

MINUTES of the meeting of the **SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL** held at 10.30 am on 21 April 2022 at Woodhatch Place, Reigate, Surrey.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Panel at its next meeting.

Members:

(*Present)

- *Councillor David Reeve (Chairman)
- *Councillor Bruce McDonald (Vice-Chairman)
- *Councillor Keith Witham
- *Councillor Mick Gillman
- *Councillor Fiona White
- *Councillor Paul Kennedy
- *Councillor Victor Lewanski
- Councillor Bernie Spoor
- *Councillor Valerie White
- *Councillor John Furey
- *Councillor John Robini
- *Councillor Will Forster
- *Mr Philip Walker
- *Mr Martin Stilwell

15/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

Apologies were received from Councillor Bernie Spoor.

16/22 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 4 FEBRUARY 2022 [Item 2]

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2022 were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

17/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

None received.

18/22 PUBLIC QUESTIONS [Item 4]

None received.

19/22 POLICE AND CRIME PLAN 2021-2025 - PROGRESS [Item 5]

Witnesses:

Lisa Townsend, Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey

Ellie Vesey-Thompson, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey

Alison Bolton, Chief Executive – OPCC

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) introduced the report, noting that the plan was still in its infancy and there was a meeting with Surrey Police next week regarding the plan. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and the Force were working to make the plan and the outcomes more accessible for the public. The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC) highlighted that the plan had been welcomed by the Force and it was considered a co-owned plan. It had been noted by the Force that the plan had been much more consulted than in previous years. It was also easier to understand, as each section was broken down into actions for each partner.
2. A Panel Member noted that the report contained a lot of detail for the public to understand and asked what the PCC was doing to make it accessible. The PCC emphasised that the report provided to Panel Members was produced specifically for the Panel. The PCC agreed that communication with the public was vital and the OPCC worked closely with the Force on this. For example, in the context of reducing violence against women and girls (VAWG), it was essential for the public to understand reporting. A new Head of Performance was starting in May, and they had discussed creating an accessible dashboard on the website. It would include the headline statistics, with the option to delve into more detail if desired. The PCC acknowledged that there was a lot of work that the public were not aware of and that better campaigning on certain issues, such as fraud, was needed.
3. A Panel Member asked what support was being provided for victims of crime, because their residents believed that there was little support. The Panel Member asked for baseline information on this. The PCC explained that in their conversations with the Chief Constable she highlighted things that were not happening and that she was unhappy with. Victims wanted to be communicated with and kept up to date. The Deputy Chief Constable was completing a review into three areas, one of which was supporting victims of crime. The PCC added that they could provide some further information on this area, but that she was unable to comment on individual cases.
4. A Panel Member asked for further information on the recruitment of more specialist workers for children experiencing domestic

abuse and sexual violence. The PCC explained that this was a piece of OPCC commissioned work, in collaboration with a range of partners. This included providing domestic abuse refuges with the resources to recruit specialists and working with the charity RASAC (Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre). The Head of Policy and Commissioning (OPCC) could provide more detail. The Panel Member noted that their borough did not have sufficient refuge provision. The PCC explained that an individual would seek refuge elsewhere in the county or another area for safety, so that they were not in their own immediate area. The PCC highlighted the importance of the county council working on these issues as well.

5. A Panel Member asked whether the analysis on Safer Streets could be shared once available to enable councillors to support the work. The Chief Executive (CEX) explained that the work that went into the Safer Streets bid was done collaboratively with district and borough councils. The DPCC clarified that the analysis from the 'Call It Out' survey and the national Streetsafe tool (as distinct from 'Safer Streets') could be shared.
6. A Panel Member noted that there was no narrative in the report regarding the increase in the number of recorded serious sexual offences and recorded hate crimes and sought assurance that this was because more people were willing to report these crimes than previously. The Panel Member emphasised the importance of including crimes involving fraud, as people were often unaware of how much of this type of crime occurred. The PCC explained that it was important to have the right mix of policing and skills to tackle different types of crime. It was difficult to analyse the rising types of crime, due to the impact of the pandemic. The PCC agreed that people were reporting certain crimes more and that this was a positive thing. These issues were discussed with the Chief Constable at the governance meetings.
7. Regarding school exclusions a Panel Member asked about alternative provision provided for young people who received exclusions, to prevent them potentially turning to crime. The PCC responded that this should not be a policing issue. The DPCC explained that she could highlight the options in place for those excluded after the meeting. The DPCC had worked with the High Sheriff on this issue and shared that Surrey was doing well comparatively with other counties. The target set was for no children to be excluded and the incoming High Sheriff shared the passion for maintaining that target. The DPCC noted that there was a report by Royal Holloway University on school exclusions in Surrey.

