

# Safer in Kent

News from Matthew Scott: Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner

## Community policing and crime prevention to receive significant boost

Community policing and crime prevention will receive a significant boost under budget plans being put forward by Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Matthew Scott.

Kent will have **3,813 police officers by March 2021**, with 181 more being recruited thanks to funding from the Home Office. That compares to 3,787 in March 2010; or 3,181 when Mr Scott took office in 2016.

And Mr Scott is looking to raise money through local council tax to fund dozens more Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and civilian staff too.

Mr Scott said: 'My last [Annual Policing Survey](#) attracted a record number of responses. What I heard loud and clear was residents were prepared to pay a little bit more for additional resources focused on neighbourhood policing, and on preventing crime and anti-social behaviour.'

'With that mandate I am planning to add £10 to the annual bill of an average household, or 83p a month, in order to raise an extra £8.4million for policing in Kent.'

The Chief Constable has told Mr Scott this additional investment would fund:

- **36 new PCSOs**, including 15 dedicated to crime prevention;

- **100 civilian staff** to train and support frontline officers, including more community liaison officers and digital forensics investigators.

- Some of the additional money is required to meet inflationary pressures such as increases to estates and vehicle running costs, and annual pay increases for police officers and staff.

Mr Scott has also required Kent Police to make more than £9million of savings for 2020/21, which the force had already identified.

Where every **£1** of the police budget goes:



- Kent Police pay and overtime **79p**
- Premises costs **6p**
- Transport, supplies and other non-pay costs **14p**
- Support for victims and community safety projects **1p**
- The PCC and his office **less than ½p**

Mr Scott added: 'Kent Police is an outstanding force, and rightly has the support of the public it serves. Last week's crime figures showed our ongoing recruitment is having a positive impact but there is still more to do. This budget plan will allow Kent Police to further increase efforts to tackle county lines, prevent crime in local communities, and give victims an even better service.'

Kent Police Chief Constable Alan Pughsley said: 'I have asked the Commissioner to support a number of policing initiatives that will improve visibility, vulnerability and public contact. I welcome the Commissioner's strong financial support for my operational plans to further improve policing in Kent.'

Currently Kent residents pay the seventh lowest policing precept in the country: £193.15 a year for a Band D home. The PCC's proposal for a 5.2% increase has been voted on and subsequently agreed by the Police and Crime Panel. **The annual contribution for a Band D property in 2020/21 is now set at £203.15.**



Kent Police recruits passing out parade before they join local teams across the county

### Independent Reviewer of Complaints

Are you passionate about helping to uphold high standards in policing, and ensuring that officers and staff adhere to the Code of Ethics?

We are initially looking for someone to work for approximately three days a week, but are flexible as to when and where these hours are taken. However, the ability to work independently, meet strict legal deadlines and manage a caseload is vital.

Legislative changes mean that Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner, and his Office, will now receive appeals from the public when they are unhappy with the outcome of their complaint to Kent Police. We therefore need someone with an analytical mind, with sound judgement who can demonstrate distinct independence from the Police, who can review these cases and come to clear and reasoned judgements.

Full details of the job, pay and recruitment process can be found on the Commissioner's website at: <https://www.kent-pcc.gov.uk/who-we-are/vacancies/>

### What does the PCC do?

- Sets Kent Police's priorities
- Holds the Chief Constable to account
- Decides the budget and council tax
- Commissions services for victims
- Runs a custody visiting scheme
- Works with councils and others to prevent crime

## Engagements across the county

Matthew Scott has been busy meeting residents across North and West Kent recently. In the last few months he has taken time out of his busy schedule to get the views of what policing is really like in their local areas and also to consult them on the council tax precept increase, amongst other matters.

We had the pleasure of speaking to people in Otford Lunch Club, Sainsbury's in Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells; Asda in Swanley and Royal Victoria Place in Tunbridge Wells. Even more recently he has visited County Square and Tesco in Ashford.



## Medway Taskforce launched

On Friday 7 February 2020 the multi-agency led Medway Taskforce was officially launched. The team involves Kent Police, Medway Council and other partners who all have a common goal to tackle crime, prevent violence and safeguard the most vulnerable. Working together under one roof the taskforce have had some early successes through community protection orders, advice given to local residents, safeguarded victims of cuckooing and working on an ongoing fly-tipping prosecution.

The PCC stated, 'While Kent remains a safe place to live, work and visit, communities have become increasingly concerned about reported rises in violent crime'.

'So, in 2018, through my [Violence Reduction Challenge](#), I brought key partners together to scrutinise the statistics and consider our joint response. Kent Police made an early commitment to support the unit with officers funded by my budget decisions. I am delighted to see those officers working closely with our partners to tackle the underlying causes of violent crime'.



## PCC visits tour teaching pupils about online safety



More than 5,000 young people are enjoying a concert-like event across Kent this month which teaches them valuable lessons in online safety.

Matthew Scott funds Amelix to tour schools and talk to pupils about the dangers of 'oversharing' on social media. On Safer Internet Day he saw one of these *Is It Worth It?* tours for himself when he visited Towers School in Ashford.

This year the PCC has also provided Amelix with money to create lessons plans for schools to use in the classroom. Young people are being encouraged to film their own videos warning

siblings about online dangers ahead of an Online Safety Summit in Maidstone next month.

## Violence Reduction Unit up and running

A countywide Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) has been established, aiming to tackle some of the root causes of serious violence using a multi-agency, health-based preventative approach.

- Identify the major causes of violence in Kent and Medway.
- Co-ordinate activity across Kent and Medway to tackle violence and deliver long-term reductions

in violent crime.

- Involve communities in the work of the VRU and build their capacity to deliver the best long-term solutions to reduce violent crime in public spaces.

Its work is being overseen by a core panel which includes senior representatives of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent, Kent Police, Medway Council, Kent County Council (KCC), Kent's NHS commission-

ing groups, Public Health England, Kent Association of Head Teachers and Kent Fire and Rescue Service.

To understand how to best achieve the VRU's goals, a partnership-informed problem profile is being drawn up to truly understand the issues underlying violent crime in our county.



## Commissioner's Sport Relief Challenge

Next month, Matthew Scott will dust off his goalkeeping gloves and go up against various teams to save as many shots as possible, in the name of charity.

In March, the Commissioner will host a Sport Relief Volley Challenge to raise money for vulnerable children across the globe. Aiming to win the challenge cup and bragging rights will be teams of student PCs, Cadets, Kent Police Recreation Association, the Force Control Room and Street Soccer Foundation, amongst others. It would be much appreciated if you could help us raise as much as possible by parting with any spare change: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/kent>



I'm happy to help you or answer questions—please do get in touch with me using the details below

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