



David Keane

Police & Crime Commissioner for Cheshire

ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20



David Keane
Police & Crime
Commissioner
for Cheshire



Delivering an accessible police service based in the heart of your community



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Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic that gripped the nation towards the end of this 12-month period has brought into sharp focus the value of local communities and the support we can give each other. These efforts have undoubtedly saved lives across Cheshire.

Policing has a vital role to play in delivering stronger, safer and fairer communities after one of the most challenging periods in living memory. But a one-size-fits-all approach will never work. Instead, we need a truly local policing service, based in the hearts of our communities and genuinely connected with the very people it exists to serve.

I want to make Cheshire Constabulary the best police service nationally in its delivery of community policing and with the support of the residents of Cheshire, I have been able to guarantee a dedicated Police Constable and PCSO for each of our 122 policing communities.

These officers will be working closely with local residents and other key partners to identify and solve the problems specific to the place where you live.

This will be supported by a funding package for your local policing area, made available from money seized from criminals under the Proceeds of Crime Act. By investing this money back into our communities, I hope to send a clear message that crime doesn't pay and that I am investing in our communities to make them even safer.

This now means that you have:

- A local community police base
- A dedicated PCSO
- A dedicated PC
- Regular community policing surgeries
- Funding for your local community

My focus has and will always remain on preventing crime and anti-social behaviour, supporting victims and protecting vulnerable people. I believe that the best way to do this is by delivering a truly local police service that is fit for the future and visible in our communities.

Of course, improved policing alone cannot offer all of the solutions we need to tackle the challenges ahead. Issues such as mental health, county lines, youth violence, homelessness, street begging and violent extremism can only be solved by a truly partnership approach. I continue to be committed to strengthening the multi-agency work that exists across Cheshire.

This year, I have continued to focus on putting more local police resources into the heart of our communities by developing problem solving teams which bring together community police officers and PCSOs and representatives from key partner agencies such as local authorities and health to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour at its root-cause.

These teams have been pivotal in a number of successful operations to not only make our communities safer but also bring local people together to develop a sense of pride in their community whilst working with the police to prevent crime.

Whilst preventing crime from happening in the first place is always the best possible outcome, it is vital that we continue to make sure that victims of crime are a top priority. I have commissioned a comprehensive victim needs assessment to map our existing services, to gather the views of victims across Cheshire and to ensure that their views and needs are placed at the centre of our future model.

I have also continued to invest in a number of vital services which support victims of crime to cope and recover from their ordeal and commission new services which offer innovative methods to support victim recovery.

Whilst putting local policing priorities and the needs of victims at the heart of everything I do, I have also ensured your police service continues to provide

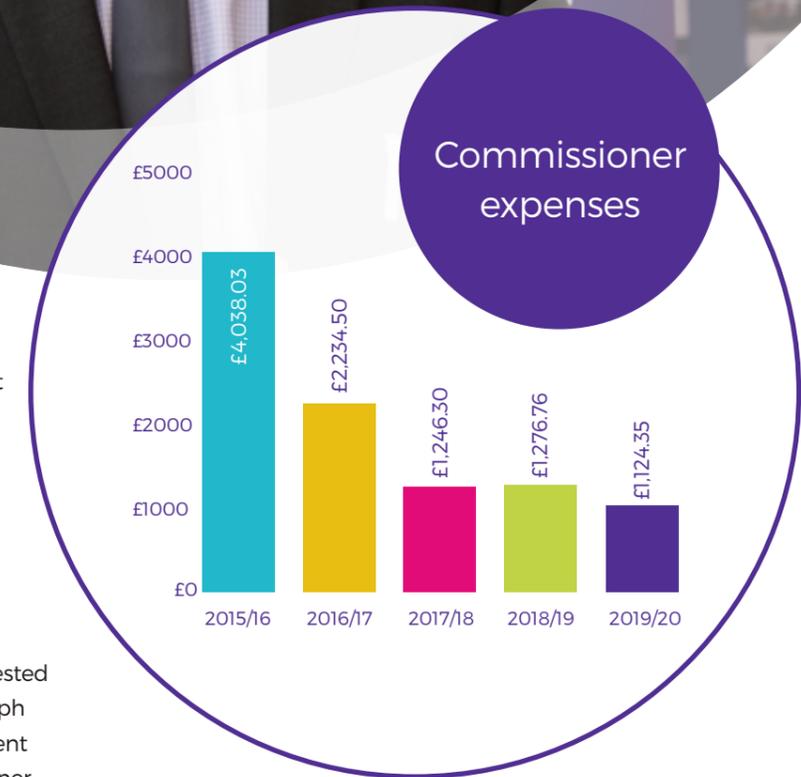


value-for-money. With the support of the public, I have been able to significantly increase our police officer numbers, despite the challenges we have faced due to severe cuts to central government funding. Without this investment in our front-line, I would not have been able to deliver a dedicated officer for every community in Cheshire.

Furthermore, my office costs and my spending on essential travel away from the office have remained at their lowest possible level so I can ensure the majority of the police budget is invested in local policing and keeping you safe. The graph below shows that I am now spending 72 per cent less on expenses than the previous Commissioner.

My main priority will always remain being your voice within local policing and ensuring that you have a police service which operates effectively and keeps you safe.

David Keane
POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR CHESHIRE



Delivering my Police and Crime Plan

My annual report provides a yearly update on how I am delivering the priorities set out in my Police and Crime Plan. This plan was developed in close consultation with local residents and key stakeholders to ensure they have a 'voice' in local policing.

In my role to hold the Chief Constable to account, I make certain he is delivering the priorities set out in my Police and Crime Plan to ensure we have a truly efficient and effective police service to keep Cheshire safe.

