



Making the money work

Hello everyone,

January has been a demanding month drawing up a budget to present to the Police and Crime Panel in February in which I intend to raise the police precept element of council tax by the maximum I'm allowed without holding a referendum (which could cost £1m). I'm only prepared to raise the maximum £24 per month to produce genuine improvements in the frontline. As a result, I have agreed with the Force that 160 officers will be recruited in this financial year (2019-20) and have laid budget plans to recruit 120 in the following year (2020-21) and 100 in the year after (2021-22).

This has been a far from straightforward task as the £4.571m special grant I won in December made good money that had already had to be paid out to cover the cost of fighting gang, gun and knife crime in the county over three years and the additional grants from Government (and anticipated council tax increase), totalling £8m, did not cover both the cost of this additional recruitment and all the inflationary pressures on Bedfordshire Police, including our contribution to a national pensions' shortfall, trebling of vehicle insurance and an anticipated 2% pay increase for officers and staff (however deserved this obviously is).

The Force has been engaged in the process of Priority Based Budgeting to scrutinise every single officer and every item of expenditure in one half of its departments (with the remaining 20 to be examined in the coming months). This draws a line in a fully evidenced way to show what Bedfordshire Police can afford to do at its existing level of funding and how these services would be enhanced or diminished if funding rises or, heaven forbid, falls. The emphasis has been on future-proofing the Force (for example looking at areas such as cyber crime which may need investment, looking ahead at spiralling demand) and trying to get ahead of the curve and prevent crime in the first place, rather than simply providing more officers to respond to it on the 999 and 101 services. The recommendations will be made by January 31 and I will comment on them in next month's newsletter.

Yours Kathryn,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Holloway'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Kathryn Holloway
Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire



PCC and top team from Bedfordshire Police meet residents of Houghton Regis in public meeting to discuss investment in local policing throughout the county

Bedfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, was joined by the Deputy and Assistant Chief Constables of Bedfordshire Police and members of the community team to meet residents to explain their plans for local policing at a public meeting in Houghton Regis (Monday January 14 2019).



The PCC opened the event at the Bedford Square Community Centre in Tithe Farm Road, Houghton Regis, by explaining the investment she is insisting on in new officers for local policing following her successful bid to the Home Office for a unique £4.571m emergency payment from the Special Policing Grant Fund and £8m in the Policing Settlement for all 43

forces in England and Wales for 2019-20, which was announced by Policing Minister, Nick Hurd, immediately before Christmas.

She explained that the Special Grant win had prevented an overspend which would have stopped recruitment in its tracks, following the unprecedented cost of fighting gang, gun and knife crime in the county. She revealed that the Policing Settlement had meant that she is insisting on investment in 160 new Police Constables this financial year and provision for 100 more in each of the following two years as the Government has made it clear that, by giving her the option of raising council tax by a maximum of £2 per month for a Band D home, improvements in local policing must be the result.

"I'm fully aware that this is a huge ask when Bedfordshire Police is also facing huge pressures of costs which increase each year with inflation. This coming year they include an anticipated pay settlement of 2% for officers and staff, a trebling of insurance for police vehicles and £115,000 to cover a shortfall in pensions nationally, despite extra income from Government in the Policing Settlement in two new grants of £1.318m and £1.117m to help with these pressures," Commissioner Holloway told the audience.

"The increase in officers is necessary because it's what every member of the public in every community tells me they want and it's what the frontline at Bedfordshire Police need too. What's more, the Government has made it absolutely clear that a council tax increase must produce improvements in local policing - that's what people will primarily be paying more for - and if it doesn't happen, in my view Bedfordshire Police would have absolutely no chance of having its fundamental funding position improved in the next Spending Review," she said.

The Deputy Chief Constable, Garry Forsyth, confirmed the priority the Commissioner has placed for the Force in recruiting 160 officers in this financial year and explained that, in addition to the Government grant and council tax income, Bedfordshire Police will have to make further savings to achieve this.

“The Force has already had to make cuts of £34.7m since 2010 which has, of course, had an impact on the service we can provide to the public. We deal incredibly well with Serious Organised Crime at one end of the scale and protecting the most vulnerable at the other but we recognise that those in the middle, like some of you in this audience, can feel left out and let down at times when you call us over anti social behaviour or vehicle thefts and we don’t have the number of officers to respond because they are having to deal with situations which are life-threatening.

“At the moment we’re engaged in a process to examine every single officer and item of expenditure across the first half of the Force and we are finding efficiencies of up to £4m to avoid cuts in service. We will finish this at the end of January and then we’ll look at the other half. We’re also finding areas which need further investment, so it’s a complex picture but we are investing in local policing as your local Community Hub team shows and the Commissioner has made it absolutely clear to me what she expects,” said DCC Forsyth.