8. A Panel Member queried whether the burglary figures included in the report referred to retail, commercial or domestic. The PCC would confirm following the meeting.
9. A Panel Member shared a resident experience regarding their business whereby the Force provided little support, despite having evidence of a crime, and asked what work was done with the business community. The PCC explained that they did work closely with the business community and had regular meetings. Issues related to the business community had been raised with the Chief Constable recently and the PCC was happy to share the response.
10. The Chairman queried why all residential burglaries could not be investigated and noted that less than 3% detection rate was poor. The PCC explained that the outcome rate in January was 3.7% for Surrey, and this was raised with the Chief Constable at the first public governance meeting. That number has since improved and updated figures would come to the Panel meeting in June. The Force were reviewing all of the burglary reports they had received to check that they had been dealt with correctly.
11. A Panel Member enquired into the work to address anti-social behaviour. The PCC clarified that this was one of the areas of focus set out by the Home Office and therefore, the bid for Safer Streets funding had to address this area. The OPCC was bidding for money from the Home Office to support district and borough councils with issues they were struggling with. The DPCC added that Hampshire OPCC had established a task force who met when required and would ask their PCC for funding to tackle an issue. This has been successful and the DPCC was investigating whether this could be established in Surrey.
12. The Chairman noted that the statistics on the non-emergency police phone number 101 appeared to be getting worse and the digital form of contact was not making it easier for residents. The PCC explained that residents were using 101 as well traditional forms, rather than moving to digital. The 101 service was a standing item on the meetings with the Chief Constable. Changes were planned for 101, as this was a national issue.
13. A Panel Member suggested that there should not be an agenda for the public governance meetings, and they should rely on residents to provide their questions. The Panel Member also expressed that rural crime was a niche issue only affecting a

minority of residents. The PCC explained that some of the agenda items did come from residents sharing what they would like to be raised at the meetings. The Communications Manager stated that they tried to theme meetings, but this did not stop residents asking questions on other topics. If a question was not answered, the individual could contact the OPCC to receive an answer afterwards.

14. A Panel Member enquired about the plan to improve the 101 service, as well the engagement work of the OPCC now that in-person meetings could happen again. The PCC explained that they had been working with district and borough councils regarding 101. Residents needed to understand the use of 101 and the digital service was not the answer on its own. There had been a lot of staff absences over the pandemic in contact centres, but this was starting to improve. The PCC explained that they were reluctant to discourage anyone to call in and emphasised to call 999 if in doubt, and they could deescalate the issue if necessary. The PCC for Kent has completed a piece of work on best practice. In-person meetings had started to happen, and the PCC explained they would like to do more, including a summer or autumn roadshow. The PCC was looking at introducing a surgery for residents to raise issues. The Communications Manager explained that as not everyone was able to attend in-person meetings, a mixture of options was required to gain the perspective of harder to reach communities.
15. A Panel Member emphasised the importance to focus on rural crime and asked about any progress on unauthorised encampments. The PCC explained that there was not a recent update, however, she was receiving a briefing from the Force on this the next day which she can share with the Panel at the next meeting.
16. A Panel Member asked whether the Force used powers of confiscating vehicles of anti-social drivers. The DPCC apologised that she had not yet provided this information to the Panel Member. These were powers from Section 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002, and they were used in Surrey. The DPCC explained that a warning would be issued first, and that they find that there was a lot of impact from those as it was applied to both the car and the driver. These warnings were sometimes more impactful than a speeding fine. The PCC encouraged Panel Members to participate as Community Speed Watch volunteers.
17. A Panel Member raised the issues of speeding and noise from motorbikes. The PCC explained that one of the ways to reduce

