

THE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN

A SAFER AND FAIRER BEDFORDSHIRE

PCC John Tizard

Stage One: October 2024 - March 2025
Stage Two: 2025 - 2028 to follow



Bedfordshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner

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Preface

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) has a duty to produce a Police and Crime Plan for the period of their term in office, which currently is for the period 2024 to 2028.

The PCC is focussing this plan on his six missions which are underpinned by objectives. The PCC recognises these missions and objectives will evolve over the period of the plan. His overarching mission is to make Bedfordshire safer and fairer.

This plan must be ambitious yet achievable. It must maximise impact and public benefit, have measurable outcomes, and be affordable within tight financial constraints.

This plan has two stages, **October 2024 to March 2025**, and **April 2025 to May 2028**. This document principally sets out the plan for stage one, with stage two being published in March 2025. Stage one will be a combination of some objectives and establishing the foundation for the longer term.

Some of the objectives will take much longer than four years to be realised, particularly those which require whole-system, cultural and behavioural change.

This two-stage approach ensures that the longer-term plan:

- follows a more comprehensive and intensive public consultation and joint planning with key partners including local authorities, the NHS, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service and criminal justice organisations, community groups, trade unions, professional associations and local businesses,
- aligns with the plans of local authority partners and with ideally joint plans between these agencies,
- addresses the new government's policies, initiatives, and targets,
- reflects the government's spending review,
- is underpinned by a three-year budget for Bedfordshire Police and the PCC's Office – as a plan without a budget is simply a “wish list”,
- allows time for measures to be taken to strengthen and restructure the PCC's Office to ensure delivery of the plan,
- allows for publication of the report from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) of its inspection of Bedfordshire Police service in September 2024,
- and allows the proposed mission boards to develop long term strategies.

Stage one of the plan will focus on:

- establishing Mission Boards (**see Appendix I**), governance and a PCC's Office that can develop the plan and ensure its implementation,
- agreeing clear objectives and measurable outcomes for the longer term,
- listening and having informed conversations with residents, businesses, stakeholders and experts,
- setting a three-year budget for the police service and the PCC's Office,
- and aligning the use of grants and contracts from the PCC's Office with the plan.

Message from the Police and Crime Commissioner

The people of Bedfordshire have a right to be safe and to feel safe. Everyone who lives in, works in or visits Bedfordshire is entitled to benefit from an effective and efficient police service. They are entitled to be able to access and benefit from high performing services across the criminal justice system, and across the wider public service landscape.

Every public organisation and every elected official should pursue greater equality, social justice and fairness. The upholding of human rights of citizens, victims, witnesses, suspects, and offenders is non-negotiable.

As the Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire, I am the only elected politician who represents the whole county. I have a duty to ensure that there is an effective and efficient police service and wider criminal justice system.

I am assisted by my Deputy PCC Umme Ali, who will advise me on the missions for tackling violence against women and children and putting victims at the heart of the criminal justice system.

This Police and Crime Plan is based on six missions designed to reshape public services including policing, to tackle the causes of crime and inequality, and to create safer communities. They will hold true for the next four years and probably beyond. The objectives and specific proposals will evolve, and I want the people of Bedfordshire,

local businesses, the voluntary and community organisations, trade unions and our public sector partners to contribute to this evolution.



“Cutting poverty and inequality is the best way to reduce crime. There needs to be substantial funding into the infrastructure of our inner cities and our more deprived areas.”

“We need to reduce that deprivation and the scale of deprivation that we see in some of our communities, because if you give people a viable alternative, not all but a lot will take it.”

“If we don’t do that, then policing will always be on the back foot.”

***His Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services,
Andy Cooke QPM DL***

I will be accountable for the implementation of both Stage One and Stage Two of this plan, but I do see it as our plan, due to the need for contributions to its success by all the key players in Bedfordshire.

The missions will require both behavioural change and system change, not simply more money or more resources. Some of this change needs to be bold and radical. Much of what is required will take many years - some even beyond 2028. Change can be difficult, but it must not be avoided.

I regard the police as a public service. They must be integrated with the NHS, local government, schools, and other services. There are many opportunities to align plans and share resources.

Policing by consent requires a partnership with, and the support of the people who live and work in our county. Policing must put people first. It must be based on values and a commitment to deliver a service of consistently high quality. Key components of this must be that the police service is accessible, responsive, visible and treats people with fairness, respect, and dignity.

Our criminal justice system is broken after a decade of austerity, and like other services the police are significantly underfunded. We have a duty to seek to repair them and, whilst pressing for extra funding, we must ensure that the resources currently available are used effectively and efficiently.

In terms of criminal justice, we must take every step we can to prevent people, especially young people, from becoming involved in crime either voluntarily or

involuntarily and if they do where appropriate avoiding custodial sentences.

Bedfordshire is a county of many towns and villages with different pressures and needs.

This plan is based on ensuring an equitable allocation of resources, especially police resources, across every part of the county.

This is not the same as everywhere having the same level of policing, as policing must be needs led, but that should never mean that anywhere in the county is not policed. It is important to recognise that everywhere benefits from policing even if this is not always visible policing.

This is going to be an exciting journey and one we should all wish to be on.

As PCC, I will advocate for and be a social activist for social justice and criminal justice together.

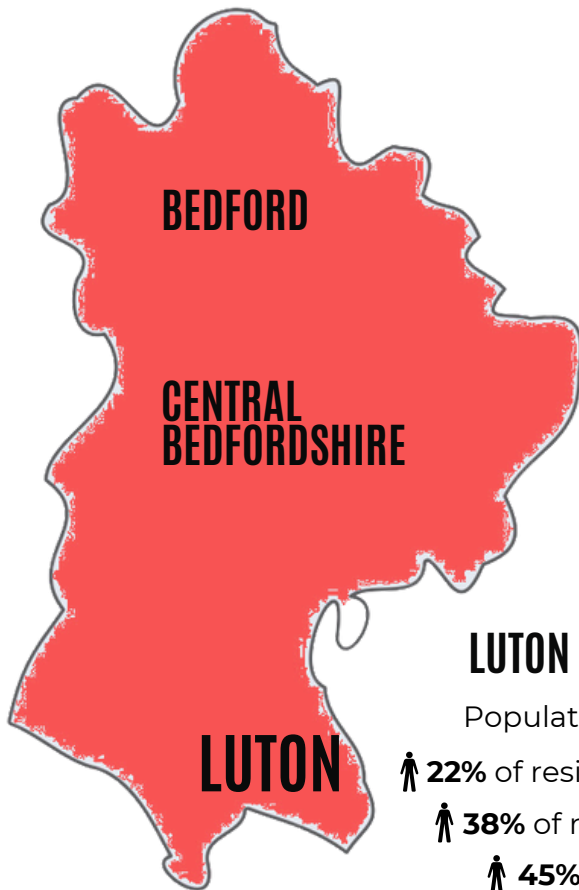


Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire

John Tizard

Bedfordshire: a county of diversity

county
population
705K



BEDFORD BOROUGH

- 👤 Population density of **388 per m2**
 - 👤 Largest population increase in East of England
 - 👤 **35%** of residents over 16 are unable to work
 - 👤 **76%** White, **13%** Asian, **5%** Black, **4%** Mixed, **2%** Other
 - 👤 **88%** speak English as their main language
- 79.69 crimes per 1000 people recorded in 2023



CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE

- 👤 Population density of **411 per m2**
 - 👤 Largely rural area, some population in towns
 - 👤 **33%** of residents over 16 are unable to work
 - 👤 **90%** White, **4%** Asian, **2%** Black, **3%** Mixed
 - 👤 **95%** speak English as their main language
- 55.27 crimes per 1000 people recorded in 2023



Bedfordshire is home to London Luton airport, as well as sections of the M1 and A1 motorways

LUTON BOROUGH

- Population density of **5196 per m2**
- 👤 **22%** of residents have no qualifications
 - 👤 **38%** of residents over 16 are unable to work
 - 👤 **45%** White, **37%** Asian, **10%** Black, **5%** Mixed
 - 👤 **88%** speak English as their main language
- 88 crimes per 1000 people recorded in 2023



Luton is the most densely populated of the East of England's 45 local authority areas

Delivering the PCC's missions

Mission-based and mission-driven policing and criminal justice

The Police and Crime Commissioner is adopting a mission-based approach.

What are missions?

These are a small number of ambitious, long-term goals on which the PCC will concentrate resources and political capital.

They are:

- clear ambitions which are defined enough to secure significant, affordable and sustainable change to make Bedfordshire safer and fairer,
- based on a bold vision for change which sets out a challenge to Bedfordshire Police, the wider criminal justice system, public sector partners, businesses, the community and voluntary sectors and the public,
- long term strategic goals which are not based on short term political ends (some goals may take ten years to be realised but they can still form part of the four year plan),
- outcome focused and not about setting inputs,
- catalysts for innovation and challenge to tradition,
- about continuous learning and improvement,
- set to achieve demonstrable change that the public can see,
- and are designed to ensure that the PCC is accountable and in turn for him to hold the Chief Constable to account and coordinate the wider criminal justice system.

Find out more about the mission-led approach in Appendix I of this plan.



The role of the PCC

The PCC does not have operational responsibility for Bedfordshire Police. He sets strategic direction through this plan and the budget. The PCC holds the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of an effective and efficient police service based on this plan.

The PCC will review all budgets including that of the police service and his own office. He will also make the case to government to improve national funding for policing and the wider criminal justice system.

The PCC has responsibility to coordinate the wider criminal justice system in Bedfordshire. He chairs the Local Criminal Justice Board which brings together the partners responsible for all elements of the system to develop joint strategies and to deliver joint solutions.

He will work with the three unitary local authorities in the county and other public sector agencies to strengthen joint planning, working and resource sharing. **In addition to these core responsibilities,**

The PCC holds the Chief Constable to account. He will:

- ✓ establish baselines for key areas of this plan in order to measure police and criminal justice performance
- ✓ review and strengthen governance arrangements
- ✓ review and rationalise all boards, committees and panels to improve decision making, use of resources and accountability
- ✓ strengthen the Stop and Search, Use of Force and Independent Custody Visiting scrutiny arrangements, to ensure they are effective and representative of the county's diversity and age profile

The PCC is accountable to the public. He will:

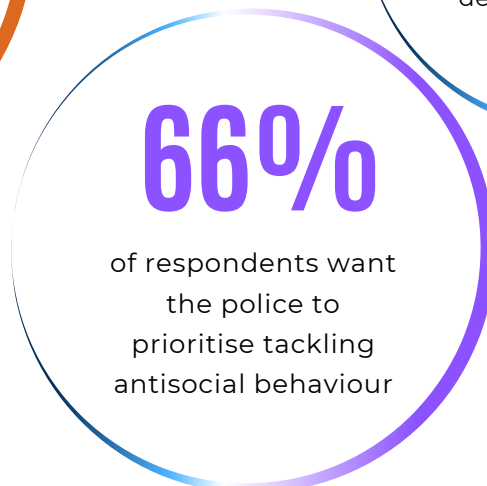
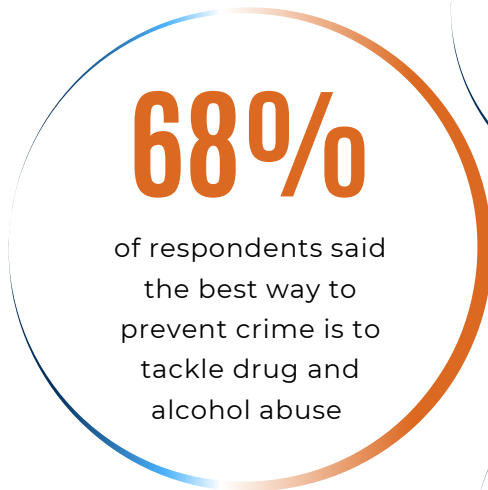
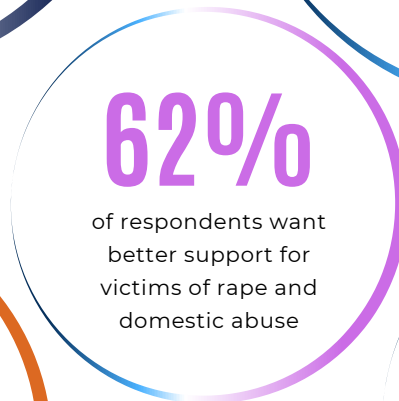
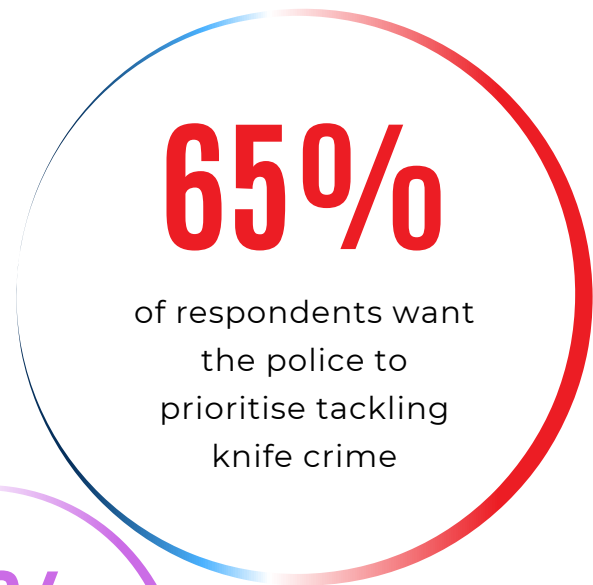
- ✓ attend regular public Accountability and Challenge meetings across the county
- ✓ ensure that he supports and answers to questions from the Police and Crime Panel
- ✓ establish advisory panels including youth panels: and set up citizens' panels and focus groups as well as polling to shape policy and monitor performance
- ✓ engage regularly with the press and local media
- ✓ be subject to an annual '360' degree public appraisal

