

**Bedfordshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner**

Making the money work

Hello again everyone,

First let me confirm where Bedfordshire Police now stand on the 20,000 national uplift in officers that has been promised by Government. Both the Government and National Police Chiefs Council considered it too difficult a task to change the funding formula which dictates Bedfordshire Police's share of the national pot prior to deciding how many officers each force would get from the first part of the 20,000 uplift. It was decided, therefore, to divide up the first few thousand on the basis of each force's current portion of the national 'cake' (which, as you know, has always historically failed to favour Bedfordshire Police or reflect its level of serious crime such as terrorism, gang, gun and knife crime and serious organised crime).

After some confusion in the wording of the Home Office announcement, the fog has cleared and we have learned that we are to get an extra 54 officers in the first 18 months, of which 18 will be recruited this financial year. As you'd expect, while every extra officer is welcome, I have been very vocal to Kit Malthouse, the new Policing Minister, concerning my argument, and that of the Chief Constable, that we need 440 extra officers overall and 80 detectives.

By contrast, the Minister has written to me to confirm that I will receive a second Special Grant for Bedfordshire Police this year to cover the cost of the Force's specialist Op Boson team (which focusses on gun and gang crime) and I am waiting to see how much that will amount to as I've also asked for all the additional, and related, Child Sexual Exploitation costs to be met too as well as the overspend on last year's contribution. So please watch this space as I'm hoping to hear how much the Special Grant will be before Christmas.

This month one of the most important changes I could introduce as PCC to help drive down demand came into being. I'm delighted to be the first Police and Crime Commissioner to financially support the launch of Family Drug and Alcohol Courts (FDACs) which I believe will revolutionise how families in Bedfordshire can be kept together when parents have addictions, so that children who would normally be subject to local authority care orders can remain safely with their parents. Such parents have to pledge to undergo treatment to free them from addictions on a planned programme under the direction of a judge; Judge Patrick Peruško in Bedfordshire. Later in the newsletter you'll see details of this new initiative and how it will be a huge support to these families. This initiative now has the backing of all three local authorities who have supported it after a lot of work by my Chief of Staff, Clare Kelly, and the judge himself.

The FDAC is not a soft option as the participants have to be tested and see the judge every two weeks. It's shown very positive results in areas such as Milton Keynes where Judge Peruško previously presided over FDACs.

Also, as I've previously mentioned, the Force has been awarded a grant to tackle serious violence and the Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit (VERU) has been established to work with partner agencies to provide a dedicated programme to prevent violent offences as well as to stop exploitation of those young people drawn into gangs, county lines drug dealing and organised crime groups. The VERU launched grant funding specifically aimed at those organisations that can meet the Home Office VERU funding criteria to produce direct impact across communities to reduce violent offending.

I have also recently launched the annual PCC Grant Fund which is open for organisations to bid for funding. This year's process remains open until 10th January 2020. We've extended the timeline to ensure organisations have a good opportunity to prepare and present their bids. The two main themes for my funding streams this year are:

- Early intervention programmes for young people - 10 to 13 - with a focus on preventing them becoming involved or exploited in gangs, drugs and associated criminality.
- To combat domestic abuse with a focus on a strategy that operates across all of Bedfordshire so it is not a postcode lottery as to what sort of service victims receive.

I look forward to receiving your own bids. Do feel free to get in touch with my office to talk them through in advance but get them in quickly please.

Yours
Kathryn



Kathryn Holloway
Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire



News from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

PCC and farmers get together to stamp out rural crime in Bedfordshire

Bedfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway teamed up with the National Farmers Union (NFU) and Bedfordshire Police to fight rural crime in Bedfordshire in a tactics and planning session to "stamp out crime that takes place because of its country location".

The event at Scald Farm in North Bedfordshire on Tuesday 19th November 2019 was the third annual conference held by the PCC with the NFU, working together to make full use of the farming community's network and local knowledge, as well as promoting better coordination, planning and information sharing to tackle crime. The aim of the event was to share knowledge and to plan a coordinated strategy for the upcoming year, with commitments from each group over the specific actions they will be taking.

The PCC was accompanied by Bedfordshire's Chief Constable, Garry Forsyth, and members of Bedfordshire Police's rural crime team, which is now the largest in the whole of the seven force Eastern region.

Commissioner Holloway said "My Police and Crime Plan specifies as a priority that we must give a fair share of policing to those who live in the country, just as we do to those who live in our towns so it's absolutely imperative that we work with farmers and residents of rural parishes and produce a consistent approach from policing to crimes which take place because they occur in these locations."

She pointed out that certain crimes in the country require specialist knowledge from officers encountering them, such as illegal hunting, hunt saboteur activity and hare coursing which the rural crime team is working to spread on a force wide basis.