Throughout this report, I will update on what I have delivered between April 2019 and March 2020 in regards to the following priorities:



Cheshire Police and Crime Panel

Since November 2012, police and crime panels have had a vital role in scrutinising and supporting each other. Police and Crime Commissioners.

The Panel ensures I am delivering against the objectives set in my Police and Crime Plan and that I am effectively holding the Chief Constable to account.

The Panel is made up of cross-party local councillors and independent members with an interest in policing and crime.

Throughout 2019-20, I have attended public meetings to answer any questions they may have about my work. I am also required to submit my precept proposal for the panel's consideration. The panel supported my precept, which has allowed me to deliver the budget priorities for this period.

The roles and responsibilities of the Police and Crime Panel are set out in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.



You can find more information on the Panel here:

- https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/your_council/cheshire-police-and-crime-panel.aspx
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/117474/policing-protocol-order.pdf

My year at a glance

APR | MAY | JUN

Quarter 1: April-June 2019

- ✓ Launched Cheshire's Anti-Bullying Commission to tackle bullying amongst under 25s
- ✓ Secured £400K in central government funding for a major project that tackles the root causes of serious violence among children and young people
- ✓ Outlined my concerns about police custody suites being used for mental health triage
- ✓ Published a Cheshire Youth Commission report to recommend how leaders in the criminal justice sector can improve their engagement with young people
- ✓ Welcomed a government decision to return the supervision of all offenders in the community to state run probation services
- ✓ Opened up my Safer Communities Fund, making £100K available to community organisations wanting to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in their area
- ✓ Held an event to celebrate the work of OPCC and Cheshire Constabulary volunteers
- ✓ Produced a film in partnership with Cheshire Youth Commission to highlight the rights of young people during police stop and search
- ✓ Commended a Cheshire Police investigation to take £20million of illegal drugs off our streets

JUL | AUG | SEP

Quarter 2: July-September 2019

- ✓ Completed a county-wide consultation with under 25s to understand the impact bullying is having on our communities as part of Cheshire's Anti-Bullying Commission
- ✓ Established four problem solving teams across Cheshire to tackle crime at its root-cause
- ✓ Held a special Scrutiny Board meeting to hold its Chief Constable to account on police recruitment issues
- ✓ Commissioned a new mental health support package for police officers and staff
- ✓ Launched my annual policing survey to determine policing priorities for Cheshire residents
- ✓ Made funding available for every local policing unit to hold their own diversionary engagements events over the summer
- ✓ Expressed my concerns that the proroguing of parliament could lead to delays in the approval of the domestic abuse bill
- ✓ Engaged with residents at various events across the county including the Cheshire Police and Fire Open Day, Chester Pride and Pride in the Park in Crewe
- ✓ Funded a Citizens Advice project in Cheshire West to reconnect people with their communities and employment
- ✓ Supported the delivery of hate crime awareness workshops for 700 young people through commissioned victims support service 'Got Your Back'
- ✓ Encouraged more residents to set up Neighbourhood Watch Schemes by providing funding to promote the benefits
- ✓ Joined officers on a raid to disrupt serious and organised crime in Warrington

OCT | NOV | DEC

Quarter 3: October-December 2019

- ✓ Welcomed the Knife Angel to Cheshire to raise awareness of the impact of knife crime on our communities
- ✓ Brought together a team of community representatives to review evidence collated as part of Cheshire's Anti-Bullying Commission
- ✓ Provided funding for the successful 'mini police' scheme to be rolled out across Cheshire
- ✓ Produced a video in partnership with restorative justice provider 'Remedi' and local students to raise awareness of the effects of hate crime
- ✓ Travelled the county with the Chief Constable to give residents the chance to talk to us about policing issues and priorities
- ✓ Welcomed the allocation of an additional 90 officers for Cheshire police as part of the government's uplift scheme
- ✓ Held the Chief Constable to account over Cheshire Constabulary's support at Remembrance Day events
- ✓ Brought together partners to improve support services for victims of sexual violence
- ✓ Supported the establishment of a specialist team to protect communities against rural and wildlife crime
- ✓ Held an event to recognise the impact of restorative justice on the criminal justice system
- ✓ Expressed my concerns about how government money to recruit police officers was being spent
- ✓ Contributed to a Chester Women's Aid campaign to stand up against domestic abuse

JAN | FEB | MAR

Quarter 4: January-March 2020

- ✓ Launched a public consultation to ask Cheshire residents about their priorities for police funding in 2020/21
- ✓ Allocated funding to provide all 122 police communities with its own dedicated police constable as part of 2020/21 budget
- ✓ Completed a tour of the county with the Chief Constable to speak to residents about policing issues and priorities
- ✓ Spoke at a number of events across the county to encourage residents to work with us to make their areas safer
- ✓ Held a social value event to encourage local businesses to bid for work with Cheshire Police
- ✓ Produced a training package for frontline officers to improve their support for victims of rape and sexual violence
- ✓ Worked closely with the Chief Constable to ensure the Constabulary was prepared for the impending COVID-19 pandemic
- ✓ Commissioned a review to improve victim support services in Cheshire
- ✓ Secured £100K in government funding to purchase 130 new Tasers for frontline officers
- ✓ Joined other PCCs in a call for an urgent review into assisted dying laws following the tragic death of Durham PCC Ron Hogg
- ✓ Allocated £200K in funding to allow the successful approaches used by Cheshire's Anti-Stalking Unit to be extended to other serious crimes



A continued focus on community policing

My priority has always been to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, support victims and protect vulnerable people and I believe the best way to do this is by delivering a truly local police service that is fit for the future and visible in our communities.

