

Police and Crime Panel O&S update – March 2025

Gloucestershire Serious Violence Prevention – 5 year strategy 2024 - 2029

The last decade has shown a rise in many areas of serious violence across England and Wales especially Weapon Enabled Crime & Domestic Abuse.

Serious Violence Duty (SVD) places a legal obligation on public sector organisations, such as local councils, Youth Justice Service, prison, probation and other relevant bodies, to work closer together with the support of the police and crime commissioner. The aim is to tackle the root causes of crime and disorder that affect our quality of life, such as male violence against women and girls, serious organised crime and anti-social behaviour to prevent unnecessary deaths.

It also stresses the importance of early intervention to stop young people from being drawn into serious violence like knife crime. The grant funding will be used effectively to engage young people to help them feel safer in public spaces and to avoid the risks of bad advice associated with violence and crime.

In Gloucestershire, senior stakeholders have been working together over the past 12 months to create an approach that is relevant, and the OPCC has been given the mandate to embed the SVD on behalf of the specified authorities.

Gloucestershire Definition of Serious Violence: Intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group, or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, trauma or controlling deprivation.

Gloucestershire's four strategic priorities are:

- Reducing the harm caused by Serious & Organised Crime (SOC)
 - This includes Urban Street Gangs (USG's) County Lines, Organised Crime Groups (OCG's) Supplying Class A Drugs, Child Sexual and Criminal Exploitation (CSCE) Illegal Weapons, Modern Day Slavery.
- Reducing the harm caused by Violence & Intimidation Against Women & Girls (VIAWG)
 - This includes Domestic Abuse, Sexual Violence, Stalking & Harassment, Rape, Coercive Control.
- Reducing ASB that can present a multitude of abhorrent behaviours, many of these are linked to Hate Crimes
- Supporting our Communities to Build Resilience

The Home Office have mandated three key preventative reduction measures as a minimum:

- Homicide rates
- Hospital admissions for knife/ sharp object assaults
- Police recorded knife crime

As part of the force's serious violence prevention strategy, Gloucestershire Police are promoting educational theatre performances for secondary schools about the dangers of knife crime and involvement in gangs. It was reported that sadly 14-16 year old boys are most at risk. So far 28 schools in the county have engaged with the programme including 8 schools in Cheltenham.

Further engagement with schools is supporting young children from year groups 5 and 6 to visit to Gloucestershire's [SkillZONE](#), an interactive life skills village where children can learn how to keep themselves safe at home and in their communities. Educational VR headsets are also being offered to older teenagers to provide immersive learning experiences.

The strategy implements a **Theory of Change** that takes the desired strategic outcomes of an organisation and works backwards to map the processes and activities which will deliver on those outcomes. There is also a focus on seeking **Lived Experiences**, a critical part of creating and implementing a Public Health Approach to Serious Violence prevention.

Crime data dashboards are now shared with key strategic partners. Unhelpfully, even though this insight is extremely useful the police ward areas do not match local authority ward areas providing unnecessary confusion. This data management is also creating challenges for the force so suggested this is resolved with a key provided to districts in the meantime.

[Link to full strategy](#)

Results of the OPCC/Constabulary Staff Survey 2024

Staff surveys are commonly used in the private sector but this was not the case for Gloucestershire Constabulary / OPCC until the Commissioner requested a survey last year. I supported the Commissioner in bringing this forward however the outcomes of the staff survey are alarming, identifying low staff morale and a need for immediate action.

- 20.4% is confident my ideas and suggestions will be listened to by the organisation
- 13.4 feel confident in the mechanisms for providing feedback to all levels
- 9.8% feel confident the organisation learns from feedback and is open to change
- 25.6% of respondents said that visibility of the OPCC and PCC met their expectations

Free text responses provided useful feedback on the perception and the role of the OPCC versus the role of the PCC.

Examples of staff quotes relating to common themes:

“Teams within the force appear to be stretched far too thinly, some individuals within teams are taking on far more than others”

“I also feel that the organisation fails to defend itself or its staff from criticism, or to sing its own praises. Seeing the OPCC or COG member's support, praise and defend its staff against undue criticism would instil a far greater public confidence in the organisation than the current stance”

[we need] Clear and transparent communication from senior leadership regarding changes and decisions made.

Going forward the staff survey will be issued annually.

[Link to survey results](#)

Commissioner's Police and Crime Prevention Plan for 2025/29

The Police and Crime Prevention Plan focuses on Gloucestershire's priorities but must also highlight and reflect on the national requirements, measures and responsibilities:

- Strategic policing requirements
- National strategies
- National crime and policing measures
- Statutory responsibilities

Locally the commissioner also commits to:

- Focusing on the 'voice of the child', ensuring children and young people are at the heart of what we do
- Promote and embed early intervention and prevention
- Ensuring commissioned services meet the needs of young people, and we strengthen the link with youth justice partners and education
- Understanding and addressing disproportionality in the Criminal Justice System (CJS)
- Focusing on diversion from criminality and anti-social behaviour with enforcement as the last resort only (wherever possible)
- Stopping the 'adultification' of young people
- Improve links between the Police and Crime Prevention Plan and Gloucestershire's Youth Justice Plan

The Commissioners six priorities address the areas that are critical for Gloucestershire

1. Creating safer communities
2. Tackling violence against women and girls (VAWG)
3. Strengthening your Constabulary
4. Targeting the causes of crime
5. Supporting victims and reducing reoffending
6. Improving trust and confidence in policing

The [Police and Crime Prevention Plan 2025 – 2029](#) will come into effect on 1st April 2025