

Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey

Annual Report 2020-21



Office of the Police and Crime
Commissioner for Surrey

Introduction

This last year has been like no other and proved to be an unprecedented challenge for policing as officers and staff adapted to the Covid-19 pandemic together with our communities in Surrey.

This annual report covers the period between April 2020 and March 2021 and takes a look back at Surrey Police's performance over the year as well as providing an update on the work of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Lisa Townsend has been elected as the Police and Crime Commissioner for 2021-2024. During the period of reporting however, David Munro was the PCC in office and this report refers to work carried out during 2020-21 in his final year in the role.

As April 2020 began, Surrey was already in a major incident mode as the county got to grips with the early stages of the pandemic.

Whilst policing of course continued to provide its usual 24/7 service - many officers and staff, including the PCC's office, had to adapt to working very differently whether that be working remotely from home or adhering to the strict social distancing measures in the workplace. This continued for much of 2020/21 whilst policing teams also worked closely with our local council, emergency service and health partners in Surrey to provide a co-ordinated response to the crisis.

At times it put on strain on Surrey Police resources with the Force having to close one of its custody centres during the Christmas period due to Covid-19 infections while officers and staff in other teams such as the Force contact centre were also affected. Sadly over the year, Surrey Police did lose an officer and a member of staff to the virus.

There was a shift in the nature of crimes Surrey Police had to deal with during the year. Whilst various lockdowns and restrictions during the 12 month period meant that a decrease was seen in crimes such as burglary, other crime types such as domestic abuse and cyber offences have seen a rise.

And of course, officers across the county were responsible for enforcement of the Covid-19 restrictions – following the national four 'E' approach of Engage. Explain. Encourage. Enforce.

Although Surrey officers issued more than 1,500 fixed penalty notices over the course of 2020/21 - the response from the vast majority of the Surrey public was excellent.

The PCC is elected to oversee policing and community safety in Surrey and is responsible for setting a Police and Crime Plan. The priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan that covered 2020/21 were:

- Tackling crime and keeping people safe
- Building confident communities
- Supporting victims
- Preventing harm
- Making every pound count
- A Force fit for the future

During 2020/21, the PCC also asked the Chief Constable to particularly focus on:

- More Police Officers and Frontline Staff

- Better Crime Prevention
- More crimes solved

This report will look at how Surrey Police has performed against those priorities in the last 12 months.

Progress against the Police and Crime Plan

A key part of the PCC's role is to monitor the Force's performance and scrutinise progress against the Police and Crime Plan through regular performance meetings with the Chief Constable. Every other one is usually webcast live to be open and transparent with the public about what is happening in policing in Surrey. During 2020/21 - those meetings have taken place virtually due to the Covid-19 pandemic and recordings made available for public viewing where possible.

The first priority in the Police and Crime Plan was **Tackling Crime and Keeping Surrey Safe** and there has been both positive progress in a number of areas but equally some areas where improvements are still needed.

Force recorded crime was significantly down over the year with 66,361 offences committed during 2020/21 compared to 76,578 in the previous year.

However, the pandemic has seen a shift in certain crimes with a reduction in crime types such as burglary but an increase in areas such as cybercrime and domestic abuse.

The OPCC has been supporting the Problem Solving and Partnership Team in developing proactive plans around burglary prevention across the county, funding initiatives in hot spot areas including in Runnymede and Reigate and Banstead. The schemes target specific areas and work with local communities to raise awareness. The number of burglaries in Surrey fell dramatically from 6,160 in 2019-20 to 3,546 over the last year.

In recent months, Surrey Police has identified a dramatic increase in the prevalence of catalytic converter theft. In 2020, there were over 1,100 incidents in the county and Surrey's Serious Organised Crime Unit have partnered with the Problem Solving Team to work together for the first time to reduce the prevalence of this crime. The OPCC has supported this by helping fund a countywide campaign to increase awareness of the crime and protecting the most likely vehicles that are targeted through catalytic converter marking kits.

