

ANNUAL REPORT

of the Police & Crime Commissioner



Re-inventing the wheel

It could be said that 'neighbourhood policing' is back in fashion. And if so, you might attribute it to the fallout from the dreadful attacks that have blighted our country in recent months.

Whilst there is no doubt that what happened in London and Manchester has concentrated minds, I have been stressing the importance of the police knowing their communities since my very first day of campaigning back in 2012.

Community or neighbourhood policing remains at the centre of my second Police and Crime Plan, the strategy for my next four years in office, because local policing is 'the golden thread' that links police with their communities.

Crimes involving drugs and knives, hardly unique to Gloucestershire, have led to levels of violence we've not seen since the 1980's. Over the past year, the Constabulary has done outstanding work in bringing offenders to justice; people who seek to flood our county with drugs and rule by violence & intimidation.

But whilst it is absolutely right to vigorously pursue those who seek to harm us, I do not believe enforcement alone will win the peace. That's why in the new Police and Crime Plan I stress the importance of maintaining neighbourhood policing even if it means adopting a different approach.

Tempting though it may be to throw all the resources at the here and now - especially in the wake of terrorist-related incidents that cause widespread shock and panic - it is important that neighbourhood teams are valued and maintained as they are vital to the relationship between the police and the public.

Every day we see the good work of the officers in the Constabulary, an organisation of which the county can be proud. But we must always strive to do better.

MAS

Martin Surl

Gloucestershire Police and Crime Commissioner



Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021

The new updated Police and Crime Plan, the overriding strategy the police must work to, was launched at a public event on 31 March and you can read it on the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) website www.gloucestershire-pcc.gov.uk.

It will be in operation for the next four years and will take us beyond the next election in 2020.

I see no reason for major changes though as with my first plan, I canvassed a wide range of views to supplement my own, including the Constabulary, the general public and voluntary sectors. The Plan was presented to the Police and Crime Panel in November where it was supported.

You can see a selection of films, shown at the public launch event, which illustrate each of the Plan's priorities, by following these links:

- **Accountability and accessibility:**
<http://bit.ly/2t74GaR>
- **Older but not overlooked:**
<http://bit.ly/2t7AwUI>
- **Safer days and nights:**
<http://bit.ly/2uzQKKK>
- **Safe and social driving:**
<http://bit.ly/2v9bMgl>
- **Young people becoming adults:**
<http://bit.ly/2uA3dyc>
- **Safer cyber:**
<http://bit.ly/2vtc296>



Changing faces:

Gloucestershire's first Deputy PCC checks-in

Former BBC Political reporter Chris Brierley began his new job as Gloucestershire's first Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner.

Mr. Brierley, 36, who joined BBC Radio Gloucestershire in 2005 and has also worked for BBC Radio 5-Live, BBC West's Politics Show and the corporation's political unit in London, will share Police and Crime Commissioner Martin Surl's burgeoning workload.

As well as leading on a number of projects, he represents the PCC in meetings, in public and acts on his behalf as required by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the legislation which created PCCs. His appointment was confirmed by the Police and Crime Panel in September.

Mr. Brierley said, "There is so much good work going-on in Gloucestershire under the umbrella of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). I am keen to play my part and help communicate it."



County's first woman police chief who smashed the glass ceiling....

Police and Crime Commissioner Martin Surl paid tribute to Gloucestershire's former Chief Constable, Suzette Davenport, following her retirement in April.

Ms Davenport, 54, became Gloucestershire's first woman Chief Constable in the Constabulary's 174 year history in 2013, having been appointed by Mr. Surl following his election as the county's first PCC.

Mr. Surl said, "Reaching the top of her profession just as the Government introduced Police and Crime Commissioners could have led to understandable tension. Instead, Suzette and I have been able to form an effective, professional working relationship that always put Gloucestershire first.

"She has had a remarkable career at local, regional and national level. I would like to thank her personally, and on behalf of the county, for her dedication and commitment during one of the most turbulent periods in the Constabulary's history."



... but the new Chief is temporary

Gloucestershire's former Deputy Chief Constable Rod Hansen has been promoted to Chief Constable with a 12 month contract.

Police and Crime Commissioner Martin Surl explained his decision to appoint a chief constable on a temporary basis had been influenced by uncertainty over the future of the fire service.

He said, "The Government is keen to see if a closer alignment would benefit both fire and police and lead to an even better service for the people of Gloucestershire. I have an open mind but if that proves to be the case, the responsibilities of the Chief Constable in 12 months' time could be very different to what they are today.

"Rod Hansen has been an outstanding officer at local, regional and national levels. I had no hesitation in offering him the job of temporary Chief Constable and I am grateful to him for accepting under these circumstances".



(and the PCC was re-elected)

Martin Surl was re-elected as Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire on 6 May 2017. He received 78,592 first and second preference votes giving him a majority of 27,025. The turnout was 30%, up from 17% in 2012.

Martin is now one of only three Independent PCCs in the UK. Of the others, 20 are members of the Conservative Party, 15 Labour and 2 Plaid Cymru.



Amongst his other responsibilities, Martin is a member of the Police ICT Company; the Police Reform and Transformation Board and is a former chair of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners.

Locally, he chairs Gloucestershire's Criminal Justice Board and is a member of Leadership Gloucestershire, the county's Health and Wellbeing Board and the South West Police Collaboration Strategic Board.

