



Police & Crime
Commissioner
for Cheshire



ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 2024

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Foreword

As your newly elected Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), every year I will produce an Annual Report, which details the progress made against the county's Police and Crime Plan.

The current plan has set the priorities for policing and community safety until 2024 and will soon expire. I will publish a new and ambitious plan which will cover my term of office until 2028.



The Constabulary, under the leadership of the Chief Constable, Mark Roberts is reported to be performing well. I recognise the hard work of police officers, staff and volunteers and the contribution they provide in working to making Cheshire safer. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank them for their dedication and commitment. I look forward to the independent assessment that will be made by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) as Cheshire have now completed the fieldwork for the next PEEL (Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy) inspection cycle. The findings will be published by HMICFRS early in 2025.

Over the Summer, I have been listening to you and will begin to create a new set of priorities for policing in Cheshire. The priorities – which reflect what you've told me – will be set out in my Plan for 2025-2028 which will be published in early 2025. I will be focusing on the Chief Constable delivering real neighbourhood policing that focuses on prevention which will see police officers, PCSOs and staff tackling crime and keeping us safe. Crucially, I will ensure we have a police service you can be even more proud of. I will achieve this by undertaking a comprehensive culture review across the organisation.

During my campaign, it became clear that communities did not always feel that the police service responded appropriately to their concerns. I will start real conversations about policing. To achieve this, we are holding the first Citizen's Assembly which will take place in Crewe, enabling the community to have a real voice in local neighbourhood policing.

I look forward to working with you, the Constabulary and key partners to make Cheshire even safer.

