

Office of the

Police and Crime Commissioner

for Gwent

Police and Crime Plan

Annual Report 2018/2019

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# Introduction

Welcome to my third Annual Report as Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Gwent.

This report provides an update on the overall progress by my Office against the delivery of the strategic priorities in my **Police and Crime Plan 2017-20211**. This plan sets out the strategic direction for how policing and crime services should be delivered in Gwent during this four-year period.

My plan was informed by a range of information, including feedback from partners and communities, and this is reflected in my five priority areas for policing in Gwent:

* Crime Prevention
* Supporting Victims
* Community Cohesion
* Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour
* Efficient Service Delivery

There were a number of significant developments across these priority areas in 2018/19, largely supported by my Office.

During the year, I published my updated Police and Crime Plan to ensure that it remains relevant to and reflective of both policing and community needs. Work to develop a comprehensive approach to police performance management has been a key priority in terms of helping to ensure efficient and effective service delivery across the priority areas. This has supported the development of a performance framework that will enable more effective scrutiny of Gwent Police’s delivery against the Police and Crime Priorities.

We have continued to work proactively within our communities and with partners to help tackle issues such as serious and organised crime and the impact of adverse childhood experiences. This report highlights some of the excellent initiatives that have been further developed during the year.

Once again, I was pleased to make funding available to our communities using cash seized from criminals. The role of projects and programmes in community empowerment and cohesion should not be underestimated, and I look forward to seeing the outcomes of the successful projects as they develop.

This year also saw the further development of my commitment to providing diversion schemes for all. The retendering of the Women’s Pathfinder diversion contract will enable the scheme to grow to cover the whole of Gwent. The commissioning of a brand new ‘18 to 25’ diversion programme will ensure that young males are also provided with opportunities for diversion away from the criminal justice system and into appropriate support. This will help reduce the risk of reoffending.

I was also pleased to support the Chief Constable’s recruitment of 93 additional police officers for Gwent. This will help to ensure that the policing service we provide is appropriately resourced and responsive to the needs of our communities.

We have continued to focus on making Gwent Police more representative of our communities, with the employment of a dedicated Positive Action Outreach Officer to raise awareness of the opportunities to work within our local policing arrangements.

At the end of this reporting period, I received notice from the Chief Constable, Julian Williams, of his intention to retire in June 2019. I would like to thank Julian for his effective leadership of Gwent Police and his dedication to protecting our communities. I look forward to continuing this successful relationship with his successor, Pam Kelly.

This has been another year of both challenges and successes. I know how much the people of Gwent value the continued hard work and dedication that our officers and staff put in every day. The Deputy Commissioner and I are proud of the hard work and commitment of our police officers, support staff and volunteers, and my team in the OPCC, whose tireless dedication ensures a safer Gwent for all our communities.

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# Jeff Cuthbert



Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent.

# Progress in meeting my Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021

# Summary of overall progress in 2018/19

This is year two of a four year strategic Police and Crime Plan. This document should be read alongside Gwent Police’s Performance Report for 2018/19.

**Priority 1 Crime Prevention**
**Promoting and reducing crime that causes the most harm in our communities and against the most vulnerable people**

Progress in 2018/19:

**Serious and Organised Crime, and Early Intervention**
The OPCC was successful in securing £150,000 from the Home Office to develop and deliver serious and organised crime (SOC) interventions. Newport was one of five areas across England and Wales to receive the funding to undertake pilot work to address identified issues. The project included funding for service delivery to meet criteria of early intervention and prevention, community resilience and strategic communications. To ensure the service delivery included provided a full and holistic approach to SOC for children, young people, their families, and the community, I enhanced the Home Office funding of £150,000 with a further £120,000. Delivery partners included St Giles Trust, Barnardo’s, Newport Live, and Mutual Gain.

In support of Operation Jigsaw (Gwent Police’s campaign against SOC in Gwent) and the SOC programme in Newport, we hosted the ‘Understanding Serious Youth Violence and Gangs’ partnership event with OneNewport in February 2019. St Giles Trust was commissioned to deliver training for professionals to raise awareness of the issues facing local children, young people and communities in relation to gangs, drug dealing, violence and exploitation. The training sessions were aimed at front line officers, teaching staff, outreach workers, and other professionals working with young people and communities within Newport. The sessions were delivered by Junior Smart who began working with St Giles Trust after being released from prison in 2006 having served a 10-year sentence for drug and gang offences. Due to oversubscription for the February event, a further session was scheduled for the beginning of April 2019.

With the project funded until March 31st 2019, consideration will be given to sustaining the project beyond the first year.

In addition, the four Welsh PCCs secured £1.21m from an Early Intervention Youth Fund (EIYF) in August 2018 as part of a collaborative bid with the Welsh police forces. Coinciding with the launch of the Home Office Serious Violence Strategy, the bid was awarded over two years (2018/19 and 2019/20). It outlines regional implementation of a multifaceted approach to understanding and tackling the root causes of serious violence through early intervention and prevention, with children under the age of 18. Each PCC is working with distinct delivery partners, coupled with a level of local direct intervention delivery, based on local need as identified during the funding period. Locally, the project is based on the Newport SOC delivery but includes interventions for people living in other areas of Gwent where significant risks of involvement in serious violence exist.

Since the commencement of the work in Newport, at any one time there is a caseload of 10 young people engaging with the service. Notably, at least one young person previously very resistant to service involvement has engaged in significant intervention with St Giles Trust. Barnardo’s work with a caseload of 15 young people and their families.

 **ACES Early Action Together Programme**
In 2017/18, approximately £6.8 million was awarded from the Police Transformation Fund to the Wales collaboration (Gwent, South Wales, North Wales and Dyfed Powys PCCs and police services, and Public Health Wales), for a 3-year period, to design and implement initiatives to tackle issues linked to ACEs - a range of traumatic and stressful events that children can be exposed to while growing up. The collaborative programme has enabled each area to identify and implement early intervention and preventative activity when ACEs are evident and / or where families are at risk of poor outcomes, as well as addressing the associated impacts on policing and partners in terms of vulnerability and crime.

Since October 2018, ACEs training has been delivered to 700 police officers and staff and 144 staff from partner agencies across Gwent. By July 2019 this will have increased to 1,300 and 550 respectively. The ACEs support hub has trained 120 Ambassadors and 180 staff in housing, with a further 20 people having completed the Train the Trainer course. Evaluation of the training is being undertaken in 2019/20.

Under the ACEs programme, Operation Encompass, a scheme to support children exposed to domestic abuse also rolled out across Gwent during the year. As part of this, police will inform schools of any domestic abuse incidents that have involved, or been experienced by children before classes start the following day, allowing the most appropriate safeguarding to be put in place. 462 children have been supported since the project went live and all schools have been very engaged with the process.

As a member of the Early Action Together governance board, I will continue to provide oversight of the programme, ensuring the best outcomes for some of our most vulnerable children within Gwent.

During 2019/20, we will consider the sustainability of the Newport SOC, EIYF and ACEs programmes in addressing vulnerability in children and young people, which remains a significant priority for the OPCC.

**Positive Futures**Established in 2002 and funded by the Commissioner since 2013/14 together with other partners such as local authorities, Sport Wales, and Asda, the Positive Futures project is an inclusion programme that uses sport and physical activity to mentor and divert around 10,000 young people annually away from crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB). It provides one to one mentoring for around young people and diversionary engagement programmes, training and personal development opportunities that can lead to qualifications or employment. It also offers comfortable engagement and learning environments for those young people affected by adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).

The programme contains two delivery elements with open access and referred opportunities:

1. Diversionary community provision
2. Bespoke educational based programmes for referred young people.

By delivering these youth engagement sessions according to need, the programme enables young people to achieve goals, whether this be qualifications or personal achievements. It also provides comfortable engagement and learning environments for young people affected by ACEs that struggle to cope within mainstream services and need more support, and those with numerous barriers to participation due to poverty and insular family issues.

