

 **Bedfordshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner**

Making the money work

Hello everyone,

The key news of the month - which I trust you will welcome - is the uplift in officers I am now able to introduce to the Bedfordshire frontline this financial year; this will mean the doubling of the existing strength of Police Constables in Community Policing across the county including nine in a trouble shooting task force for Bedfordshire, at neighbourhood level, as part of the largest officer recruitment programme at Bedfordshire Police for a decade.

The PC recruitment and trouble shooting team will be introduced this financial year and will see four new PCs each for the Community Policing Hubs - Luton South and North, North Urban and Rural, Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard.

Every community and those who represent it, such as MPs and councillors, have been crying out for an uplift to officers dedicated to neighbourhood policing. The Hubs are working; as you know, they are out and about in communities every day and Local Area Priority Setting is winning over elected representatives and other key community groups, but we need to give them more help given the scale of public demand, and provide it through officers with full warranted powers, hence this announcement.


I had already pledged to recruit more officers this year than in any year for a decade at Bedfordshire Police - 160 - of whom 60 are new posts above the level the Force had planned for; 100 will replace those leaving through retirement or other issues this year (with 80 the average needed annually for replacements).

In addition, we will have a Neighbourhood Intervention Team of a Sergeant and nine PCs who will be a permanent trouble shooting unit to move around the county to deal with pernicious issues as they arise, at neighbourhood level, in towns anywhere in Bedfordshire. The team was inspired by the success of Operation Hilton in Dunstable, which followed a public meeting held by me and the Chief Constable in late August 2018. As you may know, Op Hilton successfully targeted drug dealers and resulted in doors going in all over the town with multiple arrests and the seizure of Class A drugs, weapons and counterfeit money over a fortnight of focussed operational deployments.

The problem was that Op Hilton ran on the basis of overtime and Bedfordshire Police simply couldn't afford that on a permanent basis. I am supporting the DCC Garry Forsyth in the Neighbourhood Intervention Team initiative as it is a way to try to go in hard and swiftly to deal with tough problems as they arise in a particular neighbourhood, if they are on a scale which outstrips the numbers available to deal with them within the existing local Community Policing Hub.

This month also saw the completion of my Commissioner's Fund (grant funding) process for 2019-20 worth £1.6m.

Yours Kathryn,



Kathryn Holloway
Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire





PCC to pay for up to 400 new police officers and double those in Community Policing with 2 pound per month council tax rise

Bedfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, has announced that she is to back recruitment of up to 400 new Police Constables and double the number of PCs in Community Policing across the county as the result of a £2 per month increase in the police share of council tax which was approved by the county's Police and Crime Panel last night (5 February 2019).



The PCC explained that the number of recruits would be funded as a result of a combination of the unique Special Policing Grant of £4.571m that she won from the Home Office last December and a total of £8m, made up of the police's council tax precept and Government grants of £1.1 and £1.3m as part of the Policing Settlement for all forces for this financial year, which was also announced in December. The

budget also depended on savings from scrutiny of every officer, member of staff and expenditure in 20 departments at Bedfordshire Police so far, which make up half the Force.

She told the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Panel, who must vote on her budget and precept proposal that she had been "insistent" that the increase in council tax was not simply used to tackle costs rising with inflation like pay, pensions and insurance, but to deliver a meaningful uplift in officers in visible policing in communities.

"This is why we have agreed a budget which creates 160 new PCs in Bedfordshire in the year 2019-20 and that those going into the eight Community Policing Hubs in towns around the county, will double the available number of PCs already in post in neighbourhood policing. This is a really meaningful uplift and is what everybody tells me they want," said PCC Holloway.

"I also consider that it would be remiss of me to plan a budget which only deals with the final year of my term in office and am proposing one which will deliver recruitment of 120 more PCs in the year after that - which is 20 more than I've already promised, now the budget has been finalised - and for between 100 and 120 for the following year of 2021-22, whatever happens at the ballot box at the next Police and Crime Commissioner election, as a proper plan to secure Bedfordshire Police's future recruitment.

"Every single community, everywhere I go in the county, wants to see more officers in communities and that is also what I have agreed with the Force, with this very

significant uplift in Community Hub officers as it has been imperative to me that people get a change that is palatable to them if having to pay an extra £2 per month,” said Commissioner Holloway.

Chief Finance Officer, Phil Wells, confirmed to the Panel that, without the Special Policing Grant of £4.571m that the Commissioner won in December, far from increasing recruitment, it would have had to stop.

The Commissioner also revealed that Bedfordshire Police is to create a Neighbourhood Intervention Team made up of a Sergeant and nine PCs to move from area to area as trouble shooters following the success of Operation Hilton, to combat drug dealing in Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard, in early autumn 2018.

“The success of Op Hilton, with drug dealers’ doors going in all over Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard to take them out of the picture and disrupt the drug dealing that was making local residents’ lives a misery, was the inspiration for the Neighbourhood Intervention Team. The problem of Op Hilton was that it had to be delivered primarily on overtime which was an expense Bedfordshire Police simply can’t afford every time. The beauty of this proposal is that, as the Force is aware of a pernicious problem in one of our towns or villages, the Neighbourhood Intervention Team can move in to target it and produce similar results as its core, day to day, purpose,” said PCC Holloway.

