North Somerset Council

REPORT TO THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES BOARD

DATE OF MEETING: 30 JANUARY 2017

SUBJECT OF REPORT: POLICE AND CRIME FUNDING FROM THE AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

TOWN OR PARISH: ALL

OFFICER/MEMBER PRESENTING: PAUL MORRIS, HEAD OF PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT AND HR, NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL

KEY DECISION: N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) That the Board notes and considers the changes to the funding currently provided to the North Somerset Community Safety Partnership and Youth Offending Service Management Board by the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner.

(2) That the Board agrees the overall approach to be taken to these changes:

   i. To retain the current overall funding priorities
   ii. To retain the current proportions of ‘Community Safety’ and ‘Youth Offending’ funding within the new grant arrangements and apply the overall 10% reduction to both elements
   iii. To delegate the detailed allocation of funding to relevant officers who are also Board members. Delegation for the ‘Community Safety’ element to be to the Council’s Head of Performance Improvement and HR (in consultation with the Avon and Somerset Constabulary representative) and delegation for the ‘Youth Offending’ element to be to the Chair of the Youth Offending Service Management Board.
   iv. To confirm that this funding should continue to be paid to North Somerset Council on behalf of the People and Communities Board (the People and Communities Board fulfils the role of Community Safety Partnership in North Somerset).

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

This report sets out changes to the grant funding which the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner currently provides to support the work of the North Somerset Community Safety Partnership and the North Somerset Youth Offending Service. These changes will be implemented from the 2017/18 financial year.

The Board is asked to consider and agree a response to managing these changes, with a recommended approach set out in the report.
2. POLICY

The Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner has launched a new Police and Crime Plan for her current term of office. This new plan includes the following priorities:

- **Protect the most vulnerable from harm** – acting as a fierce advocate for victims and ensuring the most vulnerable are protected
- **Strengthen and improve your local policing teams** – ensuring the police are accessible and tackle the crime that matters most to you
- **Ensure Avon & Somerset Constabulary has the right people, right equipment, right culture** – working with the Chief Constable focusing on supporting the representative workforce programme, providing suitable equipment and technology for officers and staff, developing leadership capability to embed a positive culture and to reform how complaints are handled
- **Work together effectively with other police forces and key partner agencies to provide better services to local people** - working with other Constabulary and other public sector partners to share estates and enabling services and making savings for reinvestment in priority areas; and transform the criminal justice system locally into a criminal justice service.

The North Somerset People and Communities Board is currently developing a new People and Communities Strategy 2017-2020. The draft strategy has recently been consulted upon and contains a Priority Theme **Enabling communities to thrive: enable people to live safe, healthy and independent lives.** The consultation draft identifies the following Community Safety issues to be addressed within this theme:

- Crime types, locations and victims where there are particular concerns – there are areas of North Somerset with high levels of deprivation which also record above average crime rates and the risk of becoming a victim of crime is not evenly distributed across the population
- Supporting vulnerable victims – personally targeted offences such as domestic and sexual abuse, exploitation and hate crime remain substantially under-reported. These areas of ‘hidden harm’ present significant safeguarding risks to vulnerable victims. Domestic abuse has the highest repeat victimisation rate of any crime
- Meeting the needs of communities (particularly new and expanding communities) by increasing community resilience

The consultation draft also includes a Priority Theme **Enabling the best start in life: enabling children and young people to thrive and develop skills to lead healthy lives and achieve their full potential.** This theme highlights the need to work particularly with the most vulnerable young people and those with the most complex needs.

3. DETAILS

3.1 Since the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners in 2012, the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner has provided a Community Safety Grant and a Youth Offending Service Grant to Local Authority areas. In 2016/17, the North Somerset Community Safety Grant is £68,975. The Youth Offending Grant is £27,178.
3.2 The Community Safety Grant 2016/17 is being spent primarily (£43K) as a contribution to the pooled budget with North Somerset Council and North Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group to fund domestic abuse support services including the IDVA service for high risk victims. The remaining funding is allocated to Somerset and Avon Rape and Sexual Abuse Support, night-time economy projects and the Bournville/Oldmixon One Team. This spend profile (particularly the contribution to domestic and sexual abuse services) is similar to a number of other Avon and Somerset Local Authority areas. There is the potential to reduce the funding requirement from these services on the PCC grant through a bid to the Home Office Violence Against Women and Girls Transformation Fund which has recently been submitted.

3.3 The Youth Offending Grant is currently being used to support staffing costs in the Young People’s Substance Advice Service and in the Youth Inclusion Support Project. These work areas are also open to potential further change as the Government response to the Taylor Review of the Youth Justice System references the intention to work with local authorities to explore how local areas can be given greater flexibility to improve youth justice services.