Throughout the period of 2018/19, there has been an increased awareness in referrals for individuals with poor mental health that regularly have suicidal thoughts and self-harm concerns. Such young people are usually involved with a range of agencies and process are in place to ensure regular engagement between Positive Futures staff and the appropriate support service. Additional support has also been provided to these individuals to ensure that any additional emotional needs were addressed.

Positive Futures was a key partner in Operation Bang 2018, during which time they engaged with a range of young people to help divert ASB relating to Halloween and the 5th November. One related project saw staff working with residents in Pill to provide a small community event. 300 people attended and feedback from community members and Gwent Police evidenced a positive impact on levels of ASB in the area.

Positive Futures also supported the Gwent Youth Question Time event in March to raise awareness of OPCC-funded diversionary programmes for young people.

**Community Funding**
During 2018, I carried out an evaluation of the successful grants awarded from my Partnership Fund in 2017/18. 11 projects were selected from a dip sample to provide a cross-representation from the Gwent area. All recipients were visited in person evaluated through a standard question-set. I was pleased that the projects reported positive outcomes as a result of the funding they had received and that all had made positive contributions towards at least one of the priority areas. In addition, one of the projects was recommended for future support and directed to the 2018/19 round of funding.

For 2018/19, I chose to refocus the future of my community funding arrangement with the launch of my Police Community Fund. As with previous funding provision, the activities supported must have clear links to the priorities within the Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021. The new Fund focuses on providing support for Gwent’s most disadvantaged areas, particularly for groups or organisations already working with young people in those areas. Community and partnership working is central to the success of my Police Community Fund; local Police teams working at the heart of these community groups act as the link between the OPCC, Gwent Police and the beneficiaries. The Fund is aimed at crime prevention initiatives as well as tackling poverty, and safeguarding the most vulnerable in our communities, without duplicating other funding sources.

During the year, the Multi-Agency Assessment Board agreed to fund six projects across the Gwent policing area, two in the West local policing area (LPA), three in the East LPA, and one working pan-Gwent. All successful projects will be required to evidence their compliance with the requirements of the grant, and the subsequent impacts.

**Priority 2 Supporting Victims
Provide excellent support for victims of crime particularly focusing on those who have experienced the most serious harm**

Progress in 2018/19:

**Connect Gwent**

Connect Gwent was launched in 2015 to provide an improved multi-agency service for all victims in Gwent. During the year, a total of 33,380 referrals were received (an increase of 42% compared to 2017/18), including 1,283 additional referrals made by Gwent Police officers (an increase of 73%). Self-referrals also increased by 16% compared to 2017/18. In addition, 506 people accessed services as victims of hate crime.

During 2018/19, work was undertaken to improve how referrals are recorded and defined. Referral numbers for 2017/18 were based on workable cases (excluding those deemed inappropriate for referral to the service), whereas in 2018/19, the figures included all referrals received, including inappropriate referrals.

Outcome surveys for the Connect Gwent service undertaken during the period showed that:

* 81% of people have improved or maintained health and wellbeing (comparable to 2017/18);
* 88% of people were better able to cope with aspects of everyday life (new for 2018/19);
* 81% have increased feelings of safety (compared to 73% in 2017/18); and
* 87% have increased confidence and knowledge of opportunities and services (compared to 89% in 2017/18).

We continue to recognise the changing demands on policing and the roles that my Office and Gwent Police perform by protecting the most vulnerable in our communities. Delivery of the ACEs and SOC programmes makes a significant contribution to how we support victims. The increasing challenge of cyber-based crime means that, as a police service, we are also responding to a growing number of victims of economic crime. A Financial Abuse Co-ordinator and Safeguarding Officer post has been based within Connect Gwent for the past few years to provide support and intervention as part of our response to people affected by economic crime. During the year, 538 people received specialist financial abuse support.

**Mental Health**
Since February 2018, the joint Police Control Room Clinical Advisor (PCRCA) project between Gwent Police and the OPCC ensures that when vulnerable people with a mental health illness or suffering a crisis come into contact with Gwent Police, they receive appropriate support at first point of contact. The project provides a team of dedicated mental health specialists that work alongside staff in the Gwent Police control room. This aims to better manage risk and harm in relation to mental health crisis and ensure that appropriate care and support is provided in a timely way.

Since the beginning of the project, the team has recorded an increase in mental health consultations, receiving on average around 800 requests for service per month. This has led to a reduction in the number of detentions under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act, with 237 recorded since the team has been in operation, compared to 310 detentions over an 11 month period prior to the launch of the service. Furthermore, the number of times officers have been dispatched to incidents has reduced, with over 1,000 deployments averted during the life of the service. General mental health and threat of suicide provide the greatest demand on the team, and a marked increase in the number of welfare checks requested has also been recorded, from 50 in February 2018 to 178 in February 2019.

The project forms part of the commitment by my Office and Gwent Police to support the key principles outlined within the Wales Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat and I welcome the positive difference this service is making for people in crisis.

The Wellbeing practitioner based at the Connect Gwent victims’ hub in Blackwood also continues to provide specialist support for victims of crime with mental health requirements. During 2018/19, 115 referrals for psychiatric help were made to the Wellbeing Practitioner.

**Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)**

The OPCC is a member of the Gwent-wide VAWDASV Board. Working with the Safer Gwent partnership, we have continued funding for the provision of Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA) and an IDVA Co-ordinator for the region. Continuation of the service has ensured that all individuals referred for support:

* are provided with information and advice;
* are able to access appropriate services;
* are given safety planning advice to make them feel safer; and
* experience improvements in their well-being / quality of life.

Through the opportunities presented via the ACEs project, consultation on the Domestic Abuse Bill, and the Domestic Abuse Best Practice Framework, I have continued to work with Gwent Police and key VAWDASV partners to ensure the provision of interventions and services that are innovative, inclusive and meet the needs of survivors and victims. This includes minority groups, children and young people who experience domestic abuse and other forms of gender based violence.

During 2017-18, the OPCC and police Victim Services Co-ordinator reviewed the sexual abuse, violence and sexual exploitation services in Gwent. The review aimed to scope the existing services for child and adult victims and provide an evidence base that I could use to inform the creation of a sustainable model for sexual abuse, violence and exploitation services. The finalised evaluation report was presented to me in September 2018, and subsequently provided to the VAWDASV Board in October. The recommendations will be used to inform future OPCC commissioning processes beyond April 2019.

The OPCC is also contributing to the review of the Gwent-wide needs assessment and commissioning plan for sexual violence services and support. This will help us to shape our commissioning of related service in the future.

**Victim Satisfaction**Over the last 12 months, Gwent Police has continued to see an increase in reporting from victims of hidden crime. Hidden Crime is that crime which is not easily reported or uncovered. It includes child abuse and sexual exploitation, hate crimes, domestic abuse, forced marriage, Modern Day Slavery and Human Trafficking (MDSHT), and ‘honour’ based violence.

There will be a genuine rise in some of these crimes, but I am confident that the increasing numbers of reports reflect improved public awareness of offences and increased confidence in reporting. Increasing volumes of recorded crime, particularly in under-reported areas of violence and sexual offending, means that there will be more victims requiring services.

Extra investment in these areas has shown a positive impact on the experiences of victims of domestic abuse. In a bespoke satisfaction survey undertaken with domestic abuse survivors during late 2018/19, 87% of respondents reported that they were satisfied with the police action taken, with 90% saying they were satisfied with the overall service received from Gwent Police. Due to resource and staffing changes experienced by across the Victim Satisfaction Survey Team during the year, the survey will commence again in January 2019.

I continue to monitor victim satisfaction across a range of outcomes. During 2018/19:

* 74% of victims stated they were satisfied with the overall service they received; and
* 92% stated they would be happy to report an incident to Gwent Police in the future.

Whilst this is a slight reduction on last year, the number of surveys undertaken was significantly lower for 2018/19 due to the resource and staffing changes. My Office will continue to work with Gwent Police to improve victim services and raise satisfaction through via the Victims Strategy and through existing internal Boards.

