilian staff to train and support frontline officers, including more digital forensics investigators;
- support frontline policing through the investment programme, ensuring that police officers have the most effective equipment, access to the best technology and the most efficient support services.

Revenue Outturn

Police and Crime Commissioner Expenditure

My net budget consists of the costs of the OPCC and the grants that I provide to support projects across Kent.

The following provides a breakdown of that expenditure:

Table 2: OPCC Budget and Expenditure Breakdown

	2019/20 spend £'000's	Budget £'000's	2020/21 spend £'000's	Variance £'000's
OPCC	1,360	1,452	1,292	(160)
Grants	1,829	2,089	2,219	130
Total	3,189	3,541	3,511	(30)

The expenditure included a small underspend of £0.03m that was transferred to reserves.

Overall Position

The final position on my revenue budget and that of the force is shown below:

Table 3: Revenue Outturn by Directorate

Directorate	2019/20	2020/21		
	Net Expenditure £'000's	Budget £'000's	Net Expenditure £'000's	(Over) / Underspend £'000's
Central Operations	42,679	35,815	34,088	(1,727)
Local Policing & P/nerships	20,625	21,921	22,800	879
Serious Crime Directorate	28,871	29,950	27,937	(2,013)
Divisions	137,288	153,258	150,651	(2,607)
Chief's Office	2,292	2,198	2,151	(47)
DCC Portfolio	11,750	14,323	14,472	149
Support Services	45,995	44,987	46,659	1,672

HR / L&D	14,848	9,998	13,400	3,402
Corporate Charges	15,738	9,087	15,228	6,141
Transfer to / (from) reserves	(8,137)	9,987	8,598	(1,389)
OPCC	3,189	3,541	3,541	0
Net Expenditure	315,138	335,065	339,523	4,458

*Budget changes include income and expenditure relating to external funding e.g. collaborations with other forces.

Table 4: Revenue Outturn by Subjective Category

Subjective Category	2019/20	2020/21		
	Net Expenditure £'000's	Current Budget £'000's	Actuals £'000's	Variance Over / (Under) £'000's
Police Pay	193,571	211,511	212,250	738
Police Staff Pay	88,942	92,643	94,724	2,080
Other Pay Costs	9,109	10,141	12,291	2,150
Total Pay	291,622	314,296	319,264	4,968
Police Overtime	6,875	8,277	7,924	(352)
Police Staff Overtime	1,684	1,402	1,898	496
Total Overtime	8,559	9,679	9,822	143
Premises	21,198	21,512	21,377	(135)
Transport	8,247	7,637	8,146	509
Supplies & Services	30,366	31,717	35,308	3,591
Third Party Payments	9,860	17,195	16,736	(459)
Total Running Expenses	69,671	78,061	81,566	3,505
Capital financing & contributions	1,230	0	1,352	1,352
Expenditure Sub-Total	371,082	402,036	412,005	9,969
Income				
Sales, Fees, Charges & Rents	(4,975)	(4,310)	(4,661)	(350)
Interest / Investment Income	(624)	(500)	(186)	314
Reimbursed Services	(20,321)	(53,032)	(57,954)	(4,922)
Transfers to Revenue & Capital Reserves	(8,137)	9,987	8,414	(1,573)
Total Net Expenditure	(34,057)	(47,855)	(54,386)	(6,531)
Partnership Funding	(21,886)	(19,116)	(18,096)	1,020
Overall Total	315,139	335,065	339,523	4,458

*Budget changes include income and expenditure relating to external funding e.g. collaborations with other forces.

Revenue variances included unfunded officer and police staff costs, additional police equipment and non-pay cost pressures relating to Operation Zenith, the project to move away from the old Police Headquarters site on Sutton Road.

The overspend of £4.5m was covered by the General Reserve. This was reinstated to the minimum of 3% NRE (circa £10.5m) in 2021/22.

Investment Budget

Investment Expenditure includes both capital and revenue expenditure (directly related to bringing the asset into use) on our assets such as property, vehicles and IT infrastructure which have a longer-term life, greater than one year. This is funded through a combination of government grant, use of reserves, capital receipts and borrowing. Capital receipts are the proceeds of the sale of an asset and can only be used for capital expenditure.

The approved Investment budget for 2020/21 was £17.6m of which £14.6m related to the capital element and £3m revenue set up costs.

The revenue set up costs were £2.5m. These costs related mainly to staff, IT licensing, mobile, agency and contractor costs.