The proposals were welcomed by Police and Crime Panel members, Cllr. Fiona Chapman and Cllr. Alison Foster with Cllr. Foster saying she had spoken to many residents in Harrold who had said they were prepared to support an extra £2 per month increase per Band D (averagely priced) home. Bedford Borough Cllr. Sarah Jayne (sic) Gallagher said she supported the increase in police numbers but did not support passing the cost on to the local council taxpayer and abstained. Bedford Borough Cllr. Randolph Charles voted for the precept as the only means available to the PCC to raise the number of police officers in the Force. Independent member Damian Warburton also pointed to the rising cost of living and the need for Central Government to put Bedfordshire Police on a sustainable financial footing.

“I entirely agree that continuing to fund improvements in policing through the council tax precept are not sustainable. All this would mean in future would be that those forces with a higher proportion of Band D homes in their county would grow richer while those, like Bedfordshire, with a far smaller number of Band D homes would get poorer, by comparison, and I made the Policing Minister, Nick Hurd, aware of this immediately after he announced this settlement for 2019-20, based on a maximum council tax rise by me of £2 a month,” said Commissioner Holloway.

Independent Chair of the Panel, Paul Cain, said he was being informed daily that other Police and Crime Panels around the country were voting in favour of a £24 per year increase as the only means for Police and Crime Commissioners to fund improvements in policing and an uplift in numbers of officers. He pointed to the work done by Bedfordshire’s Police and Crime Commissioner to make the Government aware of the plight of Bedfordshire Police.

“I would like to point to the work of our Commissioner as I honestly don’t believe that anyone could have done any more than she has to raise the funding issues of Bedfordshire Police and she has had to do so with more than one Policing Minister and Home Secretary since she came into this role and deserves to be congratulated for this. I can just imagine the Policing Minister, Nick Hurd, cringing every time he hears that it’s Kathryn wanting to talk to him!,” said Paul Cain.

When asked by Damian Warburton if anything more could be done to win more money from Government at this stage, the PCC replied: "I have raised Bedfordshire Police's case with every Policing Minister, Home Secretary, the Prime Minister, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Chancellor and the Security Minister but, as governments come and go, what's just as important is that the Police Funding Team of civil servants who are always in place now fully understand the plight of Bedfordshire Police as they had to go over the books to agree the Special Grant of £4.571m and I will be asking them to do so again this year."

Panel Chair, Paul Cain, spoke of his disappointment that so few Police and Crime Panel members attended the vital annual budget-setting meeting as, without three quarters of the Panel being present, the budget and precept rise had to be voted through in any case. Conservative councillors Paul Downing, Peter Hollick and Ian Delgarno all sent apologies. None of Luton's Labour councillors attended.



OPCC holds panels to allocate 1.6 million pound Grant Fund

Bedfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, and her office have been holding a series of panels over the last fortnight to decide which organisations will be awarded money from her Grant Fund to help victims and reduce crime in Bedfordshire over the next year.

The commissioning team received 85 applications (69 of which were from external organisations and charities) for the 2019/20 Grant Fund totalling more than £3.8 million worth of bids to help victims and increase community safety in the county. Over the last two weeks (4–15 February), applicants have been presenting for an hour each to a panel of experts and residents from across the county who decide if any of the £1.6 million of grant funding will be allocated to them.

The Commissioner and her team were joined by safeguarding experts from local authorities, organisations and charities across Bedfordshire which provide support in domestic violence, sexual violence, education, early intervention and offender rehabilitation. The independent chair of the Police and Crime Panel, Paul Cain, was also present for many of the panels.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner will now be reviewing the feedback from the panels and the presentations with the aim of announcing the successful applicants for the 2019/20 Grant Fund in March. As part of the Commissioner's commitment to working with services to support victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and hate crime, the team will also be looking to support services which aim to reduce offending in areas such as domestic violence by providing education for offenders, child sexual exploitation, modern day slavery and county lines.

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 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 application process for the Grant Fund was officially launched at the end of last year (Tuesday 11 December 2018) and closed on Friday 11 January. This year, the Commissioner has actively encouraged applications which demonstrate joint working across organisations for the benefit of Bedfordshire residents countywide.

The PCC's Grant Fund is created by combining a grant from the Ministry of Justice and funding from the Bedfordshire Police force budget, producing a flexible and accessible grant opportunity aimed at promoting innovative and collaborative working across Bedfordshire.



Social Media Highlights



Kathryn Holloway @KHollowayPCC · Mar 7
With Montell Neufville who leads Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel and Sgt Steve Mosley after the Panel was chosen as an example of the very best practise in national policing in Criminal Justice Alliance report



Kathryn Holloway Retweeted



BedsPolice Cohesion @bedscohesion · Feb 1
The PCC @KHollowayPCC says a few words about how it's important to get to know our communities and how public engagement is priority for this police force #CohesionAwards19



Dates for the diary

12 March 2019 – Police and Crime Panel was held – 18:30hrs – 20:30hrs.

02 April 2019 – Launch of Direction, the PCC's new Offenders Hub

17 April 2019 – Haynes Engagement Event

Police and Crime Plan

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