 **Priority 3 Community Cohesion**
**Increase understanding and respect among communities to improve equality, safety and well-being**

Progress in 2018/19:
 **Engaging with our Communities**
The Deputy Commissioner, OPCC staff and I undertook a wide range of engagement activities across the whole of Gwent. This activity is supported by an annual engagement and consultation programme run by my Office that helps maintain a focus on our engagement activities.

During the year, the Chief Constable and I agreed the joint OPCC and Gwent Police Communications and Engagement Strategy 2018-2022. This strategy provides a new joint approach for both organisations in discharging our statutory obligations to publically engage and communicate. The first engagement outturn reports will be published in 2019. During 2019/20, my Office aims to increase engagement to ensure those that are seldom heard have an opportunity to engage, particularly children and young people in Gwent.

In January 2019, the OPCC launched a new e-news bulletin. This bulletin has three main purposes:

* To keep residents and partner organisations up-to-date with the activities of the OPCC and partners;
* To target residents who are active internet users but do not follow the OPCC on social media; and
* To provide additional structure to information sharing, internally and externally.

As of the end of March 2019, there were more than 800 users registered to receive updates. To register for the e-bulletin, visit [www.gwent.pcc.police.uk/en/home/](http://www.gwent.pcc.police.uk/en/home/).

I was pleased to co-host with the Chief Constable the first ‘Behind the Badge’ joint emergency services open day at Police Headquarters in June 2018. The event was a great success, with over 15,000 people attending throughout the day from across Gwent and beyond. I recognise and appreciate the significant collaboration between all the services involved and look forward to repeating the event in future years.

The OPCC’s social media activity during 2018/19 continued to see an increase, in particular the use of twitter to communicate with our key stakeholders. To complement the use of Twitter and Facebook, during the year we also began to use Instagram and YouTube as methods of communicating and engaging with residents.

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|  | **March 2018** | **March 2019** | **Increase** / **Decrease** | **Female Followers** | **Male Followers** |
| Twitter | 4.313 | 4,689 | **9% increase** | 53% | 47% |
| Facebook | 1,396 | 1,589 | **14% increase** | 62% | 37% |
| Instagram | N/A | 206 | **100% increase** | N/A | N/A |

The OPCC has held a YouTube account since May 2015 and use of this increased during the year to grow the number of subscribers.

By increasing its online presence and making substantially more use of already established audio-visual platforms such as YouTube, my Office continues to have the highest number of social media followers across all platforms compared to other OPCCs in Wales.

Other examples of where we have engaged positively with partners and communities during the last year include:

* Attending a number of community events across Gwent between May and September;
* Relaunching my public walkabout surgeries in each local authority area. This informal walkabout is followed by the option of a pre-bookable, formal sit-down meeting. This enables me to engage with people that wouldn’t usually attend traditional surgeries, while continuing the idea of surgeries for those wishing to engage in this way. All surgeries are promoted via the OPCC website, social media channels and through partners. Matters raised are fed through the Public Response Unit in order for any themes to be identified and dealt with either by raising awareness on issues e.g. use of the 101 non-emergency number, or by ensuring that any learning is disseminated throughout Gwent Police;
* In October 2018, part funding and co-hosting with Race Council Cymru, the first Gwent Black History Month (BHM) Wales event in Newport. 2018 marked the 11th anniversary of BHM Wales celebrations and the theme was ‘Black Icons of Wales’. Keynote speakers included the Chief Constable and I, Simon Wooley, the Director of Operation Black Vote, and a number of community members that have made social, economic, or other contributions to Gwent. Attendees welcomed a Gwent-based event and encouraged similar local activities in the future;
* Supporting Gwent Police in the publicising of the Mini Police Heddlu Bach programme. I sat on one of the interview panels for Fochriw and Phillipstown primary schools and OPCC staff visited Wainfawr Primary School alongside the Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services, Alun Davies AM. Mini Police from Blaenycwn Primary also took part in Hate Crime Awareness Week and interviewed me live on radio. Photographs and videos from the visits were posted on social media; and
* Funding and supporting an event for the Regional Youth Forum in January 2019. Also sponsored by Assembly Members, the event was attended by young people from across Gwent who used the opportunity to launch their ‘Curriculum 4 Life’ (C4L), that highlights the key areas in life that they feel are important to be taught in schools, ranging from cooking to financial skills. A short video on this project was created and shared on OPCC engagement channels. The topic of C4L was voted a priority for the Gwent Regional Youth Forum last year.

**Volunteer Schemes**

The OPCC continues to actively engage with its volunteers.  The Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) Scheme allows volunteers to attend police stations to check on the treatment of detainees, the conditions in which they are held, and whether their rights and entitlements are being observed.  It offers protection to both detainees and the police and provides reassurance to the community at large.  Throughout 2018/19, there were nine scheme volunteers that conducted 49 weekly visits at various times during the day.  This resulted in:

* 59% of detainees in custody during visiting periods accepting a visit by the ICVs;
* 100% of issues identified by ICVs being addressed by the custody sergeant at the time of visit; and
* Only one issue being escalated to the OPCC, which was addressed by the custody Inspector.  This related to difficulty accessing custody in order to carry out a visit.

The Scheme Administrator delivered training on the role of ICVs to custody staff at the end of May 2018 and refresher training to the ICVs themselves in February 2019. The Scheme handbook was also revised to reflect any changes implemented during the year.

The Animal Welfare Scheme enables members of the local community to visit, observe and report upon the conditions under which police dogs are housed, trained and transported on a monthly basis.  During the last year, 10 checks were carried out by nine scheme volunteers.  Outcomes from the visits are recorded by the OPCC and shared with Gwent Police to ensure that any issues or concerns raised by the volunteers are addressed.  Scheme members also visit the regional police dog kennelling facility in Waterton, Bridgend, to assess the conditions and facilities that Gwent dogs may be temporarily accommodated in.

My Office supported the Animal Welfare volunteers during their campaign to bring about a change in the law. As a result, in April 2019, the Animal Welfare (Service Animals) Bill Act 2019, or ‘Finn’s Law’, became law after receiving Royal Assent by Her Majesty the Queen. From that point on, it became a criminal offence to harm working animals.

Working with Gwent Police, the OPCC continues to use the resulting feedback from both volunteer schemes to help to provide public assurance of appropriate standards in each case.

**Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020**

In April 2016, we published our first joint **Strategic Equality Plan2** (SEP) with Gwent Police. The priorities within the SEP, supported by two separate action plans, are aligned to and support the delivery of my Police and Crime Plan, whilst recognising the needs and expectations of our diverse communities in Gwent. The second joint Annual Report for 2017/18 was published in September 2018 to demonstrate how we are performing against the objectives in the SEP. The activities within the OPCC action plan were also reviewed to ensure a relevant focus and better reflection of Gwent Police’s related operational activity, where appropriate. Some of the key activities emphasised in the report included the work of the Legitimacy Scrutiny Panel around stop and search and use of force, hate crime, and activities undertaken in support of the Representative Workforce Strategy. These activities are included where appropriate in this report to highlight significant areas of progress.

A new SEP will be developed during 2019/20 to cover the four-year period 2020 to 2024. This will be published in 2020.

# Legitimacy Scrutiny Panel

We continue to work to ensure that police powers are used correctly in Gwent. The Scrutiny Panel is co-ordinated by my Office and examines stop and search and use of force body worn camera footage, related performance data and stop and search records twice a year. During 2018/19, I was pleased to note a number of improvements to internal processes, including:

* Improvements to the way the grounds for searches are written;
* A reduction in the number of blank information fields in stop and search forms;
* Greater internal scrutiny of forms by supervisors; and
* Positive examples of engagement by officers observed through body worn video footage.

My Office will continue to work closely with Gwent Police to ensure an appropriate focus on continuous improvement.