During 2019/20, I continued to prioritise my focus on delivering a real community police service for Cheshire residents by prioritising spend on frontline policing as we have battled real-term cuts to local policing budgets.

The initiative to provide all of Cheshire's 122 police communities with its own dedicated PCSO and community police base is operating successfully with increased police visibility and assurance across Cheshire.

This year, I also worked with the Chief Constable to establish dedicated Problem Solving teams in each of Cheshire's four local authority areas to extend our partnership working to tackle emerging issues and crimes more efficiently and effectively.

The teams consist of a police sergeant, four police officers and a PCSO, supported by officers from the local authorities' Anti-Social Behaviour and Community Enforcement teams.

They focus on addressing the root cause of the most prominent community safety issues in each area by looking at data and speaking to residents, coming up with a plan of what they are going to do and then working with the community to tackle the issues.

The feedback the teams have received so far has been overwhelming positive with residents and local businesses feeling more secure in their surroundings.

The teams' work builds on the approach of the dedicated PCSOs for each policing community and officers who have problem solving with partners and communities at their core.

Looking ahead to the next 12 months, I have already allocated funding to provide all 122 police communities with its own police constable and I look forward to seeing how this development further connects our communities.

Standing up against bullying

Bullying is endemic in our society and is something that cannot be addressed by policing alone. In May 2019, I founded Cheshire's Anti-Bullying bringing together key partners and community representatives to take a closer look at the issue on behalf of Cheshire residents.

The aim was to identify ways individuals and organisations can work more effectively together to support those who have been impacted by bullying, prevent such behaviour in the first place and intervene to address the behaviour of those perpetrating it.

The Commission recognised that taking on the topic of bullying is a huge task. As such the work has been split into three phases:

- Phase 1**
Under 25s (2019/20)
- Phase 2**
Bullying in the workplace (2020/21)
- Phase 3**
Over 65s (Post April 2021)

Over the last year the Commission spoke to hundreds of people across Cheshire who have experienced bullying. It also reviewed academic research, serious case reviews and coroner's reports on suicides where bullying has been a factor.

The first phase of the Commission found there is an urgent need for a coordinated approach if we are to achieve a caring society in which all individuals are afforded the tolerance, respect and support needed to achieve their full potential and live a happy and fulfilled life. Individual voices need to be heard and all agencies involved need to share information and act together to ensure early identification of vulnerability and enable intervention.

As a result of the first phase of the Commission's work, we have developed an Anti-Bullying Charter for organisations to sign to show their commitment to eradicate bullying in our society. The Charter is the first time a county-wide pledge has been implemented to tackle bullying.

It was due to be rolled-out to all schools, workplaces and community organisations across Cheshire in March 2020 but, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, will now be launched in the autumn of 2020, alongside the phase 1 report.





Working in partnership to make our communities safer

Prevent crime and anti-social behaviour

More than **£1.1m** invested in partnership projects

Examples of services funded by Community Safety Fund

- £198,000** to support young people through the Youth Justice Service
- £170,000+** invested in reducing the impact of anti-social behaviour across Cheshire
- £100,000+** to assist those with substance abuse issues
- £100,000+** invested into community interventions to find innovative solutions to community issues

My Community Safety Fund provides funding to Cheshire's four Community Safety Partnerships. This year, I improved the funding structures in support of each partnership to ensure that activity met the needs of communities, and in doing so supported the priorities my Police and Crime Plan.

I was able to ring-fence and maintain the funds allocated whilst ensuring the activity continued to stimulate positive change. I observed a step change in the appetite of partners to pool budgets to improve the value for the community and also in the adoption of more innovative approaches to prevent crime and keep communities safe. Each grant is carefully monitored against agreed outcomes; this will ensure that I am continually able to improve the effectiveness of my future commissioning decisions.

During 2019/20, the Community Safety Fund also supported a number of bespoke projects which tackled key issues in our communities.

Improving outcomes for female offenders

Improving the outcomes for women who offend and those who are vulnerable to offending has continued to be a key priority for me as Chair of Cheshire's Criminal Justice Board.

Ongoing work alongside Criminal Justice Board Partners and with charities such as MyCWA has meant that we have delivered women's centres in Warrington, Crewe and Macclesfield. In addition, through further investment from myself, the National Probation Service and our community safety partnerships, I am delighted to confirm that further centres in Halton and Cheshire West will be established in 2020/21; delivering my commitment of centres in each part of the county.

The priority in the forthcoming year will be continuing to enhance our partnership working across our women centres, continue to explore opportunities to develop local problem solving courts and crucially establishing sustainable funding to embed women centres within our core services.

Connecting our communities

In the spirit of championing new innovative responses to the needs of the community, I invested £20,000 in the Community Connector programme led by Citizens Advice. This scheme builds bespoke packages to support the more vulnerable members of the community who have complex and varied needs but are all too frequently associated with debt and the associated risks of exploitation. This approach places experienced resources alongside the vulnerable to assist in navigating frequently complex public services and assist them in accessing the services they need.

Providing funding to empower local communities

Prevent crime and anti-social behaviour

Over the last three years, my Safer Communities Fund has supported hundreds of small community groups across Cheshire to run projects or initiatives to make their communities safer.

The fund empowers local people to make a real difference by preventing crime or anti-social behaviour and this year, I focused on awarding more of the grants to grassroots community groups.

In 2019/20, I awarded 27 grants of up-to £5,000 to Cheshire community projects as part of the £100K fund.