The audience was urged to have its say to support the PCC’s proposed rise in the local policing precept by just £2 a month for a Band D Home, as members of the audience indicated they were happy to do, in her current survey to gather as many views as possible of the public and partners, such as councillors.

ACC Jackie Sebire and the senior officer responsible for Community Policing, Chief Supt. David Boyle both addressed local issues of concern in the Houghton Regis area, including unauthorised traveller encampments. ACC Sebire confirmed that she receives reports each morning of every illegal encampment in the county, that these are visited very regularly and that motor tax, insurance and MOT compliance are checked for all vehicles, contrary to popular belief, as contravention of these regulations would cross a threshold of criminality which allows police to use their Section 61 powers and move travellers on.

Chief Supt. Boyle and DCC Forsyth explained the difference between these police powers, which require a measure of anti social behaviour and criminality to be met in law before they can be used, and the Section 61 powers which would allow police to force travellers to move to a temporary site, if one was provided by Central Bedfordshire Council, with whom the Force is in negotiation concerning this provision.

The DCC confirmed that travellers using such a site have to pay a fee to use it which increases every day and also for utilities, which has proved a deterrent in other parts of the country.

The meeting was also addressed by (Acting) Inspector Craig Gurr of the town’s Community Hub team, which is shared with neighbouring Dunstable. The Hub currently consists of:-

- * 1 Inspector
- * 1 Sergeant
- * 4 Police Constables
- * 5 PCSOs

Sgt. Gurr detailed the recent work of the Hub officers, who are dedicated to problem solving in communities and meeting local area priorities set at regular meetings with town councillors and those from Central Bedfordshire Council. He revealed that this work has included the successful closure of a crack house in the town, six warrants since April to counter those dealing in cannabis and other drugs and successful action to deal with the problem of street drinkers, including fixed penalty notices to shops and off licences selling alcohol to those who are already inebriated. He also stressed the need for the community to pass on intelligence to police to alert them to drug dealing and other issues. The next Local Area Priority setting meeting will be on January 28.

He also pointed to the problems facing police in dealing with drug dealers and nuisance motorcyclists who use the local busway, cycle paths and a warren of hiding spaces in older social housing developments to escape or hide from view and the need for the community to work closely with police to counter this.

Chief Supt. Boyle stressed that those wishing to pass on information entirely anonymously concerning matters such as names, vehicles and registration numbers of those involved, could do so via the confidential Crimestoppers number - 0800 555 111 - where callers are untraceable.

Commissioner Holloway pointed to the success of the new Facebook page, Dunstable and Houghton Regis Community Policing Team, with posts reaching 4,792 in one recent case.

“If you want to know what your Community Hub team is up to, working on your behalf day after day, please take a look on Facebook rather than listening to rumour and speculation. Where reporting crime is concerned, please don’t think that posting your comments about crime and anti social behaviour on other Facebook sites is the same as reporting it to police. Please call them on 101, or 999 if it’s a life-threatening matter of course,” she said.

DCC Forsyth said he understood it could be frustrating to face delays on 101 at peak times but that Bedfordshire Police compares very favourably with the performance of other forces in terms of the total number of calls and the time taken to answer them on this national call line number.



Over 3.7 million pounds worth of bids submitted to PCC's Grant Fund, up more than 1m on last year

Bedfordshire’s Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, has received applications for her 2019/20 Grant Fund totalling over £3.7 million worth of bids to help victims and reduce crime in Bedfordshire.

The application process for the Grant Fund was officially launched at the end of the year (Tuesday 11 December 2018) and closed on Friday 11 January. Some 69 applications have been received. The Grant Fund is created by combining a grant from the Ministry of Justice and funding from the Bedfordshire Police budget producing a flexible grant opportunity aimed at promoting innovative and collaborative working across Bedfordshire.

“What I’m particularly delighted about is that the word about my grant funding is getting out to more people than ever before as I’ve made it clear that I don’t just want all the usual suspects to apply but people with fantastic ideas to help victims or make their communities safer but who may never have applied for a public sector grant in their lives!

“I’d like to assure this group that this will be taken into account by me and my panels hearing the applications and that we will give help to develop some of the best ideas,” said the Commissioner.

“More than £1m more in bids have been submitted this year than last - £3.7m now as opposed to £2.6m in 2018-19. This does, of course, mean that with only a total of £1.6m to distribute, a lot of people are not going to be successful but I intend, as always, to make this money go as far as possible and to favour projects which are funded from more than one source so partners are genuinely invested and working together,” she added.

