

Briefing Note: Requests for Funding from Avon and Somerset Police to the PCC – July 2026

Purpose. This briefing clarifies the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner's (OPCC) approach to funding requests from Avon and Somerset Police. It is intended to support a consistent understanding of the respective roles and responsibilities of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and the Constabulary in relation to funding and commissioning.

Key Message. The PCC is not a general source of additional funding for day-to-day policing activities, or activities that support day-to-day policing activities. The overwhelming majority of funding received by the PCC is already allocated either:

- To support the approved policing budget for Avon and Somerset Police;
- To meet statutory and contractual commitments;
- To commission services aligned to the Police and Crime Plan; or
- To fund the operation of the OPCC itself.

There is therefore very limited discretionary funding available to respond to ad hoc requests. Requests for routine operational costs, minor purchases, conference expenses, training-related expenditure, catering, equipment, local initiatives, or other activities that sit within normal policing responsibilities should ordinarily be met from existing Constabulary budgets.

The PCC's Role. The PCC's statutory role is to set strategic priorities through the Police and Crime Plan, hold the Chief Constable to account, and commission services that improve outcomes for victims, communities and the wider criminal justice system.

The OPCC's Commissioning Strategy makes clear that commissioning activity should:

- Be driven by identified need and evidence;
- Deliver against the Police and Crime Plan;
- Demonstrate value for money;
- Be planned and prioritised in advance;
- Be undertaken through transparent and proportionate decision-making processes.

The OPCC's approach is therefore strategic rather than reactive. Funding is generally allocated through established commissioning, grant-making or partnership arrangements rather than through individual requests received during the financial year.

[\[avonandsom...pcc.gov.uk\]](#), [\[avonandsom...pcc.gov.uk\]](#)

Existing Commitments. The OPCC commits significant financial resources every year through commissioned and co-commissioned services, including:

- Victim support services;
- Domestic abuse and sexual violence services;
- Violence reduction activity;
- Community Safety Partnership grants (the Police and Crime grant);
- Mental health triage;
- Appropriate Adult services;
- Diversionary and preventative programmes;
- Other services funded through Home Office, Ministry of Justice and partnership funding streams. [\[avonandsom...pcc.gov.uk\]](#)

Many of these funding streams are either:

- Legally prescribed;

- Ringfenced by central government;
- Subject to specific grant conditions;
- Committed through multi-year contracts; or
- Allocated following formal commissioning processes. [\[avonandsom...pcc.gov.uk\]](#), [\[avonandsom...pcc.gov.uk\]](#)

As a result, there is little unallocated funding available to support additional requests outside these arrangements, as commissioning budgets are already committed.

PCC Reserves. The PCC holds reserves for prudent financial management, risk management, future liabilities, transformation activity and other strategic purposes. Reserves are not maintained to fund:

- Small-scale operational requests;
- Routine expenditure;
- Budget overspends;
- Project costs that should properly be met from force budgets.

Any request seeking support from PCC reserves would be expected to demonstrate:

- Strategic significance;
- Clear alignment with Police and Crime Plan priorities;
- Benefit beyond business-as-usual activity;
- Why existing force budgets cannot reasonably accommodate the expenditure;
- A compelling case for PCC involvement.

Such proposals should be considered and supported through the appropriate Constabulary governance arrangements, normally via the Chief Officer Group, before being submitted to the PCC for consideration.

Constabulary Funding Position. Avon and Somerset Police receive a substantial annual policing budget through the funding settlement agreed by the PCC. The purpose of this funding is to enable the Chief Constable to discharge their operational responsibilities and to manage the associated costs of policing. The PCC therefore expects normal operational expenditure, including unforeseen but routine budget pressures, to be managed through the Constabulary's existing financial arrangements and internal governance processes. The existence of PCC funding or reserves should not be interpreted as an alternative source of funding for expenditure that falls within the Constabulary's operational remit.

What the PCC Will Not Normally Fund. The PCC would not normally expect to receive requests for expenditure that should reasonably be met from Constabulary budgets. Examples of activities or projects that would normally attract PCC funding include:

- Conference lunches and refreshments.
- Training event catering.
- Room hire for internal force events.
- Team development days.
- Conference attendance costs.
- Small-scale equipment purchases.
- Operational materials.
- Local project costs that sit within existing policing responsibilities.
- Routine staff welfare or engagement activities.
- Minor one-off expenditure requests.

Whilst individual requests may be relatively small in value, approving such requests would create an expectation and precedent that is not sustainable or consistent with the PCC's strategic commissioning role.

Commissioned Services and Grant Funding. Where funding is available through the OPCC, it is normally distributed through formal commissioning or grant processes. The OPCC commissions services according to identified need and strategic priorities rather than in response to individual requests. [\[avonandsom...pcc.gov.uk\]](http://avonandsom...pcc.gov.uk)

Details of current commissioned services are published on the OPCC website and demonstrate the significant level of funding already committed to victims, prevention, diversion, community safety and partnership services. [\[avonandsom...pcc.gov.uk\]](http://avonandsom...pcc.gov.uk) The fact that a proposal is worthwhile does not necessarily mean it is eligible for PCC funding.

Future Community Crime Prevention Fund. The OPCC is developing a new small grants programme, to be delivered through the two Community Foundations across Avon and Somerset (Quartet Foundation and the Somerset Community Foundation). The scheme is expected to support community and voluntary sector organisations delivering projects that:

- Prevent crime and antisocial behaviour;
- Support victims;
- Strengthen communities;
- Address priorities within the Police and Crime Plan.

The fund is designed primarily for VCSE organisations and community groups and is expected to offer grants of approximately £1,000 to £10,000 for preventative community activity. Funding will be targeted at projects demonstrating a clear contribution to crime prevention and community safety. The scheme is not intended to replace normal police budgeting arrangements and would not ordinarily be expected to fund operational policing activity, routine force expenditure, conferences, training events or other similar activities.

Before Submitting a Funding Request to the PCC. Constabulary departments should consider the following questions:

1. Is this a normal operational policing cost?
2. Can this be met from an existing ASP budget and is there a relevant funding route?
3. Is this already covered through an existing OPCC commissioned service?
4. Is there a national, partnership or external grant opportunity available?
5. Is the proposal genuinely strategic and exceptional rather than routine?
6. Has the proposal been considered through ASP governance arrangements?

If the answer to Questions 1 or 2 is "yes", the expectation will be that the expenditure is met from within existing Constabulary resources.

Conclusion. The PCC remains committed to supporting policing, commissioning effective services, and investing in initiatives that deliver the priorities of the Police and Crime Plan. Limited discretionary funding must, however, be focused on strategic priorities and activities that provide clear public benefit. Routine operational costs, purchases, and day-to-day expenditure remain the responsibility of the Constabulary. The PCC retains a small reserve fund for strategic, one-off opportunities. While not publicly advertised, Chief Officers may put forward proposals where there is potential for significant impact, such as pilots or proof-of-concept projects. Such requests are expected to be exceptional and must align with the one-off nature of reserve funding.