The PCC uses his office to deliver the plan. He will:

- ✓ restructure the PCC's Office including appointing a new Chief Executive
- ✓ transfer elements of initial complaint handling from the police service to the PCC's Office to improve oversight
- ✓ reform commissioning arrangements with greater use of grants, innovative practice and joint activities with partners
- ✓ establish a county wide directory of voluntary and community sector groups involved with the criminal justice system; and contribute to building the sector capacity

You gave us your views...

Over the last few months, the PCC has been consulting residents, businesses and public sector partners across Bedfordshire and you told us...



[Read the Key Commitment document that the public were consulted on](#)

THE MISSIONS: A PLAN FOR CHANGE



Prevention

Prevention not only has societal benefit, but releases public sector resources for other priorities. Community safety cannot be achieved by the arresting of offenders alone.

It requires effective collaboration and data sharing, to ensure sustainable solutions are implemented to address long term causes of criminality.

There is a direct correlation between poverty, inequality and crime, with more deprived and marginalised communities more likely to be victims of crime or exploitation. This is why social justice is fundamental to this plan.

It is also important to have an understanding of the social and economic factors that are leading young people and adults to fall into crime. This will require action by all public sector partners and ultimately the government, to commit to address them.

Prevention can take many forms. Steps must be taken to reduce reoffending, such as by ensuring that prison leavers have access to housing, employment and help if they have drug or alcohol addictions. It requires availability of and access to better mental health services.

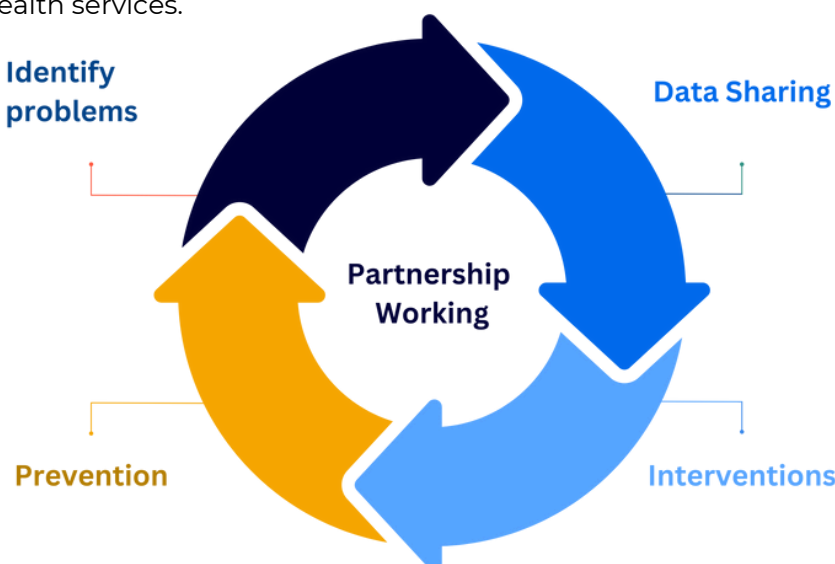
It may also include the restoration of youth services and strengthening youth re-offending work, and appropriate education programmes.

Local authorities have a role to play through their planning responsibilities, town centre management, highways and community safety programmes, and by ensuring that care leavers are properly supported. Joint working with the Fire and Rescue Services and the police also has a role to play.

The police contribute to preventing crime in a number of ways including through their crime prevention programmes and reinvigorating local policing will help police to identify potential offenders and intervene where needed to prevent crime.

This Police and Crime Plan aims to support our partner agencies over the next four years to develop and implement joined-up preventative programmes. There are also opportunities to divert people away from crime and those who have committed crime, away from custodial sentences which without effective rehabilitation often foster reoffending.

For stage one of this plan, much of the work required will be establishing strategies and frameworks for effective partnership working.



The PCC will:

- work with partners to create a virtual data-sharing hub that allows all agencies to have a pan-Bedfordshire understanding of local problems and to track data,
- agree a youth crime plan by 31st December 2024 in line with Home Office guidance, which will include, for example, the introduction of youth hubs, better mental health services and education programmes,
- develop cross-sector plans with a commitment to action and funding by all public sector partners,
- promote training of front-line staff in the police service, and ideally other agencies, around problem solving to identify patterns and to prevent crimes,
- use grants and commissioning to support voluntary organisations to deliver prevention programmes,
- increase the take-up rate of toolkits for schools from 75% to 100%, enabling them to deliver educational programmes to set out positive pathways for students,
- use funding from the Home Office to distribute preventative technology to homeowners, vehicle owners and the rural community, such as smart water kits and video doorbells,
- double the current availability of staff able to deliver training of restorative practices to staff, officers, and key partners to an approved standard to deliver problem solving mechanisms,
- increase the number of cases dealt with through out of court disposals from 377 so far this calendar year by at least 10%,
- consider hotspots as high priority areas when planning local and county-wide prevention strategies, interventions, and activities, identified by the strategic needs assessment of the Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit,
- explore further joint working with Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service,
- and actively contribute to the Bedfordshire Road Safety Partnership and supporting the mission to reduce road casualties by 50% by 2035.

The PCC is committed to convening partners to promote whole system change, reduce deprivation and consequently reduce crime.