Fraud and cybercrime are other crime types that have been more prominent during the pandemic. After its pilot year, the OPCC has agreed to fund for three more years the two Victim Navigators who support the most vulnerable victims and is working on securing additional funding to increase the number of posts to help reduce the number of fraud and cybercrime victims in Surrey.

During 2020-21, the OPCC and Surrey Police have also signed the ASB Pledge, committing to putting victims first and at the heart of the Community Trigger process (where victims and communities have the right to request a review of their Anti-Social Behaviour complaints, bringing agencies together to take a joined up, problem solving approach to find a solution). There has been a significant rise in the number of requests received by Community Safety Partnerships with 30 activations of the Community Trigger since 2019.

The OPCC has been working closely with the Roads Policing Team and partners to reinvigorate the DriveSmart strategy and develop interventions in targeted areas. The renewed strategy will be broader and encompass work on anti-social driving and combating HGVs using inappropriate roads.

The PCC's office has also awarded funding for the purchase of noise monitoring equipment and continued to support the various Community Speed Watch groups across the county. These valuable volunteers support the Roads Policing Teams and many have been out during the pandemic.

The Surrey Police contact centre has continued to answer 999 calls quickly throughout the year with 93% of calls being answered within 10 seconds. Answering times for the non-emergency 101 number have been more variable with the pandemic affecting staffing levels and supervision in the contact centre, as teams have been based across a number of sites. At times of stretch, 999 calls are prioritised and 101 answering times have increased. The average answering time for 101 has been 2 mins and 17 seconds, however more people are now using digital options which have been introduced during the year to contact Surrey Police - including a website form, LiveChat and social media. Numbers of contact via these methods are currently being collated, but these additional options provide a means of contact to suit the resident.

Identifying and solving local issues has been a key element over the last year in **Building Confident Communities** – the second priority in the Police and Crime Plan.

There is a dedicated problem solving team in force, focussed on identifying persistent issues and then putting solutions in place. The team has dedicated analysts to provide analysis and research solutions that work.

Local neighbourhood teams have focussed on improving visible presence in communities with police staff resources assisting with investigations which helps officers return to visible roles more quickly. Confidence in neighbourhood police remains very high at 88% while the percentage of people who think that local police tackle crime and anti-social behaviour sits at 72.6% - a slight increase compared to last year.

During January and February, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Surrey Police teamed up to hold a series of public engagement events covering all 11 boroughs and districts. The 'Policing Your Community' events were held virtually for the first time and saw presentations from the PCC, Chief Constable and the local Borough Commander brought live to people's homes. They were followed by a live interactive question and answer session for residents which covered topics such as the PCC's precept proposal, how Surrey Police have approached the Covid-19 restrictions through to local issues including anti-social behaviour, burglary speeding, parking and dog theft.

The community events were timed to run alongside the PCC's annual precept consultation which this year received just under 4,500 responses from the public. This included around 2,500 comments which are shared with Surrey Police to assist in their policing plans and engagement.

The OPCC has continued to work hard to ensure that **Supporting Victims** of crime in Surrey and helping them cope and recover from their experiences has remained a key priority during the last year.

One of the effects of the pandemic has been the significant impact and delay on the justice system and the PCC's office has participated in a Gold Group chaired by Her Majesty's Courts & Tribunal Service to review the position in Magistrates and Crown Courts in Surrey and Sussex. The office has continued to support and invest in the Victim and Witness Care Unit (VWCU), which opened in April 2019 and has increased its resourcing to meet the needs of victims and witnesses affected by this slow-down of justice over the last year.

Over the last year, 67.3% of victims surveyed said they were satisfied with the service received by Surrey Police, an increase of over 6% on last year. The Force has also maintained its 'Good' grading in 2020/21 in how it protects vulnerable people by the national inspection body.