The final position on the Investment budget for the Group is shown below:

Table 5: Investment Budget

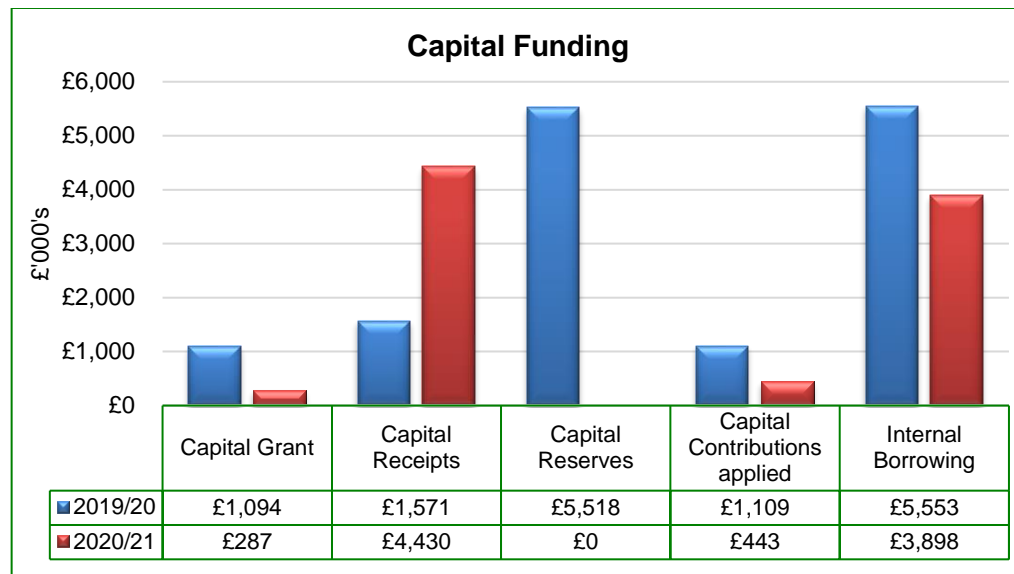
Provisioning Department	2019/20	2020/21		
	Actual Expenditure £'000's	Revised Budget £'000's	Actual Expenditure £'000's	Over / (Underspend) £'000's
IT Department	7,772	7,568	5,020	(2,548)
Estate Department	1,554	1,450	637	(813)
Transport	1,763	2,495	2,462	(33)
ANPR Department	734	456	459	3
Ashford Re-Modelling	373	3,750	285	(3,465)
Project Zenith	0	37	1,450	1,413
Other	2,648	1,864	1241	(623)
Total	14,844	17,620	11,554	(6,066)

The capital expenditure for 2020/21 was £9.1m, this was an underspend of £5.5m, of which £3.5m related to delays in the Ashford remodelling. Many projects were disrupted and hence delayed due to Covid-19. The remaining underspend of £2m related to IT, Estates and other ad hoc projects, offset by the cost of the Police Headquarters relocation (Project Zenith) of £1.4m.

Capital Funding 2020/21

The capital expenditure was funded from capital receipts, contributions from revenue and capital grant totalling £5.1m (57%). Internal borrowing was £3.9m (43%) which will be funded from revenue over the coming years based on the life of the asset.

Chart 1: Capital Funding 2020/21



Reserves

The table below shows the level of usable reserves, i.e. those reserves that I can use to provide services, subject to the need to maintain a prudent level of reserves and any statutory limitations on their use (for example the Capital Receipts Reserve that may only be used to fund capital expenditure or repay debt). These reserves are used during the year to fund investment opportunities or the capital programme. Any underspend at the end of the year is transferred into usable reserves. Any overspend at the end of the year is a transfer out of usable reserves.

Table 6: Usable Reserves

	As at 31/03/20 £'000's	As at 31/03/21 £'000's	Movement £'000's
General Fund	9,400	6,985	(2,415)
Risk			
Insurance	2,592	2,748	156
Change			
Invest to save	192	0	(192)
PCC Recruitment Support	1,000	0	(1,000)
Redundancy, Relocation & Reg. A20	1,127	0	(1,127)
Policing Opportunity:			
OPCC Budget Roll Forward	1,192	88	(1,104)
Operational Risk Reserve	0	9,894	9,894

Bank Holiday Overtime Reserve	785	0	(785)
Leased property dilapidation & maintenance	0	101	101
Investment Reserve			
Investment Reserve	447	386	(61)
Total	16,735	20,203	3,468

The reserves for Change and Bank Holiday Overtime were utilised to assist with one-off costs in 2020/21. General Reserve is to be reinstated to the minimum of 3% NRE (circa £10.5m) in 2021/22. The Operational Risk Reserve related to funding from the Home Office to assist in future operational costs.