Throughout the rest of his term, the PCC will, amongst other actions:



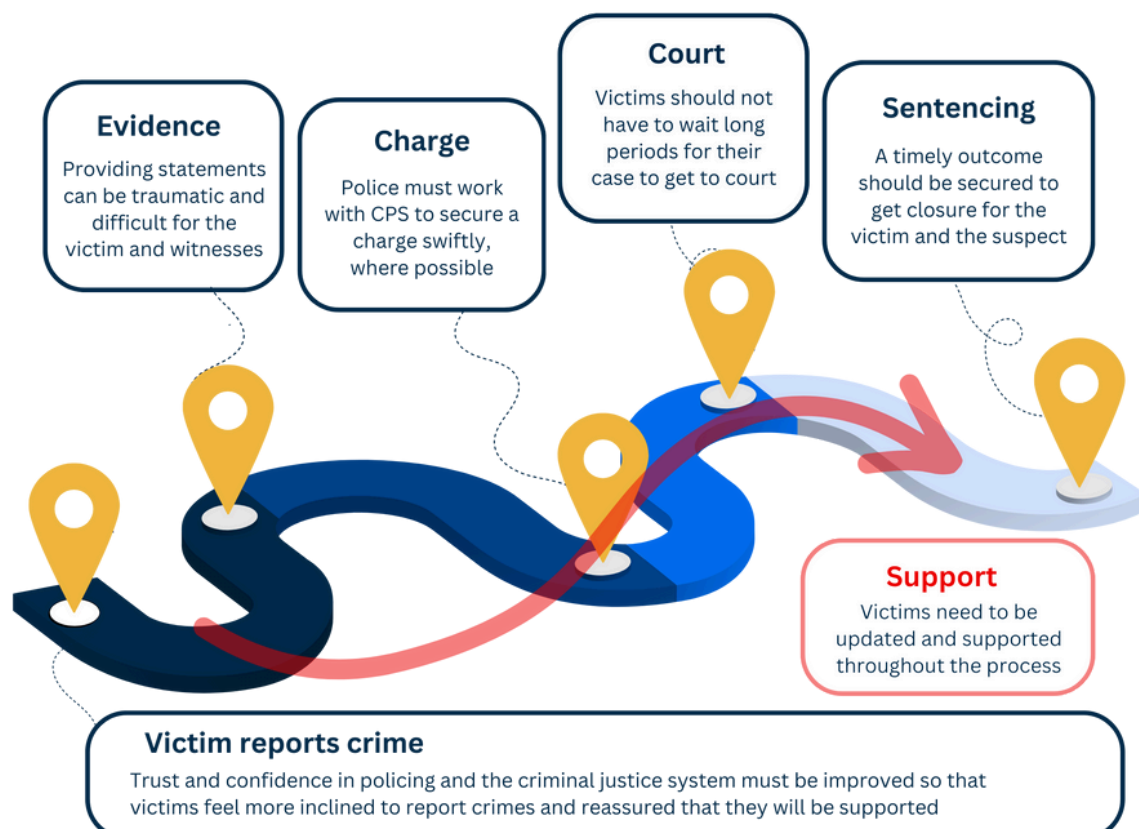
- ▶ develop a prison leavers support network designed to help prison leavers to re-integrate,
- ▶ encourage membership and the creation of watch schemes across the county,
- ▶ aim to double the funding of the Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit, with the support of partners,
- ▶ create and facilitate a community-based youth forum relating to prevention,
- ▶ explore launching an app for retailers to report, track and update crime reports to tackle shoplifting, by way of complying with the national retail crime action plan,
- ▶ introduce youth hubs in partnership with local authorities,
- ▶ and work towards educating and enabling people to protect themselves from fraud and cybercrime.

Putting victims at the heart of the criminal justice system

Victims rely on the police for reassurance, to solve crimes and sometimes for protection. Services the police must provide to victims include responding to a reported crime within a timeframe that is reasonable and proportionate to the level of threat faced. They also include investigating crimes thoroughly, covering all lines of enquiry to reach an outcome, whilst keeping victims informed of their progress. The police should respect and treat all victims fairly. Good customer service practice must be non-negotiable.

Unfortunately, the wider criminal justice system is too often failing victims. The support available from both the police service and its partners within the system is insufficient, making the process all the more difficult and uncomfortable for victims of crime. Throughout his term, the Police and Crime Commissioner must find ways to work with Bedfordshire Police and its partners within the Local Criminal Justice Board to improve communication, support, pace and effectiveness of justice for victims.

There is a need for long term cultural, behavioural and procedural change across the police and wider criminal justice services to ensure that victims are always respected and treated fairly. There is also a need for more strategic and operational partnership working. It also requires allocating funds where possible to organisations within all communities that can support victims of different crimes.



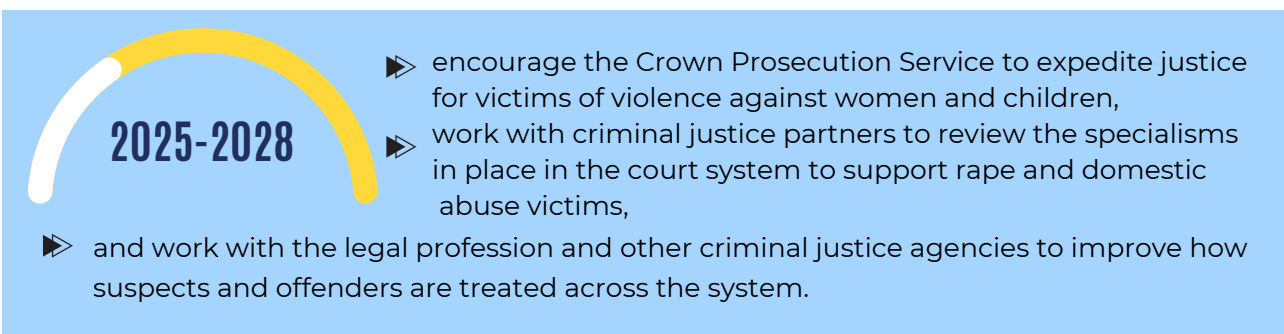
Over the next six months, the PCC will begin to put the foundations in place to achieve these objectives, starting with the following.

