

Annual Report
2022/23

Making Cheshire even safer

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Commissioner
for Cheshire

www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk



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Foreword

Welcome to my latest Annual Report as your Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire. Police and Crime Commissioners occupy a vital role in ensuring the police service delivered in their communities is of the highest standard, and that their forces work openly and transparently to achieve this. This report explains how this has been achieved and how the priorities in my Police and Crime Plan are being met.

We have seen policing face unprecedented challenges in 2022/23. The lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine have inevitably impacted public service budgets, and public confidence in the police has become a hot topic in the national media. Since being re-elected in May 2021, my priority is being the representative of your voice in policing here in Cheshire.

Through an ambitious engagement strategy, I understand that what matters most to people is simply ensuring the Constabulary is getting the basics right. It is clear that people expect their police service to be contactable, responsive, and proactive in tackling crime.

Taking a common-sense approach and investing precious resources wisely, the police are now answering calls quicker and getting to incidents faster for both emergencies and non-emergencies. The dedicated and hard-working officers and staff ensure that Cheshire is a hostile environment for all criminals with positive outcome rates for crime continuing to increase, as well as arresting those who choose to cause harm in our county. Furthermore, unlike any other force in England and Wales, Cheshire has seen crime fall by 4%.

Despite being a smaller force in comparison to our metropolitan neighbours, it is reassuring that the Constabulary nevertheless has the capability, talent and resilience that has been evident in the management of 'Operation Hummingbird'. I am extremely proud of how this complex and harrowing investigation into the deaths and harm caused to vulnerable babies at the Countess of Chester Hospital was handled by the Constabulary.

Thankfully cases like these are rare, and most of all people expect a service they can trust. I am confident that the issues reported at a national level, particularly those in Baroness Casey's Review of the Metropolitan Police, are not representative of standards here in Cheshire. However, I do not lose sight that without the strong leadership in Cheshire, cultures, and behaviours evident elsewhere could creep in. The new officers who are making up a portion of our record numbers are in a good place to learn and live the right values as we move to being an outstanding police force.

It has been pleasing to be able to complement the work of the Constabulary, which I am able to do with the support of my office, working hard to secure over £13 million in additional funding since being re-elected. This money has been used on initiatives which directly support victims, prevent crime and make our streets a safer place.

I have enjoyed meeting so many of you this year, and I hope you will agree with me that the achievements of the Constabulary and my office this year are something to be proud of, ultimately meaning Cheshire continues to be one of the safest places to live.



John Dwyer
Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire

What does your Police and Crime Commissioner do for you?

Monitors complaints made against officers and staff, whilst **having responsibility for complaints made against the Chief Constable.**

Sets the police budget and decides how much you pay towards policing from your council tax, in addition to the funding received from the government.

Appoints the Chief Constable who has **operational responsibility** for policing across Cheshire.

Holds the Chief Constable to account in delivering the priorities in the Police and Crime Plan, to make Cheshire even safer.



Works with local authorities, criminal justice partners, health and education services, plus the voluntary sector and local businesses **to create a joined up response to local problems.**

Elected by you to represent your views, and ensure the Constabulary delivers a police service to meet the needs of all of Cheshire's diverse communities.

Commissions dedicated **local victim support and crime prevention services** to keep communities safe.

Consults with **Cheshire residents to identify local priorities**, which are the foundations of the Police and Crime Plan.

PRIORITY

Prevent and tackle crime

I am proud that Cheshire is a safe place to live and work, which has been achieved by taking a robust approach to preventing and tackling crime, as well as intervening early when it comes to anti-social behaviour (ASB).

ASB can blight communities and have serious consequences on well-being and perceptions of safety. Through the community policing model, each area has a dedicated police resource with local knowledge and plans to effectively target areas where there are higher incidences of crime and ASB.

My scrutiny agenda ensures that the crimes that make people feel unsafe are given the appropriate level of attention. Burglary, robbery and vehicle crime are closely examined on a quarterly basis with the Chief Constable, where I hold the Constabulary to account for how these crimes are solved, and what is being done to reduce reoffending.

Tackle ASB, neighbourhood and property crime

Reducing crime and ASB is achieved by working with partners alongside the public. My Community Action Fund has given communities the opportunity to apply for funding to put in place initiatives and infrastructure which tackle the problems that are affecting them the most.

I've also supported initiatives like the County Cross Games (formerly Salt Wars) where the police engaged with children over the school holidays. ASB incidents were down 34% where these events were held.

34% decrease in anti-social behaviour where County Cross Games was held

Through the community policing model, areas have benefited from a dedicated police resource with local knowledge and plans.



Disrupt serious and organised crime

Cheshire's expansive motorway and key A road network makes our county a target for County Lines Drugs gangs. The Constabulary has implemented a Roads Policing Strategy which focuses on intercepting travelling criminality, and working in collaboration with other forces through the North West Regional Organised Crime Unit, 88 county lines gangs were disrupted in 2022/23.

88 county lines gangs were intercepted in 2022/23

Prevent violent crime



Carrying knives devastates lives and I am supportive of the Constabulary's increased use of Stop and Search. However, education is the key to prevention, which is why I supported the promotion of 'Get Away N Get Safe' in Cheshire. This programme is targeted at young people to empower them to make the right decisions surrounding gang culture, knife crime and social responsibility.

This year I provided funding to support the Knife Angel's visit to Cheshire to raise awareness of the effects of knife crime on our communities. Through workshops and engagement sessions, people were educated and encouraged to surrender their knives to make our streets safer. Made entirely of confiscated knives, the statue is a symbolic reminder of the devastating impact knife crime can have on people's lives.