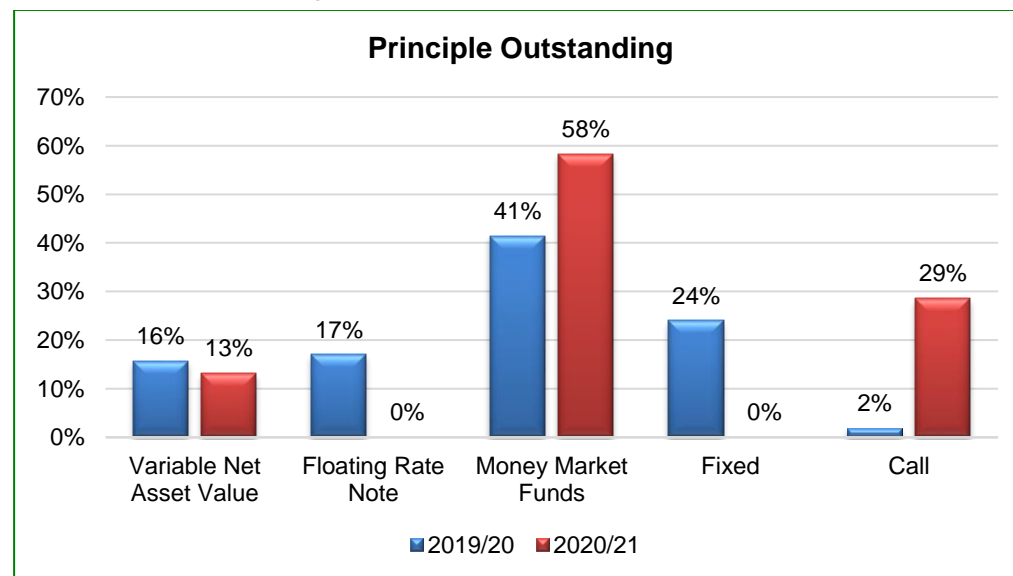
Treasury Management

I invest surplus funds in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy, which is agreed each year. The 2020/21 strategy set out a clear set of investment parameters in order to minimise the risk of financial loss.

Investments

The following shows a breakdown of our investments by type:

Chart 2: Treasury Management



The total value of investments at the year-end amounted to £25.0m. £4.6m was classified as long-term investments and £20.4m as Cash and cash equivalent. There were no Short-Term Investments at year-end.

Aside from the PFI contracts, there was no other external debt due to a longstanding policy of using reserves and now using internal borrowing against cashflow to fund capital expenditure.

Medium Term Challenge

Kent Police costs the public around £350m to run per annum. The force's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) is jointly owned by my CFO, and the force CFO. The plan incorporates the Revenue Plan, the Reserves Strategy, the Capital Strategy including the Investment Programme, the Treasury Management Strategy and my Commissioning Strategy covering the five-year period 2021-2026.

Revenue overview

The MTFP is agreed each February as part of the budget and precept setting process and is updated and refreshed throughout the year as further information becomes available. The plan covers the current year plus four from 2021/22 through to 2025/26. For obvious reasons there is more certainty around the figures included in the early years than those towards the end of the plan. The plan is prepared between the two CFOs and several optimistic and pessimistic scenarios are produced with a number of differing underpinning assumptions. These are discussed with the Chief Constable, myself, the Chief Officer team and my Chief Executive before a final version is completed.

The 2021/22 settlement, although not as positive as was initially hoped when a three-year Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) was expected to be announced, did continue to provide funding for the increase in police officers that is being driven nationally. Other inflationary costs, such as the police officer and staff pay increase and general price increases were not funded. These will be funded through precept and savings.

Future funding

During 2020/21, the government were working towards a three-year CSR due to be announced in autumn 2020. A considerable amount of work had taken place and the police service were expecting a generally favorable multiyear settlement. However, the pandemic and the need for multiple national lockdowns along with the uncertainty over funding requirements for the economy, meant that only a one-year spending review was announced in September 2020. It is hoped the funding for additional officers will continue in the same vein and a multi-year CSR will be finalised next year. The lack of future funding settlements makes it difficult to plan financial resources over the medium-term, however, the assumptions included within the MTFP are prudent and the organisation has previously proved itself agile enough to respond to changing levels of resources.