The PCC will:

- improve referrals to Bedfordshire Victim Care Services from current levels averaging at 20% of all victims by at least 5% and by 25% within four years,
- establish a victims' advisory group to work and advise him and the Deputy PCC,
- continue to fund counselling and support services for victims of all crime, using lived experience and non-discriminatory methods to help individuals overcome trauma of all kinds,
- review the availability of specialist capabilities within Bedfordshire Police to support people throughout the victim journey, identifying any gaps and how to fill them,
- improve Bedfordshire Police's Victims Code of Practice compliance to become fully compliant as per national expectations,
- strengthen the focus of the Local Criminal Justice Board to put victims at the heart of the system,
- hold the Chief Constable to account to improve the current capability of officers, staff members and control room staff to deliver a consistent and appropriate response to victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence,
- ensure that the services we commission are representative of our communities, by continuing to identify gaps in the provision of our services, and funding place-based victim support services where needed,
- finance the accreditation of restorative justice practitioners who can train officers and staff within the police service to deliver restorative practices for victims and perpetrators,
- and pursue a memorandum of understanding with commitments from all the Local Criminal Justice Board partners to take action to improve the victims' experience.

In the longer term, the PCC is committed to ensuring that victims receive an excellent service from both the police and the rest of its criminal justice partners.

This means that during the rest of his term, the PCC will, amongst other actions:



- ▶ encourage the Crown Prosecution Service to expedite justice for victims of violence against women and children,
- ▶ work with criminal justice partners to review the specialisms in place in the court system to support rape and domestic abuse victims,
- ▶ and work with the legal profession and other criminal justice agencies to improve how suspects and offenders are treated across the system.

Tackling serious crime

Tackling serious crime must be the prime focus of the police service to ensure the safety of all residents. Tackling serious crime contributes to the county's economic health, enhances inward investment, and benefits local businesses. Bedfordshire experiences some of the highest rates of serious crimes including drug, gun and gang crime in the country.

To tackle serious crime effectively requires a laser focus on stopping and disrupting the supply of drugs, arresting those responsible for the supply, and providing appropriate sentencing and/or treatment for users.

Knife crime is a serious problem, with too many young people carrying knives. All too often such crime can be linked to serious and organised crime with young people being exploited.

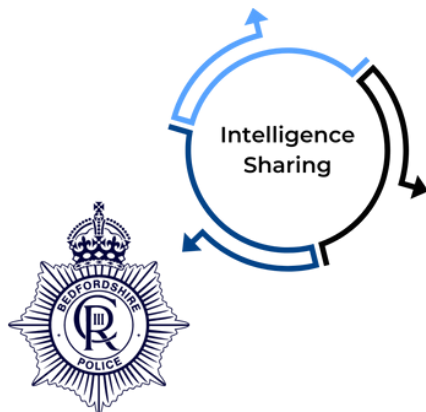
All serious crime must be tackled with a strong, zero tolerance approach, making use of the intelligence gathered by their own sources and by working with other agencies. Communities have a responsibility to report serious crime and local policing is an important source of intelligence.

Local authority community safety plans and the Police and Crime Plan must be aligned.

Bedfordshire Police has, but must invest more in, effective and well-trained teams dedicated to the tackling of serious crime. It must work collaboratively with other police services on serious crime including knife crime, gun crime, organised crime, exploitation, fraud and cybercrime.

The PCC intends to work with the police service to prevent instances of serious crime, and to keep people safe from exploitation, harm, and violence. He is committed to ensuring that Bedfordshire has the resources for effective and adequate counter terrorism provision.

Recorded crimes relating to serious violence in Bedfordshire show an increase since last year of around 10%, and the rate at which these crimes are being solved remains at only 10-15% of those. Throughout the PCC's term, it will be vital that the mission board focused on tackling serious crime is thorough in its analysis of the work being carried out by the police service in this area, and in identifying ways in which it can be improved. The PCC expects improvements in police performance.



Bedfordshire Police
Compassionate | Courageous | Inclusive | Professional | Proud



Over the next six months, the PCC will begin to drive the following objectives to tackle serious crime. **The PCC will:**

- monitor the effectiveness of the police service's approach and require continuous improvements to tackling serious and organised crime, setting realistic yet stretching objectives for the next four years and beyond,
- support the introduction of a new team dedicated to the investigation of drug dealing and possession,
- hold the Chief Constable to account for addressing serious crime,
- monitor the improvement of Bedfordshire Police's response to serious and organised crime following the latest HMICFRS inspection,
- work with partners to set up a Serious Violence Directory, detailing projects to prevent and reduce serious harm,
- explore ways to assist the police in encouraging members of the public to report instances of all drug crime to help to identify patterns that inform investigations of serious and organised crime,
- hold the Chief Constable to account to meet targets set by the 10-year drug strategy,
- make the case to the government that funding for the Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit continues,
- make the case to local partners to contribute financially to doubling the size of the Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit,
- and, through the work of the Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit, deliver a range of activities that involve young people in agreed topics related to violence and exploitation, to generate debate, share experiences, gain knowledge, and shape responses.



In the longer term, the PCC is committed to ensuring that serious crime is tackled effectively in a collaborative and efficient manner.

Throughout the rest of his term, the PCC will, amongst other actions:

2025-2028

- establish a project to understand better the causes of different forms of serious crime and develop a ten-year cross public sector strategy to address the causes by 2035
- build on the strategies around local policing and prevention to identify patterns of criminal behaviour within communities to feed intelligence pictures for teams tackling organised crime,
- encourage the Chief Constable to have greater use of diversionary tactics at the stage of intervention for drug-related offences,
- and, through the work of the Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit, aim to discourage young people from carrying knives using the 'Just Drop It' campaign which addresses the myths and highlights the dangers associated with knives.

Protecting women and children from violence

In Great Britain there is a national emergency whereby one in twelve women are affected by crimes of sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking or harassment in their lifetime. Bedfordshire is no exception to this.

The disproportionate effect of these require targeted solutions that deal with the causes and the perpetrators. Crimes such as rape, female genital mutilation, stalking, harassment, and digital crimes such as cyber-flashing, 'revenge porn' and 'up-skirting' are taking place every day. They illustrate appalling, often outdated, attitudes and prejudice towards women and girls that sadly still exist.

Over the past year, over 11,000 instances of violence against women and children were recorded in Bedfordshire. The most common of these were stalking and harassment, violence with injury and violence without injury.

Child abuse is also a major problem which requires effective partnership working between local authorities, the health service and the police.

The main barriers to ensuring the protection of all women and children include overcoming the reluctance of victims to report instances of violence, assault and abuse. A commitment must be made by the police and all of its partners in the criminal justice system and beyond, to increase the confidence of victims to come forward and to talk to professionals, the police, and to their friends and families.

The PCC will continue to engage with the correct partners to provide a pan-

Bedfordshire approach to protecting women and children from violence, abuse and vulnerability.