Following the October 2018 exercise, a review of the Terms of Reference was undertaken to ensure it accurately reflects and effectively supports the process. To provide parity between stop and search and use of force scrutiny, from April 2019, each element will be considered separately on an alternating quarterly basis. The first dedicated use of force exercise will take place in July 2019.

**Stop and Search ‘Know your rights’**Building on previous work to promote positive stop and search encounters and the ‘Know Your Rights’ information, the OPCC and Gwent Police launched a joint engagement programme in 2019. The programme seeks to establish a regular schedule of engagement with key groups. Initially aimed at young people with a focus on black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) audiences, the programme comprises ‘Know Your Rights’ engagement and work with the Gwent Police’s Professional Standards Department (PSD) and the Diversity and Inclusion Team to help build confidence and trust between communities and the police. The latter element includes raising awareness of how to make a complaint to encourage reporting when a person feels they have been treated unfairly by the police.

Between January and March 2019, two workshops were held with around 40 young people in the Pillgwenlly and Maindee areas of Newport. A number of challenges were presented in terms of feelings towards the police; however, it is hoped that regular engagement will provide valuable opportunities to better understand the reasons behind this, as well as fostering more positive relationships between young people and the police. Planned work through 2019 and into 2020 will include engagement with older people in BAME communities to help address any concerns resulting from poor previous experiences of stop and search.

**Hate Crime**
The OPCC is a member of the Hate Crime Criminal Justice Board Cymru. This ensures we have strategic oversight of the key issues across Wales that may impact on how we support our local communities, whilst enabling us to feed into the development of relevant Welsh Government strategies such as the Community Cohesion National Delivery Plan 2017-2020.

In October 2018, the OPCC received £5,000 from the Welsh Government to support Gwent Police in its activities during Hate Crime Awareness Week (HCAW). In a change to previous arrangements, we jointly invited bids from community groups to support specific HCAW activities. The fund supported 11 projects across Gwent to deliver activities during HCAW and beyond. One of the projects that ran during the week was BGfm’s anti-hate crime ‘advert’ that was brought to life by local school children and our own Mini Police. The projects have been evaluated to understand the outcomes of the funding. Feedback received from applicants has demonstrated a positive impact in terms of awareness and understanding of what hate crime is, and what can be done to report it.

One of the projects, Newport People First, provided the following feedback:

*“Newport People First hosted a workshop at Newport Market, supported by SEWREC (South East Wales Regional Equality Council), for People First Members to explore diversity, but also by looking at how similar people are by finding common interests and life experiences, demonstrating that we people are far more alike than first appears. The workshop was well attended, including members from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds.*

*According to participants, the workshop was very helpful in raising awareness of cultural issues and prompting discussion of these issues amongst members of People First (Newport and Torfaen). As a result:*

* *Members feel more confident to promote equality and diversity.*
* *Members have built personal awareness of values, beliefs and biases that can affect own behaviours.*
* *Members are more aware of organisations that promote equality and social justice.”*

**Priority 4 Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour**
**Ensuring Gwent Police work to resolve anti-social behaviour, working closely with partner organisations to help address this issue effectively**

Progress in 2018/19:

**Safer Gwent**Established by the OPCC, Safer Gwent works with key community safety partners across the five local authority areas. It provides a strategic and joined-up approach to achieve better community safety outcomes in tackling issues such as ASB, community cohesion, preventing re-offending, and supporting victims. This partnership approach received recognition as good practice by the Wales Audit Office in its 2016 report, *Community Safety in Wales*.

Through its agreed strategic priorities and using funding opportunities that I have provided, Safer Gwent has supported the commissioning of projects valued at over £600,000, including funding the provision of:

* The successful SWFRS ASB and Deliberate Fire Reduction project, which was supported by Safer Gwent in 2017. In addition to continuing to engage with young people within communities across Gwent to reduce the number of arson attacks, deliberate fires and fire related ASB such as attacks on firefighters and hoax calls, the project will look at additional areas including ACEs and Truancy;
* The Positive Futures youth inclusion sports programme, which continues to demonstrate a positive impact across Gwent;
* Support for the Youth Offending Service to employ three Gwent-wide Substance Misuse Workers, two Victim Workers for Newport, Monmouthshire and Torfaen) and a contribution towards Out of Court Disposal provision and delivery in Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly. This will continue to ensure support for critical areas of youth offending services work and enhance and maintain service delivery across Gwent;
* The Gwent Regional ASB Service and Co-ordinator to ensure continued funding for local Community Safety Teams. Positive outcomes in tackling and reducing ASB and supporting victims of ASB have already been seen during the year; and
* A Safer Communities Partnership Officer to ensure the continuation of a co-ordinated approach to the provision of ASB reduction and domestic abuse services across Newport via the Community Safety Project. The post has developed community links to aid cohesive communities across the city and support the co-ordination of a multi-agency response to community tensions.

 **Gwent Regional ASB Co-ordinator**We have continued to work to reduce the effect and impact felt by people who experience ASB. Through the Safer Gwent Partnership, I fund the ASB Co-ordinator for Gwent who works with our ASB partners across the five local authority areas, including Newport’s Community Safety Projects and Performance Officer, to ensure a more joined-up approach to the services and support provided to our affected communities.

During the year, the ASB Co-ordinator worked with partners to review the ASB strike process. This will ensure a consistent approach to the process across local authority areas and provide the best outcomes for people that experience ASB.

‘Operation Bang’ is an annual initiative between Gwent Police and SWFRS to tackle ASB associated with Halloween and Bonfire Night. It brings together the police and fire service with partners such as Positive Futures to target high-risk areas within the Newport city and Caerphilly borough areas. To enhance the positive impact that Operation Bang has provided since its implementation, during 2018/19, partnership work with education, environmental health and local fire stations to try to reduce the demand on police and fire services through a more localised, partnership approach. A ‘train-the-trainer’ package has also been developed to ensure that front line staff in contact with young people deliver a consistent message across Gwent about fire safety and ASB. The programme will be implemented in 2019 as part of the preparations for bonfire season.

We have continued to support partners in each local authority area by attending community action days. These events offer residents the opportunity to identify and engage with the support services available to them in their local area in response to specific issues they have been experiencing, such as ASB.

**Restorative Justice**
Restorative justice has been shown to reduce re-offending by holding offenders to account for what they have done and helping them to take responsibility for their actions. It also gives victims the chance to meet or communicate with their offenders to explain the real impact of the crime and help them to recover from the crime.

I was pleased to co-host with Gwent Police, the ‘Commissioning Safe and Effective Restorative Justice Services’ workshop for Wales, delivered by the Restorative Justice Council in partnership with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC). One of a series of UK-wide sessions, this event brought together PCCs and relevant agencies to support the commissioning of safe and effective restorative justice services. The session provided an opportunity to hear about the latest guidance relating to restorative justice, to share good practice across PCC areas and to establish knowledge-sharing networks to further the delivery of high quality services. Feedback following the event indicated that the workshop provided positive engagement on restorative justice opportunities to help inform future practice across Wales.

My Office will continue to work with Gwent Police to ensure the provision of effective restorative justice within a suite of alternative and out of court disposals.

**Priority 5 Efficient Service Delivery**
**Ensuring that Gwent Police deliver services that meet the priority needs of our communities**

Progress during 2018/19:

**Update to the Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021**I updated my Police and Crime Plan to ensure that it remains relevant and reflective of the demand on policing and the needs of our communities. The update made the document clearer for the public to understand and evidence the good work that Gwent Police carries out in across our communities.

Narratives around serious and organised crime, cyber, and MDSHT was fundamental to the update to emphasise its importance and ensure that the protection of our most vulnerable residents remains a priority for Gwent Police.

**‘Have Your Say’ Precept Consultation**

Between the 12th November 2018 and the 13th January 2019, I asked the residents of Gwent for their views on my proposed level of increase for the precept (the policing part of your council tax) for 2019/20.