The PCC introduced members of Bedfordshire Police's rural crime specialist team, known as Op Sentinel Rural, and explained that police need farmers to stand by them and give evidence after police action such as a recent countywide crackdown on hare coursers.

The event also publicised the launch of the Force's new rural crime handbook, put together by its Crime Reduction Officer, with contributions from partners including the National Farmers' Union (NFU), the Environment Agency, the Home Office and local farmers. The handbook contains advice on crimes which affect Bedfordshire's rural communities and how to recognise emerging crime types such as modern day slavery.

"Targeted operations concerning cars and vans that haven't been appropriately insured, taxed or which are without MOTs, have deprived those involved in criminality in the countryside of the use of the road. We've worked with neighbouring forces and have focused on matters such as hare coursing together to prevent damage to crops and the illegal betting of tens of thousands of pounds on the outcomes," said the PCC.

Chief Constable Garry Forsyth explained the wider demands of Bedfordshire Police, including details of the drugs mapping exercise carried out by the Force which had established that the Bedfordshire market for heroin and cocaine alone was equal to the entire force budget per year.

Oliver Rubinstein, from the NFU, said: "Rural crime is an enormous issue for farmers in Bedfordshire and nationally is estimated to have cost the UK £50m last year. Unfortunately many farmers have already had to take quite dramatic steps to limit their vulnerability, such as blocking off field entrances and digging ditches, however, this handbook is a valuable resource that we can share with members to help them make sure they've taken all the necessary steps."

The PCC also reminded the audience of the anonymous crime reporting line set up by the NFU and Crimestoppers on the freephone line **0800 7830137** and website - www.ruralcrimereportingline.uk.

The rural crime team also raised the importance of the 'What3words' app. What3words was designed to be able to assign a 3m square to anywhere in the world to identify a location to police and other blue light services in an emergency. Officers explained that this is especially important for the farmers in Bedfordshire in remote rural locations as it allows the force control room to find them in seconds.

NFU members committed to using their dedicated WhatsApp group, which passes information to police, to give such details so it does not become over-crowded with comment instead.

"Before I became PCC, the NFU promised me that they would become a rural crime intelligence network, in effect, and that's exactly what they've done. They've even helped us in operations, linked by radio, to crack down on country crime like hare coursing or fly tipping and we couldn't do it as we are without them," said the PCC.

The Rural Crime Team can be contacted by email - opsentinel.rural@Bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk. There is also a WhatsApp group that is open for members of the rural community to join, for more information the team can be contacted on this same email address.



PCC gains outline planning permission for Greyfriars police station to achieve "the top price possible"

Bedfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, has won outline planning permission which should settle the future of Greyfriars Police Station in central Bedford once and for all.

She addressed a meeting of Bedford Borough Council's Planning Committee, at Borough Hall (on Monday 25 November 2019) to explain that Bedfordshire Police, its architects and planning officers had been working closely together for a year to come up with a scheme that fitted the council's plan for the town centre and neighbourhood, yet which allowed her to gain the maximum amount from the sale, for the public and policing.

“I have a statutory responsibility to get the best possible price for Greyfriars for the public purse and everyone knows that a site that is sold with planning permission already agreed, on an outline basis, is worth more,” said the Commissioner.

“We went back with a second proposal after planning officers suggested that the first version had too many storeys and we now have a plan that mixes the homes that are so desperately needed in the Bedford area with the sort of lively street level facility which planners wanted us to include. I cannot praise the officers more highly as they worked with us in true cooperation to allow me to sell Greyfriars in a way that preserves part of the building and extends it further and which allows me to get the top price possible.

“The sale of Greyfriars has not been like selling a conventional home, for example. We tried an open bid process and some bids were made which were not dependent on planning permission and others required it but, at the end of the day, bidders treated the amounts they’d said they were prepared to pay as if these were negotiable expressions of interest. That wasn’t good enough for me: I need a price I can rely on and the public need me to raise the maximum amount of money possible. It made it a no brainer to go for outline planning permission and it matters so much to me that I even travelled more than a hundred miles back from my annual leave to attend the meeting to try to leave nothing to chance!”, said Commissioner Holloway.

The outline permission means that part of the old Greyfriars police station will be converted and the remainder built as a new structure to create a mixed block of 23 flats, including three at ground floor with disabled access, and a ground floor shop or cafe, to add to the street scene in Bedford town centre, as planning officers had required.

“They, quite understandably, want the town centre to be a lively place yet, as we heard at the meeting, new housing is needed desperately and the council only has a three year supply plan currently, rather than the five years they need to identify. I’m particularly pleased that access for those who have mobility issues is being included and that the flats will be a mix of one to three bedroom homes,” said PCC Holloway.

The money raised from the Greyfriars sale will be used to fund the building of a new custody suite at Kempston Police HQ.