Furthermore, the Constabulary took part in Operation Sceptre, a national week of action to tackle knife crime. Over the course of the week, the force saw 180 bladed weapons voluntarily surrendered by members of the public.

2.4% decrease in knife crime across Cheshire

Protect rural communities



With around two thirds of Cheshire classed as rural, protecting these communities is a priority in my Police and Crime Plan. Crime in rural areas can often go unreported, so I carried out a Rural Crime Survey to gather a range of people's experiences and achieve a better understanding of the relationship that rural communities have with the police.

An example of how the Rural Crime Team is working hard to engage with communities is through the Horsewatch scheme, where members of the public are encouraged to look out for and report any suspicious behaviour that they witness whilst riding their horses in the countryside and rural villages or at equine related shows. The information is then fed back to the Rural Crime Team, enabling them to target patrols, gather intelligence or deal with the report as necessary.



I've also attended public events like the Cheshire Ploughing match to speak to rural communities and distribute property marking SelectaDNA kits, which mark valuable items with an invisible liquid that has a DNA code linked to it so stolen goods and criminals can be traced. This acts as a deterrent as skin or clothing also becomes marked with the traceable liquid, meaning the offender and the stolen items can be linked back to a specific crime.

In 2022, the cost of rural theft in Cheshire fell by

24.5%

NFU Mutual Rural Crime Report 2023



Tackle cyber crime and online scams

In my Police and Crime Plan I committed to tackling what is now the fastest growing crime nationally – cyber crime. The changing landscape of the high street has put a greater reliance on online services and with criminals becoming increasingly sophisticated the consequences of falling victim to cyber crime and scams can be devastating.

Cheshire Constabulary's Cyber Crime Team have been out across the county at businesses and public events to provide visitors with a free Cyber Health Check, to see how secure their online accounts and passwords are and providing advice on how everyone can stay safe online. I filmed a short series of videos with helpful tips which you can watch via the QR code on the back of this report.

As more of our day to day lives are moving online, it's vital that the police tap into specialist knowledge that can support victims and help bring offenders to justice. To support this, I have funded a dedicated Helpline Responder at a national charity - The Cyber Helpline - to work with the police and support victims of crimes like cyber-stalking.

The Constabulary's Harm Reduction Unit (HRU) refers victims who are experiencing significant levels of cyber-related stalking, and the responder works alongside the independent support provided by the HRU's Specialist Victim's Advocates.

Tackle business and retail crime



I held a series of cyber crime business breakfasts in partnership with the North West Cyber Resilience Centre and local Chambers of Commerce. These events helped to equip local businesses with greater knowledge and the tools to keep their data, their customers, and their livelihoods safe.

As prevalent as cyber crime is, there is still a physical threat posed by crime and ASB to the day-to-day operation of local businesses too. I have engaged with Business Improvement Districts and other business groups across Cheshire to hear about issues affecting their area, which I have fed back to the Constabulary for further action.

PRIORITY

Make Cheshire's roads safer

One road death is one too many, which is why road safety is a significant priority here in Cheshire. Through my surveys, community engagements and correspondence, I am aware road safety is a key concern for residents.

There has been continuous engagement where concerns have been raised surrounding speeding, dangerous heavy goods vehicles, careless driving, poor signage and dangerous parking, with local feedback consistently escalated to the Constabulary for action. I have also complemented the Constabulary's Roads Policing Strategy with a wide range of activity and initiatives from my office.

Reduce speeding



Average speed cameras work. So I'm working with the Cheshire Association of Local Councils (ChALC) on a trial scheme that will allow Parish and Town Councils across the county to install them in their area.

Work has also progressed with each of Cheshire's four Local Authorities, who have each identified a site suitable for an average speed camera, or in one case a 'Speed on Green' camera, which identifies drivers jumping red lights and records vehicle speed.

To support the Constabulary's enforcement efforts and community intelligence-gathering, I have fulfilled my promise to invest in initiatives and equipment for officers and PCSOs to make our roads safer by purchasing speed recording devices for each Local Policing Unit (LPU). These will enable the Police to be able to collate accurate speed monitoring data and intervene accordingly.

I have also engaged with local initiatives such as the Holmes Chapel Partnership's 'Walk to School' event. These local campaigns highlight the need for partners, including Local Authorities and the Cheshire Road Safety Group, to work together on safer road designs and infrastructure to deter speeding and protect pedestrians.

> I have fulfilled my promise to invest in initiatives and equipment for officers and PCSOs to make our roads safer.





Tackle dangerous driving

Technology is becoming increasingly sophisticated, and I have used new equipment to an advantage here in Cheshire in response to concerns raised by residents at public meetings I have held.

A new acoustic camera pilot has commenced on the A34 following concerns around inconsiderate noisy driving. The camera can record noise levels and identify the responsible vehicle, giving the police and council key information about the worst offenders and enabling enforcement action to be taken against them.

Through my Police Innovation Fund, I have supported practical projects like 'Parking Buddies', which reminds motorists to be considerate when passing, picking up or dropping off outside the school gates. I have also raised awareness of initiatives like Project EDWARD (Every Day Without A Road Death) as well as National Safe Speeds Day.

Work together to educate road users

Deterrents are only part of the solution. Safer roads are achieved by educating road users and I have invited the Constabulary's Road Safety team to join me at numerous events where we were able to educate the public on the consequences of dangerous and inconsiderate driving.

These hard-hitting messages were delivered by displaying vehicles that had been involved in preventable fatal collisions, and providing an illustration of how easily this could happen to themselves or loved ones.