The OPCC continues to work with NHS England, regional PCCs and police forces to re-commission our Sexual Assault and Referral Centre (SARC). This is a complex project due to a limited provider market, new national forensic accreditation standards which must be met by October 2023 and premises considerations. The NHS are leading the procurement and there is good partnership working across Surrey, Sussex and Kent.

Collaborative work with partners continues to develop our county's response to high harm crimes such as domestic abuse. OPCC Head of Policy & Commissioning is Co-Chair of the Coercive Control work stream, part of the Domestic Abuse Re-design Project which is commissioned by the county's Health & Wellbeing Board.

The next priority in the Police and Crime Plan is **Preventing Harm**. The solve rate for high harm offences such as domestic abuse, sexual offences, child abuse and hate crime remains at 13% and improving this figure continues to be a priority for Surrey Police. A new investigation model is being brought in while the Force is also starting a programme of learner detectives next year. Although it will take time to recruit and train staff to be effective, the Force are working hard to make improvements in this area over the coming year.

The PCC's office has continued to provide support to the most vulnerable people in Surrey's communities through the office's funding streams which you can read more about in the next section of the report.

Despite the pressures caused by Covid-19, the drive to ensure Surrey Police continues to be efficient and is **Making Every Pound Count** has remained key over the last year.

The Force is currently on track to meet the increase in front-line police officers and operational staff made possible by the combination of government funding and council tax precept increases. By the end of 2020/21 - the Force has been able to meet the planned establishment of 2021 police officers, 104 more than in March 2020.

Throughout the year, the PCC's office has kept a close eye on the finances to ensure that Surrey Police stayed within budget, delivered the savings it had promised and fulfilled its precept obligations regarding new officers. At the moment the Force is forecast to be 0.3% under budget overall despite having to absorb costs in relation to overtime for the pandemic. Budgeted savings have been achieved and recruitment is on track to meet targets. In terms of his own office, the

PCC is forecast to come in under budget and his staff have been instrumental in getting additional resources from Government, such as Safer Streets funding.

Plans for building **A Force Fit for the Future**, the final priority in the plan, have also continued to develop at a pace during the year.

The project to build a new headquarters site in Leatherhead are well on track with a design appointed and the demolition of one of the vacant buildings completed at the site where the new base will be built. The move marks the start of the next phase of the project to replace a number of existing sites, including the current HQ in Guildford, with a state of the art facility in a more central location in the county. In recent months the Force has carried out consultations with staff and the local community including a live online forum with residents as preparations are made for the formal planning application process.

The strategy to achieve Net Zero Carbon emissions by 2030 is nearing completion, with local consultants assisting on what should be included in the strategy and the changes that need to take place over the next decade to achieve that target. It is recognised that, as well as helping to tackle climate change and meeting future legislation changes, being an environmentally aware organisation is something that can assist in attracting future employees.



Performance Information

Key Performance Measures	2019/2020 Performance	2020/21 Performance
% of public from survey believing that the police deal with anti-social behaviour and crimes that matter in their area	71.3%	71.3%
Recorded Burglary Offences	6160	3546
Solved Rate for crimes against vulnerable people (sexual offences, domestic abuse, child abuse, hate crime)	13.3%	13.1%
% of people who feel confident in neighbourhood police	88.1%	88.0%
% of Force budget spent on front-line policing	65.8%	67.3%
Average time taken to answer 101 call	1 min 14 secs	2 mins 21 secs
% of 999 calls answered within 10 seconds	95.0%	93.1%
Problem solving occurrences (where Surrey Police have identified and actioned a local problem)	279	472
% residents who say they feel safe walking alone after dark	86.0%	86.1%
HMICFRS grade for protecting vulnerable people	Good	Good
% of victims of crime surveyed satisfied with police service	61.3%	67.3%
Savings achieved	£2.8m	£1.4m

PCC funding, grant giving and commissioning

Over the last year, supporting projects across Surrey that help victims of crime, improve community safety and reduce reoffending has never been more crucial.