“Money raised from the sale of buildings can only be used on other buildings or capital investment, not on officers, according to public sector spending rules. We have a temporary custody block at the moment at Kempston, serving the north of the county, which needs to be replaced and the sale of Greyfriars will fund this. I fully intend to proceed with the plans concerning this new custody suite as soon as possible in 2020.

“Not only that but I intend to sell the temporary custody block when we have a new facility to raise extra funds for Bedfordshire Police,” said the PCC.



Signpost Hub teams up with Anne Frank Trust to tackle discrimination in schools

Following a successful pilot project at The Linden Academy in Luton, the Signpost Hub and Anne Frank Trust UK will now roll out inputs tackling bullying, discrimination and prejudice in schools across the county using a restorative approach.

This week (17 – 24 November) is International Restorative Awareness Week, and the Signpost Hub and Anne Frank Trust UK are working on developing the innovative programme using the feedback given by the school. It is being funded by Bedfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner Kathryn Holloway.

During the pilot project, pupils from year five and six were trained to become peer mediators, acting as intermediaries to resolve conflict or disruptive behaviour within the school environment. Staff were also given information on how to implement restorative approaches in the school.

A restorative approach in schools can be used to challenge the prejudice and discrimination found in hate incidents or bullying, before they escalate. As facilitators, students will enable those harmed to communicate with the person who caused the harm.

Victim Care Co-ordinator Sunya Hussain said: "The training was very well received by the school and their pupils. Using a restorative approach addresses the needs of both parties - the person who has been harmed and the person who caused the harm. If the harmer takes responsibility for their actions and acknowledges the impact this has had on the person who they harmed, it leads to a change of behaviour and the opportunity to make amends."

Kerry Ward, Director of Inclusion and SENDCo at The Linden Academy, added: "Pupils were taught how to use a 'talking stick' and 'circle time' to develop positive relationships between themselves and improve communication and active listening skills. They were also shown how to use key questions when resolving conflict. It's going to be a real benefit to the school and our pupils using this new approach to resolving any conflicts."

The Linden Academy pupils are now working with the Signpost Hub and Anne Frank Trust UK to create a toolkit to support the rollout of the project into primary schools. The development and implementation of the project into secondary schools will follow.

Val Ross, Eastern Regional Manager for the Anne Frank Trust, explained: "Training young people in how to use restorative justice approaches is very much in keeping with our educational methodology which seeks to empower young people themselves with the knowledge, skills and confidence to confront and challenge prejudice. We are committed to working with Bedfordshire Police, the Signpost Hub and our partners, including our networks of ambassadors, to create a more cohesive, supportive and positive environment for us all to thrive."

Commissioner Holloway added: "I'm a huge advocate of restorative justice, as it's such a powerful process when used in policing in helping victims to get closure after a traumatic time and offenders to understand the impact their actions have had and provides them with the opportunity to make amends. By using this approach in our

schools, which promotes tolerance and respect, this will be another massive leap forward in taking a stand against hate in Bedfordshire. Research also shows a restorative approach can help with early intervention, resulting in less exclusions in school as well as avoiding offending later down the line.”



ERSOU wins at World Class Policing Awards

Deputy Chief Constable Trevor Rodenhurst has praised officers from the Eastern Region Special Operations Unit (ERSOU) after they won a prestigious award yesterday (Thursday).

ERSOU were honoured for their work on Operation Polarity; a three year long investigation in to cracking a cyber-attack.

The team worked with the National Crime Agency, the FBI and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) during the investigation.

No operations on this level had ever been attempted before and cybercrime investigation was still in its infancy when the attack occurred.

The team had to deal with an enormous amount of seized data equating to 10 TB (around 50 million pages of A4) and ERSOU led on the work to get this data into a format that would meet Crown Prosecution disclosure requirements.

The awards evening, which was held in London, is the first of its kind and recognised policing work from across the globe. The force was one of 54 finalists, and beat over 100 entries from across the globe. The force were also nominated for a further three operations.

The awards celebrated and acknowledged the best in all aspects of 21st century policing and reflect that effective modern day policing requires partnership and collaboration. The awards also recognised that successful outcomes and developments in policing come from a blend of innovative, committed and well trained personnel, who serve, engage and protect the public, delivering good practice, using technology and systems to police efficiently and effectively.

Deputy Chief Constable Trevor Rodenhurst said: “It was a pleasure to attend the first World Class Policing Awards, and I am extremely proud of the work that went into the investigation that has resulted in this award.

“The awards evening has shown that there is incredible work going on all over the world to protect members of the public and continue to fight crime.

“I would like to thank everyone who was part of the investigation for their hard work during the investigation.”



PCC pledges almost £100,000 to new court to revolutionise the lives of families with drug and alcohol problems - with a 50% better chance of keeping children and parents together and freeing parents from addictions.

Bedfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, has become the first PCC in the country to fund Family, Drug and Alcohol Courts (FDACs) which have been proven to be 50% better than any other method of care proceedings at helping parents to shake off addiction and retain care of their children five years on.