Raise awareness of what causes collisions

Road traffic collisions devastate lives and, in many cases, could have been prevented. Getting the basics right is key and it is my responsibility to ensure the Constabulary does not lose focus on enforcement, particularly around the Fatal Five. I have also supported campaigns like National Road Safety Week to promote awareness of the Fatal Five.



PRIORITY

Deliver justice for victims of crime

Police and Crime Commissioners are responsible for commissioning local services for victims of crime. Victims are at the heart of everything I do, and I am in a unique position to secure additional funding to ensure they are supported.

In Cheshire there is a wide range of services to support victims through their criminal justice journey, wider recovery, and in rebuilding their lives. By supporting and empowering victims, we can ensure they stay engaged throughout the judicial process and increase the confidence people have in reporting crime.

Support victims through the criminal justice system

There are three main victim support services I currently commission in Cheshire:

Cheshire CARES (Cope and Recovery Enhanced Service)

The flagship free victim support service for everyone in Cheshire, which I established in my first term as Commissioner. In 2022/23, Cheshire CARES supported 20,393 victims of crime.

Restorative Justice (Provided by Remedi)

A voluntary process bringing victims and perpetrators together to mediate and repair the harm caused by crime. Remedi also provides victim support services for people affected by hate crime in Cheshire. In 2022/23, Remedi received 1,258 referrals.

RASASC (Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre)

Provides support for victims of sexual assault, rape and sexual abuse through specialist counselling. In 2022/23, 1,860 people were referred to RASASC.

One example of how I am working with the Constabulary to support victims in Cheshire is through the Harm Reduction Unit (HRU). Through work done in 2022/23, I secured extra funding worth **£1 million** for the HRU to take a new pioneering approach to tackling stalking. Specialist stalking prosecutors will work within the HRU to speed up the process for victims and improve conviction rates. **Cheshire will be the only place in the UK where specialist prosecutors work with the police and other partners in this way.**

Ensure every crime is recorded accurately

Working to ensure that all crimes are recorded accurately is fundamental to effective victim support and demonstrates that the police are operating in a fair and inclusive way. The variety of offences and the nature of crime means that recording naturally brings challenges. With new guidance from the Home Office due imminently, I look forward to there being a more straightforward process to improve further in this area.

Our skilled Force Control Centre (FCC) operators are trained to capture all offences at the point of contact and identify hidden harms and vulnerability, and this has been made possible by increasing the investment madein the FCC and its staff in 2022/23. This has not only improved answering times and reduced abandonment rates but has contributed to improving the service overall.



In 2022/23, Cheshire CARES supported 20,393 victims of crime.

Increase action taken on crime

2022/23 has seen a significant increase in action taken in response to recorded crime. Charge rates have increased, alongside the use of out of court measures such as Cautions and Community Resolutions.

It is imperative that cases that are not heard in court are concluded proportionately and appropriately.

Out of Court Disposals are scrutinised by a panel which my office oversees. This gives reassurance to the public that a decision made to deal with offenders out of court was appropriate. The panel, which is made up of magistrates, representatives from the Crown Prosecution Service, Youth Justice, Remedi and a member of the Independent Advisory Group, works with the police to consider whether a particular Out of Court Disposal delivered the best outcomes for victims and the wider community.

You can read more about Out of Court Disposals and how their use is scrutinised here:

www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/support-for-victims/out-of-court-disposals

Reduce reoffending

Funding that I have secured has meant that Cheshire Constabulary is one of the first forces in the country to offer the Perpetrator Custody Programme. The project is delivered in partnership with My CWA (formerly known as Cheshire Without Abuse), a Cheshire based charity who support families affected by domestic abuse.

My CWA has recruited a team of experts based in our custody suites to speak to perpetrators, directing them to support services and a programme to change their behaviour long-term.

In 2022/23 my office submitted a bid to extend the Perpetrator Programme as well as introduce Project CARA (Cautioning And Relationship Abuse), and we have since been successful in securing over £1.1 million worth of funding. Project CARA allows the police to issue perpetrators of domestic abuse with a conditional caution - subject to the support of the victim – so that they can be given specialist support to change their behaviour. It has seen reoffending rates fall by up to 80% in some areas where it has been trialled.

I have secured funding to make Cheshire Constabulary one of the first forces in the country to offer a Perpetrator Custody Programme.

You can find out more about the services I commission and others I support at:
www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/what-the-commissioner-does/commissioned-services

I also host a 'Support for Victims' section on my website, which includes an A-Z of support services and organisations for victims of various crimes:
www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/support-for-victims











PRIORITY

Protect vulnerable and at-risk people

Tackle violence against women and girls



There are many factors that can make an individual or community more susceptible to crime in general, or a particular type of crime. In 2022/23, more work has been done to understand the factors that contribute to this vulnerability and target support to ensure everyone feels safe in our county.

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is given a real focus in my Police and Crime Plan and is a top priority for the Constabulary. I have supported this objective by investing in initiatives to protect women and girls, particularly through the projects which I have secured additional funding for.



An example of this is the Safer Streets initiative, where Safety Buses are now a safe haven for those out at night in areas with a busy night time economy, and the Constabulary has partnered with the Hollie Gazzard Trust to offer enhanced versions of the personal safety app Hollie Guard.

However, there is no long-term solution to VAWG without changing societal attitudes, and an educational behaviour-change programme in high schools across the county is teaching young people about how to spot harmful behaviours when out at night and intervene safely in certain situations. The Constabulary takes a no-nonsense approach to crimes that disproportionately affect women and girls, such as domestic abuse, which is evident in the increase of arrests of perpetrators by 59%.

Along with the positive action taken by the Constabulary, I have also provided funding for more Domestic Violence Advocates to work alongside the Constabulary in its relentless pursuit of tackling domestic abuse perpetrators and supporting victims.