Umme Ali, the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner advises the PCC on this mission, along with the mission to put victims at the heart of the criminal justice system.



***“Gender based violence and child abuse are pervasive societal crises that demand our full attention and commitment.*”**

***“For far too long, victims have been an afterthought in a criminal justice system that fails to address their basic needs. This is not just about changing policy, but changing a culture that has allowed this violence to persist in silence.*”**

***“The PCC and I will work with partners to ensure that we are prioritising the safety of women, children and victims with a zero tolerance to violence. We are dedicated to addressing these issues by asking difficult questions, taking decisive action and by scrutinising the police and our partners to ensure that every victim in Bedfordshire feels heard, protected and supported.”*”**

***Umme Ali
Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner***

Over the next six months, the PCC will start to progress and deliver the following objectives as the county begins on a journey that will deliver the government's landmark mission to halve violence against women and children within ten years.

The PCC will:

- investigate barriers to reporting crimes of violence against women and children and set targets to increase reporting,
- fund programmes to engage with women and children in 'hard-to-reach' communities,
- scrutinise Bedfordshire Police's work to improve their response to rape and serious sexual offences,
- review and strengthen inter-agency safeguarding for vulnerable adults and children,
- involve women's groups, community organisations, and those with direct experience of these crimes and safeguarding issues in this review,
- establish a single multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) including technological initiatives to improve data sharing,
- work with the Family Drug and Alcohol Court to grow their reach and secure long term sustainability within the mainstream judicial system,
- explore new models of support to victims of domestic abuse including the removal of perpetrators from family homes,
- invest in educational products that will enable schools to educate young people about healthy relationships and consent,
- support police and partnership initiatives to target dangerous repeat offenders and address the causes through bespoke referral services to diversion, treatment, and support,
- review the existing capability and capacity to provide support to women and children for whom English is not their first language, ensuring that partner organisations can provide support for all languages during counselling and other victims services,
- and promote a county-wide pledge from public, civic and business organisations to support a joint agenda for tackling violence against women and children.

Halving violence against women and children will take many years.

Throughout the rest of his term, the PCC will, amongst other actions:



- work with the police and partners on a zero tolerance approach to the causes of gender-based violence and support the government's proposal to treat extreme misogyny in the same way as terrorism,
- work with the police service and partners to strengthen strategies to address culturally-based misogyny and violence against women and girls including domestic abuse,
- hold the Chief Constable to account to ensure that police officers and staff are appropriately trained to handle violence against women and children including domestic abuse, with a particular focus on the police call centre,
- and explore new ways to make it easier for victims of sexual crimes and abuse including child abuse to report crimes safely.

Reinvigorating local policing

Local policing, based in, working with and responsive to communities, is essential to effective contemporary policing. It also provides quality intelligence to tackle serious crime and contributes to building trust and confidence in policing more widely.

Bedfordshire is a small county in terms of its geography. It is a county of significant contrast in terms of its mix of large urban areas, small towns and villages. Additionally, Bedfordshire is rightly proud of its diversity, bringing together a multitude of difference that is collectively celebrated and adds cultural, social and economic value.

Local policing needs to be proactive, problem solving and work in partnership with local councils and other community organisations in such areas as antisocial behaviour.

The PCC regards the reinvigoration of local policing as non-negotiable and he intends to work with the government to secure Bedfordshire's fair share of the government's pledge to introduce 13,000 new police officers and police community support officers (PCSO).

However, the PCC believes that the change required is about more than just additional officers. It's about cultural, structural and behavioural change.

Over the next six months, steps will be taken to begin to realise this mission. The PCC will:

- hold the Chief Constable to account to ensure an equitable allocation of resources especially police resources, across every part of the county, proportionate to the severity of the criminality faced,
- hold the Chief Constable to account for ensuring effective policing of local crimes including antisocial behaviour,
- ensure that Home Office requirements of one continuous 15-minute patrol in each hotspot every three days is met, which also meets best international practice,
- develop a long-term strategy for community policing, based on smaller areas with local police hubs and regular access sessions, as well as additional police officers and PCSOs, as resources permit,
- establish advisory boards drawn from local councillors, local businesses, and community leaders/representatives, to work with community police teams,
- understand ways in which local policing can be strengthened, by encouraging officers to take opportunities within rural and urban community policing teams as important steps in their careers,
- evaluate compliance with new legislation relating to violence against retail workers, as included in the Crime and Policing Bill of July 2024,
- ensure membership of, and active contribution to, the three community safety partnerships across the county, and seek to align the plan with these and vice versa,
- engage with rural residents and rural businesses to understand how Bedfordshire Police can better tackle rural and wildlife crime and respond to the needs of these communities, and establish a rural crime advisory panel with the National Farmers Union and Bedfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils,
- and establish an advisory panel on retail crime to include unions, local retailers, local authorities and the police.

The PCC is dedicated to reinvigorating local policing over the course of his four-year term.

This will include his commitment to, amongst other actions:

- require the Chief Constable to identify ways in which additional resources could be made available to strengthen local policing,
- monitor the level of engagement between community policing teams and local residents, ensuring officers are as approachable and visible as possible to encourage reporting and to build relationships,
- assess the quality of the evidence-based problem-solving approach that community policing teams take when working with partners to disrupt and divert the most harmful perpetrators, improving where possible to safeguard vulnerable people in a sustainable way,
- speak with appropriate charities and experts on how to effectively tackle wildlife crime and how to tackle crimes against animals,
- and strengthen the role of specialist police teams such as the rural and wildlife crime team and the community cohesion team.



Excellence: an excellent police service

The PCC must hold the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of an efficient and effective police service.

The PCC will also expect the Chief Constable to fulfil the policing elements of this plan. It will be important, in implementing Stage One of this plan and developing Stage Two, to take into account the recommendations of the report by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services inspection in September 2024.