road deaths was by reducing speeding. If a residential road suffered from speeding, then you should speak to the county council to see if any measures could be taken. The local police teams had to prioritise issues, but the PCC emphasised that they did take speeding seriously. There was a campaign called Safe Drive Stay Alive by Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, in conjunction with the OPCC and the Force. The PCC explained that she was not sure what the laws were on the noise of exhausts. There was a limit to what the Force could do if they did not breach a law.

18. A Panel Member asked whether the Safe Drive Stay Alive campaign could be broadcasted more widely, especially for use by parents. The DPCC explained that they were targeted at sixth form age and was concerned that it could be less impactful if it was shared more widely. The DPCC would look into having a separate version of resources for parents.
19. A Panel Member noted that drivers were not being persuaded to keep to speed limits and asked about the approach to tackle this. The Panel Member also enquired about the support for victims of road collisions. The PCC explained that it was about community engagement and ensuring that the Force were communicating with victims.
20. A Panel Member suggested introducing a unified speed limit of 30mph to provide consistency on roads where the speed limit varied. The PCC responded that she had discussed bringing down the speed limits on some roads with officers and the Chief Constable. A Panel Member added that the county council were looking at a wider scheme around reducing speed limits on rural roads, as control of speed was often about consistency.

Actions/requests for further information:

1. **R8/22** – The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to provide further information on the work on supporting victims of crime.
2. **R9/22** – The Head of Policy and Commissioning to provide further information on the recruitment of more specialist workers for children experiencing domestic abuse and sexual violence.
3. **R10/22** – The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to share the analysis on Call It Out survey and the national Streetsafe tool.

4. **R11/22** – The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner to provide information on the other options available for young people who have been excluded from school.
5. **R12/22** – The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to confirm which type of burglary the figures referred to.
6. **R13/22** – The Support Officer to organise a briefing from the Force on the new Vanguard Road Safety Team.

RESOLVED:

The Surrey Police and Crime Panel recommends that –

1. That future Police and Crime Plan progress reports to the Panel contain the key actions taken since the last update, and those to be taken, in relation to each subheading of each Plan priority.
2. That all of the measures reported to the Performance and Accountability Board be included in future Police and Crime Plan Progress reports, and the same descriptions used.

20/22 POLICE COMPLAINTS REFORM [Item 6]

Witnesses:

Lisa Townsend, Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey

Alison Bolton, Chief Executive – OPCC

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. A Panel Member queried when the right to review complaints switched to the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC). The Chief Executive explained that the police complaints regulations were complex and clarified that the OPCC could only review complaints which fell under Schedule 3 (Otherwise by Investigation). The IPCC only reviewed the most serious of complaints. The Chairman asked who conducted the reviews and the PCC explained that Complaints Review Manager did, but both she and the Chief Executive had oversight of these.
2. A Panel Member queried the rationale behind the proposed extension to the target timescale and asked if the figures up to March 2022 were available for Surrey. The PCC could share the figures after the meeting. The PCC explained that the OPCC operated independently to the Force, therefore, when a member of public submitted a complaint, this went to the Complaints Review Manager. There was no statutory deadline in which

reviews needed to be completed. The Chief Executive added that there was only one individual doing this, and some of the complaints were complex. The Complaints Review Manager had increased his hours and Surrey OPCC still completed the process faster than any other OPCC in south-east. It was about providing the complainant with a reasonable expectation and if the workload decreased, then the timescale would be reviewed.

Actions/requests for further information:

1. **R14/22** – The OPCC to provide the average time taken to progress complaints reviews in the first and second halves of FY2021/22.

RESOLVED:

The Panel noted the report.