One of the key functions of the of the PCC's office is managing its two regular funding streams – the Victim Fund and the Community Safety Fund. In 2020/21 – an additional stream was created called the Coronavirus Support Fund which was made up of £500,000 from the PCC's operational reserve to provide extra support to those agencies helping vulnerable people during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Victims Fund is made up of a grant of around £1.4m from the Ministry of Justice which is used to commission services for victims of crime. A key part of this is Surrey Police's Victim and Witness Care Unit that launched in 2019. It provides a professionally trained team to help victims who are now automatically referred to the unit and gives them an end-to-end service from initial contact through to court and beyond if needed. More information can be found at www.victimandwitnesscare.org

The remaining budget is awarded in grants to specialist victims services in the high harm areas such as domestic abuse, child sexual exploitation, rape and sexual assault and modern slavery. These services provide crucial support to some of the most vulnerable people in our communities through outreach services, women's refuges and referral centres. All of these services are available to victims, irrespective of gender and whether the crime has been reported to police.

The level of need amongst clients, both adult and child, isolated due to the pandemic has increased significantly and this is impacting on the capacity of services to cope with demand during the year.

A second round of Ministry of Justice emergency funding for domestic abuse and sexual violence services was awarded to Surrey OPCC, totalling £87,000 and the office worked with services to ensure this was used to cope with the increased demand, including psychotherapy support for children and young people affected by domestic abuse, additional counselling for sexual assault and rape survivors and training and support for staff.

In the summer of last year – the PCC's office worked with Surrey County Council and partners at Reigate and Banstead Women's Aid, Your Sanctuary and the Community Foundation for Surrey to provide extra refuge capacity for seven families. In just six weeks a building was identified, developed and opened for use with the scope to increase capacity to eighteen families in the future.

The Coronavirus Support Fund has also commissioned support services for those affected by 'cuckooing' (exploitation), care packages of essential items for those fleeing to refuge and additional counselling for rape and sexual violence survivors.

Around £750,000 is made available through the Community Safety Fund (CSF) which helps projects both large and small across the county with a focus on tackling anti-social behaviour, supporting families and reducing crime.

Over the course of the financial year the PCC's office has supported many applications related to anti-social behaviour (ASB) ranging from small grants to community groups to improve their facilities such as CCTV and youth centre funding. There has also been support and funding for larger projects focused on improving information sharing, with the PCC approving the license for the platform E-Cins, along with support for Neighbourhood Watch and funding for their continued community safety work.

A developing piece of work for the OPCC is the expansion of Mediation Surrey's Intergenerational Mediation Service which helps young people and their families resolve disagreements through improved communication with the support of a trained mediator. The aim is to help provide a strong family unit to support young people in staying away from harm and crime. Along with the core grant awarded to Mediation Surrey, additional financial support has been provided to enable the service to work alongside the Early Help project in Woking.

Around £250,000 of the CSF is dedicated to funding projects aimed at reducing reoffending which supports a broad spectrum of services and projects with a focus on a lack of housing, education training and employment, positive relationships, support for women who have experienced sexual or domestic abuse and substance misuse issues.

Surrey has one of the lowest rates for people who are homeless on release from prison and this is in part down to the commitment by the OPCC and its partners to provide supported, long term housing options in the community for ex-offenders and prison leavers.

A report recently released by the Prison Reform Trust indicated that Surrey has the lowest rate for the imprisonment of women in England and Wales. The OPCC and criminal justice partners' commitment, over several years, to supporting women has undoubtedly helped achieve this.

A number of our reducing reoffending projects and services, such as our housing option for offenders on the Integrated Offender Management scheme or our support for women through the 'Checkpoint Plus' out-of-court disposal scheme have received recognition in inspection reports while others, such as The Amber Foundation supporting homeless young people, have won awards. The reoffending rate for the Checkpoint and Checkpoint Plus schemes is currently at only 6% which is an amazing outcome. All of this work has helped to ensure that Surrey has one of the lowest reoffending rates for adults in the country.