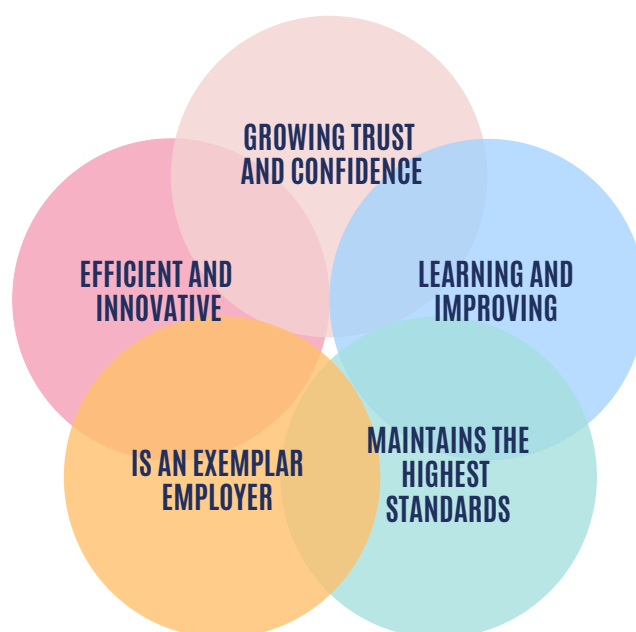
Nationally, public trust and confidence in the police is at an all time low. This has to be reversed.

Currently, there is no evidence of the level of public trust in Bedfordshire Police. The PCC is committed to undertaking polling to assess the level of trust across the county and in different community and socioeconomic groups.

The PCC will expect the highest professional standards, and for all staff to conform with the Code of Ethics. He will hold the police to account through the established governance arrangements.

It is important that the public have a good understanding of contemporary policing, the demands on the police, and the strategic criteria required for the deployment of resources, including police officers.

The police service is a public service which must be at the heart of the public service ecosystem, not just the criminal justice system.



As such, it must be ready to share data, resources, ideas and strategies to maximise the wellbeing of the people of Bedfordshire.

The police should strengthen relations with all communities in the county and ensure recruitment reflects its diversity. To be successful, the police service must be an exemplar employer, invest in change and technology, and continue its journey of innovation to improve performance and productivity.



The PCC aims to put measures in place during his term that will pave the way for the building of an excellent police service.

Starting with what he aims to do in the first six months, the PCC will:

- work with, and hold the Chief Constable to account for responding to the findings and recommendations from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services to ensure they are acted upon,
- conduct an independent public opinion poll to measure the level of public trust and confidence in Bedfordshire Police; and to source information to shape the longer term Police and Crime Plan,
- invest in technological solutions, including artificial intelligence, to improve productivity and outcomes,
- require the compliance of Bedfordshire Police with the 'Improving Policing for Black People' strategy and with the national Police Race Action Plan,
- review all budgets to ensure value for money and effectiveness and alignment with the plan,
- strengthen the governance arrangements to hold the Chief Constable to account,
- press for advancing the 'One Bedfordshire' public estate proposal,
- and end future outsourcing contracts and agree a timetable for insourcing services.

The PCC aims to make inroads towards achieving a status of excellence in both the police service and the wider criminal justice system, so as to provide an excellent service to victims of crime, and to effectively tackle crime and the causes of crime.

This will take longer than the term of the PCC, but over the next three years he will, amongst other actions:

- ▶ monitor the progression of Bedfordshire Police's strategy aiming to become an exemplar employer of choice over the next ten years,
- ▶ work towards ensuring that the police service workforce is reflective of the diversity of the county it serves,
- ▶ strengthen the police service's anti-racist policies and their enactment,
- ▶ work towards a more open criteria to shape and explain the allocation of police resources including personnel so as to improve public understanding and public trust,
- ▶ monitor and ensure Bedfordshire Police's delivery of the strategic policing requirement and this plan, ensure the highest standards of conduct and behaviour by police officers and police staff and take appropriate action when these are not met,
- ▶ invest in training technology and other measure to improve productivity and performance,
- ▶ review policy and practice in areas such as Stop and Search, Use of Force and Independent Custody Visiting, including strengthening the independent review arrangements,
- ▶ ensure that the police service have an effective response to enquiries and reports of crime, and victims and witnesses are kept informed of progress of cases,
- ▶ and ensure the police service has clear carbon reduction targets and is prepared for the impact of climate change on policing.

Excellence: an excellent criminal justice system

This Police and Crime Plan aims at achieving a whole system change, which is the only way to address properly the ways that victims, offenders, prison leavers and communities are being failed by the criminal justice system. In order to drive this change, all local agencies must contribute, through joint working, to sharing information, agreeing actions, and sharing resources.

The PCC has a duty to convene and coordinate all the agencies involved in the criminal justice system and is chair of the Local Criminal Justice Board, however he does not have any direct authority for any of the agencies to act in a specific way.

The PCC intends to reinvigorate the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) within his term, focusing on one of the key expectations of its members within the national guidance, which is to 'work with local, regional and national counterparts as necessary to identify and overcome barriers to improving the delivery of justice'.

This will include encouraging and brokering collaborative approaches to addressing social and economic causes of injustice and crime.



Over the next six months of his term, the PCC will:

- focus the LCJB on problem solving, and putting victims at the heart of the system,
- agree shared objectives with the LCJB for improving criminal justice across the county within the current regulatory and resource constraints; and identify proposals to put to government to improve outcomes through regulatory and funding changes,
- pursue a memorandum of understanding with commitments from all LCJB partners to take action to improve the experience of victims,
- encourage the Crown Prosecution Service and courts service to expedite justice for victims of serious crime, including violence against women and children,
- work with partners to review the specialist services in place to support victims of serious sexual offences and domestic abuse,
- and develop system wide plans to reduce reoffending, including ensuring prison leavers have access to accommodation, employment and appropriate health services.

To continue towards whole system change over the next three years and beyond, the PCC will, amongst other actions:

- aim to understand and put in place means by which the Local Criminal Justice Board can contribute to addressing social as well as criminal injustice,
- develop an enhanced system response for managing prolific offenders, with mandatory drug testing on arrest, diversion into treatment and multi-agency support,
- improve the victim experience by using technology to create an end-to-end service for victims, with a single case officer, who may not necessarily be the investigating officer, assigned from the moment a crime is recorded,
- develop a ten-year strategy for criminal justice through the LCJB,
- and adopt a cross-system plan for alternative methods of disposal.

Securing value for money

The Police and Crime Commissioner is committed that every pound spent by Bedfordshire Police and by the PCC's Office contributes to the fulfilment of his six missions whilst maximising value for money. Every pound spent inefficiently or ineffectively is a pound which is unavailable for maximising public benefit. Therefore, the PCC will require the Police and his Office to assess every revenue and capital expenditure against certain criteria.

The PCC will assess if each expenditure is:

an efficient and effective use of public money?

aligned with and contributes to the missions in this plan?

consistent with the PCC's commitment to equity?

going to contribute to local economic growth?

consistent with the ambition to reduce carbon emissions?

sustainable and does it have adverse long term impact?