To change attitudes and perpetrator behaviour I secured funding for Engage and Reset - two innovative early intervention programmes, developed by my office, My CWA and Cheshire's four Local Authorities. These programmes offer support for vulnerable victims and children, young people displaying signs of risky behaviour, and interventions for perpetrators of domestic abuse.



59% increase in domestic abuse perpetrator arrests

Protect children, young people and adults at-risk

I have ensured that there is funding to support vulnerable children by bolstering areas such as the Online Child Abuse Investigation Team and the Harm Reduction Unit. To prevent young people from falling permanently into a life of crime, I am working alongside Queensberry AP and Warrington and Halton Borough Councils to deliver an educational programme on child exploitation. It targets individuals involved in or on the cusp of County Lines through mentoring by those with lived experience.

'Honour'-based abuse (HBA) is an abhorrent crime. Whether it's forced marriage, female genital mutilation, or any other harmful practice designed to defend the 'honour' of a family, there is no excuse for abuse. I am working in partnership with Savera UK to identify the extent of HBA in Cheshire and encourage victims to come forward. After initially funding a specialist HBA worker, I was able to secure further funding to enable Savera UK to deliver training to professionals on how to spot the signs of HBA and safeguard victims.

Older adults and those vulnerable due to disabilities can also be more at-risk of particular crimes and are often targets of fraud and scams. Through my Police Innovation Fund, the Economic Crime Unit now has more state-of-the-art call blocker devices being installed in homes across the county to prevent criminals from getting through.

Police Innovation Fund Project

Economic Crime Unit Call Blockers

Estimated £108,215 recovered from criminals

43 trueCall units installed across Cheshire



Estimated 15 scams prevented

9,113 nuisance calls received by the units

9,105 nuisance calls blocked

34% of calls received by the units were nuisance calls

Tackle hate crime and bullying

Education is key to preventing hate crime and bullying. I am committed to ensuring local police officers and PCSOs can talk to young people in schools and other safe spaces aboutthese issues.

'Got Your Back' is a service I commission to help anyone under 18 that has been a victim of crime in Cheshire, regardless of whether anything has been reported to the police. It offers help and advice as well as someone to talk to for young people who are victims of bullying or any other crime.

I carried out a survey to understand how hate crime affects different communities and what might prevent people from reporting it to the police. I have commissioned Remedi to provide a bespoke service to support victims, whether or not they have reported anything to the police.



Got Your Back is a service I commission to help anyone under 18 who has been a victim of crime in Cheshire.

Extend mental health support

I have enabled the Constabulary to increase the number of street triage officers to help identify where people suffering with mental health issues can go for support, and the Constabulary is an early adopter of the 'Right Care, Right Person' operating model which will be rolled out later in 2023.

By working with partners, this model ensures that the right agency deals with health-related calls, instead of the police being the default first responder. It has been shown to improve outcomes, reduce demand on all services, and make sure people get the help they need.

By working with partners, this model ensures that the right agency deals with health-related calls











PRIORITY Improve public confidence in policing

Policing is under intense scrutiny. While national headlines generating public debate have not involved Cheshire, we have to be alive to risks. It is crucial to public confidence that we ensure mechanisms are in place to prevent issues arising and root them out where they do.

The Constabulary continues to 'police by consent' by working with the public who cooperate with their police service. I am incredibly grateful to the volunteers who make up groups which scrutinise and give transparency to provide unbiased, external scrutiny from a diverse mix of community representatives on the use of police powers and whether they have been used inappropriately or disproportionately.

Deliver a visible police service

In 2022/23 the number of police officers in Cheshire reached 2,361. This is the highest number of officers since the Constabulary's boundaries were set in the 1970s. These officers, along with PCSOs have supported the Constabulary's 122 community policing model and I regularly take feedback from residents and elected representatives to the Chief Constable to ensure it is fit for purpose.

I know visibility matters, and an added assurance is that there is now the analytical capability to examine the footfall of police resources to ensure that they are where they are needed most.





"Cheshire now has the highest number of officers since the 1970s."

Make it easier to contact the police

In 2022/23 I increased funding to improve call handling performance, and it has worked. Building on existing investment I made previously, an additional 35 staff are in public contact roles which have helped to reduce abandonment rates and seen answering times for 101 and 999 improve significantly.

The service we deliver must be inclusive. I have worked with the deaf community and British Sign Language (BSL) users to understand the challenges they face when contacting the police. The emergency service is now accessible using 999 BSL and I have made sure this message has reached as many people as possible through my engagement activity.

Find out more: www.999bsl.co.uk

Response

Average time to answer non-emergency calls:

6 minutes & 28 seconds

Compared to over 9 minutes on the previous year.

2021		2022
79%	999 emergency calls answered in 10 seconds	89%
85%	emergency incidents attended within 15 minutes	90%
77%	prompt incidents attended within 60 minutes	83%

Crime and incidents

8000 domestic abuse arrests in 2022

up by 80% on the previous year

20,000 Arrests made in 2022

up by 34% on the previous year

Overall action taken rate:

2021: 10.8%

2022: 17.3%

7 ½ minutes - average time to attend Grade 1 incidents

30% increase in domestic abuse charges

Represent the diversity of our communities



The police uplift programme has attracted diverse groups to the workforce and more female applicants. The Constabulary has been awarded the Disability Confident Leader Charter, and in 2022/23 it was recognised as the 25th most inclusive employer in the Inclusive Top 50 Employers rankings.

However, there is still much more to be done. I work with Staff Networks, as well as hosting 'drop-in' sessions, which gives me a realistic view of the culture in the organisation.

