

# Addendum to Police and Crime Plan for 2017-2021

(Updated February 2021)





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In 2020, coronavirus changed everything. It also led to the postponement of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) elections until 7 May 2021<sup>1</sup>. In turn, this has necessitated my setting out an interim arrangement for the Police and Crime Plan until the new or returning PCC draws up a new Plan.

The Police and Crime Plan priorities will remain the same:

- ✓ **Protecting vulnerable people**
- ✓ **Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour**
- ✓ **Treating people fairly**

During the period of the restrictions I have been focusing on the following:

- 1. Ensuring the Chief Constable has the resources to respond to the emergency**
- 2. Ensuring the police respond in ways that are necessary, sufficient, proportionate and ethical (holding to account)**
- 3. Facilitating effective partnership working in community safety, violence reduction and criminal justice**
- 4. Commissioning and co-commissioning services, particularly for victims of crime, and providing grants for combatting crime and anti-social behaviour**

South Yorkshire Police (SYP) has coped well during the restrictions. Officer and staff attendance has remained high and SYP has worked successfully with partners in the Local Resilience Forum to manage the emergency situation in the four districts.

In using emergency powers, SYP has engaged with people to educate them on the restrictions, only resorting to fines when absolutely necessary. Communities have largely complied with legislation and guidance.

We will continue to monitor the force's response to the emergency powers.

South Yorkshire Police is unrecognisable from the police force it was in 2016. The Force has fundamentally changed its operating model. Neighbourhood policing teams (NPTs) have been introduced in all our four districts and major improvements have been made to 999 and 101 call-handling and other services in Force Communications (Atlas Court).

South Yorkshire Police is now the most improved in the country and has been rated 'Good' in all its most recent inspection areas by Her Majesty's Inspectorate ('Outstanding' in the area of Ethical Leadership').



<sup>1</sup> under the Coronavirus Act 2020

But in order to sustain and build on these improvements, we need the right level of resources, and be able to match those resources to our analysis of current and future demand on the police.

During the first national lock-down, SYP saw a reduction in demand, though crime then returned to pre-virus levels with some increase in relation to domestic abuse and mental health issues.

It is important to understand that the police have a greater role in making our communities safe. They:

- Stop people being victims of crime (through awareness-raising, education and other prevention work)
- Stop people becoming criminals (through working with partners to provide alternatives to crime, and to intervene and disrupt crime)
- Stop people being in fear of crime (through activity to provide reassurance to communities, e.g. through the media, social media and patrols in neighbourhoods).

## Focus of concerns January - May 2021

Towards the end of 2020 I undertook two countywide surveys to gauge public opinion and peoples' views on what issues we should focus on until a new Police and Crime Plan is produced. I have combined this with the work my office undertakes in understanding crime and the demand facing the Force and where their performance needs to be improved. I have grouped these areas of focus in this way:

### Neighbourhood crimes

Residential and commercial burglary, vehicle crime, sexual offences, hate crime, anti-social behaviours (ASB) and violence reduction.

### Domestic Abuse

Principally against women, but also the impact of domestic abuse on children in the household.

### Organised crime gangs and serious violence

Drug dealing, knife and gun crime, child sexual and criminal exploitation, county lines.

### Speeding and Road Safety

Improving road safety, casualty reduction and antisocial road use especially in more rural areas.

### Rural Crime

Tackling both crimes in rural areas and also crimes against wildlife.

### Cyber Crime

Collaborative work with other forces in the North East region (Cleveland, Durham, Humberside, North Yorkshire, Northumbria and West Yorkshire) in relation to cyber enabled and cyber dependent crime.

### Issues of disproportionality and inclusivity

Criminal justice system as a whole, stop and search, use of force, policing of protests and workforce issues of recruitment, retention and training.



## Operating Model of SYP

Increasing neighbourhood teams and police 'visibility' and engagement with the public and ensuring there is a workforce strategy and coherent workforce plan to match resources to demand.

## Understanding what is working

Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, improving services to victims and understanding and improving representation from our diverse communities within the workforce.

## Partnership working, including work with local criminal justice agencies

Continued local work to support recovery of the criminal justice system from the impact of COVID19 and supporting preparations for the introduction of probation reforms in June 2021.

## Resources

In order to tackle these areas of focus, I need to make wise investment decisions, including investments in technology, but also face real dilemmas.

For instance, I have welcomed the government's national 'Uplift' programme to increase police officers by 20,000 additional numbers by 2023. However, efficiencies and financial savings will have to be made in order to pay for it locally.

The Chancellor's announcement on the funding I will receive for policing and crime was for one-year only, and means I will have to ask the council tax payers of South Yorkshire to make up the shortfall. The consequences of not doing so will take the Force backwards, and may result in cuts in areas I really do not want to visit, e.g. reducing the number of Police Community Support officers (PCSOs) in our neighbourhoods.

## Conclusion

South Yorkshire Police is in a strong position to move forward, build on the changes it has already made and continue to improve for the benefit of South Yorkshire's communities.

However, in order to ensure the Force continues to move towards being an outstanding force in all areas I will have to ask council tax payers to pay a little more in 2021/22 as part of the annual precept setting. This equates to around 20 pence per week for residents in Band A and B properties, which accounts for the majority of South Yorkshire households.

I realise this is at a time when local communities are suffering financial hardship due to the consequences of the Coronavirus pandemic but I also have to balance this against what the public tell me they want from their police force and ensure that we have the finances to provide this. During the consultation process for the setting of the precept over 67% of 2160 respondents were supportive of the maximum increase.

Overall, I want South Yorkshire to be a safe place to live, learn and work. I believe this can be done through focusing on the three priority areas within the Police and Crime Plan, whilst also achieving the right balance of resources to deliver the most efficient and effective policing and crime services.



**Dr Alan Billings**

**South Yorkshire Police & Crime Commissioner**

February 2021