Some of the new schemes that the PCC's office is now supporting include The Twinning Project which enables prison inmates to gain football coaching and refereeing qualifications and the Skill Mill which provides employment opportunities for young people aged between 16 and 18 in conservation and environmental work in Surrey.

This year also saw the first distribution of grants from the government's Safer Streets Fund. The PCC's office secured around £647,000 in funding to invest in new neighbourhood safety measures in an area of Spelthorne.

The OPCC worked with Surrey Police and a private sector housing provider to make physical improvements to two locations in the Northlands Estate area of Stanwell North. Modernised door entry, fencing and improved lighting were just some of the changes that will enhance the security of the local community. Safer Streets funding for 2021/22 has now been announced and the OPCC

is developing a bid together with the Surrey Police problem solving team and local Community Safety Officers.

Over the next year, the PCC’s office has a further uplift to the commissioning budget for 2021/22 of £644,000 as part of the former PCC’s precept increase and work is well underway to collaboratively design services with this funding, for those affected by stalking, domestic abuse and exploitation. The MOJ has also increased the Victims Fund for 2021/22 by £226,352 for domestic abuse and sexual violence services and the OPCC is currently working through its needs analysis in order to submit plans to the MOJ for its spend.

In addition, all PCCs have been invited to submit an Expression of Interest for additional funding for Independent Advisors/Advocates for domestic abuse and sexual violence and the OPCC is working closely with its commissioned services and partners to progress this process and secure funding.



Engaging with the community

Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, the OPCC has continued to engage with Surrey's communities through an increase in virtual meetings and a focus on reaching more residents using social media.

The PCC attended over 100 such meetings with partners and residents, including listening to residents' and residents groups' views on topics including rural crime, speeding, and bike theft.

The PCC also hosted a webinar with Stanwell residents about the Safer Streets project, attended a joint meeting with Surrey Police and taxi drivers in Woking about Covid-19 concerns, and responded to questions from the public during a public consultation on plans for the new Surrey Police headquarters.

In the last year, correspondence to the Office of the PCC increased by over a third, providing an important insight into other areas that matter to people the most: burglary, road safety and increasing the visibility of police officers.

In January and February 2021, a further 4,500 responses and 2,500 comments were received through the PCC's annual council tax survey. The survey was accompanied by virtual 'Policing your Community' events attended by over 500 residents from across Surrey's boroughs.

The OPCC Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn accounts provided 6,000 people with regular updates on our projects and Police and Crime Plan, attracting 750 new followers in 2020/21, and an average of over 1,000 clicks, likes or comments a week.

A new OPCC presence was also developed on social site Nextdoor, alongside improved engagement with residents using Facebook groups. Since October, posts to Nextdoor generated over 600 comments, and 35 direct enquiries on local policing issues.

Messages shared via Nextdoor and Facebook groups extended the average reach of OPCC online channels by almost 50%, while engagement across all the OPCC social media channels grew despite a reduced physical visibility of the PCC in Surrey's communities.

The OPCC website received a small increase in users and time spent on the site during the last year. This included 700 visits to a dedicated page containing information on the latest Covid-19 rules and where to find support in Surrey.

The PCC continued to be regularly interviewed by regional and national press and radio, featured over 160 times by BBC Surrey, Surrey Live, Guildford Dragon and others. More than a third of this coverage sought the PCC's views on the policing of the pandemic, social restrictions, and the impact of Covid-19 on the Criminal Justice System.

The year also included a commitment to make information provided by the PCC's Office accessible to more people. In March, this included a joint meeting alongside Surrey Police to receive important feedback from a number of residents with learning difficulties.

Following an accessibility review in 2020, changes are now planned to ensure more individuals can learn about and have their say on policing Surrey.