I have been engaging with diverse and under-represented communities through various events like Warrington Mela, Disability Awareness Day and Chester Pride, where I carried out a hate crime survey to find out the extent to which it affects people and identify barriers to reporting incidents.

Furthermore, I have visited groups representing diverse communities to understand how the police and services I commission can improve the confidence they have in engaging with us and reporting crime. One example is Pearls of Cheshire, who work with women from black and minority ethnic backgrounds experiencing domestic abuse.

I have also engaged with young people through the Cheshire Youth Commission, including inviting them into HQ and working with them on the priorities fed back by their peers to ensure young people's voices are heard in policing.



Involving the public in policing

I support volunteer schemes such as Independent Custody Visitors, Call Management Auditors and Police Dog Welfare Visitors, to provide extra reassurance that the work of the police is independently and impartially scrutinised and monitored by members of the public. The management of these schemes is run by my office and they are therefore independent to the Constabulary.

To further bolster public confidence, I have recruited new members to the Independent Ethics Panel. The panel brings together residents from across Cheshire to review ethical issues within policing, such as Stop and Search, to ensure the Constabulary acts with integrity and transparency.



The Ethics Panel brings together residents from across Cheshire to consider ethical issues within policing.



PRIORITY Modernise our police service

You expect your police service to be utilising the latest technology to keep our communities safe, to be environmentally friendly, to be scrutinised in a way that reassures you about any concerns, and to deliver value for money in challenging financial times. 2022/23 has seen key progress on these measures.

Review the police estate

Progress against the Estates Strategy is well under way. Planning permission has been secured for a new police station in Wilmslow and construction is expected to begin soon. Work continues at Police HQ in Winsford to update aspects of the building and to reduce its carbon footprint.

Carbon emissions have already reduced by 46% since 2017, compared to a target of 55% by 2031.

Ensure officers, staff and volunteers have the latest technology

Through my various funding streams, I have been able to support the Constabulary in exploiting the opportunities that technology can offer. From the latest speed and noise camera technology, to the GoodSAM platform which allows for live video streaming in the call centre, along with solutions to streamline investigations, there has been a lot happening in this area.

I have also championed new electronic report forms for the Independent Custody Visitors scheme, to ensure that volunteers will be supplied with bespoke technology to support them in monitoring and reporting on Cheshire's custody suites.



Move the Constabulary forward to become carbon neutral by 2040

To help achieve this goal the Constabulary set a target of reducing carbon emissions by 55% by 2031 compared to 2017. I'm pleased to report that with eight years until the target date, emissions have already reduced by 46%.

Through our joint Estates Strategy, we are making progress in delivering police buildings that better serve communities and our environmental goals. The new police station in Wilmslow will release resources back into policing while cutting the carbon footprint on-site.

The Environmental Strategy and Fleet Strategy both outline how the Constabulary plans to introduce a more modern and environmentally friendly fleet. Progress continues on introducing lower carbon vehicles to the fleet in a sustainable way.

Increase opportunities for volunteers

My volunteers provide valuable insight and scrutiny and their work in custody, public contact and the welfare of our police dogs gives an additional layer of transparency. In return, I am committed to supporting volunteers and providing training and opportunities for personal development.

The in-house training enables us to keep up-to-date with new legislation, new ways of working or even feedback on how we are performing in our roles and this, in turn, enables us to carry out our duties as volunteers or make improvements or adjustments- where needed.

We are all kept up-to-date, whether that be via simple, yet very informative, emails or by the opportunity to attend more in-depth and focused training to help us learn. These learning opportunities are discussed and agreed beforehand, and attendance, though not compulsory, is certainly beneficial. No matter how long we've been in the role there are always going to be gaps in our knowledge that can personally, and jointly, be developed. This helps to keep us on our toes whilst assisting, immensely, with our development and I, for one, am very appreciative of the support which ensures that the role remains interesting and enjoyable.

- Independent Custody Visitor

Ensure the Constabulary delivers value for money

I set the police budget and hold the Constabulary to account for how it spends the money received from the government grant and the police council tax precept. Through regular joint board meetings with the Chief Constable, I maintain progress against the budget.

This is supported by an annual value for money assessment conducted by external auditors, along with a six-monthly review and update of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, both of which are available on my website.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

I am supported by a dedicated team who work with me to create and deliver the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan.

Making up a small fraction of the overall policing budget, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) punches above its weight through securing millions in additional funding and helping the Constabulary to roll out the new initiatives made possible.

This is in addition to the day-to-day business of managing correspondence from the public, my scrutiny process and volunteers, my governance process and role in the police complaints system, my engagements with communities and stakeholders, my community funding pots, and communicating all this work to the wider public.

The OPCC operates impartially and is often referred to as the 'civil service' that provides core support to the Commissioner. This small team works effectively due to their mix of expertise and conducts business with the best interests of the public as their primary focus.

You can find out more about the OPCC at: www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/commissioner-and-office/the-office

Commissioning and community funding

In 2022/23, over £5 million in additional funding has been secured. Additional resources brought in by the OPCC include:

£1,336,200	IDVA/ISVA 3 year extension (Independent Domestic and Sexual Violence Advisors)
£653,112	IDVA 3 year uplift
£801,469.32	Domestic Abuse/Sexual Abuse 3 year uplift
£847,100	Perpetrator Fund
£825,000	Safer Streets 4 (Primary)
£790,000	Safer Streets 4 (Secondary)

In 2022/23, every £1 spent on the OPCC budget generated around £5.71 for policing, crime and victim support.



Community Action Fund

Through my Community Action Fund, I invest money into local projects that are committed to delivering community safety or crime prevention activities. Grants of up to £5,000 are available and the initiatives must engage with the local policing team.