Last year, the Commissioner funded an enhanced new service for all victims of crime in Bedfordshire, called Signpost. The free and confidential service is a one-stop-shop for all the information a victim of crime needs to know. Signpost consists of a call centre of specialist Victim Care Coordinators, available on Freephone 0800 0282 887, running six days a week (Monday to Friday 8am – 8pm, Saturday 9am – 5pm). Signpost also has an online directory of all support services for those affected by different crimes (and a section telling them what will happen next if they report these crimes to the police) at signpostforbedfordshire.com.

In the coming year, PCC Holloway intends to provide a similar service for former offenders to also draw together contact information for all services available to support them in Bedfordshire into one online home, backed by a call centre of specialists. The new service will launch in April and will be called Direction.

In the last round of grants, the PCC also commissioned multiple organisations supporting victims of Domestic Abuse and Child Sexual Exploitation and other crimes against women and children such as Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage. Organisations such as the Anne Frank Trust received funds to work in schools across the county to combat prejudice and prevent Hate Crime through the story of Anne Frank and the PCC established Bedfordshire’s first dedicated counselling service to help male victims of sexual and domestic abuse.

The process is still ongoing, with the Commissioning team currently assessing bids. A selection of the 69 applicants will then be invited over the next two months to present to the PCC and a panel of members from across Bedfordshire who will then decide if any of the £1.6m of grant funding will be allocated to them.

“It’s important that the process is seen to be fair, open and transparent. The politically independent Chair of the Police and Crime Panel, Paul Cain, will join me and there will be representation from young people in the criminal justice system for applications relating to them as well as from minorities in our communities,” said Commissioner Holloway.

More information on the commissioning process can be found at www.bedfordshire.pcc.police.uk in the Campaigns & Initiatives section under [Funding Opportunities](#). Anyone with any questions should contact the OPCC on **01234 842064** or email PCC-Commissioning@Bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk.



Bedfordshire Police is recruiting police officers

Today (Friday 11 January), we have opened applications for police officers, with applicants invited to complete an online application form.

Recruitment continues to be a priority for us and since 2016, we have continued to recruit new officers, who are now working on the frontline, policing the counties of Bedfordshire.



WE'RE RECRUITING

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IN OUR
COUNTY**

www.bedfordshire.police.uk

Inspector Mo Aziz, from the force's recruitment team, said: "While recruitment is a priority for the force and we have continued to recruit new officers, we still have more work to do to get to where we need to be in terms of numbers. We want to recruit passionate individuals who want to make a difference in Bedfordshire, and who will uphold the high standards we expect from our officers."

"As a force we face complex challenges, and as a result I think we offer people a diverse career across a number of vital departments. We're a small force, but we have big opportunities and big ambitions. There are many opportunities for our people to continue to develop their skills once they join us, and this is something we continue to encourage."

We're hosting an information evening next Thursday (17 January) at the Auction House in Luton, from 6.30pm until approximately 9pm. Attendees will have the opportunity to hear from serving police officers about their time with the force, and learn more about the application process.

Anyone who is interested is asked to register their interest by emailing r.recruitment@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk.

To find out more about becoming a police officer, visit our [police officer information pages](#). To apply to join the force, [click here](#).

Social Media Highlights

Bedfordshire PCC @BedsPCC · Jan 18

PCC and top team from Bedfordshire Police meet residents of Houghton Regis in public meeting to discuss investment in local policing throughout the county - [ow.ly/DMeF30njU44](https://www.facebook.com/bedspcc/posts/10158345444444444)



1 retweet 5 likes

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Kathryn Holloway @KHollowayPCC · Jan 21

Anyone wondering why we have PCSOs should listen to Daniel James of the Bedford Hub re Op Highgate - driving down street drinking, aggressive begging & homelessness in a plan with partners & joint action group



4 comments 3 retweets 10 likes

Kathryn Holloway @KHollowayPCC · 23h

Privileged to join the Anne Frank Trust for their annual event - they train anti hate crime ambassadors for me in our schools and truly make a difference to young people's attitudes towards prejudice



2 likes

Dates for the diary

Police and Crime Panel – Tuesday 5 February 6:30pm – 8:30pm.

Flitwick Public Surgery – Tuesday 12 February 5:00pm – 7:00pm. For more information and to register your attendance please visit - <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/pcc-public-surgery-flitwick-tickets-54843269696>

Flitwick Council Meeting – Tuesday 12 February 7:30pm – 8:30pm. Councillors only. Library Lecture Hall, Coniston Road, Flitwick MK45 1QJ

Police and Crime Plan

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