Altogether, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) is represented on another 30 partnership boards.

PCC's plan branded “an appalling waste of money” nets a tidy profit

When Police and Crime Commissioner Martin Surl scrapped plans to build a new police station in Gloucester, the Taxpayers Alliance (TA) called it an ‘appalling waste of money’.

A little over 12 months later, the old fire station site in Eastern Avenue, which was at the heart of the discarded plan, was sold to the German supermarket chain Lidl for £1,500,000.

Based on the figures on which the TA made its assessment, it represented a profit of around £400k.

Mr. Surl said, “It’s not really about the money, though it is always nice when a plan works out. An out of town police station was not a good idea and we could never have afforded to build it.



Commissioner keeps pledge on Forest of Dean Police Station

It took longer than expected but the plan to make Coleford the main centre for the police and other criminal justice services in the Forest of Dean was achieved in October.

The former magistrates’ court building, which shares the site, was bought by the Police and Crime Commissioner in December 2015 following its closure in 2011. This is now also home to the Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), the National Probation Service and provides a space for use by the community.

The building was formally opened and re-named the Forest of Dean Police Station by Lady Bathurst, as High Sheriff of Gloucestershire, on 8 October, 2016.



**Although the police no longer operate from Lydney Police Station, the building is being retained by the PCC for other possible use in the future should the economy improve.*

Independent Custody Volunteers (ICVs)

Independent custody visiting is a vital part of the work of the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) in ensuring the police service is open and accountable to the people it serves.

It is a statutory responsibility for the PCC to have an Independent Custody Visiting scheme in place which is responsible for organising and overseeing the scheme, in consultation with the Chief Constable.

Independent Custody Visiting is a well-established system whereby volunteers make unannounced visits to police stations to check on the treatment of detainees and the conditions in which they are held. They ensure that prisoners' rights and entitlements are being observed. The system offers protection and confidentiality to detainees and the police, and reassurance to the community at large.

It is the responsibility of the Commissioner to recruit, train, manage and support all volunteers appointed to the Gloucestershire Independent Custody Visiting Scheme.

Gloucestershire has one designated custody suite, in Quedgeley, Gloucester. Stroud custody suite was de-designated from 1 April 2011 and is now only used as and when necessary. The new custody suite was built in Quedgeley alongside the Police Headquarters and was opened in 2015.

Independent Custody Visiting has a vital part to play in the work of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire in ensuring the police service is open and accountable to the public.

If you want to know more information about ICVs, please visit the Independent Custody Visiting Association's (ICVA) website: www.icva.org.uk



Charge up the Nissan! Shot in the arm for PCC's plan for greener police cars

Charging points for Gloucestershire's electric police cars have been installed around the county at a considerably reduced cost to the Constabulary.

The Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV), which is part of the Department of Transport, picked-up 75% of the bill for fitting plug-in points at 11 different locations, at a cost of £94,000.

The agreement also includes three years' maintenance and warranty.

Mr. Surl said, "We've carried out a number of trials to make sure the technology is right for the police as using electric cars for certain types of jobs not only helps to save money, but is better for the environment".



In line with his election manifesto, the PCC is keen for the Force to adopt a greener option and in March this year bought seven Nissan Leafs. Three are marked cars for use in urban areas. The other four will be unmarked for use in other operations.

A further boost for the Commissioner's long term goal came with news of an agreement with National Grid and OFGEM, the industry regulator, over the feed-in tariff for the solar panels on Prism House. It means that not only do they currently provide 25% of the energy used in the building, but they will pay for themselves within six years. After that, any surplus raised will go into the police budget.

Why it's no longer a dog's life for the teenager who hated school

To say that Aaron was not very keen on school is probably an understatement. Like many young boys of his age, he found it difficult to concentrate. His attendance was sporadic due to high levels of anxiety and a lack of motivation.

When challenged to focus, he would dig his heels in and become rude and aggressive. Work placements also fell through due to his reluctance to take part.

The turning point came when he was given a place on the HALT project where a new Aaron, whose name has been changed for legal reasons, began to emerge.

Debbie Morgan, Education Officer at the Cheltenham Animal Shelter said, "On the HALT project, we saw a completely different personality. He was engaged and interested, keen
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Breaking the cycle of crime

to learn and be involved and developed into a very confident young man.

“Aaron had often talked openly about how he struggled to make friends and would behave in a certain negative way to try and build friendships with people. The HALT project allowed him to build a genuine relationship with one of the other attendees and he often said how nice it was to have made an ‘actual friend’ as they both shared the same interests in Animal Care.”

The HALT Project is an intensive, two-week programme at the Cheltenham Animal Shelter which is funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). It is designed to teach compassion, respect and responsibility towards both animals and people. It is the only one of its kind in the country and one of 78 organisations out of a record 167 who successfully applied for support to the Commissioner’s Fund this year.



For an application form, go to www.gloucestershire-pcc.gov.uk/funding-opportunities

It is also one of more than 350 projects supported by the Commissioner’s Fund since its launch in 2012 and is also part of his “A compassionate approach” in the Police and Crime Plan.

Pawsnote: After a visit to Hartpury College as part of the HALT course, Aaron is now studying for a certificate in Animal Care with the aim of becoming a police dog handler.

To see other projects we have funded please go to

www.gloucestershire-pcc.gov.uk/what-the-pcc-has-done-for-gloucestershire/local-projects-weve-supported/

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