In 2022/23, I supported projects across Cheshire with £95,000 in funding.

Police Innovation Fund

My Police Innovation Fund provides officers, staff and volunteers from Cheshire Constabulary with a funding stream to launch new projects that will have a positive impact on policing. The fund encourages staff to think outside the box and develop solutions to local problems.

In 2022/23 the fund has allocated £55,142 to new initiatives.

Community Cashback Fund

The Community Cashback Fund sees money seized from criminals reinvested back into communities. The principle of this fund is that the money is spent by the community, for the community, in the community. Each of Cheshire's nine Local Policing Units (LPUs) is allocated £10,000 and local community groups, policing teams and businesses can bid for funding to support a project they are proposing.

In 2022/23 the fund has allocated £90,000 to new initiatives.

> **Opening the gym has brought the community together, and we were able to get a young 16 year old boy a full time, paid apprenticeship with a local builder. The builder took the youngster on because of the glowing references the club gave him.**
>
> **-Jabbin Dabber Boxing Club**

> **It has provided a means of targeting behaviour and local issues and helped establish a better rapport between local PCSOs [and the young people]. It has also created a safe environment, the young people have professional staff that they can talk to and they can share experiences with their peers. Above all, it is an enjoyable session every week and the young people can have fun, do their own thing and benefit from new experiences too.**
>
> **- Middlewich Youth Club**

Engaging with Cheshire's communities

As your voice in policing, it is imperative that I hear from all communities across our county to ensure true representation for those who live and work in Cheshire. To help achieve this, I created ambitious communication and consultation strategies.

It's my job to set the police budget and ask you about your priorities, as well as what level the police precept should be set at. More people than ever have engaged with this process during my term as Commissioner. I have continued to hold more in-person roadshows than ever before so you can speak to me directly, and in January 2023 the precept consultation survey received over 4,000 responses. This was the largest ever response to a budget survey, and demonstrates my commitment to engaging with you at a consistently high level.



As well as meeting face to face at events and at the roadshows, I have carried out rural and hate crime surveys over the course of summer and early autumn 2022 to hear from as many people as possible to inform work in these areas.

Whoever or wherever you are in Cheshire, I am your voice in policing. I've attended a wide range of public events to hear from various communities about how different policing issues affect you, including the Cheshire Show, Nantwich Show, Chester Pride, Warrington Mela and Disability Awareness Day.

To further ensure that all voices are heard in policing I have been keen to engage with groups who speak for under-represented communities, like Pearls of Cheshire, who have a particular focus on the impact of domestic abuse on black women. I have also visited the Rainbow Tearooms in Chester to discuss issues affecting the LGBT+ community, and I regularly engage with the Deafness Support Network to improve accessibility in policing for hearing-impaired people.

November 2022 marked ten years since the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners. With the role not always fully understood, it has been valuable to visit groups of residents across Cheshire to explain how the role came to be, how it has evolved, and how as your Commissioner in Cheshire I can help with any issues.

To that end, I continue to hold public meetings with residents to hear about local issues where there is a significant demand, particularly around speeding and where there is a need to bring the police and different partners together to resolve issues.

I am also keen to work with other elected representatives in Cheshire and hold regular meetings for Parish and Town Councils and Borough Councillors. These meetings provide opportunities for local issues to be raised with me and senior officers directly.

There is plenty of good work going on and to be done, and I am constantly engaging with our communities. I am committed to keeping you up to date with what I am doing along with my office on your behalf by sending out a regular Commissioner's Newsletter and keeping in touch via Neighbourhood Alert, as well as regular updates to the press and via my social media channels.





Action across the county

These are just some of the local communities, organisations and projects I have supported over the past year.


Terry Spencer Boxing Club


Day of Memory 2023


Young Driver's Event


Wilmslow Community Garden


Lambing season


Brookvale Young Vets


Collaborate Digital


Precept survey


Walk to school road safety


Helsby Police Hub


Tomorrow's Women


Deafness Support Network


Discussing speeding concerns


Rural road safety


Macclesfield Rugby Club


Congleton Link Road Meeting


Knutsford Together


Middlewich Youth Club


Knife Angel


Winsford Women's Day


Sandbach Probus Club


Nantwich Show

Warrington
Widnes
Runcorn
Ellesmere Port
Neston
Frodsham
Chester
Northwich
Winsford
Middlewich
Tarporley
Sandbach
Crewe
Nantwich
Alsager
Congleton
Knutsford
Wilmslow
Poynton
Macclesfield
Malpas

Volunteers

I am supported by many volunteers who work with me to ensure Cheshire residents receive an outstanding police service. All volunteer roles are independent from Cheshire Constabulary and are there to ensure the Constabulary treats people, and animals, in the right way.

These volunteers act as 'critical friends' providing me with invaluable feedback on how Cheshire Constabulary is performing from an independent, impartial and non-discriminatory point of view in the above functions. I am incredibly proud of the work my volunteers have carried out over the last year, selflessly giving up their time to support my role to scrutinise the Constabulary.

Volunteers are valued members of the police family and play an extremely important role, reassuring me that the Constabulary is upholding high standards.