Commissioner Holloway has agreed to provide £50,000 of funding and also to pay for a specialist Domestic Abuse Expert to support parents attending the Family Drug and Alcohol Court.

She also provided the lead Judge - Judge Patrick Peruško - with the services of her Chief of Staff to help other key partners across Bedfordshire, such as those in the NHS, Public Health, Mental Health services and Safeguarding leads of the three local authorities to work together to bring all these parties into partnership to fund and support the unique FDAC process.

Family Drug and Alcohol Courts require a parent with addiction to agree a formal rehabilitation plan and work very regularly with the Family Court Judge and an FDAC team of specialists over a 26 week period, to address their behaviour and build better relationships with both their children and themselves.

"It's fair to say that Judge Peruško had me convinced and signing on the dotted line where financial support was required within the first hour of meeting me. What was absolutely obvious was not only that Patrick was full of energy and a real passion for the benefits but, having run the Family Drug and Alcohol Courts in Milton Keynes, he'd seen the enormous benefits for himself," said PCC Holloway.

"Not only that, but Judge Peruško can produce evidence that this process works to lift parents out of addiction and helps them to re-build family life, keeping children in the home where it is safe to do so, as not one but two universities - Lancaster and Brunel - have evaluated the programme and the results speak for themselves," said the PCC.

Both university studies found that parents, five years on from graduating from the Family Drug and Alcohol Court, where they worked through their problems with a judge and specialist support workers linked to FDAC, were more likely by half to have controlled their addiction and retained care of their children compared with those who were subject to standard care proceedings.

"It was clear from the findings that parents felt they were being treated as individuals and being supported more than judged and that they built really strong relationships with the judges overseeing the programme and the specialists to whom they have access as a result of going into FDAC," she said.

The grant funding from the Commissioner is the single biggest financial contribution to the FDAC project in Bedfordshire. In another first, Bedfordshire's Clinical Commissioning Group has provided the services of a highly experienced psychiatrist to enable the psychiatric screening of parents, via the East London Foundation Trust (ELFT).

FDAC has also made arrangements for consultations with child and adolescent psychologists in support of the mental health of children.

Public Health in Central Bedfordshire, Luton and Bedford has also supplied a funding grant for a Substance Misuse specialist to support the court. They are also providing FDAC Parent Mentors who have experienced similar issues to provide a supportive voice to parents outside those hours usually worked by FDAC and its specialist workers.

All three local authorities' Directors of Children's Services in Luton, Bedford and Central Bedfordshire are supporting the programme and will refer suitable families to Family Drug and Alcohol Courts.

The charity, The Marks Trust, is also providing office space and room for parent assessments for the new courts and is committed to working with FDAC parents who 'graduate' the scheme, to help them gain employment as they rebuild their lives.

"I'm absolutely delighted that so many agencies have come together and seen the benefits that the Family Drug and Alcohol Court can bring to troubled families in Bedfordshire. Children belong in families. That is where they deserve to be. FDAC gives them the best chance to be with their parents by helping parents achieve and maintain abstinence in a problem solving, therapeutic, court process," said Judge Peruško.

"Bedfordshire Family Drug and Alcohol Court is the first FDAC nationally to secure support from our Police and Crime Commissioner who also recognised the benefits of funding a specialist Domestic Abuse worker to work within the team. That commitment has drawn in other partners to work alongside children's services in Bedford, Luton and Central Bedfordshire. Public Health in all three authorities and Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group are partners. No other FDAC has such a broad base of support. We also have funding from The Marks Trust, a local charity assisting people who have come across difficult times", he said.

There will be two Family Drug and Alcohol courts in Bedfordshire; one in Bedford, overseen by Judge Peruško, with Judge Spinks running the court in Luton.

The Bedfordshire Family Drug and Alcohol Court was launched by Judge Perusko, the PCC, FDAC manager Beverley Sorensen and the three local authority Directors of Children's Services, at a presentation for professionals at Bedford Magistrates' Court on Thursday (17 October), which was also attended by a number of judges who support the FDAC process. A similar launch event is to take place in Luton later this month. The first hearings are due to start next month in November.

There are 11 FDACs across the country, with the project in Bedfordshire the first to be established in conjunction with other agencies outside of local authority children's social services.



Handbook aimed at helping cut crime in rural areas is launched

A Rural Crime Handbook which gives advice on a range of issues such as fly-tipping, hare coursing and sheep worrying has been launched in a bid to help tackle countryside crime.

Put together by our Reduction Officer with contributions from a number of partners, including the National Farmers' Union (NFU), the Environment Agency, the Home Office and local farmers, the handbook contains advice on crimes which affect Bedfordshire's rural communities, such as modern day slavery.

It was launched at a special event at the Rufus Centre in Flitwick on Thursday (10 October) as part of the Rural Crime Week of Action, and has been supported by Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway.