Safer Communities funding was allocated slightly differently this year. A new application triage system

was put in place to ensure applications were suitable for funding and met the criteria prior to completing the application. This resulted in a higher standard of applications received and closer partnership working with the OPCC and local policing teams.

Since launching the Safer Communities Fund three years ago, it has been fantastic to see so many community projects develop and to witness the significant impact this funding has on making our communities a safer place to live.

The high number of applications we receive each year is testament to the level of passion and commitment from local people in Cheshire who want to make a real difference in their communities.

Examples of projects funded...

- Action Transport Theatre** to develop theatre based workshops which raise awareness of the effects of exploitation and county lines on young people
- Dane Valley Community Orchard** to support ex-offenders and those with a history of substance misuse to volunteer
- A better Tomorrow** to allow refugees and asylum seekers to receive cultural awareness sessions and support
- Warrington Open Doors at Christmas** to provide support to vulnerable and homeless people during the Christmas period
- Kops N Kids** to provide free, fun sports sessions for young people enabling enhanced relationships with local police officers
- Barnies** to reduce social isolation amongst older people
- Elworth Speedwatch** to help residents clamp down on speeding in their local area
- Padgate Sports Club** to reducing anti-social behaviour among young people



Thanking our dedicated volunteers

34
ACTIVE
VOLUNTEERS

My dedicated volunteers support me in my role to hold the Chief Constable to account by ensuring we have an efficient and effective police service which protects local communities.

This year, I was able to dramatically increase the number of volunteers that support my office with 34 individuals now representing the OPCC in the following roles:

- Independent custody visitors
- Front desk auditors
- Police dog welfare visitors
- Call management auditors
- Independent observers of protests and demonstrations
- Consultation volunteers

Over the last year they have made 193 unique visits to custody suites, police station front desks, police kennels and protests or demonstrations and spent 24 hours listening to police 999 and 101 calls to ensure services are operating effectively.

In early 2020, I advertised for more police dog welfare visitors to join the scheme, which resulted in an overwhelming 474 enquiries for the position and 84 formal applications for the role. We had some really experienced people apply for the role and we have recently recruited seven new visitors who will start visiting the kennels and training grounds in the coming months following vetting confirmation. This is testament to the high level of support for my volunteering schemes to independently ensure Cheshire Constabulary is delivering an effective service to local communities.



Giving young people a voice on policing and crime

This year, Cheshire Youth Commission (CYC) consulted a further 2,000 under 25s in Cheshire on my behalf to find out how police and other organisations in the criminal justice sector can improve their engagement with young people.

They visited schools, colleagues and youth clubs across the county to determine the priority areas for 14-25 year-olds in Cheshire for us to focus on. The six priorities they identified were:

- Knife crime
- Misuse of social media and hate crime
- Mental health
- Relationships
- Stop and search
- Substance misuse

They worked with their peers to establish how police and partners could work together and with young people on these priority areas and produced and presented a report to key leaders on what improvements could be made.

As part of one of their priority areas, members of CYC also teamed up with police officers to produce a short film to promote the rights of young people during police stop and search. The film highlights how the process should work and looks at the issues from both a young persons' and police officers' point of view.

I look forward to working with the Chief Constable and other key partners to ensure the issues highlighted by the Youth Commission are addressed and we improve the services we deliver to young people across Cheshire.



Engaging young people with policing

During 2019/20, I set aside funding to roll-out Cheshire's successful Mini Police programme across the county. The scheme encourages 9-11 year-olds to make their area safer by supporting local police officers and PCSOs to tackle issues in their communities.

The mini police officers work with their local primary school teachers to identify the key issues in their area and then draw up a plan to proactively tackle them. This has seen pupils in Cheshire supporting officers in speed checks, taking part in litter picks or delivering to food banks. They are given a police uniform, loosely based on a regular police uniform, so they look and feel like they are part of the policing family.

Mini police is a fantastic scheme which not only helps us to engage with our young people and address police priorities, it also increases confidence in local policing and reduces perceived barriers.

It also educates young people about responsibility and the importance of contributing positively to their community.

The scheme was first rolled-out in Runcorn in 2018 and I'm looking forward to seeing how other young people across the county get involved to make their communities stronger.



IMPROVING THE RELATIONSHIP between YOUNG PEOPLE and the POLICE

As part of my commitment to delivering a community police service that engages with local people, I provided funding this year for local policing teams to hold events to prevent anti-social behaviour during the summer holidays.

The free events offered diversionary sports activities for young people giving them the opportunity to stay active and stay out of trouble during the holiday period.

I made the funding available for all local policing units in Cheshire after seeing the success of the Victoria Park Experience (VPX)

in Warrington which is delivered annually. The event, which was established by local PCSOs 12 years ago, and has gone from strength-to-strength and now attracts participants from across the whole of Cheshire. I wanted more of our communities to reap the benefits of a free sports event in their local area, which provides healthy activities and prevents anti-social behaviour.

Young people often commit anti-social behaviour because they have nothing else to do, but events like this provide a positive focus for young people's attention.

Each local policing unit in Cheshire was given the opportunity to bid for up-to £1,000 from to get the events off the ground.

The following events took place during summer 2019:

FRIDAY 2 AUGUST
Phoenix Park, Runcorn

TUESDAY 6 AUGUST
Victoria Park, Warrington

TUESDAY 13 AUGUST
Victoria Park, Warrington

WEDNESDAY 14 AUGUST
Pebblebrook Park, Crewe

THURSDAY 15 AUGUST
Victoria Park, Widnes



A police service connected with our communities



Putting victims first

Support victims and protect the vulnerable

Alongside providing a truly local police service, I am committed to putting the needs of victims at the heart of everything I do and I prioritise funding support services to ensure victims of crime across Cheshire are given the right support to help them cope and recover from their ordeal. In 2019/20, I invested a further £1.2 million into victims' services across the county through a grant allocated to my office by the Ministry of Justice.