Yours sincerely

Dan Price

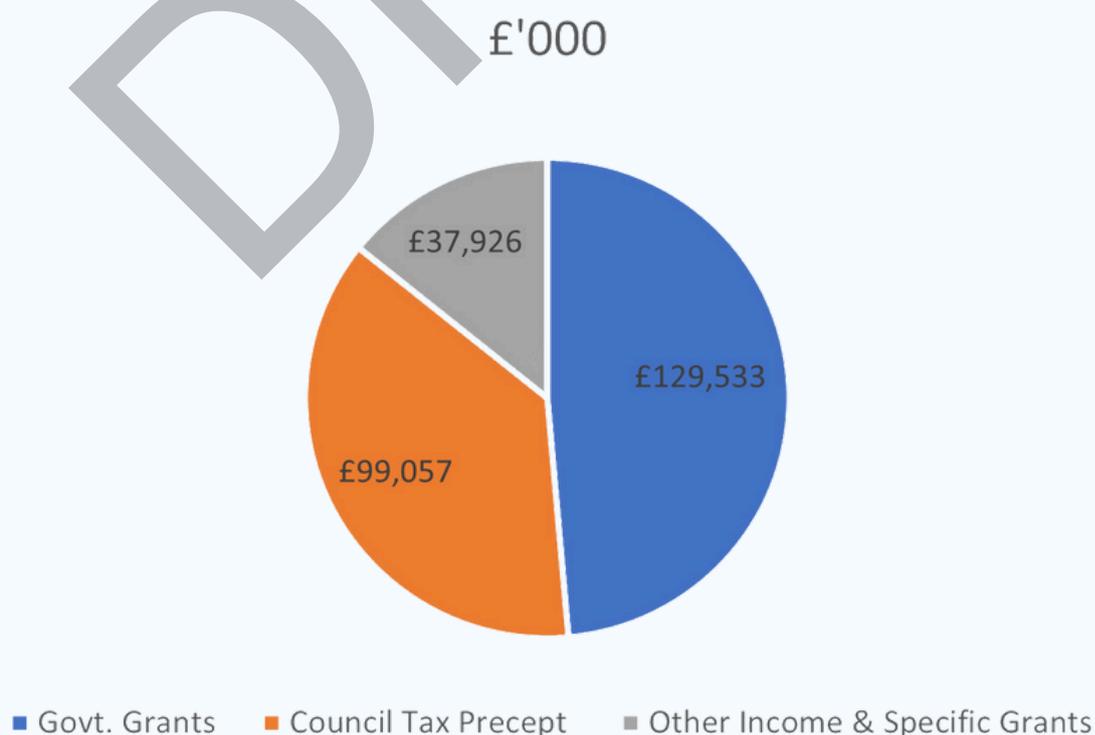
Finance

Funding your police force

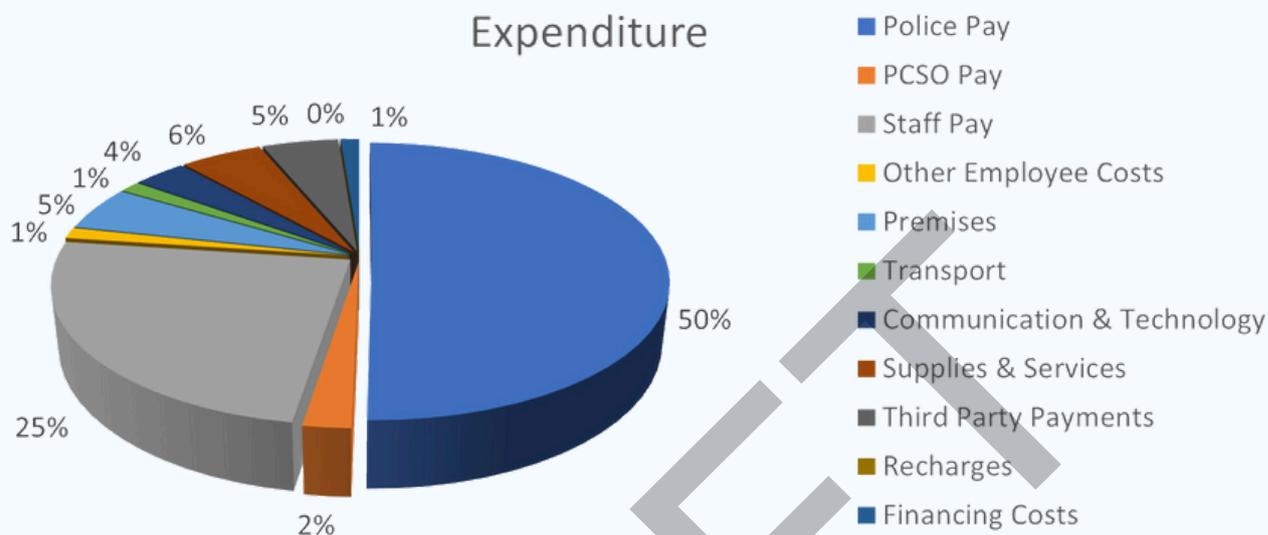
Funding for police services increased in 2023-24 with Cheshire benefiting from an additional £11.2m income overall compared to the previous year. This mainly comprised of an increase in the local council tax precept which rose by £15 per annum per household (based on a Band D property) and an increase in central government funding. This brought the total overall expenditure budget to £266.516m, with funding from central government increasing by 1.8% and overall funding increasing by 4.2%.

In the run up to setting the 2023-24 budget, inflation hit the headlines with the UK reporting a 40-year high of 10.1% in July 2022, increasing further to a reported 11.1% in October 2022. Without additional funding afforded through the precept uplift, substantial additional savings would have been required, and the level of services provided could not have been maintained. The funding increase included money provided to Cheshire Police as part of the government's Police Uplift programme. Despite police officer numbers in Cheshire now being at their highest level, I am concerned this objective of maintaining numbers is creating an arbitrary target that could result in resources not being appropriately allocated. It is crucial that this does not lead to officers carrying out roles that police staff are better suited to. I will scrutinise the Chief Constable to ensure this does not happen.

Cheshire Police and PCC funding 2023-24 by source



Cheshire Police and PCC 2023-24 Expenditure by type



Type	Percentage
Police pay	50
PCSO pay	2
Staff pay	25
Other employee costs	1
Premises	5
Transport	1
Communication and technology	4
Supplies and services	6
Third party payments	5
Recharges	0
Financing costs	1

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) office budget is less than 0.4% of the Constabulary budget.

Police and Crime Plan

2021-2024

The Police and Crime Plan was refreshed by the previous PCC in 2022 and contained five objectives which were used to hold the Chief Constable to account.

The objectives are listed below:

"Delivering even safer communities for the whole of Cheshire"

- Improve confidence in policing.
- Prevent and tackle crime.
- Make Cheshire's roads safer.
- Deliver justice for victims of crime.
- Protect vulnerable and at-risk people.
- Modernise our police service.

Performance against these measures can be found in the previous Commissioner's 'wrap up' scrutiny session at the end of the previous term of office www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/what-the-commissioner-does/scrutiny/scrutiny-board/scrutiny-board-documents-2023-24/



Commissioning

Police and Crime Commissioners are responsible for commissioning services to support victims and witnesses to cope and recover from the impact of crime and are responsible for commissioning activities which will contribute to community safety and crime reduction.

