

RAG Briefing – September/October 2019

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## September Overview:

**Recruitment of frontline officers**

The number of police officers in Hertfordshire Constabulary are continuing to rise following the increase in the council tax precept at the start of the year. In September, an additional 15 officers graduated into the force having completed their 16-week training course, and have already started performing their duties at local stations across the county.

The Constabulary are continuing to recruit to meet the current establishment figure of 2,034, with more intakes scheduled over the coming months.

**Refresh of the PCC’s Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan: Everybody’s Business**

Engagement and consultation with the public and partners on the refresh of the Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan started in October 2018 with a ‘Looking Forward’ event. The event brought together community safety and criminal justice partners across the county to have their say about the type of challenges they are facing now and foresee in the years ahead.

The PCC recognises that the refreshed Plan is being prepared as central government has announced the good news that there will be a further 20,000 officers recruited to policing in England and Wales. Further details are emerging, but it is not yet clear where officers will be deployed or the impact on Hertfordshire Constabulary. The public have been asked their views.

Between 6th August and 4th September 2019, the public and partners were invited to share their thoughts on the draft refreshed Plan. The Plan was circulated widely. This included: six county boards and the Community Safety and Waste Management Panel as well as community and voluntary organisations. In addition, 200 victim organisations and 150 victims of crime who agreed to be contacted were asked for their thoughts. Via OWL 133,000 households and businesses across the county were sent a copy of the Plan and the consultation was heavily publicised through local newspapers and social media. For the first time, Echo, a new digitally innovative platform was used to run a listening post and an SMS text messaging service was used allowing residents an opportunity to provide fast feedback via their mobile device.

In total, over 450 residents and stakeholders responded to the consultation. Of those we received detailed comments from the countywide boards, parish and residents associations, Clinical Commissioning Groups and community safety and criminal justice partners.

Feedback from the public and partners has been collated and used to inform the final draft which was presented to the Police and Crime Panel at their meeting on 19th September.

It is anticipated that hard-copies will be ready for distribution in the next few weeks.



**Forthcoming Retail Crime Seminar for Hertfordshire Businesses, 23rd October 2019**

The Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire together with the Independent Business Advisory Group are hosting a free breakfast seminar on 23rd October 2019 from 8am - 10am at Aubrey Park Hotel, Hertfordshire for 30 local businesses.

Over breakfast, retailers will be given the opportunity to hear from experts about the retail crime landscape in Hertfordshire, advice on how to prevent businesses from becoming a victim of cybercrime and the current legal obligations for businesses. There will also be an opportunity to network with local business owners and representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, Growth Hub and Federation of Small Businesses.

**Policing Reviews**

In support of the PCC’s district days, the Commissioner’s office is coordinating an information pack that brings together relevant crime and disorder information about each of the 10 CSPs. It will use data from a range of sources including the CSP strategic assessment, policing priorities, feedback from local priority setting forums, together with data on complaints compliments, confidence levels and victim satisfaction to give an overall picture of the priorities and challenges within each district/borough and provide some recommendations on areas of focus over the coming year. To date, the reviews have taken place in Stevenage and East Herts. The remaining eight CSP reviews will be completed by the end of October.

**Community Connection Days**

In conjunction with his districts visits, the PCC has recently started a new community engagement initiative to help spread awareness that police stations continue to remain open across the county.

The OPCC often receive comments by members of the public that police stations have closed. Community Connection Days have been designed to demonstrate to the public that although they may not have a front-counter, police stations remain operational and officers are available for an appointment should they be needed.

In the past month, two community connection days have been held in Dacorum and Three Rivers, in which the PCC has held a stand outside the police station, providing members of the public with the opportunity to speak with him directly and the local officers who are in attendance. These days have also been well supported by the Constabulary’s ECHO team and Neighbourhood Watch’s District Coordinators, encouraging an ever closer relationship between the police and the public.

The next community connection day will be held in Welwyn on the 9th October, followed by Royston on the 31st October.

**Hertfordshire Problem Solving Conference 2019**

The annual problem solving conference was held at the Fielder Centre on the 16th September. A number of new and innovative problem solving approaches were demonstrated at the conference, with the three nominated finalists presenting their projects to more than 100 officers and staff from across Hertfordshire Constabulary, partner agencies and neighbouring forces.

Hertsmere Community Safety Partnership were awarded with the Mick Fogarty prize for their outstanding problem solving led approach to addressing anti-social behaviour resulting from an incident of hoarding by a resident in Borehamwood. The partnership led project has not only resulted in a prevention of further ASB related activity, but has ensured that those involved received the support and help that was needed.

Partners are encouraged to sign up to the Knowledge Hub, which has been created for public and private sector agencies to help share information and discuss ideas through its online platform. If you would like to register, you can do so through the following link; <https://knowledgehub.group>

**Launch of the Hertfordshire Fraud and Scams Strategy**

The Hertfordshire Fraud and Scams Strategy was launched at the Community Safety Board on the 26th September. The strategy, which focuses on Hertfordshire residents, seeks to provide information on current crime and safety risks, helping residents to stay alert to the potential vulnerabilities, and to coordinate a partnership approach to address these threats.