The consultation was conducted bilingually (in English and Welsh) and in both electronic and paper format, and staff attended 19 community engagement sessions, engaging with over 1,000 people during this period to promote and undertake the survey. The survey was also extensively promoted across social media with a total online reach for the posts exceeding 100,000 compared to 10,500 people last year, and more than 40,000 people were communicated with via Gwent Now. The e-consultation was publicised via local press and the OPCC website, as well as through community groups, partner organisations, the third sector and local authorities. Paper copies were also available in easy read versions (on request) from my Office.

This proactive engagement approach provided greater results than previous consultation exercises, with a total of 1,918 responses recorded (of which, 1,875 respondents lived in Gwent), exceeding the representative sample of 600. 67% of residents were in support of the principle of an estimated £1 a month increase in precept. The face-to-face engagement sessions saw 81% of respondents in support. Therefore, I proposed a final increase level of 6.99% to the **Gwent Police and Crime Panel3**, which they accepted on 22nd February 2019.

Listening to and engaging with the people of Gwent allows me to hear their views, not only on our policing service but also on local issues that matter to them. The feedback I receive is always considered when making decisions around the provision of policing services. I will continue to work with our communities and partners to help resolve any issues raised with us.

**Crime Reporting**
Over the last financial year, overall recorded crime in Gwent has increased by 20%, an upward trend seen across the police service throughout England and Wales. Within Gwent, this rise mainly relates to offences of public order and violence without injury, both of which have increased substantially.
An increase in crime can reflect a range of factors. These include continuing improvements to crime recording, more victims feeling confident to report both new and historic crime, as well as genuine increases in some crime categories. Gwent Police has continued the focus on ethical crime recording and significant investment has been made to ensure that their crime data integrity is both ethical and proportionate. This has improved Gwent’s crime data integrity from 77% to over 90% in a two-year period. During 2018/19, Gwent Police received praise from HMICFRS for their excellent approach to the appropriate identification and recording of sexual crimes. In addition, there has been significant investment in resources linked to MDSHT and online child sexual exploitation, which had enabled proactive investigation of crimes and incidents that has contributed to the increase in recorded crime.

However, Gwent Police has seen a decline in both shoplifting and domestic burglary during the year. In line with national statistics, we are seeing rises in some higher harm, lower volume crime types. This means that the number of offences in these categories are lower, but the harm they cause to individuals and communities is significant. Together with our partners, we will continue to focus on these crimes and place ever-greater emphasis on prevention. Gwent Police are currently recording low figures of knife crime and we are fully alert to gang related knife culture that is widely reported within the larger urban cities of London, Manchester and Birmingham. During 2018/19, gang related offending accounted for only 4.9% of total bladed implement offences. Work is being undertaken with key stage 3 pupils (years 7, 8 and 9) in all Newport schools in response to the identified serious issues of gang violence and knife crime with plans to roll out the initiatives across the rest of Gwent in the near future through schools liaison officers and local authorities.

You can rest assured that the Chief Constable and I will be working together to monitor emerging trends and the factors that drive change so that we can continue to ensure that Gwent is a safe place for everyone.

**Commissioner and Chief Constable Statements of Accounts 2017/18**

The Statements of Accounts 2017/18 for the Chief Constable and I received Wales Audit Office (WAO) sign-off on the 31st July, which confirmed an unqualified audit opinion for each. This successful conclusion was an important milestone as, for Statements of Account covering the 2018/19 financial year, the new statutory deadline for audit sign-off will be the 31st July 2019 – the previous deadline was the 30th September in each respective year.

This successful conclusion was not without challenges, and the Finance Department and the WAO undertook a ‘Post Project Learning’ (PPL) workshop in September 2018 to refine the year-end closure process ready for the 2018/19 financial year. The findings and action log from this PPL were reported to and monitored through the Joint Audit Committee.

 **Public Response Unit (PRU)**The PRU was launched in April 2016 to provide an improved level of service for the public by ensuring that any dissatisfaction with Gwent Police is dealt with as quickly and effectively as possible before it evolves into a more serious complaint. The unit was established to promote openness, transparency and efficiency and to provide an appropriate response in a timely manner and complements the work of Gwent PSD.

In 2018/19, the PRU has:

* Dealt with over 1,500 incidents contributing to a reduction in local police complaints by facilitating early resolution and a satisfactory outcome for complainants;
* Received 14 compliments from people regarding the outstanding service they have received from officers and staff. These were provided to the PSD for feedback to the individuals concerned; and
* Been involved in a national project to develop the new ‘Centurion’ police complaints system. Following this involvement, Centurion has adopted the PRU report model as a preliminary template that will be accessible by all PCC offices, nationally. The team also participated in testing the new Centurion process to ensure its effectiveness.

**Improving the Criminal Justice Process**I remain the Chair of the Gwent Criminal Justice Strategy Board, and my Office has continued to work with the relevant partners to promote a more efficient and effective criminal justice system for Gwent that provides improved outcomes for victims.

During the year, the Board has undertaken deep dives regarding MDSHT, disability hate crime prosecutions, VASDASV, and the Wales Blueprint for Women and Youth Justice. The Board has agreed to act as the scrutiny body for the Domestic Abuse Best Practice Framework and is monitoring the implementation of the local stalking and harassment protocol.

During 2019/20, supported by OPCC staff, the Board will be working to monitor compliance with the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in order to meet national requirements for local Criminal Justice Boards.

**Comparing our Police and Crime Commissioners (CoPaCC) Transparency Award**
For the fourth year in a row, the OPCC has achieved a national award for transparency by CoPaCC, an independent national body that monitors police governance. CoPaCC recognises excellent performance by PCCs and their Offices.  The CoPaCC award was presented for how we provide the public with key information in accessible format on our website including information about ‘who we are and what we do’, ‘what we spend and how we spend it’, ‘what our priorities are’, ‘how we make decisions’ and ‘information around complaints, policies and procedures’. A formal presentation of the award will take place at the CoPaCC Governance Summit in July 2019.

This award demonstrates that the public can have confidence that the organisation publishes information about the Commissioner and OPCC over and above the statutory level required and that the information provided is accessible and transparent.

**Freedom of Information (FOI) Compliance**The OPCC received 24 FOI requests during 2018/19 and achieved 100% compliance with the legal requirement of responding to all requests within 20 working days, providing and positively impacting on public confidence. Most requests received concerned areas that do not fit into a clear work stream, such as electoral fraud, county lines and the CoPACC Transparency Award. All information relating to FOI requests received by the OPCC during the year will be published in April 2019 within the OPCC’s FOI Annual Report 2018/19.

During the year, I made the decision to change the way we record requests received into the OPCC that relate to Gwent Police. From April 2019, these will be included on our disclosure log and published on the OPCC website in order to provide full transparency and reflect the number of requests that are actually received and processed by the OPCC.

In order to comply with the Freedom of Information Act, the OPCC maintains a **Publication Scheme4** that commits us to making information available to the public as part of our normal business activities. The scheme sets out:

* What information the OPCC publishes or intends to publish;
* How we will publish this information; and
* Whether the information will be available free of charge or on payment.

The Publication Scheme is updated in line with changes to FOI legislation, guidance issued by the Information Commissioner’s Office and any other statutory requirements to publish information.

**General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018**

The GDPR came into force on the 25th May 2018, bringing with it a number of changes to the ways in which we hold and use your personal data.  During the year we have continued to work towards ensuring our compliance with the new requirements. In the summer of 2018 we underwent an audit of our arrangements for data protection, carried out by our internal auditors, receiving a ‘Reasonable’ assurance rating. A follow-up audit was undertaken in January 2019 to review the progress against the outstanding actions, which also received a ‘Reasonable’ assurance rating. The results of both audits provide reassurance that we have progressed well against the implementation of the requirements of the GDPR.

All OPCC staff have completed mandatory GDPR training to promote awareness and good practice regarding data protection requirements.