She said: "My Police and Crime Plan specifies as a priority that we must give a fair share of policing to those who live in the country, just as we do to those who live in our towns. Therefore, it's absolutely imperative that we work with farmers and residents of rural parishes and produce a consistent approach from policing to crimes which take place because they occur in such locations.

"This handbook marks an important step forward for Bedfordshire Police and the residents of rural communities alike and it's particularly timely that it's been launched in Rural Crime Week.

"Our rural crime team, Op Sentinel Rural, has chalked up very significant successes in the past year. Targeted operations concerning cars and vans that haven't been appropriately insured, taxed or which are without MOTs, have deprived those involved in criminality in the countryside of the use of the road. We've worked with neighbouring forces and have focused on matters such as hare coursing together to prevent damage to crops and the illegal betting of tens of thousands of pounds on the outcomes."

Rural businesses are often seen as a soft target by thieves for a number of reasons. Many farms, equestrian premises and industrial estates are remote, spread over a large area of land, unoccupied overnight and contain plant and materials of high value.

Also in attendance was Deputy Chief Constable, Trevor Rodenhurst, who said: "Rural crime can be complex and challenging to investigate. It isn't just low level offences, as a range of serious and organised crime can take place in our rural areas, so it's important we engage and work closely with our partners and communities.

"This handbook is an excellent example of the importance of such partnership working. I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the handbook and Police and Crime Commissioner Kathryn Holloway for supporting its launch."

Oliver Rubinstein, from the NFU, said: "Rural crime is an enormous issue for farmers in Bedfordshire and nationally is estimated to have cost the UK £50m last year. "Unfortunately many farmers have already had to take quite dramatic steps to limit their vulnerability, such as blocking off field entrances and digging ditches, however, this handbook is a valuable resource that we can share with members to help them make sure they've taken all the necessary steps."



The PCC supports Operation Meteor with camera gear to crack down on nuisance bikers countywide

Bedfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, is continuing to support Operation Meteor - the Force's response to the issue of anti-social riding, nuisance bikes and related criminality - by investing in new high-quality camera equipment to help deter repeat nuisance offenders.

"Sadly, many of our communities in our smaller towns and villages and farmers too have found their lives blighted by the total lack of consideration and damage caused by nuisance motorcycles, quad bikes and even hand bikes. The whole idea of funding this specialist camera gear is to allow Bedfordshire Police officers to capture images to evidential standards to make it easier to prosecute such individuals.

"They don't just deliver a tap on the wrist. Stolen bikes are easy to identify, as they usually have had the stock or registration details removed, and in these circumstances they are crushed by Bedfordshire Police," said the Commissioner.

Problems caused by nuisance motorbikes include: general anti-social behaviour, noise, damage caused to road signs and danger to themselves, other road users and pedestrians.

This year, Operation Meteor is looking to reduce the number of offenders and motorcyclists. They aim to do this by developing new strategies to identify and prosecute offenders and create innovative ways to disrupt those responsible. The Force has also invested in brand new off-road police motorcycles and have newly trained off-road police motorcyclists.

The officers who are on the Operation Meteor deployment respond to 101 and 999 calls from the public, with high-visibility patrols aiming to deter potential offenders.

"The Force has been building its capability to deter, disrupt and catch those responsible for nuisance biking, especially off road, where bikes can cause hundreds of pounds worth of damage to crops. I've seen for myself evidence of the success of the off-road police bikers in catching those responsible in Dunstable, for example, preventing them from getting away along the busway or bridle pathways out of town.

"The sad fact is that these crimes generally peak during the school holidays and Bedfordshire Police is ready for those who have such a blatant disregard for the safety and property of others," said Commissioner Holloway.

Constable Andrew Parsons said "Thanks to the PCC, Op Meteor having this new high-quality camera means that we don't need to get into any form of chase, conflict or confrontation now because we can capture what we need to on the camera.

"From these photos, we can identify known offenders. We then distribute the other images to the intelligence units of other forces to assist in identification as it is well-known that the majority of the offenders come from outside of Bedfordshire. Most commonly, from as far as London and Hemel Hempstead.

“This camera has already been used in the quarries in Sundon and Houghton Regis and is a really good bit of equipment as it has already proven very successful, giving good identification of the bikes.”

“I’m delighted of course that the camera equipment has already proved its worth in Sundon and Houghton Regis and I hope news of the continuing work of Op Meteor and the enhanced off road capability of the Force will send home the message that we will not tolerate this behaviour” said Commissioner Holloway.



Bedfordshire Police to recruit 54 officers as part of national uplift

An additional 54 officers will be recruited into Bedfordshire Police in 2020-21, following the latest government announcement on its three-year police recruitment uplift.

The figure for Bedfordshire is part of the first wave of 6,000 new police officers to be recruited nationally, under the plans announced earlier this year to achieve an uplift of 20,000 officers over three years.