In 2023-24, more than £3.5 million was secured and then invested into support services which help victims of crime.

This funding secured by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) came from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the Home Office.

Below are some of the ways the office has used this funding to support victims and vulnerable people in communities.



Safer Streets 4

This was completed in September 2023 and each bid secured over £750k of additional funding into Cheshire.

Primary Stage

This built on the legacy of Safer Streets 3 which began in Warrington, and has now expanded across Cheshire.

- Training teachers at all high schools to recognise young people requiring behavioural change around violence against women and girls (VAWG) issues
- Bystander intervention training in schools, pubs and bars, so people are equipped to challenge inappropriate behaviours.

Secondary Stage

- Three safe space vans which offer sanctuary in the busy night-time economy period
- Hollie Guard and GoodSAM mobile phone apps to make people safer when they are alone

Educating those in the beauty sector, who may regularly come into contact with clients experiencing domestic abuse, empowering the beauticians to signpost clients to access help.

Safer Streets 5

This followed in October 2023 and is a programme which will continue to be delivered until the end of March 2025. The funding secured for 2023/24 was £465,000 and will deliver:

- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) practitioners who support repeat victims and work with Perpetrators using restorative practices.
- Situational crime prevention such as CCTV, lighting and environmental updates.
- Added capacity to the drone unit, with Cheshire police officers supporting the pilots. The drones can be used to reduce ASB from off road bikes and electric scooters which can cause a nuisance in the community.

Independent Domestic Violence/ Sexual Violence Advisors

The OPCC was able to obtain an extension to existing funding with some additions to the value of £675,910.

Domestic Abuse and Sexual Abuse Uplift Funding

£267,156 funding for additional activity to meet the needs of victims of domestic and sexual abuse.

Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Fund

£1.4m of additional investment was put into work with perpetrators of domestic abuse and help them to reduce reoffending. These projects look to support the victims of domestic abuse and their families alongside changing the behaviour of the perpetrators.

The funding will be used to deliver the following:

- Project CARA
- Engage and Reset

Project CARA

CARA stands for **Cautioning And Relationship Abuse**.

CARA sits within the criminal justice system as an early intervention, targeting domestic abuse offenders who meet specific criteria to be issued with a Conditional Caution.

Domestic abuse workers have been deployed in custody suites encouraging perpetrators to engage with behavioural change programmes.

The domestic abuse workers also facilitate the use of Conditional Cautions to place perpetrators onto behavioural change programmes.



Engage / Reset

This innovative intervention delivered two perpetrator programmes one which looks to engage the whole family in the behaviour change programme and the other aimed at young people who are displaying problematic behaviours towards parents.

The programmes have seen 133 people engaged with support.

reset

Harm Reduction Unit (interventions)

Funding has been secured to support pro-active interventions to tackle stalking perpetrators. This has led to the review of 770 cases, with further action being taken for 40 cases.

The Constabulary's outcome rate for stalking has continued to rise, which has been the case since the commencement of the Harm Reduction Unit (HRU) from 15.6% for 2022/23 and 17.9% the previous year, to 20.3% in 2023/24.

This is a significant achievement when compared to the national average is which is 7%. Our funding has enabled greater capacity and ownership of cases which was not possible before.

Savera UK

This service has been delivered across Cheshire to meet the needs of victims of 'honour'-based abuse along with female genital mutilation and forced marriage to a value of £150k for the first year.

SAVERA UK

This has reached 57 survivors who received support and had access to enhanced trauma-informed help. There are now over 200 professionals who have been trained informing 1600 hard to reach people through campaign activity.

Average Speed Cameras

Cameras at all locations are underway or installed, funding agreements have been formalised and the first schemes were installed in October 2023 in Cheshire West and Halton.

Youth Violence and Exploitation Intervention Service

This was delivered following a pilot in Halton and Warrington targeting individuals involved in county lines or on the cusp of county lines through the provision of mentoring by those with 'lived experience'.

A full service for a pan-Cheshire approach was commissioned by service provider Queensberry.



Restorative Justice (RJ)

In 2023/24, the offer of RJ services was broadened, extending to working with probation cohorts. This also included the integration of RJ practitioners within the Constabulary.



Cheshire Youth Commission

The Cheshire Youth Commission ensures there is an ongoing dialogue with 1400 young people across Cheshire, to understand the policing priorities and issues they face.

