

North Somerset Council

12 January 2021

Report on the Police and Crime Panel

Councillor Roz Willis

Covid Breaches

To date, at the time of the report in early December, numbers are as follows:
353 breaches out of which 41 fixed penalties issued
80 warnings issued by officers (18 to 24yrs largest number)

Officers are delivering extra patrols at the known hotspots across the force area ie those large gatherings, protests, illegal music events etc that are known to be happening. Officers are working closely with all these known areas and groups to try and solve the breaches before it happens again.

Cyber Crime

Avon and Somerset are also concerned at the cyber/social media issues around the “myths” about any Covid vaccine that are filling Facebook etc. The force has asked that all LA elected members are pro-active in getting the correct messages out.

VRU Violence Reduction Unit

The annual report is out January 2021. This unit started in 2019, and is proving its worth, but at the time of my report they still have no idea if being funded for 2021.

Protect Officers

A&S are the only force who have “Protect “ officers. This is in place to protect victims of fraud. The message is “take 5 minutes” to stop and take a breath and think clearly whilst being pressured on the phone from fraudsters, think before answering any questions. This as we know is an important message for everyone but especially for those who are alone or vulnerable.

Mental Health

S136 is the legal power to detain under the Mental Health Act. Work continues in Partnership with both BNSSG (clinical commissioning group) and AWP (Avon Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership) to deliver services within the force area, in Police call centre, street triage and in custody suites. All are benefiting from the above working. BNSSG finance 2 Specialist nurse posts who provide cover from 10am to 22hrs. Because of Covid capacity the transfer by ambulance for any s136 is not always possible so officers are back to transporting by police cars again as in the past, which is not best practice for the officers, and definitely distressing for victims of s136 when trying to take someone to a place of safety. Since the pandemic, numbers of s136 cases are up by about 33%, and as we know our places of safety beds are low in number, 5 only across the force area. Nothing's changed even though pressures are growing, but work is happening on putting in place a sanctuary. This is with some urgency and I hope to see this soon.

Draft Budget

Discussion has taken place on the budget and by the time you read this report

settlement figures may well be out! The PCC (Police and Crime Commissioner) is out to consultation with the public on any extra rise to the precept. Scenarios looked at so far are:

2% freeze but deficit

5% further cuts but balance

6.6% £15 per band D will give opportunity for 70 officer increase

Finally violence against officers has seen a big increase whilst in this pandemic, some is s136 related but majority is crime related

Roz Willis