This included providing support for three key victims' services commissioned by my office; Cheshire CARES which offers support to every single victim of crime across the county, RASASC which provides bespoke support to survivors of rape and sexual abuse and Remedi which offers restorative justice and mediation services to reduce reoffending.

Individual projects funded...

£600,000
to deliver a service to all victims of crime in Cheshire

£358,000
with partners to support victims of rape and sexual abuse

£100,000
to support victims with restorative justice and mediation

£204,000
to support victims of domestic abuse

£42,000
to work with NSPCC to support victims of sexual abuse

£15,000
to reduce the risk of child sexual exploitation

£31,000
to support young victims of crime and bullying

Supporting all victims of crime

Cheshire CARES offers practical and emotional support to all victims of crime in Cheshire. It is the core service meeting the needs of many victims of different crime types that also serves to direct victims to specialist services as required. Cheshire CARES received **more than 66,000 referrals** in 2019/20. This year, I have worked with them to extend provision to ensure victims of fraud, who report offences via a national hotline, are still able to access much needed support and crime prevention advice locally.

66,000
victims supported



CASE STUDY

Sarah a female victim of domestic abuse self-referred into Cheshire CARES for practical and emotional support. Staff were able to refer her into the 'gateway programme' to assist meeting her needs. Feedback from Sarah praised the level of contact and the provision of counselling helping her through a very difficult period and preventing her from having a breakdown.*

Bespoke support for survivors of sexual abuse

RASASC supported **more than 1,100 survivors of sexual abuse** throughout the year. They provide vital emotional and practical support, alongside specialist counselling services, as well as helping survivors negotiate the criminal justice system.

Helping **1,100** survivors of sexual abuse recover



CASE STUDY

Amy a female aged 16 years was referred to RASASC following disclosures that family members had taken indecent photographs of her. This survivor was quickly supported by a trained and experienced Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) and future support was provided following an assessment of needs through the implementation of a bespoke care plan. Support was provided over a two year period due to the complexities in the case and the justice system. Throughout this extended period, the ISVA maintained regular contact providing emotional and practical support alongside access to services as required. In 2019, the perpetrators were sentenced to periods of imprisonment. The survivor describes the support of the ISVA as wonderful, saying she does not know how she would have got through the criminal justice process without it.*

Repairing harm

Remedi provide much needed restorative justice and mediation services for victims in Cheshire, primarily aimed at assisting their ability to cope and recover. Sometimes this involves communication with a perpetrator. This can be face-to-face or by other means and is recognised as an effective means of providing closure for victims. Furthermore, the process allows a perpetrator to understand first-hand the harm they caused and is a recognised means of reducing future offending. Remedi have been using mediation as a means of addressing chronic long term community disputes with excellent results. Throughout the year Remedi have dealt with **322 restorative justice and mediation cases** and **71 young victims through Got Your Back** - their bespoke service for victims of crime under the age of 18.



CASE STUDY

Following a dangerous driving incident, Jodie was left with injuries and traumatised because she had two young children in the vehicle with her. The restorative justice process allowed Jodie to communicate her thoughts and feelings. She was able to forgive the offender, Dave*, accepting that he too would relive the events daily. The fact that Dave had accepted responsibility for his actions provided a degree of closure. For Dave, the process allowed him to discuss what happened with someone who was impartial. He was further able to understand the impact and apologise for his actions which is something he desperately wanted to do.*

Supporting **322** victims and offenders to repair harm

*All names on this page have been changed to protect identities.



Support victims and protect the vulnerable



Support victims and project the vulnerable

Improving



I am committed to doing everything possible to put victims first and ensure the best level of support is available to help people cope and recover from their ordeal.

victim services

Giving a voice to victims of sexual violence

Following a consultation I commissioned with survivors of sexual violence, I have implemented a number of initiatives over the last year to improve the services that provide them with support to recover from their ordeal. Survivors of rape and sexual abuse, along with service providers who help people recover from their ordeal, were asked for their views on after care services as part of a consultation.

The needs of survivors of these crimes and their experience of the criminal justice system are not always fully understood. That's why I wanted to put survivors at the heart of the consultation to give them a voice.

The consultation identified a gap in the knowledge of some frontline workers, including police officers, responding to sexual violence incidents. In response, I produced a scenario-led video training package which will be rolled-out to all new officers joining Cheshire Constabulary, with existing officers receiving refresher training.

As a result of the consultation, I also brought together key decision makers across Cheshire to discuss how they can enhance existing partnership working to improve services for survivors.

A range of organisations, including local authorities, health providers, charities and support services attended the event to understand the needs of survivors and how they can work together to improve support mechanisms.

I hope the conversations between service providers and decision makers about improving our approaches will see Cheshire deliver one of the best quality support services to all victims of sexual violence.

Reviewing all victim services

As Commissioner I am wholly committed to ensuring that the voice of victims in Cheshire is heard.

This allows me to not only represent the views of victims at a local and national level but also ensure that the services I commission meet their needs. This year I also launched a full review of victims' services across the county to ensure victims of crime have access to most appropriate support to help them recover from their ordeal.



Highlighting the effects of hate crime

In order to help young people understand the impact of hate crime, I commissioned two Cheshire students who had been victims of hate crime themselves to produce a video resource which tells the powerful stories of people throughout Cheshire who have experienced hate crime and how it has impacted their lives.

