

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire Newsletter



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"Putting people at the heart of policing"

In the News

March 2023



- PCC hails second successful youth conference
- Officers set to move to new police hub in Leighton Buzzard
- PCC's school absenteeism pilot helps over 100 young people
- PCC sets another record investment for victim support services
- PCC backs review of police Code of Ethics

PCC hails second successful youth conference

Hundreds of teenagers have attended conferences organised by Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner Festus Akinbusoye this week as part of a major drive to raise awareness about issues like knife crime and violence against women and girls.



Nearly 300 year nine students attended the events which were delivered in partnership with agencies such as Bedfordshire's Violence and Exploitation Unit (VERU) and the Safer Streets programme.

Held at venues in each local authority area, students heard from a number of guest speakers and took part in talks and workshops to help them understand the impact their actions and choices can have on the rest of their life, while giving them the opportunity to be part of the solution in reducing crime in Bedfordshire.

Sessions included a live theatre performance from educational theatre group Performance in Education, who delivered a thought-provoking play about sexual violence and how young people can call out such behaviour.

Local partners and organisations engaged with young people, sharing their real-life, lived experience and delivering educational talks to encourage young people to consider healthy choices away from crime.



Events - more info soon!

Keep an eye out on our Bedfordshire OPCC website for details on other events we have scheduled throughout the year, including:

- The Annual Multi-Faith Conference
- The Annual Business Conference
- Rural Crime Conference
- Schools Debate

Please email PCC@beds.police.uk if you would like any further information or would like to enquire about any OPCC events.



Officers set to move to new police hub in Leighton

Buzzard

Frontline police officers are set to move to a new base in Leighton Buzzard as Bedfordshire Police continues its efforts to reduce response times and address community concerns in the town.

The community policing team is to start making the move to Bossard House over the coming weeks as the new policing facility in West Street begins to take shape. Addressing concerns raised by local residents, Bedfordshire Police and the PCC worked with Chief Constable Trevor Rodenhurst to secure the new facility to help increase the police presence in the town.

Patrol officers who respond to 999 calls are now able to work from Bossard House between jobs to complete administrative tasks, reducing the need to drive back to either Dunstable or Luton. Though there are no plans for the site itself to be open to the public, the PCC has funded a new public service terminal that will be placed at Leighton Buzzard Library in the coming weeks.



PCC's school absenteeism pilot helps over 100 young people

More than 100 young people have engaged with a pilot project led by Bedfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner to help schools tackle persistent absenteeism in the county.



For more information about the VERU or to refer a young person at risk of violence or exploitation, visit bedsveru.org

Festus Akinbusoye has made the absenteeism project one of his flagship projects in a bid to reduce the number of young people that could become vulnerable to exploitation by gangs and criminal activity.

In the seven months since the pilot was launched, specialist youth workers from Bedfordshire's Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit (VERU) have worked with 116 students who were referred into the scheme by school staff.

Every child referred into the programme has engaged with the specialist staff involved, in a bid to understand what is driving their absence from school or college and get them back into the classroom.

"Early findings from this pilot programme are very encouraging," Mr Akinbusoye said.

PCC sets another record investment for victim support services

More than £2.6 million is being put into victim support and other services by Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner Festus Akinbusoye this year.

The funding will support a whole range of prevention and early intervention services to support victims of crime and prevent things like domestic abuse and exploitation.

Commissioning has been based on rigorous research by staff in the commissioner's office, using police data and public surveys to identify the most important areas for investment, as well as ensuring progress on Mr Akinbusoye's own police and crime plan.

"I want to thank all those organisations that applied for funding this year, as a custodian of the public purse, it is vital that the process of considering any applications for support and funding is robust, transparent and completely focussed on outcomes," he said.

Find out more about **commissioned services** via the OPCC website:
<https://www.bedfordshire.pcc.police.uk/commissioned-services/>



You can also keep up to date with the PCC and his offices day to day work via Twitter, Facebook and Instagram



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If you need to contact the police please either call **999** if it is an emergency

or dial **101** if it is a nonemergency



PCC backs review of police Code of Ethics

Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Festus Akinbusoye has welcomed a review of the police Code of Ethics as Bedfordshire residents are given the opportunity to be part of the consultation in shaping how police officers should act.

The College of Policing has carried out a review into its Code of Ethics, which provides a framework to guide the actions taken and decisions made by everyone working for the police service. They are now asking people from across policing, partner organisations, and the public to share their views on the proposed new version.

Chief Constable Andy Marsh, Chief Executive for the College of Policing, visited Bedfordshire Police Headquarters on Tuesday (7 March) to launch the consultation process. During his visit he spent time talking to PCC Festus Akinbusoye about the work being done to bring about cultural changes within Bedfordshire Police.

Mr Akinbusoye said: "Standards in policing are under the spotlight like never before and I have invested in our Professional Standards Department to speed up things like misconduct investigations as well as vetting. But this is just a small part of the approach policing must take to set the right standards, ethics and culture it needs to be a truly first class public service. The proposed code of ethics is a crucial part of this approach and I was pleased to hear Chief Constable Andy Marsh's vision for it."

PCC out and about



Volunteering and other opportunities

There are a number of volunteering opportunities at the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire.



Independent Custody Visiting

Independent Custody Visitors are members of the local community who, working in pairs, call at Police Custody Suites unannounced at any time. With agreement, the visitors can speak to detainees about their treatment or conditions, and take up any issues of concern with custody staff.

Community Scrutiny Panel - Stop and Search and Use of Force

The Community Scrutiny Panel review Stop and Search and Use of Force data, outcomes and also reviews body worn footage recorded to scrutinise use of the power. Panel members attend quarterly meetings which are usually held online via Microsoft Teams on an evening.

Please view our website under the 'volunteering' section or email PCC@beds.police.uk to find out more.

You can also keep up to date with the PCC and his offices day to day work via Twitter, Facebook and Instagram



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