

Safer in Kent

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

Working differently during lockdown

Matthew Scott held the Chief Constable to account virtually to observe social distancing

The Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Scott has sought assurance from Kent Police's Chief Constable that the force is ready to help those victims of domestic abuse who are seeking support as lockdown eases.

Mr Scott, who this month [held his quarterly Performance and Delivery Board meeting virtually in order to adhere to social distancing](#), said: 'There have been concerns about whether we have known the true level of domestic abuse during the lockdown period.

'We may see further demand now that people are allowed to visit more people and they access services.'

Asked whether the force had enough resources to deal with demand, the Chief Constable explained that: 'Already in the last week we have started to see a change. Domestic abuse as a proportion of our calls for service has gone from 6% or 11% a couple of weeks ago to about 30% or 40% - a big increase - as more people have more flexibility to come out of their households.

'But we have the right resources available to deal with that because demand is being dealt with in a really efficient and effective way. Live chat is the best example I can give of that. Making contact with other victims that way, in line with their needs



Matthew Scott (bottom right) and his staff ask questions of the Chief Constable (top left) during his Performance and Delivery Board

and wishes, means officers have more time to get out to and deal with domestic abuse incidents that we absolutely need to get to.'

Other than domestic abuse, the only other area Kent Police has experienced a large increase in in recent weeks has been in reports of anti-social behaviour.

Chief Constable Pughsley said the vast majority of these had been linked to alleged breaches of the Government's stay at home instructions.

Mr Scott added: 'Well done to Kent Police officers, staff and volunteers for the incredible job they've done in stepping up to the challenge.'

Online Panel Event: Mental Health during COVID-19

Thursday 25 June at Midday

www.facebook.com/MatthewScottPCC



Matthew Scott, Kent's PCC, will be joined by Nav Mirza of Dads Unlimited, Anna McGovern, Chair of Medway Youth Council and Adam Colthorpe of South Kent Mind.

Submit questions on the day or in advance
via haveyoursay@kent.police.uk

What does the PCC do?

- Sets Kent Police's priorities
- Holds the Chief Constable to account
- Decides the budget and sets the policing part of your council tax
- Commissions services for victims
- Runs a custody visiting scheme
- Works with councils and others to prevent crime
- Leads on mental health work for the national Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC)

Whoever you are, you are not alone

Police and Crime Commissioners are responsible for handing money over to local charities and services who help support victims of crime.

Some of the support work these charities

would normally do, like offering face-to-face counselling, has been impacted by lockdown but they have adapted to maintain services wherever possible.

Matthew Scott's office

worked with some of those providers to create a video encouraging victims of domestic abuse to seek help if they need it.

You can [watch the video now on YouTube](#).



Engagement with Kent's diverse communities continues despite Covid-19

Thank you to everyone who joined Mr Scott last week for a virtual Q&A using the video calling platform Zoom (*pictured right*).

Matthew Scott and around a dozen members of the community talked about a number of different local and national issues, including gang-related crime, support for victims, visible policing, Kent Police training, and mental health.



PCC and the attendees to talk about how they are feeling about the Covid-19 lockdown and how they

are finding ways to keep positive and occupied in such a difficult time.

More virtual engagement are being planned for the near future, including a Mental Health and Covid-19 themed event on Thursday 25 June from 12noon.

You can submit a question to the panel in advance of the event by emailing: haveyoursay@kent.police.uk

It was also an opportunity for the

Welfare checks on custody cells now being conducted over the internet

Volunteers who normally make unannounced visits to custody suites to ensure detainees are being properly looked after, have taken to using technology instead in the wake of the Covid-19 outbreak.

Kent's Independent Custody Visitors

(ICVs) are making video calls to talk to people held in police cells, in order to adhere to social distancing rules.

Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Scott said: 'All PCCs have a duty to operate an ICV scheme. It is one way in which we can hold police forces to

account on behalf the public.

'Of course, the current lockdown makes it difficult for our volunteers to visit police stations to check on detainees' welfare in person, so my office has worked with Kent Police to devise an alternative to help keep people safe.'

A message from your Police and Crime Commissioner, Matthew Scott:

It is vitally important that everyone stays at home to save lives where possible, but Covid-19 has not prevented my office from continuing its vital work.

I have been having regular remote discussions with the Chief Constable and other senior representatives of Kent Po-

lice; my commissioning team has been ensuring services for victims of crime continue to be available and accessible; and residents' casework continues to be handled by phone and email.

Myself and my office are also engaging with local residents about different issues, such as crime,



policing, mental health amongst other topics.

Furthermore, my team

are engaging and informing me on national work regarding mental health and procurement matters.

We all look forward to things returning to normal but, until then, my team and I are still here to serve you as Kent residents – just in a slightly different way.

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

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