The first year target allocated for forces is based upon the existing funding formula for all police forces in England and Wales.

The force’s current recruitment window has so far seen high interest in people applying to become a police officer and registering their interest for further information about a career in policing, but there is still time to apply before applications close on 13 October.

Deputy Chief Constable Trevor Rodenhurst said: “We are thrilled to receive funding to employ an additional 54 police officers in the first year of the government’s campaign.

“We want to make Bedfordshire a safer place for all, and with this additional 54 officers we hope to make a real impact in the community.

“We hope to recruit officers from all backgrounds and walks of life to serve their neighbourhoods, and of course welcome applicants from further afield or those who want to consider a brand new career.

“Bedfordshire is a richly diverse county with a mix of urban and rural challenges. If you want to make an impact within Bedfordshire and help us protect the public and fight crime, apply today and help make the changes you want to see.”

Within Bedfordshire, the 54 officers will be recruited over and above those hired to fill existing vacancies and in addition to the extra 40 officers promised by the increase in the Council Tax precept.

Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner Kathryn Holloway said: “We had been told to expect around 18 officers so 54 is a significant improvement and reflects the fact that the Home Office is fully aware that Bedfordshire has to be treated as a

special case. I've evidenced the need for 440 officers and 80 detectives in total but the uplift has to start somewhere and I'm grateful for it, of course."

Police officers deal with a range of call outs daily, ranging from supporting vulnerable people, continuing the fight against drug and substance misuse, the exploitation of children and adults and many more. If you have the drive to help people and face issues head on, visit our website and find out more about how to become a police officer:

<https://www.bedfordshire.police.uk/apply/Recruitment-and-volunteering/Police-officers>



PCC hosts 4th Annual Parish Councils Conference to explain what Bedfordshire Police has been delivering across communities in 2019

Bedfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, hosted her fourth annual Parish Council Conference at the Rufus Centre, Flitwick, and thanked 84 separate parishes from across the county for their enthusiastic response to the chance to hear at first hand from the top police team and community officers (1 October 2019).

The PCC was joined by Chief Constable Garry Forsyth, Chief Superintendent David Boyle, Inspector Nick Masters of the Biggleswade Community Hub and Sergeant Ian Leeson as she wanted the parishes and their councillors to have the opportunity to ask questions of senior officers, to hear some examples of the best of their work taking place in Bedfordshire's communities over the past year and for the PCC to bring them up to date with news on funding and officer recruitment.

The PCC opened the conference by stating "First of all, this has been quite an extraordinary year for me in terms of what I have been able to bring into Bedfordshire Police with the assistance of the top team and the Chief Finance

Officer in terms of rewriting the traditional definition of Special Grants from the Home Office to bring home £4.571m to Bedfordshire which, together with further grants to tackle youth violence, represents the largest surge in central funding for the Force for over 20 years."

The Commissioner explained that, even before the current promised uplift in police numbers, she had been able to support the Force to double the response to Serious Organised Crime and youth violence and bring about more recruitment in a single year than since austerity began.

"The Special Grant was absolutely vital to allow the Force to double the specialist unit, Op Boson, which concentrates on gang, gun and knife crime, and also to allow me to proceed with plans to recruit 160 new PCs this financial year," she said.

The Commissioner confirmed that the first tranche of officers to be delivered under the newly announced uplift is likely to reflect the current way all police funding is distributed.

“I, of course, have very strong views that the forces in most need, such as Bedfordshire, should have a greater share but, given the timescale against which the first few thousand officers are being brought online, we understand that the share is being based on the current National Revenue Expenditure. This will, at least, give us an extra 18 to 21 officers and this will be on top of the 160 already planned.”

The PCC also confirmed that, in addition to the Special Grant, another of which she has just applied for, Bedfordshire Police has won a further £1.36m this year to concentrate on work to alleviate youth violence and £880,000 for a Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit, working with local partners, including councils to focus on the issue.

Chief Constable Forsyth spoke about the financial struggles Bedfordshire Police face every day. Chief Constable Forsyth said “If our income from the Government increased, then somewhere else suffers as the main pot never increases, it just gets shared out differently. That’s why it’s so important that the overall funding formula is revised but we’re still very grateful for the extra officers of course. It causes us some ‘problems’ with how to train them and where to put them but these are nice problems to have after years of having to drive money out of policing.”

He also explained the difference in modern demands on police in terms of crime and why traditional policing of villages and smaller towns has had to change,

“Here’s an analogy for you. The iPhone was not around 10 years ago. A normal 64GB iPhone can hold 11,000 complete works of Shakespeare. We have to sometimes look for just one line in that to satisfy disclosure requirements. There is artificial intelligence that can do this for us, but that is very, very expensive and none of this investment delivers cops to your front door or out on the street and can’t do the things that you want to see. So we have to get a balance between insuring our cops have got the right level of technology that enables them to keep pace with the criminals and do their jobs and also satisfy the need that you all have for visible local policing that understands your issues.”

