



 **Bedfordshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner**

Making the money work

Hello everyone,

It's more good news this month. We have been promised 54 new officers on top of the 160 new PCs that I am currently recruiting into Bedfordshire Police. This is our share of the first tranche of the uplift which has been promised nationally. The Home Office has had insufficient time to rebalance the whole national funding formula and, therefore, it is based on this outdated system, but there has been a commitment to redress this in future. It is, of course, a welcome move in the right direction but, as I have evidenced the need for 440 PCs and 80 detectives in all, you can take it as read that the new Policing Minister and Home Secretary have been made fully aware of this. The Government has called for these new officers to be deployed in visible, public facing roles and I will hold the Force to account to make sure that this is delivered. We also have an urgent requirement to boost our team looking after the most vulnerable victims of abuse - who are most often children - and I will be treating this as a priority too.

New PCs are, of course, paid for from the revenue budget. Changes to police buildings, which I own in law as the corporation sole responsible for them, come from the capital budget. I view it as an essential investment in the welfare and wellbeing of our officers and staff to produce improvements in working conditions in buildings which have not been overhauled since the 1970s, in some cases such as Luton Police Station, and this will be another priority for me for the remainder of my term to mid May 2020.

I have made a start. At Luton Police Station, the £50,000 worth of improvements that I have agreed, are underway. My Chief of Staff, Clare Kelly, and I prepared and fitted out the newly decorated kitchen for officers who respond to 999 and 101 calls with crockery, cutlery and furniture etc. as it is incredibly important to me that they have somewhere suitable to take the few minutes out that they have available in a space that is fit for purpose.

I am currently planning an enlarged and redecorated rest area for the new Community team which combines detectives and the former Community Crime Unit, at Luton, to produce omnicompetence in detection skills, and another for the CAVAA team, dealing with children and vulnerable adults who are victims of abuse. The old tired loos will be refitted too. The Enquiries Office at Luton is to get a new



kitchen as well. The corridors will be carpeted and new lighting has been installed on floor four (as previously it was so dark, one colleague told me you felt you had to have a head lamp to see and he was not exaggerating...). I suspect that most welcome of all will be the news that changing the windows to keep out extremes of both cold and heat has been agreed and that sellotaping the draughts out will be a thing of the past next year.

Regular readers will know that I am also on track to deliver a facility which is to be one of the proudest achievements for me as PCC - the new Sexual Assaults Referral Centre or SARC. I have engaged directly with managers, service users, forensic nurses and victim support volunteers in Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire to establish what works best and that decent soft furnishings including fabric sofas and chairs and lampshades can indeed be used in non-forensic waiting areas to make them as unlike either a police station or a hospital as possible (and, as promised, there will be three of these to meet the varying needs of families with young children, teenagers and adults). It is my intention to produce a well-designed space which will also support the officers and staff who work on such emotionally demanding cases in a calm and soothing environment, which is exactly what they and these victims of some of the worst crimes deserve.

What matters to me in terms of upgrading outdated working conditions at Bedfordshire Police is that our officers and staff can see a modest investment in them and their surroundings as living proof of the way the Force Executive team and I want to support their wellbeing, which must include improvements to the environment in which they work and (occasionally) rest. I am proud that this work was planned before the national Front Line Review following which the Home Office urged forces to pay much more attention to such matters.

Yours
Kathryn



Kathryn Holloway
Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire



News from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner



PCC secures funding for community projects aimed at tackling serious youth violence

Around £35,000 has been awarded to community projects to divert young people away from knife crime and other serious violence.

Grassroots initiatives across the county will benefit from a portion of the £1.4 million funding awarded to us to tackle serious youth violence.

The successful projects include refurbishment work and outreach groups who can engage with communities through activities such as sport, music and drama.

Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, said: “This money is particularly vital because we all know that only the communities themselves understand which approach to driving down knife carrying, gang membership and gun use are going to work with their own young people.