The key assumptions on funding are that there will be a modest increase in the general police grant and flat cash settlements for Legacy grants and first year uplift funding over the life of the MTFP. Although funding is unknown, it seems prudent to reflect the current settlement as a continuing commitment. Any further funding that is announced in future years will help offset proposed savings targets. Beyond the precept announced for 2021/22, it is assumed precept limits will return to historic levels of 2% in line with non-pay inflation forecasts.

Savings

The table below shows that over the next five years, Kent may have to make savings in the region of £38.9m. While the force has a good track record of identifying savings ahead of schedule, the changes in savings required for each year will need careful management. Any changes in the assumptions in the MTFP, for example in the level of government grant received, could lead to a change in the amount of savings having to be made.

On the basis of these assumptions the savings profile is as follows:

Table 7: Five Year Saving Requirement

Savings	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
Delivered (cumulative)		8.6	18.4	30.6	35.3
Required (each year)	8.6	9.8	12.2	4.7	3.6
Total (cumulative)	8.6	18.4	30.6	35.3	38.9

The savings target for 2021/2022 is in part due to the one-off requirement to re-establish General Reserves. The force has a savings plan to cover much of 2021/2 and is already developing opportunities for future year savings.

Any savings identified during the year that are not required to balance the budget in 2021/22 will be invested in reserves, to support reserves and the investment programme over the medium-term.

As can be seen, significant savings are once again potentially required over the medium-term. These savings are a forecast of the future and will change as we go through the MTFP. The force seeks early opportunities to identify savings and deliver them wherever possible. Any savings identified and not required to meet savings targets will be taken into reserves.

To progress the savings for 2021/22 and future years, there are several initiatives, including spend to save, productivity gains from technology, evaluating activities through a dedicated review team, and driving for affordable levels of vacancies. It is recognised that the delivery of savings becomes harder each year so there are also longer-term plans that will generate significant savings including the move away from the former Police Headquarters site on Sutton Road. However, it must be recognised that the level of savings required is challenging and will need significant managing over the MTFP.

Independent Review of Deaths and Serious Incidents in Police Custody

Police custody is important to protect the public and to enable the effective investigation of criminal offences. It may only be used where it is both necessary and proportionate to the investigation of an offence. Simultaneously, detainees in police custody are often among the most vulnerable in society and there is a significant duty of care on the police.

As Home Secretary, Theresa May commissioned the independent review of deaths and serious incidents in police custody, and appointed Dame Elish Angiolini as independent chair. The review published its [report](#) on 30 October 2017, making 110 recommendations for improvement. The [Government's response](#) was published on the same date.

In recognition of PCCs being accountable to the public, and responsible for holding police forces to account, the report included the following recommendation:

'Recommendation 53 - PCCs should report annually on deaths and serious incidents in police custody in their jurisdictions'.³

The IOPC requires forces to submit a mandatory referral relating to deaths or serious injuries (not incidents) in custody. The IOPC define 'serious injuries' as *'those where there is a significant impairment, either temporary or permanent, to a person's functional abilities. This can either be physical, for example, broken arm, deep cut or laceration, ruptured spleen, or loss of consciousness; or mental, for example, personality change, memory loss or epilepsy, as a result of brain injury'*.

In 2020/21, a total of 28,729 people were processed through Kent custody suites. Reflecting my commitment to transparency, I can report that the force recorded no deaths in police custody and 17 'serious injury' incidents. It is important to note the majority involved no lasting injury and they predominantly related to self-harm and collapses caused by prior consumption of drugs or alcohol.

Among the most important safeguards available to those in police custody are Appropriate Adults, who ensure that both children and vulnerable adults understand custody processes, and that their rights and entitlements are respected. ICVs managed by the OPCC also have a key role to play in safeguarding people detained in police custody.

Whilst I acknowledge that due to the nature of policing it is impossible to entirely eradicate deaths and serious incidents in police custody, I am reassured that Kent Police takes all reasonable steps to minimise the risks as far as possible, and that when such incidents do occur, they have procedures in place that are efficient, effective and humane.

³ The report does not include a definition of 'serious incident' and it is not a term that the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) or forces use.

As your Police and Crime Commissioner, I'm happy to help or answer your questions.

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