Volunteering

Surrey Police's volunteering programme has continued to expand over the last year with recruitment across communities in the county. The Force currently has 135 Special Constables, 160 Police Support Volunteers and 190 Volunteer Police Cadets who each share their unique knowledge, skills and experience, and together form a valuable part of Surrey's policing family. In addition, the PCC's office manages the Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) scheme which has around 40 volunteers who check on the welfare and treatment of people held in custody in the county.

Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs)

Due to Covid-19 and a desire to both protect the Force, volunteers and detainees, the decision was taken that during the March and January lockdowns, ICVs should withdraw from the custody suites and instead conduct calls with custody officers in place of physical visits. These calls discussed facilities, suite management, Covid provisions and randomly spot checked detainees records verbally. Whilst it is fully appreciated that oversight calls will never replicate the level of care and oversight from actual visits and true detainee interaction, in the extraordinary circumstances this allowed a level of custody monitoring to continue. ICVs had the choice to carry on with oversight calls rather than physical visits out of these lockdown periods if wished.

It is anticipated that by the summer of 2021 with vaccines complete, ICV visits could revert to the traditional, physical visit methodology. It is estimated that volunteers gave around over 250 hours of their time with 147 visits during the year.

Special Constables

The Special Constabulary has continued to provide crucial support to policing teams across Surrey with over 40,000 hours volunteered as part of Surrey's policing response to Covid-19.

Specifically in response to the demands of the pandemic, the UAV (Drone) team provided a daily double-crewed drone unit, seven days a week resourced entirely by specials. Specials have also continued to support the Joint Response Unit (JRU) in West Surrey which attends any incident requiring a joint police and ambulance response and special constables have provided regular cover on Friday and Saturday night shifts.

These activities are in addition to the core roles which specials carry out within Neighbourhood Policing Teams, Safer Neighbourhood Teams and Roads Policing Units. The current establishment of the Special Constabulary is 135. The force is working to a target of 200 Special Constables.

Police Support Volunteers

Surrey Police has 150 Police Support Volunteers whose valuable contribution assists the force in various ways including community engagement, looking after police dogs, helping investigation teams, providing advice through the Independent Advisory Group, supporting victims and witnesses and offering pastoral support as part of the chaplaincy.

Support to frontline policing during the pandemic has also been provided by Police Support Volunteers, many of whom have stepped outside of their normal roles to assist in other areas such

as joint transport service. Volunteers have also provided valuable support to Local Resilience Forum led initiatives such as Surrey's Food Bank and surge testing within the Woking and Egham areas. The Force continues to develop its range of volunteering opportunities and hopes to encourage more residents to join their volunteering family.

Volunteer Police Cadets

Whilst Covid-19 has stopped almost all face to face activity, the Force's Volunteer Police Cadets and their leadership teams have been far from inactive!

The Cadets have remained dedicated to continuing their learning and volunteering their time and have played their part in helping the county during the pandemic. Together with other volunteers, they have supported Surrey's Food Hub by packing food parcels for vulnerable members of communities who were unable to get food by any other means.

Cadets have also continued to work closely with the Force's licensing teams, conducting plain clothed test purchase operations where they attempt to purchase prohibited items such as knives and alcohol which directly links to reducing crime in communities.

Looking forward, the Force is planning to resume face to face sessions as soon as it is safe to do so, working closely with partner schools to make this happen. The newest unit in Spelthorne will be next to open, hopefully to be followed by more very soon. The Force seeks to fulfil the ambition of a cadet unit in each of Surrey's 11 boroughs.

Contact us

To find out more about the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) - please visit our website: www.surrey-pcc.gov.uk

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Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey

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If you are hard of hearing or speech impaired, you can textphone Surrey Police on **18001 101** (non-emergency) or **18000** (emergency) or text on **07967987249** or **999** (register at www.emergencysms.org.uk)

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