21/22 SURREY POLICE RECRUITMENT AND WORKFORCE PLANNING [Item 7]

Witnesses:

Lisa Townsend, Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey

Ellie Vesey-Thompson, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey

Alison Bolton, Chief Executive – OPCC

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. The PCC referenced her letter to the Chairman (Annex 1) regarding some Panel Members who had shared information regarding the number of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and expressed that this was unhelpful for members of the Force concerned about redundancies. The PCC explained that the misrepresentation could lead the public to believe that their community would be less safe. The Chairman confirmed that the letter had been shared with all Panel Members and queried the distinction between front-line police officers and PCSOs. The PCC confirmed that the current Borough set up of both police officers and PCSOs in each area was being maintained. The Force had taken the opportunity to replace 22 PSCOs with fully warranted officers, as these positions had become vacant, in order to improve operational effectiveness in neighbourhood teams. The PCC expressed her concern that the replacement of PCSOs was being incorrectly linked to the budget of the OPCC in tweets by Panel Members.

2. A Panel Member noted the difference between establishment numbers and actual numbers of PCSOs, as well as the associated savings related to staffing included at the previous meeting. The Panel Member also queried the reduction in PCSOs compared with previous figures provided. The PCC explained that there was difference due to the number of Full Time Equivalents (FTEs). The Chief Executive added that the Force was over establishment at one stage, with the current number of FTE PCSOs being 118.42. The report requested was about the allocation of police officers, in future, information could be provided on police staff.
3. A Panel Member queried the routes into the Force, especially with regards to obtaining a university degree during the probation period. The PCC explained that there were a number of routes, and each Force took a different view from the guidance provided by the College of Policing. A degree was not required to enter policing; however, a degree would need to be obtained during training in order to become fully qualified. The DPCC explained that there would be some who would leave during their probation because they would not pass it. The DPCC noted that quality candidates were entering policing through this route, however, she shared concerns about whether this route could discourage some candidates to apply. This was a relatively new route, and it would continue to be monitored.

RESOLVED:

The Panel noted the report.

22/22 FORCE CULTURE AND CONDUCT [Item 8]

Witnesses:

Lisa Townsend, Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey

Alison Bolton, Chief Executive – OPCC

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. A Panel Member noted that statistically there was over one case per officer and some officers would have several cases against them. The PCC explained that there was a low threshold to record a complaint against an officer, which meant that the case numbers were higher. It was better to have a lower threshold for making a complaint.

2. A Panel Member questioned whether there were a large number of complaints reported by a small number of the population. The PCC explained that the OPCC did not have access to that information, however, the Professional Standards Department (PSD) had been doing work on repeat complainants who took up a disproportionate amount of time. The Chief Executive added that the PCC had regular meetings with the PSD and could probe any outliers and look at general trends.
3. A Panel Member asked about the support provided to those who reported inappropriate behaviour of their colleagues. The PCC agreed that this was an important issue which had been raised with the Chief Constable. There had been a lot of work around VAWG, domestic abuse and misogyny within the Force. It was crucial to stop these behaviours before they turned into a conduct issue. The PCC explained that there has been a cultural campaign around 'call it out', whereby colleagues were encouraged to call out behaviour, and if they did not feel comfortable, there was a system to anonymously raise an issue. There was a real effort in policing to break the cycle seen by a small number of officers in the country. The OPCC and the Force had discussed introducing external oversight in this area.
4. A Panel Member asked about whether staff surveys on culture could be introduced. The PCC explained that surveys were done frequently by the Force, however, not all employees would feel comfortable answering a survey issued by the same organisation. The Panel Member queried whether there was a significant difference in the distribution for complaints upheld and asked about the time taken to investigate complaints. The PCC explained that she met with the Police Federation and UNISON to discuss those issues. There had been recent issues with delays which had been addressed. Some complaints had been escalated when they arguably should not have been, but it was also important to be robust when investigating complaints. The PCC did not have the figures to hand regarding the distribution and suggested that this could be raised at the informal meeting with the Chief Constable.
5. A Panel Member queried the timing of retirement for those facing a misconduct case. The PCC responded that the organisation could not stop someone from leaving. Where it was a serious and criminal allegation, this would be pursued. It was also possible to write to the Home Office regarding forfeiture of some of an officer's pension, in some circumstances.
6. A Panel Member expressed concern over a lack of justice on these occasions and asked about the types of misconduct. The

PCC explained the numbers of people who had faced misconduct hearings were small and she would not share any more information with the Panel about the type of misconduct.