Chief Superintendent Boyle, who heads up Community Policing explained the Force’s approach to problem solving.

“I am really thankful over the last couple of years to see the investment we have had, in not only the Community Hubs but also in supporting the rural crime team. There is a very bespoke service there to help and support our rural communities.”

This year, the parishes and councillors requested to hear more about the work of the eight different Community Hubs of Inspectors, Sergeants, PCs and PCSOs and the priorities of the Community teams. The PCC used this as an opportunity to discuss the recent Community Hub Awards event, held on 19th September 2019.

“We decided to have a Community Policing event, where we asked each of the Hubs around the county, to nominate some of the most successful problem solving officers, but to also identify those members of the public who have gone out of their way to work with Bedfordshire Police to bring about some of those results.”

Insp Nick Masters, talked the conference through the exceptional work of his Biggleswade-based Hub, in conjunction with Shefford Town Council, to drive down Anti-Social Behaviour in the town, known as Op Leithen.

Insp Masters said “I was delighted to have this opportunity to present the hard work of our team and our partners to an audience that were keen to hear the detail of the practical application of our problem solving and its benefits to our Community.”

He was accompanied by Sgt Ian Leeson who spoke of the outstanding operation - Op Lemon - around Bedford Prison, working with residents and surrounding businesses as well as the prison itself, to dramatically reduce “throw overs”, where items of value for re-sale in HMP Bedford, are thrown over the walls to inmates, ranging from drugs and tobacco to toiletries.

Chief Superintendent Boyle said “I’m really grateful to all those who attended, It was a good turn out with representatives from across the county. It’s really great to be able to explain and highlight some examples of the work carried out by our Community Policing teams and the investment the Force is putting into getting more officers working with communities across the county.”



PCC launches first annual Community Hub awards to reward members of the public countywide for help for local police and "truly outstanding" problem solving by officers

Bedfordshire’s PCC, Kathryn Holloway, held the first Community Hub Thank you Awards to single out both members of the public and officers involved in exceptional work to solve problems in towns and villages at Woburn Abbey and to “spread the word” of what Community Police are delivering across the county. (19 September 2019).

The event was attended by 140 guests including officers from the eight Community Hubs based in towns across Bedfordshire - in Leighton Buzzard, Dunstable, Biggleswade - covering the North Bedfordshire towns and villages, Ampthill - based at the Community Fire Station, Bedford and Luton, which has Hubs based at Luton Police Station and Futures House at Marsh Farm and one at the Airport, plus members of the rural crime team Op Sentinel Rural, who work out of both Dunstable and Riseley, at either end of the county.

The ceremony, held in the Sculpture Gallery at Woburn recognised both individual officers for successful problem solving operations and members of the public, nominated by each Hub team themselves and by rural crime officers.

“This was a fantastic opportunity to spread the word about what Bedfordshire Police’s Community Hub officers have been up to over the past year to solve problems and help communities in all our major towns and the villages and also to say a huge ‘thankyou’ to those members of the public who have really got involved to help their local teams to solve problems.

“Those members of the public who received awards told me they were overwhelmed that the officers themselves had singled them out and it was also absolutely right that those officers who had presided over exceptionally successful problem solving were recognised,” said the PCC.

The problem-solving police operations presented to the audience included an overall winner, Op Yellow, designed to drive down drugs and other saleable goods being thrown into the grounds of Bedford Prison and other examples included a community wide effort to reduce Anti Social Behaviour in Shefford - whose Mayor, Paul Mackin, received the award from the Biggleswade Hub for his outstanding help to the local police team as well as work to end drug dealing and intimidation of residents at Ruthin Close, Luton which turned around the neighbourhood, according to residents.

The Commissioner was inspired to hold the event, which the Force now plans to stage annually, by the yearly Community Cohesion Awards.

“I have really taken on board how important the annual Community Cohesion Thankyou Awards have been in building strong bonds of trust and confidence in local policing in our communities in Luton and Bedford, primarily, and across our diverse neighbourhoods where trust in police has not been strong, historically. It’s incredibly important to me for our smaller towns and villages to enjoy exactly the same relationship with Bedfordshire Police and, now they have dedicated local Community teams, this was the perfect event to start to build this,” she said.

The PCC was keen to stress that the event was provided at reasonable cost, thanks to the generosity of the Duke and Duchess of Bedford.

“I’m so grateful to the Duke and Duchess for allowing us to use the Sculpture Gallery, its magnificent gardens, conservatory and reception rooms free of charge and they also were kind enough to provide welcome drinks for all who attended. This meant that the very first Community Hub Thankyou Awards got off to a quite superb start in a wonderful setting where officers and members of the public alike told me how delighted they were to have been invited,” said Commissioner Holloway.