“In Bedfordshire, I’ve insisted that we go one step further and put the bids for these funds before panels made up of members from the worst affected communities, so that they have a say at the earliest possible part of this process.

“It’s clear, isn’t it, that neither police nor local authorities can impose solutions that work? It’s no good just saying we must work together with our public, we must actually get on and do it. That means that I’m not just looking for all the ‘usual suspects’ to apply for grant funding, but for brand new projects.

“My office is prepared to support them to the hilt but, of course, this means that they have to understand from the get-go that the money comes from the Government, my office and the force, and that means that there is an absolute requirement for every single person linked to the projects to be completely separate from any active involvement in any form of criminality, including the use of drugs.”

We are one of 18 police forces across the country to receive funding from the Home Office to tackle serious youth violence.

The funding so far has been spent on patrols to target hotspots which have seen an increase in serious youth violence, as well as speeding up the force’s forensic work.

Bedfordshire has also received £880,000 [to establish a Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit](#), working with partners such as councils and the health service to tackle the root causes of violence and exploitation.

Around a quarter of this funding is also due to be made available to community projects that can divert young people away from gangs.

The announcement comes in the same week that we are supporting [Operation Sceptre](#) – a week-long operation dedicated to tackling knife crime.

During the week, the force has been running operational activity including weapons sweeps, to recover weapons that have been hidden for future use or discarded, and patrols in knife crime hotspot areas.

Bedfordshire Police's Assistant Chief Constable, Jackie Sebire, who is also the National Police Chiefs Council's lead for serious youth violence, said: "Investing in and strengthening our communities to help them divert young people away from knife crime is absolutely crucial if we are to get a grip on this problem.

"As has been said time and again, increased enforcement, while having an important role in removing the highest threats and giving communities some respite, cannot be the sole answer. Prevention, as always, is better than cure.

"That's why I am delighted to be helping such a diverse range of projects in our communities."

Successful projects

Mastroe - £5,000

Change The Narrative (CTN) project to be delivered in Bedford

This project will provide media training, mentoring and development to 12 young people over the course of 10 weeks. The training will incorporate key aspects of media including photography, videography and video editing. The trainees will work together in teams / groups to create video content geared towards changing mindsets and informing young people of the dangers of a life of violence and other opportunities for success outside of crime and violence. The programme will also be used to also teach the trainees project management.

Houghton Regis Town Council - £5,000

Serious Knife Crime – prevention and awareness to be delivered in Dunstable and Houghton Regis

The programme will use peer education to deliver anti-knife messages around actions, outcomes and consequences. The Youth Council will promote the opportunity for young people to sign up to form a group to undertake a programme of education and awareness, including a visit to the Ben Kinsella Exhibition. The programme will help to develop their awareness and understanding and the group will use their knowledge to complete a peer education programme / anti-knife campaign to the wider community.

Shefford Town Council - £5,000

Refurbish a redundant building for youth development work in Shefford

Over the last few years Shefford Town Council has been developing a youth strategy that allows provision of facilities for young people to encourage them to take an interest in their community.

With the provided funding they will bring back into use a building that was built and used previously as a changing room for a junior football club. They will use the building for a dedicated Youth Hub. The location lends itself to many creative activities, including sports.

However, this space will also be used to facilitate a bike repair project, mentoring young people, employment support and drop in sessions.

RAMDA - £4,980

Engage, Inspire and accomplish based in Luton

This project is working with families from ethnic minority backgrounds, especially the Somali community and their young people, by diverting young people with issues around serious violence away from offending and re-offending through sports activities, leisure and group workshops.

It will reduce social isolation for children and young people through facilitating activities, and will also support families to access development support.

Halleema Ali - £4,950

22 Seconds To Murder- looking to deliver out of Luton

22 Seconds To Murder was launched in February 2019 and proved so popular that it gained media publicity on the BBC. It was in memory of Azaan Kaleem, who was the victim of a fatal 22 second attack. This project engages young people through the medium of art and performances, by tackling a heavy topic in a creative way. It also allows families, staff and other relevant organisations to be part of the conversation, by providing a holistic approach.