RESOLVED:

The Panel noted the report.

23/22 POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S SUCCESSION PLAN [Item 9]

Key points raised in the discussion:

None.

RESOLVED:

The Panel noted the report.

24/22 PANEL UPDATE ON FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF ERP SYSTEM [Item 10]

Witnesses:

Lisa Townsend, Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey

Kelvin Menon, Chief Finance Officer and Treasurer – OPCC

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. A Panel Member asked whether any of the £1.5 million spent so far on the ERP project could be recovered. The Chief Finance Officer explained that some assets were acquired as part of the termination and that these were still being assessed to see if they could be used. A proportion of the money would be recovered through use on new systems; however, a proportion would be written off.
2. A Panel Member asked which option would be chosen. The PCC explained that they were waiting for a recommendation from the Force.

RESOLVED:

The Panel noted the report.

25/22 PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEETINGS [Item 11]

Witness:

Lisa Townsend, Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. A Panel Member asked about the CCTV projects. The PCC clarified that one was the Force's own plan, and one was a piece of work with Surrey Leaders Group regarding joined up working between the district and borough councils. These projects were running in parallel.
2. A Panel Member asked what the current budget was for CCTV and whether there was an opportunity to review the CCTV plan. The PCC explained that she did not know what the current budget was and suspected that it was not confirmed at this stage. The PCC noted that the budget setting for the Force was a matter for the Chief Constable. The Panel Member suggested that the Force should work with the modern and effective CCTV that already existed in the county and invest appropriately. The PCC responded that this was an issue that was spoken about at Community Safety Partnership meetings and noted the importance of Surrey Leaders engaging. The PCC agreed that CCTV did need to be modern, and some systems were outdated. A Panel Member added that at the previous meeting the Panel were informed that there was £800,000 in the revenue budget for the whole of the county for CCTV and none in the capital budget for CCTV.
3. The Chairman stated that the statistics did not show any improvement in performance, in terms of better outcomes or reduced offences. The Chairman asked if there was any information that came out of the PCC's meeting with the Chief Constable on 7 April 2022 that could be shared with the Panel. The PCC explained that the issues raised were around 101 and burglary. There had been an increase in solve rates, particularly in two divisions, and best practice was being shared.

RESOLVED:

The Panel noted the report.

26/22 PCC FORWARD PLAN AND KEY DECISIONS [Item 12]

Witnesses:

Lisa Townsend, Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey

Nathan Rees, Communications Manager – OPCC

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. The PCC noted that the forward plan needed to be updated, as this version was out of date, and the Chairman asked for the new version to be shared with the Panel when it was.
2. A Panel Member asked whether the Panel could receive a written briefing on the Community Safety Fund and asked how the annual report would be published for residents. The Communications Manager explained that it would be published on their website and hard copies would be available.

Actions/requests for further information:

1. **R15/22** – The OPCC to share the updated version of the forward work plan once available.
2. **R16/22** – The OPCC to provide a written briefing on the Community Safety Fund once available.

RESOLVED:

The Panel noted the report.

27/22 COMMISSIONER'S QUESTION TIME [Item 13]

Witness:

Lisa Townsend, Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. A Panel Member asked a question about the College of Policing's advice regarding non-criminal hate incidents (NCHIs). The PCC declared that she had been reported for at least one NCHI herself. It was important that they were very clear with their judgement. The PCC explained that they were awaiting new guidance from the College of Policing. The PCC had raised

this issue with Ministers at the Home Office. The PCC stated that as they were non-crimes, the Force should not be involved.