> As a Call Management Auditor, listening to 101 or 999 calls where the caller may be in considerable distress, highlights the professionalism and empathy call handlers must exhibit. The knowledge that our input will help these call handlers deliver the best service possible is very rewarding.
>
> - Call Audit Volunteer

> I enjoy volunteering as I observe the officers care and dedication to their colleagues, community and most importantly their canine partners.
>
> - Police Dog Welfare Volunteer



Scheme	Purpose	Activity
Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) Scheme *www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/volunteering/independent-custody-visitor*	Volunteers check on the welfare of people detained in police custody and ensure that they are treated appropriately.	Weekly unannounced visits to all three custody suites in Cheshire. ICVs made 155 reports in 2022/23 with findings discussed at quarterly panel meetings.
Police Dog Welfare Scheme *www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/volunteering/police-dog-welfare-visitor*	Aims to maintain standards and ensure that Cheshire Constabulary's police dog training procedures are ethical, humane, transparent, and accountable.	Monthly unannounced visits to police kennels. Observations of police dog training on a bimonthly basis; around 20 reports received each year. A panel meets every six months to discuss findings.
Call Management Auditors *www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/volunteering/call-management-auditor/*	Undertake an audit of randomly selected emergency and non-emergency calls received by the Constabulary's Force Control Centre to ensure that the demands and expectations of the public are met.	Call audits take place every three weeks, resulting in around 140 calls reviewed per year.

Did you know?
In 2022/23, the Special Constabulary performed 8,880 duties, amounting to 57,132 hours of policing across Cheshire.



The Special Constabulary is made up of volunteer police officers from different walks of life, who support the work of Cheshire Police alongside their day-to-day careers and responsibilities.

A Special officer is provided with full training and uniform, and has all the powers and authority of regular officers. I am always overwhelmed by their contribution which, without doubt, is instrumental in our aim to keep making Cheshire even safer and becoming an outstanding police force.

Accountability and Governance

There are multiple processes through which I make key decisions and hold the Chief Constable to account for the effective delivery of policing in Cheshire. These run alongside processes to provide checks and balances for the decisions I take.

Arrangements	Purpose	Activity
Public Scrutiny Board *www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/what-the-commissioner-does/scrutiny/scrutiny-board*	The main 'holding the force to account' meeting with the Commissioner and Force Senior Leadership Team.	Quarterly meetings held in public.
Joint Audit Advisory Committee *www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/commissioner-and-office/transparency-and-information/accounts-and-audit/joint-audit-advisory-committee*	Provides assurance to the Commissioner and Chief Constable on the effectiveness of the governance, risk management and internal control arrangements.	The Committee meets a minimum of four times a year with timings determined by the deadlines for publishing a draft and final statement of accounts.
Joint Management Board (JMB) *www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/what-the-commissioner-does/making-key-decisions*	A joint governance arrangement which enables the Commissioner and Chief Constable to make decisions of significant public interest regarding policing, crime and community safety. The Commissioner may also take management decisions outside of such meetings, which are subsequently published on his website.	JMB is held monthly, subject to need. During 2022/23, there were 12 meetings held with a total of 50 decisions made.
Police and Crime Panel *www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/what-the-commissioner-does/ scrutiny/cheshire-police-and-crime-panel* *www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/your_council/cheshire-police-and-crime-panel.aspx*	Provides checks and balances in relation to the performance of the Commissioner. The Panel comprises ten local councillors reflecting the political makeup of Cheshire's four Local Authorities, along with three independent co-opted members.	The Panel is administered by Cheshire East Council, with all agendas, webcasts and correspondence with the Commissioner publicly available.
Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) *www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/what-the-commissioner-does/partnerships-and-collaborations/local-criminal-justice-board*	Chaired by the Commissioner, the LCJB brings together criminal justice organisations at police force area level to support joint working and improve services.	Meetings of the Board are held quarterly
One to One meetings with the Chief Constable	Enables the Commissioner to undertake a regular dialogue with the Chief Constable to discuss strategic matters and current issues.	Weekly meetings
Dealing with complaints, including complaints against Chief Constable *www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/contact/compliments-and-complaints* *www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/contact/police-complaint-review*	The Commissioner is responsible for handling and recording complaints against the Chief Constable of Cheshire Constabulary. Should any complaint require investigation, this will be a matter for the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC). The Commissioner is also a relevant review body for complaints and has a statutory responsibility to determine whether the outcome of a complaint to Cheshire Constabulary was reasonable and proportionate.	In 2022/23, Cheshire Constabulary finalised 485 complaints. For additional information in relation to the statutory police complaints system, as well as police complaint statistics, please visit the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) website. *www.policeconduct.gov.uk/police-force/cheshire-constabulary*
Out of Court Disposal (OoCD) Panel *www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/what-the-commissioner-does/scrutiny/out-of-court-disposals-scrutiny-panel*	Decides whether the method of disposal is appropriate, or if the case would have been better in court. This is based on a review of the information available at the time of the OoCD.	The Panel meets quarterly and reviews around 320 cases each year.

Joint Management Board

During 2022/23, 12 meetings were held with a total of 50 formal decisions made.



Serious Violence Duty

The Serious Violence Duty was introduced in 2022 following public consultation. It brings together relevant partners and services to share information and collaborate on interventions to prevent and reduce serous crimes in their communities. Working collaboratively I have had seconded to my office a Detective Inspector and an Assistant Chief Officer from probation to lead on developing the strategy for Cheshire which is due for publication in 2024.

They occupy a vital convening role, developing the Serious Violence Partnership where stakeholders share expertise and work with cross functional data to inform decisions about how best to invest the money to prevent serious violence, reduce reoffending and make Cheshire a safer place to live and work.

For 2022/23

£30,000 secured for Serious Violence Duty

Strategic Policing Requirement

The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) sets out the threats which, in the Home Secretary's view, are the biggest threat to public safety and must be given due regard by Police and Crime Commissioners when issuing or varying Police and Crime Plans. It supports Commissioners as well as Chief Constables to plan, prepare and respond to these threats by clearly linking the local response to the national, highlighting the capabilities and partnerships that policing needs to ensure it can fulfil its national responsibilities.

