

Bridgwater LCN meeting notes
Monday 2nd March 2026
Online via Teams

Attendees:

Inspector Charmaine Dyne
Clare Moody – Police and Crime Commissioner for Avon and Somerset
Cllr Hilary Bruce
Cllr Leigh Redman
Suzy Fellows – Citizens Advice
Daniel Bell - Thrive
Lilly Keeley Watts – SALC
Sally Diaz – Puriton PC
Tracey Mock – On Your Bike
Emma Plummer – Somerset Council
Gill Keniston-Goble – LCN Link Officer
Chris Booth – LCN Link Officer (supporting various areas incl. Bridgwater & Exmoor)

Apologies:

Kate Franklin	Nicola Hale
Jane Irons	Nick Cooper
Gary Perrott	Shona Stone
Cllr Kathy Pearce	Jon Clarey
Cllr Diogo Rodrigues	Helen Phillips

1. Welcome and Introductions

Gill welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited introductions.

Apologies were noted.

2. Notes of the Last Meeting & Matters Arising

No matters arising were raised. The meeting moved on to the main presentation.

3. Avon & Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner

3.1 Insp Charmaine Dyne (Neighbourhood Policing)

Charmaine delivered an overview of the Bridgwater policing area and provided context about team structures and crime patterns.

Key points:

- The neighbourhood area for Bridgwater extends beyond LCN boundaries.
- Local policing team includes:
 - Neighbourhood Inspector (Charmaine)
 - Newly appointed Sergeant (Darrell Screech)
 - Long-serving PCSO Supervisor (Laura Bray)
 - Sergeant covering Hinkley, whose work spans across Bridgwater.

- Beat teams consist of:
 - 6 beat managers
 - 10 PCSOs
 - Additional Hinkley-focused officers

Finding your beat manager:

Residents can use the Avon & Somerset Police website to enter their postcode and locate their assigned officer— this route is more reliable than printed posters.

Crime statistics overview:

- Data shared covering two 12-month periods; the powerpoint is attached.
- Notable trends:
 - Increase in arson/criminal damage, weapons offences (+71), and theft (+159 / ~10% rise).
 - Reduction in burglary and drug offences.
 - Fraud cases have increased.
- Crime heat maps show expected concentrations in central Bridgwater.
- Top reported crime locations are predominantly retail premises (retail crime/shoplifting is a major theme).
- Up-to-date local crime data can be found on the police.uk website, with the ability to drill down to neighbourhood level.
- Neighbourhood teams carried out 166 engagement activities over January–February (about 18 activities per week), including school/college engagement, beat surgeries, and community meetings.
- Recent initiatives included the Winter Streets initiative (linked to the neighbourhood guarantee), increased patrols, work using Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) for children, Community Protection Warnings/Notices (CPWs) for persistent shoplifters, and a civil injunction relating to a child causing harm.
- Low-value offences may go unreported because the reporting and evidence-preparation burden can outweigh the monetary loss; police encouraged reporting so repeat offenders can be identified and tackled.

3.2 Police and Crime Commissioner Clare Moody – Future of the PCC Role

Clare Moody (Police and Crime Commissioner) described her role as strategic oversight/governance (not operational), including budget responsibilities and shaping force-wide priorities.

- Force changes mentioned: additional neighbourhood capacity (officers moved into neighbourhood tasking teams) and a geographic operating model bringing neighbourhood and response together to use intelligence and resources more effectively.
- Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) was discussed as a significant portion of reported crime (stated as well over 20%). Avon and Somerset's work on Operation Soteria/Project Bluestone was highlighted, along with a domestic abuse improvement programme referred to as "Bright Light".
- The role of PCC will be abolished in May 2028, aligning with the end of Clare's term.
- Replaced by a Policing and Crime Board, comprising:
 - 5 local authority leaders
 - The West of England Mayor (Helen Godwin)

- 2 independent members
- A new Policing and Crime Lead will be appointed to oversee governance, supported by Clare’s existing team.
- Although government prefers a deputy mayor model, this will not be implemented in Avon & Somerset at this stage.
- Draft legislation expected June–July 2026, followed by consultations and development work.
- Clare emphasised she has two years to deliver key projects, including the Bright Light programme. Project Bright Light is an action research project funded by the Avon and Somerset PCC aimed at radically improving the police response to domestic violence. It sits alongside their work around VAWG (Violence Against Women and Girls)

3.3 Question and Answers

Q: Where can residents/businesses find up-to-date crime data for their local area?

A: Use the police.uk website to access current crime data and drill down into local areas for more detail.

Q: (Earlier reference) How much of “violence against the person” is related to Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)?

A: VAWG-related offences were stated to account for well over 20% of reported crime in the area.

Q: Is support available for parents when a child is put forward for an Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC), similar to support offered when ASBOs were used?

A: Support depends on circumstances and risk. Police complete safeguarding referrals where appropriate and share information with relevant partners (parents, schools, and—when thresholds are met—children’s social care). A risk-assessment approach (described as a “blue/red/amber/green” process) helps decide what is shared. For concerns about exploitation or youth violence, an Early Intervention Team identifies at-risk children early and coordinates with partner agencies; referrals/signposting may include mentoring/sport-based support (e.g., SASP), domestic abuse services, and Somerset Drug and Alcohol Services. The antisocial behaviour team also uses ABCs to address behaviour and support parents/children.

Further questions were raised about:

- Links with adult social care and safeguarding boards
- Integration with domestic abuse services
- Ensuring Bright Light is embedded within wider safeguarding practice

Clare confirmed:

- Bright Light is still in development but partnerships with safeguarding boards, victim services, and local authorities are central.
- Work is underway to map safeguarding provision across the area to improve consistency and visibility.

No further questions were raised.

Gill thanked Clare and Charmaine for their contributions and acknowledged the scale of upcoming changes.

4. Updates from Working Groups

Active Travel

No update was available.

5. News and Updates from the Room

SALC Community Health & Wellbeing Programme – Update (Lilly Keeley Watts)

A small grants pot is available for small towns and parishes in Somerset.

Aim: reach communities with lower engagement levels.

Support also available for:

Community engagement

Health and wellbeing initiatives

Details are included in the programme's newsletter.

Somerset Libraries – National Year of Reading

Somerset is participating in the **National Year of Reading**.

A launch event took place at Bridgwater Arts Centre.

Promotional short films have been created to encourage:

Library membership

Use of health support, employability resources, and children's clubs

The link for the promotional films is [Showcase - Glass Box](#)

No further updates were offered.

6. Any Other Business

No additional items were raised.

7. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday, 16 June 2026 – UCS Bridgwater College, Bristol Road

This will be a face-to-face annual celebration meeting, including refreshments.