Hate crime is a heinous crime as it targets its victims right at the heart of who they are. No one should be targeted for being themselves. We've seen incidences of hate crime increase on both a local and national scale over recent years. That's why it's important that we educate young people from an early age so they understand what a hate crime is and how they can seek support if they or someone they know is victim to a hate crime.

The video is being used at hate crime workshops facilitated by Halton Got Your Back, a service run by restorative justice charity, Remedi, which supports victims of crime under the age of 18 whether they've reported the crime to the police or not.

Advocating restorative approaches

During International Restorative Justice Week in November, in partnership with Remedi, I brought together representatives from policing, prisons and rehabilitation services to understand the impact restorative approaches can have on supporting victims and reducing reoffending.

Victims of crime take part in restorative justice (RJ) for a number of reasons. They may feel let down by the court outcome or have questions around why the offender did what they did. They may want the offender to know what life is like for them after the offence or they may feel angry and want to express their feelings in a safe way in order to move on. RJ can address any of these issues with its main aim to repair harm.

It also aims to reduce reoffending by encouraging offenders to face-up to the personal impact of their crime and explore the reasons behind why they committed the crime in the first place.



The Victim Needs Assessment is reviewing existing services, highlighting good practice and also identifying gaps and areas where improvement could be made.

Victims of crime are very much involved in the review and are being asked for their views on the support they have received via a survey and virtual focus groups.

I want to ensure that victims of crime in Cheshire have access to some of the best victims' services in the country. Views and feedback from victims are

very important in helping to shape the services that are provided to them in the future.

I also recognise that there are victims who do not report crime to the police but they may still need support to cope and recover. It is therefore vital that support is available in the community and is offered to all victims of crime, regardless of whether the crime has been reported.

The findings from the Victim Needs Assessment will inform the commissioning of victims' services in Cheshire from April 2021 and beyond.



Support victims and project the vulnerable



Local police funding in 2019/20

A police service fit for the future

Over the last four years, I have continuously lobbied the government for fairer funding for local policing in Cheshire as the demand and pressures placed on our frontline has increased year-on-year whilst central Government funding has decreased.

In 2019/20, we saw the Government finally recognise that we need more money for local policing in Cheshire as it increased its provisional settlement for the first time since 2013 but unfortunately, it put the burden on local taxpayers through a proposed increase to the policing precept. I believe that police funding should come centrally but with non-pay budgets now over stretched, we had a stark choice to either fund this locally or significantly cut the policing workforce.



Police precept consultation

I consulted Cheshire residents and local businesses on the proposed increase to the policing precept and there was strong support for increased investment in community policing with two thirds of local people supporting an increase in the policing precept (up to £2 per month extra for the average Band D household).

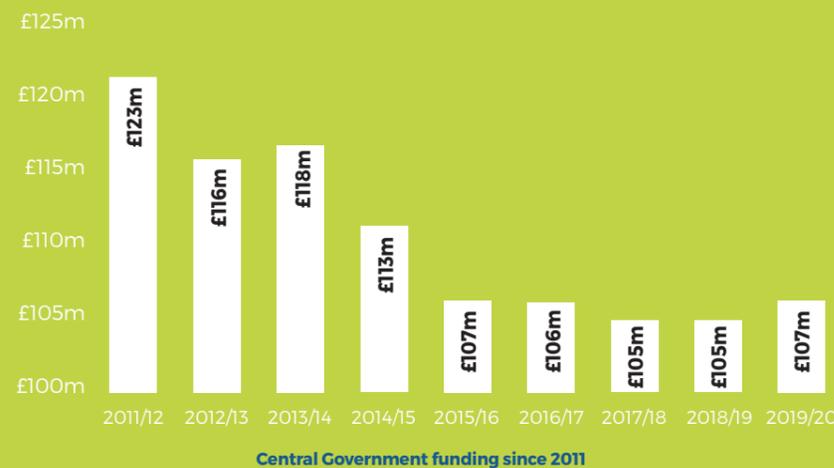
Raising the precept is not a decision I take lightly as I realise any increase in taxation will be challenging for some of our residents. However, this was necessary to protect the front-line and to deliver the service that the public rightly expects.

The precept funding allowed me to set aside funding for an additional 43 frontline police officers and seven PCSOs in 2019/20 to increase police visibility in our communities. These extra officers have been integral in further developing our community policing model, in line with my vision for bringing back a truly local policing service across Cheshire.

Addressing the effects of austerity

Cheshire Constabulary has had to make more than £60 million worth of savings since 2010 as a result of government cuts to funding. Through a strict budgeting process, my priority has been to ensure that the Constabulary is as efficient as it can be, allowing me to invest in the front-line and protect the service to the public.

I have also adopted this budgeting approach to my office and managed to reduce expenditure on my office budget in real-terms again this year. This has ensured my office has one of the lowest budgets in the country, costing just 0.3% of the overall Cheshire Police expenditure.

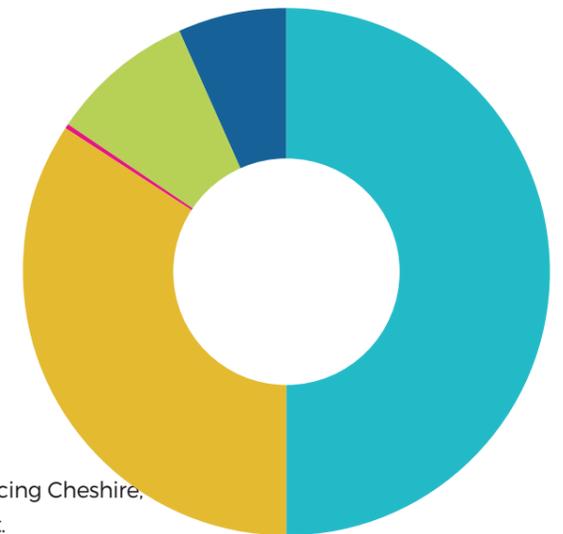


A police service fit for the future

The charts below provide details of funding for policing in Cheshire and an overview of expenditure for 2018/19.