A revised version of the SPR was published in February 2023 which provided strengthened detail around the action required from policing at the local and regional level to the critical national threats. The 2023 SPR sets out seven identified national threats. These are as follows: Serious and Organised Crime (SOC), Terrorism, Cyber, Child Sexual Abuse, Public Disorder and Civil Emergencies. These remain from the 2015 version with the addition in 2023 of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), reflecting the threat it presents to public safety and confidence.

Given this annual report is for the year April 2022 to March 2023, it will not respond in detail to the revised SPR due to the timing of its publication. However, as Police and Crime Commissioner, I am confident I have given due regard to the six threat areas identified in the previous SPR in my Police and Crime Plan and in my role holding my Chief Constable to account. VAWG, while not previously contained in the SPR, nonetheless is a key and pressing issue on which I update in this report and will be prioritised in future iterations.

Inspections

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) independently assesses the effectiveness and efficiency of police forces and fire & rescue services – in the public interest.

PEEL (Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy) is the programme in which HMICFRS draws together evidence from its annual all-force inspections. These assessments were introduced so that the public will be able to judge the performance of their force and policing as a whole.

- **Effectiveness is assessed in relation to how a force carries out its responsibilities including cutting crime, protecting the vulnerable, tackling anti-social behaviour, and dealing with emergencies and other calls for service.**
- **Efficiency is assessed in relation to how it provides value for money.**
- **Legitimacy is assessed in relation to whether the force operates fairly, ethically and within the law.**

PEEL Inspection

In July 2022, HMICFRS published its PEEL inspection report for Cheshire Constabulary. The Constabulary was judged as 'good' in preventing crime, treatment of the public and developing a positive workforce. Areas where the Constabulary was deemed as 'requiring improvements' included responding to the public and managing offenders. Investments in our Force Control Centre and in our Online Child Abuse Investigation Team have led to significant improvements in these areas since the publication of this report. The next PEEL inspection will take place in Cheshire between April and September 2024 with the final report published in February 2025.

Vetting and Counter Corruption

HMICFRS inspected Cheshire Constabulary's vetting and counter corruption arrangements in October 2022. Areas for improvement were identified but the inspection found that the Constabulary's vetting files were generally managed well and that our Counter Corruption Unit responded effectively in most of the cases reviewed.

National Child Protection Inspection

HMICFRS re-inspected child protection services in Cheshire during January 2023. The inspectors were pleased to see that leaders in the Constabulary are heavily invested in improving its approach to vulnerable children and that significant progress had been made with most of the recommendations from the 2022 inspection report.

The inspectors observed that the Constabulary knows where it needs to continue to improve and were confident that improvements would continue to be made in key areas such as the management of investigations into missing children and improving the multi-agency response to child sexual exploitation.



Funding your police force

Funding for police services increased in 2022/23 with Cheshire benefiting from an additional £13.1 million overall compared to the previous year, mainly comprising of an increase in the central government grant and the local council tax precept which rose by £10 per annum per household, based on a Band D property. This brought the total overall budget to £255.3 million.

This increase included funding provided to Cheshire Police as part of the government's Police Uplift Programme to recruit an additional 120 police officers during 2022/23, alongside the usual annual recruitment programme. Police officer numbers in Cheshire are now at their highest level since the Constabulary's current boundaries were set in the 1970s. In addition, with the support of the public and the Commissioner, the precept uplift funded the addition of a further 82 staff roles, 63 in frontline areas and the remaining providing additional support.

These additional resources, along with some further investment identified within the budget, were allocated in line with the priorities set out in the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan, the Chief Constable's 'Plan on a Page' and all national and regional priorities, threats and demands, shown opposite.

A key point of investment was in the Force Control Centre, in response to feedback from the public, particularly relating to the 101 non-emergency service. Significant funding was put in to increase the available resources and improve staff retention, with a clear improvement for the public. In addition, further investments were made into operational policing including Prevention and Early Intervention, Police Uplift Programme, Serious and Organised Crime and Intelligence.

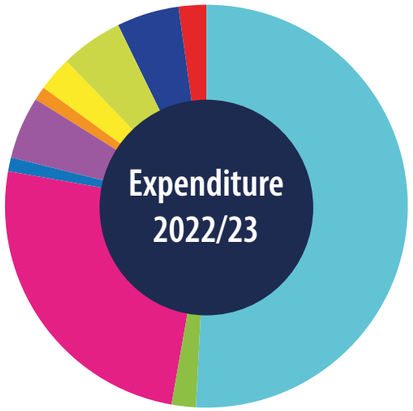
129 officers reallocated to priority roles

Serious and Organised Crime	**30**
Local Policing	**30**
Criminal Justice	**26**
Public Contact	**19**
Major Investigations	**11**
Safeguarding	**5**
Training	**5**
Roads and Crime	**1**
Uniform Operations	**1**
IT Services	**1**

82 additional staff

Public Contact	**35**
Force Intelligence	**13**
Serious and Organised Crime	**12**
Major Investigations	**2**
Partnerships	**1**
HR and Training	**7**
IT Services	**7**
Strategic Change	**3**
Planning and Performance	**2**

These charts show where the police budget came from and how it was spent over the course of the last full financial year.



51%	Police officer pay
2%	PCSO pay
25%	Staff pay
1%	Other employee costs
5%	Premises
1%	Transport
3%	Communication and technology
5%	Supplies and services
5%	Third party payments
2%	Financing costs



Government Grants	£129,138,000
Council Tax Precept	£91,185,000
Other Income & Specific Grants	£34,952,000

The OPCC costs less than 0.4% of the policing budget.



Stay in touch

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SCAN ME

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

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire
September 2023

John Dwyer
Police & Crime Commissioner for Cheshire