3.4 Following the development of a Police and Crime Plan for the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner’s new term of office (as set out above), the PCC is investing in some emerging areas of demand identified in Avon & Somerset as a whole. These are linked to Child Sexual Exploitation and Mental Health Triage services. This is in line with the new Police and Crime Plan priority to ‘protect the most vulnerable from harm’. However, it has meant that existing spend has been reviewed with an impact on the funding allocated to North Somerset by the PCC.

3.5 The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner consulted on potential changes to existing commissioning arrangements in 2016. Feedback from key partners in North Somerset included highlighting that whilst the proposed investment in emerging priorities is demand-led across Avon and Somerset as a whole and in line with the PCC’s new priority to support the most vulnerable, existing local investment is already focused in this way. For example, much of the North Somerset Community Safety Grant is already invested in support for victims of domestic and sexual abuse.

3.6 The following changes to existing funding allocations in 2017/18 have now been confirmed by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner:

- A single Police and Crime Grant will be awarded to each local authority area. This grant will replace the existing Community Safety and Youth Offending grants and will be paid to the partnership or body nominated by the local area (currently North Somerset Council). The funding for North Somerset in 2017/18 will be £86,538. This represents a 10% reduction (£9,615) against the current combined total of £96,153 (the separate grant values are currently: Community Safety Grant - £68,975 in 2016/17 and Youth Offending grant - £27,178 in 2016/17). This reduction is the lowest level of reduction which the OPCC consulted on as the consultation asked service providers to also consider a potential 20% reduction.
- There is a commitment to provide funding for a three year period (subject to any reductions in central government funding to the PCC). Historically this funding has been provided on an annual basis. This change is intended to facilitate better forward planning.
- This funding is to be allocated at the discretion of the local area, to meet local needs alongside other partner investment in services and to be prioritised in line with the
Police and Crime Plan. This change is intended to provide greater flexibility to local areas to determine how funding is allocated. The requirement to prioritise funding in line with the Police and Crime Plan is broader than in some previous years when there has been a requirement to invest in more narrowly defined issues.

3.7 The People and Communities Board is asked to consider how these changes should be managed and the following recommendations are put forward:

i. **To retain the current overall funding priorities** – as set out in Section 2 of this report, the new Police and Crime Plan and the emerging People and Communities Strategy set out well-aligned community safety priorities and existing spend supports these work areas. It is suggested that 2017/18 spend is prioritised to actions identified in the People and Communities Strategy to support delivery of these priorities. Again, these align well with existing spend. For example domestic and sexual abuse support services are referenced in the consultation draft as is development of the One Team and retention of Purple Flag. There are also references to facilitating positive mental health amongst young people and reducing risky behaviours amongst young people.

ii. **To retain the current split between ‘Community Safety’ and ‘Youth Offending’ funding elements and apply the 10% funding reduction equally to each element** – this means that there will be £62,077 to allocate to community safety activity (against the 2016/17 £68,975). There will be £24,461 for the YOS Management Board to allocate to Youth Offending services (against the 2016/17 £27,178). This is a pragmatic recommendation given the demands on existing services and some of the opportunities (and challenges) which are likely to arise in the coming year (e.g. implementation of new People and Communities Strategy including consideration of delivery mechanisms/structures, Home Office funding bid, Taylor recommendations). The following two years indicative funding from the PCC can be factored into these and other relevant developments during 2017/18.

iii. **To delegate the detailed allocation of funding to relevant officers who are also Board members** – this would allow the fine detail of how to most effectively utilise the funding within the priorities agreed by the board to be dealt with in the most timely manner. Delegation for the ‘Community Safety’ element is suggested to be to the Council’s Head of Performance Improvement and HR (who is responsible for the Council’s Community Safety Team) and in consultation with the Avon and Somerset Constabulary representative. Delegation for the ‘Youth Offending’ element is suggested to be to the Chair of the Youth Offending Service Management Board. All these officers are members of the People and Communities Board.

iv. **To confirm that this funding should continue to be paid to North Somerset Council on behalf of the People and Communities Board** – (the People and Communities Board fulfils the role of Community Safety Partnership in North Somerset) and this is in line with current and established arrangements. The OPCC has asked for confirmation of these arrangements from all Local Authority areas.
4. CONSULTATION

4.1 Consultation on the draft People and Communities Strategy has recently been taking place and is due to be reported back to the People and Communities Board meeting in January. The consultation demonstrated support for the priorities referred to in this report.

4.2 The PCC consulted on the Police and Crime Plan with the priorities included in the Plan and referred to in this report widely endorsed.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

These are set out throughout this report.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

The approach to managing the funding changes set out in the report is designed to manage risk.

7. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Many of the services to which PCC funding is allocated (and to which it is proposed to continue funding) provide support for people with protected characteristics. For example, the majority of domestic abuse support service users are women.

8. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

There is strong alignment between the draft People and Communities Strategy priorities and those set out in the Corporate Plan.

9. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

As contained within the report.

AUTHOR

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