Bruno's Brazilian Soccer School, based in the Bedford area - £5,000

Unite to learn and play

Unite to learn and play is an educational project aimed at 40 men and boys from the ages of 16 to 25. The project will run all year round and the objective is to run classroom-based English and Maths lessons, and employment skills workshops, combined with football training and games. They will also run gang workshops to educate vulnerable teenagers away from joining a gang by providing them with the tools to say 'no' to gangs, and where necessary to leave a gang they may already be part of.

The project will run a Saturday league football team for the students who regularly attend, in order to give an incentive for them and to also bring different nationalities and cultures together. The project will be working in partnership with McDonald's and He By Juniors barber shop on Midland Road, who will offer work experience and possibly job opportunities to anyone who attends the course.

Grand Union Housing Group - £4,950

Think B4 U Bother - outreach based in Central Bedfordshire

Think B4 U Bother is a weekly detached youth work programme and resource kit. It has three strands:

- Educational – Awareness raising
- Physical - diversionary activity
- Mentoring - supporting those in need.

The Grand Union youth team feel that meeting, supporting and engaging with young people who are considered hard to reach, at risk or involved in criminal exploitation or anti-social behaviour, and going to the places they hang out, has a higher chance of success.

This project focusses on the youth workers walking to parks, streets, bus stops and other hotspot areas identified to build rapport and engage with young people. Some young people may also engage in sporting activity set up through the project.



PCC launches first annual Community Hub awards to reward members of the public countywide for help for local police and "truly outstanding" problem solving by officers

Bedfordshire's PCC, Kathryn Holloway, held the first Community Hub Thank you Awards to single out both members of the public and officers involved in exceptional work to solve problems in towns and villages at Woburn Abbey and to "spread the word" of what Community Police are delivering across the county. (19 September 2019).

The event was attended by 140 guests including officers from the eight Community Hubs based in towns across Bedfordshire - in Leighton Buzzard, Dunstable, Biggleswade - covering the North Bedfordshire towns and villages, Ampthill - based at the Community Fire Station, Bedford and Luton, which has Hubs based at Luton Police Station and Futures House at Marsh Farm and one at the Airport, plus members of the rural crime team Op Sentinel Rural, who work out of both Dunstable and Riseley, at either end of the county.

The ceremony, held in the Sculpture Gallery at Woburn recognised both individual officers for successful problem solving operations and members of the public, nominated by each Hub team themselves and by rural crime officers.

“This was a fantastic opportunity to spread the word about what Bedfordshire Police’s Community Hub officers have been up to over the past year to solve problems and help communities in all our major towns and the villages and also to say a huge ‘thankyou’ to those members of the public who have really got involved to help their local teams to solve problems.

“Those members of the public who received awards told me they were overwhelmed that the officers themselves had singled them out and it was also absolutely right that those officers who had presided over exceptionally successful problem solving were recognised,” said the PCC.

The problem-solving police operations presented to the audience included an overall winner, Op Yellow, designed to drive down drugs and other saleable goods being thrown into the grounds of Bedford Prison and other examples included a community wide effort to reduce Anti-Social Behaviour in Shefford - whose Mayor, Paul Mackin, received the award from the Biggleswade Hub for his outstanding help to the local police team as well as work to end drug dealing and intimidation of residents at Ruthin Close, Luton which turned around the neighbourhood, according to residents.

The Commissioner was inspired to hold the event, which the Force now plans to stage annually, by the yearly Community Cohesion Awards.

“I have really taken on board how important the annual Community Cohesion Thankyou Awards have been in building strong bonds of trust and confidence in local policing in our communities in Luton and Bedford, primarily, and across our diverse neighbourhoods where trust in police has not been strong, historically. It’s incredibly important to me for our smaller towns and villages to enjoy exactly the same relationship with Bedfordshire Police and, now they have dedicated local Community teams, this was the perfect event to start to build this,” she said.