**Welsh Language**

Separate **Welsh Language Standards5** were issued to the Chief Constable and I by the Welsh Language Commissioner in September 2016. My Office has continued to work closely with Gwent Police through phases one and two of implementation in support of our shared commitment towards the provision of a bilingual service. As part of this work, we have:

* Held regular meetings of the joint Welsh Language Meeting to oversee progress for implementation and continued compliance;
* Published a Welsh Language Annual Compliance Report for the OPCC for 2017-18 that highlighted the work undertaken during implementation of the Standards and reported on the statutory information required;
* Continued to engage with partners through the medium of Welsh; and
* Continued to deliver compulsory Level 1 basic Welsh language sessions across all police officers and staff that are below a minimum threshold for language skills. 67% of Gwent Police officers and staff have received the inputs. 95% of OPCC staff have also received the inputs; due to staffing increases, the remainder will be undertaken early in 2019/20.

The joint Welsh Language Policy Officer has taken a proactive part in developing our Welsh language training provisions, engaging with partners on an all-Wales basis and designing internal initiatives to support the use of Welsh in the workplace.

We continue to work together towards improving our capabilities to deliver a bilingual service and will publish our Annual Compliance Reports in September 2019.

**The Police and Crime Panel**The role of the Police and Crime Panel is to examine my actions and decisions as the PCC, to promote openness and transparency in the undertaking of police business, and to provide support in the effective exercise of the my functions. The Panel is also responsible for complaints regarding my conduct when carrying out my role.

During the year, Panel members were consulted on a wide range of projects, activities and initiatives undertaken by my Office, including:

* Setting the Precept;
* Monitoring the implementation of the Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021
* Production of the Annual Report for 2017-18;
* Production of the OPCC Performance Framework;
* Financial performance throughout 2018/19; and
* Reviewing the Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021.

OPCC staff will continue to support me in my engagement with the Panel and in addressing any recommendations made as a result.

**Joint Audit Committee (JAC)**The **JAC6** provides independent assurance of risk, internal control, scrutiny and oversight of financial performance reporting processes for both the Chief Constable and I.  During 2018/19, the JAC held four formal meetings along with four ‘deep dive’ sessions to aid members’ wider understanding of the work undertaken by the OPCC and Gwent Police. These sessions focused on:

* Regional Organised Crime Unit (TARIAN) and Welsh Extremism and Counter Terrorism Unit (WECTU);
* General Data Protection Regulation Update (OPCC and Force);
* Value for Money Profiles; and
* ACEs Early Action Together project.

In September 2018, the JAC published their Annual Report for 2017/18 alongside the Statement of Accounts, detailing the work undertaken over the year and their focus for 2018/19.  The Annual Report provided assurance to the Chief Constable and me of the robustness of the work undertaken by the JAC during the year.  Work is currently underway to produce the 2018/19 Annual Report.

 **Resources and Value for Money**My Office receives regular reports as part of budget monitoring to help ensure that the people of Gwent are provided with a police service that is value for money. During this period, I have:

* Agreed a budget requirement for Gwent Police for 2019/20 of £141.07m (2018/19 budget was £133.68m);
* Set the council tax increase at 6.99% (2018/19 increase was 4.37%);
* Agreed a capital budget for 2019/20 of £27.92m; and
* Continued to monitor how the Chief Constable is managing budget and austerity pressures (through Staying Ahead 8, Gwent Police’s transformational change programme). From 2008/09 to the end of 2018/19, approximately £49.50m of efficiency savings have been delivered.

**Setting the Budget**

For 2019/20, the following budgets were set for policing services in Gwent:

In addition, for 2019/20 the following capital budgets were set in Gwent:

* Estates - £15.5m
* Vehicles - £1.0m
* Information and Communication Systems - £1.3m
* Other Capital Projects and Schemes - £0.2m

**Ensuring Value for Money**
I have ensured that my Office and Gwent Police have done everything in their power to deliver value for money whilst ensuring that residents have an effective and efficient police service. This includes:

* Annually benchmarking costs with other constabularies via HMICFRS Value For Money profiles;
* A ‘Reasonable’ assurance judgement for 2018/19 from the internal auditors (TIAA) on the overall system of internal control (not including Information Communication Technology ICT Audits of the Shared Resource Service SRS);
* The audit outcome from Torfaen County Borough Council (TCBC) for the SRS providing an overall judgement of ‘major improvement required’;
* The annual compilation and publication of the my Annual Governance Statement;
* **HMICFRS reports7**; and
* The Wales Audit Office (WAO) annual audit of my Statement of Accounts and reported findings (including the arrangements to secure value for money).

**People**
During the year, we have continued to monitor the delivery of Gwent Police’s People Plan, that sets out the organisation’s intentions for the recruitment, retention and progression of Police officers and staff. It provides a clear direction of travel to ensure we are able to meet the significant challenges ahead. A new plan is in development for the period 2019/2022 and will be reported to my **Strategy and Performance Board8** in June 2019.

The funding and the provision of policing services form part of my statutory duties and it is my responsibility to ensure that Gwent has appropriate levels of policing to meet the requirements of our communities whilst making the necessary savings.

2018/19 saw continued recruitment by the Chief Constable. During the year, we welcomed 93 police probationers and 15 police officer transferees from other policing areas. As part of the ongoing work to improve visible ethnic minority representation within the workforce, Gwent Police appointed a Positive Action Outreach Officer to actively engage with our underrepresented communities and to raise awareness of recruitment opportunities across the organisation. Currently, Gwent has a visible black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) population of 3.9%, and Gwent Police has seen some increases in its visible workforce representation across police officer, staff and Community Support Officer (CSO) roles. A number of awareness events were hosted by the Positive Action Outreach Officer across the force area during 2018/19. This work will continue throughout 2019/20 through a range of events with key stakeholders.

Workforce monitoring has improved our understanding of our lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) and disabled representation. Whilst we have experienced an increase in the total workforce identifying as LGB, we are unable to determine whether the workforce is currently representative due to the lack of definitive figures relating to sexual orientation within the wider population.

Rates of disabled officers and staff have remained constant over a three-year period. During 2018/19, Gwent Police achieved Disability Confident Employer status, which required the organisation to undertake a number of core actions that support the employment and retention of people with disabilities and those with health conditions, providing an accessible and inclusive workplace. A range of internal initiatives have been put in place under the Wellbeing Strategy that provide staff with opportunities for networking and support, as well as practical advice, such as flu vaccinations, the provision of fitness and wellbeing classes, and regular promotional activity for healthy living.

During the year, additional positive action took place to recruit more Welsh speaking personnel in order to support the delivery of a bilingual police service. As a result, we have successfully recruited an additional Welsh speaker into the Force Communications Suite.

The Chief Constable and I also pledged our commitment to the HeForShe initiative, providing a targeted platform on which men and boys can engage and become change agents towards achieving gender equality. HeforShe offers an opportunity for the police service to recognise publically that, as a traditionally male-dominated service, there remains an imbalance of power between genders. It is hoped that addressing gender inequality within our organisations will also positively impact on the way that we respond to crimes that impact disproportionately on women and girls, for example, domestic and sexual violence. Gwent Police’s annual Gender Pay Audit will help provide a better understanding of where females are more negatively affected and enable appropriate action that addresses gender imbalance to be taken. The results of gender pay auditing will be shared with the OPCC and published on Gwent Police’s website.

Following a review of Gwent Police workforce data during 2018/19 and the implementation of a force-wide Representative Workforce Plan, a number of key action have been identified for 2019/20, including:

* A focus on understanding and informing wider workplace culture and supporting BAME officers / CSOs through a series of practical interventions;
* Scoping opportunities to work with disability organisations and employment specialists to increase inclusivity and offer further opportunities for disabled people to join Gwent Police;
* Scoping the reintroduction of the ‘Springboard’ development programme for female officers and staff; and
* Preparing a staff promotion survey to understand barriers to promotion, in particular for female and BAME officers.