Cheshire Police funding 2019/20

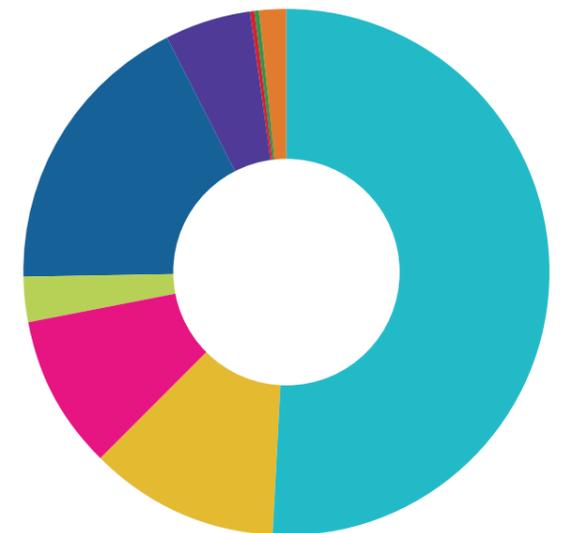
	Funding £000	%
Government Grants	110,012	50.2%
Council Tax Precept	75,548	34.5%
Interest on Balances	164	0.1%
Specific Grants	18,964	8.7%
Service Income	14,480	6.5%
Total	219,169	100.0%



Your Council Tax contributes **34.5%** towards the cost of policing Cheshire, with Government grants and other income providing the rest.

Cheshire Police Expenditure 2019/20

	Expenditure £000	%
Police Pay	116,522	51.2%
Local Policing	26,106	11.5%
Investigations	22,157	9.7%
Centrally Delivered Services	6,380	2.8%
Business Services	40,170	17.8%
Collaborations	11,829	5.2%
Corporate Costs	258	0.1%
OPCC Office Costs	783	0.3%
OPCC Commissioning	3,196	1.4%
Total	227,401	100.0%
Corporate Costs and Accounting Adjustments	-13,192	
Transfer to/(from) reserves	4,959	



*Information is provided from the unaudited draft statement of accounts income and expenditure analysis and may be subject to change prior to final accounts sign off. This has been delayed to November 2020 on a national basis as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Future proofing our police service



A police service fit for the future

An increase in officer numbers

Over the last four years, I have continuously called on the government to increase police resources for local communities in Cheshire.

Cheshire Constabulary has lost a significant number of officers since 2010, whilst demands on the service have increased tremendously in terms of both volume and complexity.

By raising the precept, with the support of the public, I have been able to invest in our front-line and increase officer numbers. This investment has allowed me to further develop our community policing model, with the introduction of problem solving teams across the county and plans to deliver a named, faced Police Constable for each community in Cheshire.

Whilst I welcome the government's commitment to replace some of the officers that have been lost since 2010, it is important to recognise that it will take a minimum of two years for these officers to be operationally independent and that officer numbers will still not return to the levels seen before 2010.

With demands on policing increasing significantly over the past decade, there are still significant challenges ahead.



Supporting local businesses

I am committed to putting Cheshire first and, where possible, supporting local businesses to provide our services whilst still delivering value for money, providing local jobs and reducing environmental impacts. In March 2020, I launched the OPCC and Constabulary's first social value and ethical procurement policies to ensure the contracts we procure have benefits for the local community. To mark this launch, I held an event at Cheshire Police HQ with local businesses across the county to encourage them to bid for work with us. It was attended by a number of businesses from a range of sectors from those working in recruitment to and construction to charities and other organisations in the third and voluntary sectors. They were all shown how to access the constabulary's contract database and tendering system. I look forward to working with them in the future.



Increased health support for employees

Police officers and police staff work in an incredibly high pressured environment every day, often putting themselves in harm's way to keep us safe. From witnessing excessive trauma to working long hours on a regular basis, sometimes the demands of the job can be too much and it's our job to ensure they have the right support in place to help them carry-out their roles, whether that is for their physical, psychological, social or financial wellbeing.

This year the Chief Constable and I committed to enhancing occupational health care for all members of staff in Cheshire Constabulary. This included providing early intervention support and increased mental health counselling for front line police officers as part of a new 12 month pilot programme. We also committed to offering fully-funded respite care away from the frontline at specialist treatment centres and providing in-house screening and support for employees showing signs of dyslexia.

Looking forward

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought into sharp focus the value of local communities and the support we can give each other. Over the next year I will focus on reconnecting our communities, following one of the most challenging periods in living memory. Building on the success of providing every policing community in Cheshire with its own PCSO, I will ensure all 122 police communities has its own dedicated Police Constable working in the heart of the community. This will further strengthen our community policing model and will see officers and PCSOs working closely with local communities to develop problem solving approaches to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour. This will be complemented by increased funding for local policing units, with all 122 communities offered a £1,000 grant, made available from money seized from criminals under the Proceeds of Crime Act (PoCA), to develop projects which reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. This will send a message to local communities that crime doesn't pay and money from PoCA will be reinvested to support local communities that have suffered as a result of such criminality.