Is this expenditure going to have unintended consequences for other police and PCC Office budgets or those of other public sector partners?

When he delegates the police service budget to the Chief Constable, the PCC will expect the latter to assess all expenditure against these criteria and will hold him to account for effective financial management. The PCC will always take a long-term strategic approach to setting budgets and financial stewardship. He will set a three-year budget for his Office and the police service.

Capital expenditure should be available to provide for the right estate, technology, fleet and equipment for an effective police service but the PCC will only agree to capital investment when there is a sound business case which demonstrates public benefit. Where possible, the PCC will minimise the cost of borrowing in fulfilling this obligation.

The PCC will also ensure that there are external audits of his Office's and the Police Service's financial management, control and planning. He will always respond to recommendations from auditors.

He will constantly benchmark expenditure and the impact of expenditure against comparable police services and PCC Offices. The PCC will encourage public sector partners to adopt similar approaches to financial management and strategy. He will explore opportunities to co-ordinate and integrate public sector budgets.

Funding and funding shortfall

The main two funding streams to support the delivery of the policing element of the Plan are the Police Grant, which equates for approximately 60% of the funding and the precept element (council tax) which provides for the other 40%.

In addition to these there are smaller specific grants that are received to cover the costs of areas of spend such as Counter Terrorism, but these are much smaller in comparison.

In setting the precept the PCC will always reflect on the ability of residents to pay council tax and the tax's regressive nature, whilst ensuring the police service is adequately funded.

Bedfordshire Police, like other police services, faces cost pressures and due to historic funding levels from government there is an approximate annual shortfall of £3 million to £4 million per year.

The government's police grant has increased by just under 19% between 2010/11 and 2024/25 whilst the actual spend for Bedfordshire Police has increased by 45% over the same period. This has required Bedfordshire Police to find savings of approximately £50 million.

The funding approach pre-2024 inherited by the PCC leaves Bedfordshire facing a 2-3% shortfall in 2025-26. This is a significant and political legacy that the PCC has inherited.

Bedfordshire receives a lower level of funding in the form of Police Grant from the government, commensurate to the demand and complexity of crime within the county. In recognition of this the Home Office have issued Special Grants for a number of years in recognition of the level of disproportionate impact of organised criminal activity related to guns and gangs.

These Special Grants represent approximately 5% of the overall budget for Bedfordshire Police. These special grants require an annual application process which makes long term planning more difficult.

The PCC will work with local MPs and others, and directly to the Home Secretary, to mainstream these special grants into the core settlement and ultimately to introduce a new funding formula that properly reflects the policing needs in Bedfordshire.

The PCC will make the case to government to secure Bedfordshire's share of the government's drive to increase police officers, PCSOs and special constables by 13,000 nationally, along with ensuring that any additional new initiatives come with the appropriate funds, such as youth hubs.

The PCC welcomes the recent pay increases for police officers and hope that police staff will receive a similar settlement. Half of the cost of the police officer pay increase is being funded by government, the rest has been already included in the current Bedfordshire Police budget.

These cost pressures also affect public sector partners including local authorities, the fire and rescue service, the courts service, probation, the Crown Prosecution Service and the NHS. The PCC, therefore, will strive to ensure

that jointly there is a partnership approach to allocating resources to the key six missions within the Plan, as these cannot be delivered without system co-operation. The PCC will support partners in their quest for additional funding. He advocates for the reintroduction of a 'total place' approach to local budgeting.

Financing the Police and Crime Plan

Stage One of the Plan will be achieved within existing budget allocations.

Stage Two of the Plan will be supported by a three year budget. There will be no commitments which are not affordable and funded. Stage Two of the Plan will also require all public sector partners to step up and contribute to resourcing agreed plans and proposals aligned to the Plan.

The PCC, over the next six months, will work to establish such a partnership approach and will continue this over his four years tenure of office. He will engage with stakeholders including the public, local public sector partners, trade unions, professional associations and the community and voluntary sector.

He will invest in measures to improve productivity in the police service and invest in these when there is a positive business case.

The Plan and more significantly fairness and safety in Bedfordshire will only be achieved by the effective use of public money and partnership financial stewardship.

The PCC will seek and welcome additional funding but will demand that the police service and his Office always maximise impact with the available resources, eliminate waste and never use the lack of funding as an excuse for poor performance or failing the people of Bedfordshire.

Appendix I: The mission approach

Mission-based and mission-driven policing and criminal justice

The mission led approach requires:

- clear goals underpinned by clear objectives (based on outcomes) but ones that can and will change in response to evidence and new demands on the police service and the wider criminal justice system
- effective leadership – political and executive; strategic and operational; siloed and holistic
- system reform and change
- the conditions for innovation
- establishing baselines from which to build and from which to measure change/impact
- delivery plans which will always be evolving
- measurable outcomes, not always as targets
- investment in research and development, people and systems; and aligning budgets with the missions and their implementation plans
- collaborative partnerships across the public sector and civil society
- strong and impactful underpinning narratives
- engagement with the public and all stakeholders
- accessible reporting of progress
- high quality and timely data and data analysis
- continuous learning and continuous improvement
- a willingness to let go of favoured and traditional practice when that is necessary to fulfil the mission
- willingness and ability to recognise failure and learn from it

Above all this mission led approach must have:

1. the right effective leadership
2. the right structures and
3. the correct governance

Mission Boards

Mission boards will be critical to the implementation of the approach to the Police and Crime Plan and monitoring and driving its success.

There will be a mission board for each of the six missions, which will be chaired by the PCC or the DPCC. The PCC's Office will co-ordinate and service the mission boards. It will be their role to facilitate and ensure that each board is aware of issues being considered by the other boards to ensure that there are holistic solutions, and that there is consistency and to avoid contradictory plans. The mission boards will be supported by the PCC's Office with remit to:

- develop each mission, objectives for the mission, and a delivery plan to fulfil the mission
- specifically contribute to the development of a 2025-2028 Police and Crime Plan
- review progress of the delivery plans and analyse the data provided by the police and other partners
- recommend changes to the missions, objectives and delivery plans
- report through the PCC via formal governance arrangements
- promote collaborative working across the public sector and more widely

Membership of these boards will be selected and appointed by the PCC to include as appropriate:

at least one senior representative from Bedfordshire Police
experts from the wider public sector, the criminal justice services, voluntary and community sector, academia, trade unions, and where appropriate people with direct experience of the issues being considered

It should be noted however that the boards are not operational and cannot direct the police service nor any other partner.