 **OPCC Structure**
Following a review of my office in 2017/18, the new structure has now been implemented, along with a focus on organisational development that is being led by the Chief Executive.  I am confident that the organisation is in a far better place to meet its (ever-increasing) statutory duties and deliver on the priorities within my Police and Crime Plan.

My Office is committed to investing in its staff and throughout the year, we have continued to promote continuous professional development. This ensures staff have the necessary training and skills required to ensure you have the best service possible. Each individual provides feedback on training undertaken, which is used to assess the value to both the organisation and the individual. In addition, we have introduced quarterly staff development days that provide opportunities for collective learning as well as organisational development.

We have also taken steps to improve the diversity of our workforce. During the year, the OPCC gained Disability Confident Committed status and received a Bronze award from the Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme. Each of these schemes will help us to ensure that we provide an inclusive workplace that attracts applications from disabled people and ex-service personnel.

**Resources**The vision for policing in Gwent is to develop the right balance between provision and re-assurance, which includes having a responsive police service, well located police stations and the modern forms of communication and technology to ensure officers are contactable and can provide an efficient, effective and economic service. As the Commissioner, I am responsible for the police estate in Gwent which includes all of the police stations, land and assets.

Despite the reduction in central funding to the police service over the last several years, I remain am committed to working with key partners to ensure that we continue to provide a visible and accessible policing service which adequately responds to local need and provides assurance to the community. During the last year, this has resulted in:

* The reopening of Ystrad Mynach custody suite to provide additional capacity for detentions within Gwent;
* Establishment of a standalone project to determine Gwent Police’s custody requirements over the short, medium and long term and to develop the most effective way to meet these needs. Scoping work commenced early in 2019 and indicative proposals and opportunities were due for presentation to the Estate Strategy Board in April 2019; and
* Approval of the RIBA Stage 3 of the new Headquarters build was approved by the Chief Constable and I in December 2018, effectively confirming the detailed design of the new building. Land purchase concluded in February 2019 and ‘enabling works’ such as drainage and power are scheduled for April 2019. Tenders for the award of works to build, fit-out and furnish the new HQ will be awarded in the summer of 2019 with building expected to commence in August 2019;
* A review of the front counter services and the provision of station enquiry officers. The review provided a better understanding of how Gwent Police can best meet demand within communities in light of the changing demands on its service and low numbers of public use of front counters. As a result, changes to opening hours and the closure of some front counter services was implemented; and
* The successful integration of a police contact point into Monmouthshire County Council’s ‘one stop shop’ in Abergavenny.

 **Headlines and Highlights

Cyber Crime**Policing continues to face significant challenges related to cyber related crimes and incidents. We have continued to invest in our resources to ensure that we are able to deal with new and existing threats. Cyber-enabled crime in Gwent increased by 45.8% during 2018/19 compared to the previous year. This is an upward trend that has been seen over the last four years. Crimes include online scams, identity fraud and sexual exploitation. A significant amount of the budget I have allocated to Gwent Police is directed towards tackling and preventing cybercrime.

Cyber-enabled bullying / harassment accounts for the majority of cyber enabled crime in Gwent, followed by exploitation and deception / fraud. Cyber-enabled bullying / harassment offences mainly involve making threats or sending abusive messages via social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Snap Chat, etc. and these offences have increased by 54.8% over the last year.

Operation Signature continues to safeguard vulnerable victims of fraud. When an online fraud is reported, trained financial investigators attempt to trace the movement of credit through the banking system, and attempt to recover stolen money. The Financial Abuse Co-ordinator and Safeguarding Officer, based in Connect Gwent, visits vulnerable victims of crime to offer appropriate support and crime prevention advice. A Cyber Community Support Officer uses social media channels to provide the public with up-to-date advice on how to avoid becoming victims of online fraud. I look forward to seeing the continued positive impact of Operation Signature.

Based within the Learning and Development team, the Digital Trainer provides support for the delivery of cyber training packages for all frontline officers. Future work includes a programme of practical-based digital investigation training for officers.

During 2019/20, Gwent Police will be upskilling a greater number of front line officers with both internal training and external inputs through organisations such as Get Safe Online. This will equip them to deal more effectively with the less serious and complex cyber based crimes. The additional resources and training will continue to improve Gwent Police’s investigative capability, assisting them in bringing offenders to justice and improving services to the public.

**Modern Day Slavery and Human Trafficking**My Office has continued to work with the MDSHT Police Transformation Regional Co-ordinator, national strategic lead, and Regional Anti-Slavery Partnership Chair to ensure the review of MDSHT that I initiated, is robust. This has ensured that we have a strong evidence base that illustrated our priorities for tackling MDSHT as a police service and jointly with partners. The review was completed in the summer of 2018 and the resulting recommendations taken forward through the national and regional anti-slavery partnerships. The findings have provided more consistent approaches to these issues across the policing areas in Wales and better integrated activities between devolved and non-devolved organisations. They have also been used as the basis of our response to the MDSHT Home Affairs Select Committee call for evidence during 2018/19.

In June 2018, the MDS Advocate 12-month pilot commenced. Employed by Victim Support, the post has provided direct support to a number of victims of modern day slavery subjected to either sexual or labour exploitation. One individual was a British national. The Advocate has also supported police operations and other activity with agencies such as the Home Office Immigration Team and the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) as required.

To support better partnership working, five days of MDS awareness and safeguarding events were delivered to 600 attendees from various agencies across Gwent. This will help to ensure consistent approaches to MDS issues and secure better outcomes for victims.

I continue to represent the four Welsh PCCs at the Welsh Government’s All Wales Anti-Trafficking Leadership Group, the All Wales Anti-Slavery Leadership Group and the PCC UK Network for Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking. This ensures that, alongside the work of the Gwent Anti-Slavery Group, we are actively contributing and influencing the national approach to tackling modern slavery and human trafficking.

**Provision of Diversion Schemes**Established in 2013, the Women’s Pathfinder is an Integrated Offender Management (IOM) Cymru initiative that aims to ‘design and deliver a women-specific, whole system, integrated approach to service provision for women who come into contact with the criminal justice system in Wales’. It supports the female on their journey through the criminal justice system from the point of arrest to release from prison, by ensuring that there is a multi-agency, co-ordinated response for each case. A key feature of the scheme is the provision of a multi-agency response to divert women (where appropriate) away from the criminal justice system and into community support and interventions at the earliest opportunity. Women’s Pathfinder has been running in Gwent since October 2015 and, to date, 347 women have been diverted through the scheme.

Throughout 2018/19, my Office, working with Gwent Police, continued to develop the provision of diversion opportunities for all low level and first time offenders in Gwent, with a particular emphasis on vulnerable people. With the existing Women’s Pathfinder contract due for retender, in October 2018, the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) Cymru Women’s Pathfinder Whole System Approach Market Engagement Event took place in Cardiff. A joint event between IOM Cymru, Gwent OPCC and Police and South Wales PCC and Police, the session provided a chance for interested providers to learn more about the tendering opportunities on offer. As part of this, my Office and Gwent Police have tendered for the new 18 to 25 diversion scheme. This is the largest cohort of offenders and is an appropriate step in enhancing the diversionary support on offer in Gwent. The new services are scheduled to commence in the autumn of 2019.

There can be no doubt that diversion schemes provides benefit to society through reduced reoffending and the increased capability of the individuals involved to live more positive lives. I look forward to seeing further developments and positive outcomes over the next few years.