The 'Big Conversation' was held in November and focussed on the following themes:

- Violence and abuse.
- Relationships with the police.
- Safer communities.
- Hate crimes.



Community Action Fund

The Community Action Fund was launched, which saw communities bid for grants up to £5,000 from a pot totalling £100,000.

The grants enabled groups to fund projects which made their communities safer. We awarded the following:

- 36 projects which included youth engagement projects such as; youth clubs, boxing sessions and educational workshops.
- Additional projects were focussed on road safety, crime prevention and community safety interventions.



Serious Violence Duty

The Serious Violence Duty (the Duty) came into force on 31st January 2023 through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022.

The Duty ensures serious violence is a priority for Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and requires specified authorities to collaborate to prevent and reduce serious violence. The statutory guidance states Police and Crime Commissioners have an important role to play as lead convener for local partner agencies as they are responsible for the totality of policing in their area, as well as services for victims of crime.

The Home Office provided funding to police and crime commissioners to support the delivery of the duty. For 2023/24 £362,562 was received for providing interventions such as educational and mentoring services for young people at risk of exploitation, a domestic abuse perpetrator programme, and software and data development tools to better understand serious violence.

The OPCC supported the development of the Cheshire five-year Serious Violence strategy which reports to both the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) and Home Office regarding grant spending and progress.

Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR)

A revised version of the SPR was published in February 2023 which provided strengthened detail around the action required from policing at the local and regional level to critical national threats.

The 2023 SPR sets out seven identified national threats.

These are:

- violence against women and girls
- child sexual abuse
- terrorism
- public disorder
- serious and organised crime
- civil emergencies
- a national cyber incident

Due regard was given to the seven threat areas identified in holding the Chief Constable to account. Violence against women and girls, while not previously contained in the SPR, nonetheless was a key issue reflected in the priorities in the Police and Crime Plan.

Governance and Oversight

There are multiple processes through which the PCC makes key decisions and holds the Chief Constable to account for the effective delivery of policing in Cheshire.

The table below explains how this has been undertaken in 2023/24.

These run alongside processes to hold the Commissioner accountable for the decisions he takes.

Arrangements	Purpose	Activity	More information
Public Scrutiny Board	The main 'holding the force to account' meeting with the PCC and Force Senior Leadership Team.	Quarterly meetings held in public.	www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/what-the-commissioner-does/scrutiny/scrutiny-board
Joint Audit Advisory Committee	Provides assurance to the PCC and Chief Constable on the effectiveness of the governance, risk management and internal control arrangements.	The Committee meets a minimum of four times a year with timings determined by the deadlines for publishing a draft and final statement of accounts.	www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/commissioner-and-office/transparency-and-information/accounts-and-audit/joint-audit-advisory-committee

Arrangements	Purpose	Activity	More information
<p>Joint Management Board (JMB)</p>	<p>A joint governance arrangement which enables the PCC and Chief Constable to make decisions of significant public interest regarding policing, crime and community safety.</p> <p>The PCC may also take management decisions outside of such meetings.</p>	<p>JMB is held monthly, and the decisions that have been made can be found here.</p>	<p>www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/what-the-commissioner-does/making-key-decisions</p>
<p>Police and Crime Panel (<i>external meeting hosted by Cheshire East Council</i>)</p>	<p>Provides checks and balances in relation to the performance of the Commissioner.</p> <p>The panel comprises ten local councillors reflecting the political makeup of Cheshire's four Local Authorities, along with three independent co-opted members.</p>	<p>The panel is administered by Cheshire East Council, with all agendas, webcasts and correspondence with the PCC publicly available.</p>	<p>www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/what-the-commissioner-does/scrutiny/cheshire-police-and-crime-panel</p> <p>www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/your_council/cheshire-police-and-crime-panel.aspx</p>

Arrangements	Purpose	Activity	More information
Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB)	Brings together criminal justice organisations at police force area level to support joint working and improve services.	Meetings of the board are held Quarterly.	
One-to-One meetings with the Chief Constable	Enables the PCC to undertake a regular dialogue with the Chief Constable to discuss strategic matters and current issues.	Weekly meetings	
Out of Court Resolution (OoCR) Panel	Decides whether the method of resolution is appropriate, or if the case would have been better in court. This is based on a review of the information available at the time of the OoCR.	The panel meets quarterly and reviews around 320 cases each year.	www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/what-the-commissioner-does/scrutiny/out-of-court-disposals-scrutiny-panel

