

Response to Cllr Val Bryant

I'd like to thank Cllr Bryant for her question.

On my election in May, I inherited a budget which was already overspending due to the pressures on police officer pay and overtime, as well as other cost pressures, some of which were unforeseen.

As a result, some of the PCC grants and commissioning budget has had to be used to offset these overspends and minimise the impact on the already low level of reserves. This is why I have not been able to run a significant grants process this year.

Spending that has taken place has focused on tackling violence against women and girls, especially through the Chrysalis programme where we top up Home Office funding to intervene with perpetrators of domestic abuse. I am pleased to be able to update the Panel that I have recently secured a continuation of Home Office funding for 2025/26 and am currently working to achieve additional contributions from partners, as well as making provision from my budget. I am also looking at whether Chrysalis can be expanded to include stalking perpetrators in addition to DA.

I am however pleased to advise the Panel that this month I will be inviting applications for a new Community Safety Fund grant scheme ahead of the new financial year. The three priority areas for this will be:

- Preventing crime and anti-social behaviour
- Tackling violence against women and girls
- Improving young people's safety

I look forward to seeing the applications for this in due course.

Subject to the outcome of this evening's meeting, I will also be considering my broader commissioning plans for 2025/26 to align with the priorities in the Police & Crime Plan.