**Gwent Drug and Alcohol Service (GDAS) and Gwent Integrated Recovery Interventions Service (IRIS)**Operated jointly between the OPCC, local Area Planning Board (APB) and the National Probation Service, GDAS provides the first Gwent-wide integrated drug, alcohol and family intervention service for individuals, including offenders and communities affected by substance misuse. The criminal justice element is provided though the Integrated Recovery Interventions Service (IRIS). 2018/19 saw the GDAS-IRIS focus on tackling the emerging trends of drug-related organised crime, homelessness and domestic abuse through increased partnership work with the statutory authorities and third sector partners

The service received 1,440 referrals during 2018/19 and key achievements for the year include:

* Extending the existing Arrest Referral Service into the Ystrad Mynach custody suite in January 2019;
* Working with Gwent Police to support operational activity linked to criminal exploitation to ensure that vulnerable individuals are safeguarded from any further risk of exposure;
* With Public Health Wales, co-ordinating a mobile testing unit for tuberculosis. 144 people were screened and a template for future inter-agency co-operation has since been agreed;
* Supporting the multi-agency response to SOC in Gwent, providing appropriate interventions where identified;
* Participating in the Newport Rough Sleepers Task Groups to signpost, provide information and support individuals with acute housing issues. Substance misuse and offending have been highlighted as common issues within the rough sleeper community; and
* Continuing to support multi-agency collaboration to provide specialist interventions for sex workers. GDAS staff regularly contribute to intelligence gathering and strategic planning, and work alongside local agencies including Gwent Police on targeted operations.

 **Public Service Boards**

The **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 20159** provides real opportunities to ensure that service providers focus on long-term, sustainable outcomes for current and future generations. The statutory PSBs created by the Act, which have now replaced Local Service Boards, have a crucial role to play in maintaining the health, independence and well-being of all people across Wales, and in ensuring that their lives have value, meaning and purpose.

As a statutory invitee to each of the five PSBs in Gwent, my Office maintains support for the partnership approach that is the basis of their work. We have continued to work with each of the PSBs through the year as they implemented their action plans during the year. We have also worked together to develop opportunities for collaborative engagement activity, particularly over joint topics such as the precept and budget.

In addition, we have continued to work closely across the PSBs with regards to the delivery of the Gwent-wide focus on ACEs to ensure a joined-up approach to partnership working. This will continue through 2019/20 as the programme progresses into its later stages.

A collective partnership desire to better understand, plan for and respond to the future wellbeing needs of the citizens of Gwent led to the commissioning of the ‘Gwent Futures – scenario report’. The report joins up the work across Gwent to address the wellbeing of our future generations, and each PSB is now looking at their responses to maximise on opportunities and mitigate issues identified.

We have worked closely with Newport PSB to successfully deliver the SOC work in the City and will continue to engage with them regarding the future plans for the project.

We have continued to work with Caerphilly PSB in support of the development of the Lansbury Park Coalition for Change. The partnership seeks to positively influence and modify the way services are delivered in the area to enable a long-term culture change within the community. Plans are now being developed to provide a ‘one public service’ approach, with work being undertaken to identify appropriate services and resources for the area.

In Torfaen, the PSB has continued to develop a ‘place-based priority’ approach to develop a set of proposals that focus on the PSB’s objective to ‘*prevent or limit the impact of chronic health conditions through supporting healthy lifestyle behaviours*’. This approach aims to establish how the PSB partners can best work together to maximise local wellbeing. The Blaenavon pilot undertaken during 2018/19 will be evaluated with the outcome used to inform the direction of future planning.

 **HMICFRS Inspections**
HMICFRS have conducted a number of inspections through the year. They praised Gwent Police following a thematic inspection for its approach to dealing with hate crime. However, the crime data integrity inspection noted that improvements had been made, but that Gwent ‘required improvement’ with an overall score of 90.5%. Feedback on the child protection thematic inspection has not formally been received; however, the inspectors commented on the joint commitment between the Chief Constable and I to protect vulnerable people.

During the year,we hosted a visit to Gwent by the Head of HMICFRS, Sir Tom Winsor. The visit provided an opportunity to discuss the role of the new Force Management Statements and their use as a self-appraisal tool for policing, and well as updates on a number of national initiatives. Sir Tom was grateful for the opportunity to discuss and better understand the nature of policing work within the context of a devolved public service system in Wales.

 **Regional and National Engagement**

**All Wales Policing Group (AWPG)**The four PCCs and Chief Constables in Wales continue to meet every quarter to discuss strategic issues, to identify how best they can work together to prevent crime and protect victims of crime from serious harm and to further opportunities for collaboration. The PCCs and Chief Constables also consider the current and future Policing requirements for Wales.

From June 2018 until June 2019, I am the Chair of the AWPG. This means that there are additional responsibilities for the co-ordination of joint work across the four Welsh policing areas and with the Welsh Government. As a result, we agreed with the Welsh Government to establish a Policing Board for Wales, which is chaired by the Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services. This police-led Board will help to ensure that policing, as a non-devolved public service, is fully understood by the Welsh Government in terms of its role as a key partner in the delivery of the ‘one public service’ ethos of the Welsh Government.

Furthermore, the AWPG provided the main vehicle for gathering ideas to form part of our submission to the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR).

**Welsh Government Policing Board**

The inaugural meeting of the Welsh Government Policing Board was held in November 2018. The Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services issued a formal Written Statement to the National Assembly regarding the purpose of the Board and its importance to the delivery of well co-ordinated public services.

**Cross Party Group on Policing**

Established through the Offices of John Griffiths AM, the first meeting of the Group took place at the National Assembly in July 2018. The establishment of this group has provided a conduit for better understanding amongst AMs of the work of policing and the pressures we face. A full programme of future meetings has been agreed to ensure an appropriate focus on the most pressing challenges. Subject areas include:

* The policing structure in Wales and challenges facing the service
* Mental health
* Homelessness, rough sleeping and substance misuse
* Domestic violence and sexual abuse
* Modern Day Slavery
* Third Sector partnerships
* Illegal drugs and County Lines
* Devolution and criminal justice

**Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCCs)**
During the year, the OPCC hosted a visit by Susannah Hancock, Chief Executive of the APCC. The visit provided some context around working in Gwent, including my key programmes, our partnerships, my Police and Crime Plan and the Police and Crime Panel. We also discussed relationships between the OPCC and APCC and any matters of national concern, including Brexit. The visit was extremely valuable for both parties and has helped to set the scene for our future engagement. Since the visit, the APCC has appointed a lead officer for Wales.

**Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) Senior Steering Group (SSG)**

The UK Government opened the CSR in the early part of 2019. In preparation, the Home Office established an SSG to drive the element concerned with law enforcement. I was very pleased to have been asked by the APCC to be one if its four representatives on the SSG. Furthermore, I was the only Welsh representative on the whole of the SSG, so had particular responsibility for ensuring that the issues relevant to Wales were heard, understood and considered in the context of the overall submission. The SSG aimed to ensure than, as far as possible, the draft submission took into account the submissions from other public services so that there can be a co-ordinated approach amongst our key partners.

Looking to the Future

In my last three years as Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent, I believe we have made real progress in delivering a policing service that meets the needs of our communities in Gwent, at a time when budgets have been stretched to the limit.

I will continue to ensure that we deliver an efficient and effective policing service that provides value for money. I will also continue to ensure a deliberate focus on performance management, working with Gwent Police and the Police and Crime Panel in further developing our performance management processes.

However, we should not underestimate the hard work that is still to be done. In the coming year, we will continue to provide a focus on key issues such as serious organised crime, exploitation, and protecting vulnerable people, while developing a response to other emerging trends as they arise. As part of this, I will be supporting the creation of a Survivor Engagement Coordinator post to be based within Connect Gwent. This role will facilitate the voices of survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence in order to make improvements to key services, including across the criminal justice system in Gwent.

In my time within this role, I have spoken to thousands of Gwent residents and their feedback has helped me to ensure that we are tackling the issues that concern them. I will continue to engage with the public and our partners to make sure that people in Gwent feel safe, and indeed are safe, and that we provide appropriate support and reassurance to them when needed.

In providing this response, I will continue to support the Chief Constable’s recruitment programme, ensuring that our police service is capable and effective. In addition, I look forward to progressing work on the new police headquarters. This is a significant part of my Estate Strategy and it will help to ensure that we have a fit-for-purpose home for policing in Gwent. Both of these accomplishments will help to establish a firm foundation for the future.

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