Actions/requests for further information:

1. **R17/22** – The OPCC to provide a full written response to the question submitted by Mr Philip Walker.

28/22 COMPLAINTS RECEIVED SINCE THE LAST MEETING [Item 14]

Witness:

Lisa Townsend, Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. The Chairman asked the PCC if she had written to the three complainants with a letter of explanation as recommended by the Complaints Sub-Committee. The PCC responded that she had not written the letter and did not intend to. The PCC asked for the Panel to publish her response to the initial complaints on their website. The Chairman understood that it was only a recommendation and noted that the last PCC did, on one occasion, choose not follow the Panel's recommendation either. The Chairman suggested that the PCC published her response on the OPCC website, as it would not be published on the Panel's website.

RESOLVED:

The Panel noted the report.

29/22 RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 15]

Key points raised in the discussion:

None.

30/22 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 16]

The Panel noted that its next public meeting would be held on Thursday, 30 June 2022.

Meeting ended at: 1.25 pm

Chairman

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20th April 2022

Dear David

Article on PCSO numbers

You may have seen the recent article, initially published on the Surrey Live site on 15th April, entitled "*Surrey Police to cut back on 22 PCSOs as PCC increases her staff budget by 30%*". The article has subsequently been shared on social media by some members of the Panel who have chosen to promote it using disingenuous headlines such as "*Surrey Police forced to cut PCSOs to help fund a 30% increase in the Tory PCC's staff budget*".

I wanted to take the opportunity to clarify the position in respect of PCSO numbers and to provide reassurance that the commitment made to maintaining policing levels over the coming year, in spite of a tough financial climate, remains. I would also like to put on record my disappointment in the manner in which some members have chosen to score political points by sharing scaremongering headlines around PCSO numbers whilst failing to provide any wider context. This serves only to create anxiety in local communities and indeed among frontline staff themselves.

Members will be well sighted on the fact that the Force needs to make significant savings over the coming year and one way of doing this without affecting front-line policing is to slow down the recruitment of PCSOs by reducing their current number from 118.42 to 96 in this financial year (a reduction of 22). Operational decisions around how officer and PCSO resources are deployed are a matter for the Chief Constable. However, I am able to confirm that local communities will not see a reduction in the overall numbers in their local policing teams, as where PCSO numbers are being reduced, the roles are being replaced with Police Officers who have additional warranted powers to support keeping our communities safe. This change will see the current establishment of 52 Neighbourhood Specialist Officers (NSOs) increase to 74 with each of the 11 Borough and District Safer Neighbourhood Teams maintaining a workforce mix of both PCSOs and NSOs.

Careful consideration will be given in each area to the best blend of PCSOs and Police Officers and the Force expects PCSOs to be back to current numbers within the next three years. There will be no redundancies for PCSOs, but instead the reduction will be managed through natural attrition e.g. as PCSOs move on to become Police Officers with several of them already in the recruitment process for this financial year.

continued.....

The decision to replace some PCSO roles with PCs has been linked by some members to my decision to increase the budget of my office, a matter that was discussed at considerable length at the last meeting of the Panel. As I explained at the February meeting, this decision was not taken lightly. It is incumbent on me to ensure I can effectively undertake the responsibilities of the Office of Police & Crime Commissioner and also discharge my duty of care to existing staff. Due to historic under-investment in the team, we are simply unable to keep up with the increasing demands placed on the PCC role without this small increase in staff. The additional posts are not to 'promote my own role', but will mean in practice that people who contact the office will receive a more timely response and that we can do more work with Criminal Justice and community safety partners to drive much needed improvements.

I know that as Chair of the Panel, you share my aim that we can work together with members offering both scrutiny and support. I do hope as we embark on a new municipal year and my second year in office, we can look to establishing a more constructive relationship for the benefit of local communities. I would be very pleased if you could share this letter with the wider panel.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Townsend". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Lisa Townsend
Police and Crime Commissioner