The event was also addressed by Bedfordshire Police’s Chief Constable, Garry Forsyth. He said: “I was delighted to part of this event to celebrate the fantastic work of our officers, staff, community partners and members of the public. I often hark back to Sir Robert Peel’s principle that the police are the public and the public are the police, and that has shown at the Community Hub Awards ceremony.

“I would like to thank all of you for the continued support you provide to our communities and to our partners and public, for helping to keep our communities safe and reducing crime.”

Representatives of each of the Hubs and the rural crime team presented a resume of the work of which they were most proud over the year and described their approach to solving local problems, before going on to nominate the work of a key partner.

The audience were also addressed by international Community Policing expert Sylvia Chennery who regularly judges neighbourhood policing competitions. “I can honestly say that some of the examples we’ve heard about here tonight are among the very best that I have heard about from any police force, anywhere,” she said.

Community Impact Award:

Winner

Operation Yellow – Sgt Ian Leeson, PC Emily Keech, John McKinney (Bedford Borough Council). Graeme Vann (Security HMP Bedford) PJ Butler (HMP Bedford Governor)

Highly Commended

OP Leithan - Sgt Rachael Welch, PCSO Ann Jeeves, PC Sarah Cluff, Paul Mackin (Shefford Town Council), Alan May (Central ASB Officer)

OP Loc (Ruthin Close) - Sgt Richard Cunningham, PC Michael Trinder, Laura Chalmers (Luton Borough Council ASB Case Manager) PC James Norman

Pan Bedfordshire:

Winner

VARAC - Superintendent Jacqueline Whittred & Shelia Forder

Highly Commended

Mental Health Street Triage – PC James Biggs, Rachel Martin (East of England Ambulance), Sarah Clarke (ELFT)

Partners in Problem Solving:

Winner

Tara Lynch & Laura Chalmers (Luton Borough Council ASB Case Managers)

Highly Commended

Sarah Keena (BPHA Housing Officer)

Impact Vulnerability:

Winner

OP Highgate – PC Sharon Cummings, PCSO Daniel James, Christina Rowe (Bedford BID), Andy Cooper (Environmental Health), Sarah Stevens (Bedford Borough Council)

Highly Commended

PCSO Spyridon Apostolidis

Innovation in Engagement:

Winner

PCSO 2813 Rachel Carne

Highly Commended

PC Emma Underwood & PCSO Claire Hughes

Problem Solver of the Year:

Winner

PC Kate Rowley

Highly Commended

Lara Curtayne

The following community members were nominated by each hub for their work in their respective communities and were also presented with a certificate:

Airport – Tamara Cato

Rural Crime Hub – Martin Towler

Dunstable – Sharon Warboys

Houghton – Sharon Knott

Luton – Peter Appleyard

Leighton Buzzard – Stephen Swaine

North Urban – Beccy Campbell-Grieve

North Rural – Paul Mackin



Independent Custody Visitor (ICV) Scheme

The Police and Crime Commissioner has a statutory duty to maintain an Independent Custody Visiting Scheme for Bedfordshire. Independent custody visiting is a well-established system whereby volunteers attend police stations to check on the treatment of detainees, the conditions in which they are held and that their rights and entitlements are being observed. The scheme offers protection and confidentiality to detainees and the police and provides reassurance to the wider community.

Beds OPCC has recruited four new ICVs which will begin training soon. We are still recruiting in Bedfordshire so if you are interested in becoming an ICV, please visit the Police and Crime Commissioner Website to complete an application form - <https://www.bedfordshire.pcc.police.uk/independent-custody-visiting-bedfordshire>

ICV Quarter two data (July - Sept) 2019/2020

Total number of detainees through custody	Number of ICV visits	Total number of detainees in custody at time of ICV visits	Total number of detainees unavailable*	Number of detainees observed**	Total number of detainees visited***
2211	18	111	29	72	72

*for the number of detainees unavailable – detainees were either in interview, asleep, intoxicated or too high risk to be seen.

ICVs have reported on the following:

- Identifying detainees which need additional support within custody and asking the ‘critical’ questions to whether or not Appropriate Adults have been contacted or whether a Mental Health Assessment was required.
- Reported that staff were helpful
- Asking detainees whether or not they needed to notify family/friends of their detention
- That they welcomed a new ICV Translation pack
- ICVs are ensuring that female detainees are being allocated a female officer and hygiene pack is provided.
- A Report was sent to the estates department after an ICV visit regarding one toilet being out of order
- ICVs assuring that CCTV footage within custody is working and being reviewed
- ICVs attended Luton Custody Suite for a stakeholder visit on the 14th November – to ensure that an Independent person was available and questions were asked surrounding the scheme
- The OPCC are still trying to recruit more ICVs via social media and Community Voluntary Service (CVS). ICVs have also attended IAG meetings to promote the scheme



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