To help support its delivery, the strategy has been split into three separate sections; Prevention, Protection and Pursue. The Protection strand incorporates the ongoing work of the Beacon Fraud Hub which is providing specialist support to victims of fraud across the county.



**Road Safety Fund 2019/20**

Round 4 of the fund was launched on the 10th October with the Commissioner hosting an event at Tewin Bury Farm Hotel, Welwyn. Over 35 people attended including representatives from Parish, Town Councils as well as DriveSafe and other neighbourhood groups.  ***The fund closes on Friday 8th November 2019* (midnight).**

Using the surplus generated from motorists who have committed driving offences and been ordered to pay court costs following prosecution, or who have attended educational diversionary courses (such as speed awareness course), the Road Safety Fund looks to fund new and innovative ways of improving road safety and changing behaviour.

Please visit the following webpage for details of previous years’ approved projects as well as guidance notes and application form: <http://hertscommissioner.org/road-safety-fund>

To find out more e-mail [Grants@herts.pcc.pnn.gov.uk](mailto:Grants@herts.pcc.pnn.gov.uk)

# Forward Look

**Beacon Fraud Hub**

Using funding provided by the Ministry of Justice, the Police and Crime Commissioner has allocated £150,000 to support victims of fraud across the county. This funding has gone towards the hiring of four additional staff, from both Hertfordshire Constabulary’s Victim Service and Catch 22 for the creation of a Fraud Hub, providing specialist support to victims of fraud.

Currently the service accepts referrals from victims who have reported either to the Police or Action Fraud (700 victims per month). Victims who are vulnerable and/or have suffered a financial loss are offered a support plan that covers practical advice to prevent re-victimisation and emotional support to help them through a particularly stressful period in their life. Victims can also self-refer. It is intended over the course of the pilot to extend referral pathways into the service as well as developing outreach, including fraud and scam workshops.

The Fraud hub has now been running for 6 months. A post implementation review will be taking place next summer to understand the impact of the pilot and whether any changes can be made to continue to improve the service to victims of fraud across the county.

**Hertfordshire to bid to the Home Office Safer Streets Fund**

On 30th September, the Home Secretary announced a new £25 million Safer Streets fund, providing Police and Crime Commissioners with the opportunity to bid for funding to help prevent acquisitive crime.

The fund, which will be available for 2020/2021, will support situational crime prevention, most notably measures such as target hardening, alleygating and CCTV to help areas who suffer from a disproportionate level of acquisitive crime. PCC’s will be the lead bidders but will demonstrate a partnership approach to tackling these issues, with local authorities, police, communities and other external partners involved in all successful bids.

An event will be held in London on the 7th November to discuss the process for applying in greater detail, with the Home Office expecting to be accepting applications from the start of January 2020.

**Local Partnership Reserve: Funding to Support Crime and ASB Reduction Initiatives 2019/20**

In October 2016 £400K was made available by the Police and Crime Commissioner to assist community safety partners to respond to nuisance crimes including ASB, fly-tipping and fly-grazing.

£100K was made available for the funds final year. £18,000 has currently been spent, including £5,000 for all local authorities to pay for specialist legal advice by the Mallard Consultancy and £9,000 to purchase branded merchandise for the Constabulary’s Gangs and Schools Team. Partners are encouraged to apply until the end of this financial year. Applications must demonstrate the following;

1. Demonstrate a problem solving approach using O’SARA and with due consideration to the victim, location and offender;
2. Relate to a current Community Safety Priority;
3. Clearly show how the community is involved in identifying what is happening, why it is happening and in determining the response(s) to which the application relates, and;
4. Support a response to tackle nuisance or anti-social behaviour and associated crime (and includes fly-tipping, fly-grazing and other environmental issues).
5. Provide ‘matched’ (or contribution) funding to ensure that there is joint ownership of the issues the funding is seeking to tackle

Application form:



For more information, please contact Insp. Lara Richards on 01707 354573 or [Larissa.Richards@Herts.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Larissa.Richards@Herts.pnn.police.uk) if you wish to discuss your application for funding.

**Police and Crime Commissioner’s Action Fund 2019/20**

The PCC’s Action Fund is currently accepting applications.  Grants of up to £5000 are available to help support community and voluntary initiatives which will reduce crime and make Hertfordshire a safer place to live by helping to deliver the priorities of the Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan for Hertfordshire (2017-2022).

Using funds recovered under the Proceeds of Crime Act, the Fund empowers local groups to find solutions to community safety problems. The Commissioner is keen to work with and fund a range of organisations from the community who have a shared interest in delivering positive outcomes and improved services for residents.

In Round 1 (2019/20) approximately £50,000 was allocated to 10 projects including towards older person’s safety awareness events, parent/guardian violence awareness and hate crime awareness in schools. The 17 bids submitted in Round 2 are currently being assessed.

The 3nd Round of applications will close on the 25th October 2019.

For more information, including eligibility and grant criteria, please see the website below: <http://www.hertscf.org.uk/pcc-action-fund>

**Community Safety Grant 2020/21**

The Police and Crime Commissioner oversees a Community Safety Grant which supports work with partner organisations / multiagency partnerships that have a vital part to play in keeping Hertfordshire’s communities safe.  Details of the 2020/21 fund are yet to be finalised.  Please keep checking the following website for updates: <http://hertscommissioner.org/community-safety-fund>