I will also continue to prioritise care for victims with increased investments into Cheshire's Women's Centres to support survivors of domestic

abuse alongside the continuation of funding for Cheshire's Integrated Anti-Stalking Unit to develop it into a Threat Management Unit, assessing other serious crimes, including rape and sexual abuse, using the same successful methods.

Increased investment into the Force Control Centre to improve service for callers to 999 and 101 will also be prioritised, along with investment into 'pro-active' operations to tackle county lines drug activity and other serious and organised crime.

As we see our officers and staff work in increasingly challenging environments, improved occupational health will continue to be a priority as we move towards an 'in-house' model for workplace healthcare.

I will also launch the second phase of Cheshire's Anti-Bullying Commission, focusing on workplace bullying and its effects on moral.

Once again, I will continue to put Cheshire residents at the heart of key decisions made to ensure I continue to remain the 'voice of the people' and that their police service remains truly local and effective in keeping them safe.



A police service fit for the future

Ensuring Cheshire Constabulary delivers a high level of service

As your elected Police and Crime Commissioner, it is my responsibility to hold the Chief Constable to account on your behalf to ensure Cheshire Constabulary is delivering an efficient and effective police service which keeps you safe.

I regularly review the performance of the Constabulary and scrutinise key operational decisions to ensure our local police service is answerable to the communities it serves.

Throughout 2019/2020, I continued to hold Scrutiny Board meetings in public to consider performance against the priorities identified in my Police and Crime Plan, as well as a wide range of performance information relating to all aspects of policing.

Following the introduction of thematic reporting in each of the four key priority areas of the Police and Crime Plan in 2018/2019, I continued this approach to ensure a deep dive in one of the key priority areas at each meeting, scrutinising performance and delivery of key priorities within local communities throughout Cheshire. Here are some of the key issues I highlighted in 2019/20 through the Scrutiny Board process.

Knife Crime



Given the national increase in knife crime and associated media coverage, I asked the Chief Constable to give an update in relation to the Constabulary's approach to tackling knife crime across Cheshire. I supported the ongoing work of Cheshire Constabulary in relation to knife crime within Halton (Operation Abolish) and welcomed the Chief Constable's decision to continue to roll out this approach across the whole of Cheshire. This year I provided funding to support the Knife Angel visit to Cheshire to raise awareness of the effects of knife crime on our communities. Made entirely of confiscated knives, the statue is a symbolic reminder of the devastating knife crime can have on people's lives. To mark the Knife Angel's visit to Cheshire, I co-hosted a Tackling Weapons Conference at Chester Cathedral where the Knife Angel was in situ. The event showcased Cheshire Constabulary's partnership approach to tackling knife crime, the habitual carrying of weapons and serious violence across the county.



Vulnerable people

At the Scrutiny Board meeting in November 2019, I requested a presentation from the Chief Constable in relation to adults at risk and vulnerability within our local communities. This followed the publication of the joint HMICFRS and HMCPSI national thematic report published in July 2019 entitled 'the poor relation'. The report had concluded that nationally, 'crime against older people isn't well understood' and police forces only have a 'superficial understanding' of the nature and extent of crimes against older people. I sought assurances on behalf of the public that there would be a focus and commitment in relation to vulnerability in Cheshire and welcomed the assurance provided by the Chief Constable.



Recruitment processes

As part of the scrutiny process, I also held an 'extraordinary' Scrutiny Board meeting in September 2019 in order to scrutinise recruitment processes within Cheshire Constabulary. The Scrutiny Board focused upon the ruling of an employment tribunal following the 2017/18 police officer recruitment process. Following the employment tribunal and a review of current recruitment processes, the Chief Constable provided assurance that the recruitment, selection and promotion processes (for police officers and staff) operating in Cheshire Constabulary are in line with the College of Policing standards of practice, equality legislation and current industry best practice.



Major investigations

The Scrutiny Board meeting in November 2019 also included presentations in relation to serious and organised crime / county lines and the work of the Major Investigation Team following a homicide.

I welcomed the real insight with regard to the most serious crimes committed within society and the massive resource, effort, commitment and partnership required for a murder investigation. Due to the increase in homicides within Cheshire over the previous 18 month period, I sought assurance from the Chief Constable that the Constabulary was adequately resourced given the ongoing significant challenges for the Major Investigation Team and the requirement to mobilise resources from across the organisation to support investigations. I committed to further discussions with the Chief Constable as part of the budget setting process for 2020/2021.

Crime statistics

Between April 2019 and March 2020, there was a slight increase in crime in Cheshire. Figures released by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) show a 1.4 percent increase in overall crime.

It is worth noting that these figures cover the 12-months before the introduction of the restrictions put in place as part of the fight against COVID-19.

Through my public scrutiny programme, I have sought to identify any areas for improvement and ensure that plans are in place to make our communities safer.

The reduction in knife offences is in contrast to a national increase, and what I believe is down to the proactive approach the Constabulary has taken to tackling knife crime working alongside partners and other agencies.

I would like to reassure residents that Cheshire continues to be a safe place to live and I will continue to monitor performance to ensure Cheshire Constabulary is doing all it can to reduce crime and bring those responsible to justice.

The full release of the April 2019 to March 2020 crime statistics from the Office of National Statistics can be accessed below:



<https://www.ons.gov.uk/people-populationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2020>



Assessment of Cheshire's Constabulary's performance

The latest Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) PEEL inspection of Cheshire Constabulary was completed in March 2019 and reported in my annual report for 2018/19. This inspection found that Cheshire Constabulary was rated as 'good' in all areas of assessment; Efficiency, Effectiveness and Legitimacy.

Full details assessment can be read at HMICFRS Cheshire:



<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/police-forces/cheshire/>





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