The PCC was keen to stress that the event was provided at reasonable cost, thanks to the generosity of the Duke and Duchess of Bedford.

“I’m so grateful to the Duke and Duchess for allowing us to use the Sculpture Gallery, its magnificent gardens, conservatory and reception rooms free of charge and they also were kind enough to provide welcome drinks for all who attended. This meant that the very first Community Hub Thankyou Awards got off to a quite superb start in a wonderful setting where officers and members of the public alike told me how delighted they were to have been invited,” said Commissioner Holloway.

The event was also addressed by Bedfordshire Police’s Chief Constable, Garry Forsyth. He said: “I was delighted to part of this event to celebrate the fantastic work of our officers, staff, community partners and members of the public. I often hark back to Sir Robert Peel’s principle that the police are the public and the public are the police, and that has shown at the Community Hub Awards ceremony.

“I would like to thank all of you for the continued support you provide to our communities and to our partners and public, for helping to keep our communities safe and reducing crime.”

Representatives of each of the Hubs and the rural crime team presented a resume of the work of which they were most proud over the year and described their approach to solving local problems, before going on to nominate the work of a key partner.

The audience were also addressed by international Community Policing expert Sylvia Chennery who regularly judges neighbourhood policing competitions. "I can honestly say that some of the examples we've heard about here tonight are among the very best that I have heard about from any police force, anywhere," she said.

Community Impact Award:

Winner

Operation Yellow – Sgt Ian Leeson, PC Emily Keech, John McKinney (Bedford Borough Council). Graeme Vann (Security HMP Bedford) PJ Butler (HMP Bedford Governor)

Highly Commended

OP Leithan - Sgt Rachael Welch, PCSO Ann Jeeves, PC Sarah Cluff, Paul Mackin (Shefford Town Council), Alan May (Central ASB Officer)

OP Loc (Ruthin Close) - Sgt Richard Cunningham, PC Michael Trinder, Laura Chalmers (Luton Borough Council ASB Case Manager) PC James Norman

Pan Bedfordshire:

Winner

VARAC - Superintendent Jacqueline Whittred & Shelia Forder

Highly Commended

Mental Health Street Triage – PC James Biggs, Rachel Martin (East of England Ambulance), Sarah Clarke (ELFT)

Partners in Problem Solving:

Winner

Tara Lynch & Laura Chalmers (Luton Borough Council ASB Case Managers)

Highly Commended

Sarah Keena (BPHA Housing Officer)

Impact Vulnerability:

Winner

OP Highgate – PC Sharon Cummings, PCSO Daniel James, Christina Rowe (Bedford BID), Andy Cooper (Environmental Health), Sarah Stevens (Bedford Borough Council)

Highly Commended

PCSO Spyridon Apostolidis

Innovation in Engagement:

Winner

PCSO 2813 Rachel Carne

Highly Commended

PC Emma Underwood & PCSO Claire Hughes

Problem Solver of the Year:

Winner

PC Kate Rowley

Highly Commended

Lara Curtayne

The following community members were nominated by each hub for their work in their respective communities and were also presented with a certificate:

Airport – Tamara Cato
Rural Crime Hub – Martin Towler
Dunstable – Sharon Warboys
Houghton – Sharon Knott
Luton – Peter Appleyard
Leighton Buzzard – Stephen Swaine
North Urban – Beccy Campbell-Grieve
North Rural – Paul Mackin



[Like us on Facebook](#)



[Follow us on Twitter](#)

View more highlights on our Facebook and Twitter pages

A rectangular box with a dark blue border containing social media icons and text. At the top left is the Facebook 'f' logo. To its right is the text "Like us on Facebook" with "Facebook" underlined. Below the Facebook logo is the Twitter bird logo. To its right is the text "Follow us on Twitter" with "Twitter" underlined. At the bottom of the box is the text "View more highlights on our Facebook and Twitter pages".