Arrangements	Purpose	Activity	More information
<p>Dealing with complaints, including complaints against Chief Constable</p>	<p>The PCC is responsible for handling and recording complaints against the Chief Constable. Should any complaint require investigation, this will be a matter for the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC).</p> <p>The PCC is a relevant review body for complaints and has a statutory responsibility to determine whether the outcome of a complaint to Cheshire Constabulary was reasonable and proportionate.</p>	<p>Police complaint statistics for 2023/24 is available via the IOPC website.</p>	<p>www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/contact/compliments-and-complaints</p> <p>www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/contact/police-complaint-review</p>

Volunteers

The OPCC oversee four volunteering schemes: Independent Custody Visitors, Call Management Auditors and Police Dog Welfare Visitors which support scrutiny aspects of the PCC's role.

Consultation & Engagement Volunteers support the PCC in gaining the views of the public by attending various local events and community-led activities, listening to people's views, recording comments and opinions and relaying this information to the PCC.

As of 31st March 2024, there were 27 active volunteers participating in the above four schemes.

Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs)

The Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) Scheme, involves dedicated volunteers who conduct visits to custody suites. Their purpose is to observe, comment and report on the rights and entitlements, health and well-being, and conditions and facilities under which people are detained at custody suites.

In the timeframe spanning from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024, a total of 156 ICV visits were carried out across Cheshire's three operational custody suites located in Middlewich, Runcorn and Blacon. Within this period, ICVs visited 1,247 detainees actively monitoring their well-being and conditions throughout their time in custody.



Call Management Auditors

The Call Management Auditors (CMA) Scheme involves dedicated volunteers who provide feedback on the way Cheshire Constabulary interacts with the public during telephone contact.

In the timeframe spanning from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024, 17 audits have been conducted and a total of 152 calls have been audited from which 49% of audited calls were emergency calls (999) and remaining 51% were police non-emergency (PNE 101).



Police Dog Welfare Visitors

The Police Dogs Welfare Visitors (PDWV) Scheme involves dedicated volunteers who observe, comment and report on the conditions in which the Constabulary's dogs are housed, trained and transported whilst on duty.

In the timeframe spanning from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024, a total of 21 visits have been completed throughout Cheshire and North Wales (comprising of training days and visits to the kennels), with 49 different dogs being observed during the year. On some visits, multiple dogs were observed, and some dogs were seen more than once throughout the year. On all visits, a total of 138 dogs were observed and checked by the volunteers.



Out of Court Resolution Scrutiny Panels Data 2023-24

The purpose of the Scrutiny Panel is to independently review a random selection of anonymised cases that have been resolved by use of an out of court resolution.

Its aim is to determine whether the method of resolution is considered appropriate, based on a review of the information/evidence available to the decision maker at the time.

In the timeframe spanning from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024, a total of 316 cases have been reviewed from which 236 cases were regarding adults and 80 cases were regarding young people.

Panel members supported 86% of cases scrutinised. 10% (N=32) of cases were not supported (meaning panel members would like to see them heard in court) and the remaining 4% were 'split' decision cases where panel members were unable to reach a unanimous decision regarding cases analysed.

Police Complaints

All complaints are taken seriously. One of the most important functions of the police complaints system is to support individuals, police forces and the police service to reflect on and learn from complaints and incidents where something has gone wrong. The system provides a vital source of evidence to help the Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable to drive improvements in policing.

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction with a police force that is expressed by, or on behalf of, a member of the public. The Policing and Crime Act 2017 and supporting regulations made significant changes to the complaints and disciplinary systems that took effect from 1st February 2020. They introduced a number of changes designed to achieve a more customer-focused complaints system.

The changes also enhanced the involvement of PCCs in the police complaints system. In addition to monitoring complaints made against officers and staff, having responsibility for handling complaints made against the Chief Constable, the PCC is also a relevant review body for complaints. PCCs have a statutory responsibility to determine whether the outcome of a complaint was reasonable and proportionate. It should be noted, however, that depending on the circumstances of the initial complaint, the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) may be the relevant review body. Cheshire Constabulary's Professional Standards Department (PSD) is still responsible for handling and, where applicable, investigating complaints in the first instance.

Additional information in relation to the police complaints process, as well as police complaint statistics for 2023/24, is available via the IOPC [website](#).

Keep in Touch



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This Annual Report is produced on a statutory basis as outlined in the Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011.

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire
November 2024