

CAMBRIDGESHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL	Agenda Item No. 4
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Report of Chief Executive, Cambridgeshire Police Authority

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OVERVIEW OF PAST WORK OF CAMBRIDGESHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide an overview of progress made by the Authority and Constabulary on key issues and topics.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Panel is asked to note the report as a useful summary across a range of business areas.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 3.1 To support the effective exercise of the functions of the Police and Crime Panel by providing a summary of key policing priorities and community safety issues in Cambridgeshire.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 As identified in a variety of previous reports to Police Authority meetings held in public since the announcement of the Government's Spending Review more than two years ago, the Authority and Constabulary have progressed work on a range of business areas with the aim of ensuring the budget is managed efficiently and effectively while keeping people safe. This is the overriding principle by which all business has been delivered historically.
- 4.2 The Authority and Constabulary strategy has focused, and continues to focus on five key priority areas, identified in the Local Policing Plan. This report aims to provide an update in line with the broad headings of the Plan. Further information can be found in the Constabulary's Annual Report 2011-12, the Local Policing Plan 2012-15 and previous reports for the full Police Authority, Scrutiny Committee and Finance and Resources Committee which can be found on the Police Authority website.
- 4.3 The areas of work below are by no means exhaustive but are intended to provide a snapshot of the key issues the Authority and Constabulary have been focusing resources on at a strategic level. The issues outlined in this paper were considered by the Full Police Authority on 1 October.

5. KEY ISSUES

5.1 Delivering policing within the available budget

- 5.1.1 Historically the Authority has been poorly funded via the various government grant mechanisms. Funding has not kept pace with population growth and the 'damping' arrangements (whereby funding is removed to assist authorities below the funding 'floor') have disadvantaged the Authority. Despite poor funding, Cambridgeshire continues to punch above its weight.

5.1.2 Operation ReDesign: In response to the Government's Spending Review and in close consultation with the Police Authority, the Chief Constable immediately embarked on a major Force restructuring programme. Operation ReDesign commenced in late 2010 and the new structure was launched in April this year. The aim of the programme was to radically re-think how services could be provided, with a focus on officers serving the needs of local communities and working more closely in partnership with local agencies. It was decided not to simply rework the past, but to start again and design a new policing model.

5.1.3 The new force structure went live in April this year. Operation ReDesign saw the three previous Basic Command Units abolished in favour of six district areas in line with local authority boundaries. The aim of the new structure is to allow officers to work more closely with partner agencies and deliver a more locally-focused policing service. Each area has a team of officers and staff performing neighbourhood policing, response and local crime investigation. The Authority and the Chief Constable have, thus far, been able to honour their promise to maintain the number of officers at constable rank in the force (1,011) and the number of officers (all ranks) engaged in Local Policing (nearly 1,000). The savings from Operation ReDesign totalled £4m.

5.1.4 Collaboration: It was recognised that in order to realise the savings required to balance the budget in 2015/16 whilst maintaining operational resilience the Authority and Constabulary needed to explore further opportunities for collaboration. Following a consideration of the options in 2011 a memorandum of understanding was signed creating a Strategic Policing Alliance with Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. To date, five units have been collaborated across Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire, as part of a move that anticipates savings across the three forces of £20m over the Medium Term Financial Plan period: Professional Standards Unit; Procurement Department; Scientific Services Unit; Armed Policing Unit; and Major Crime Unit. Plans to extend the collaboration are under way for the following functions: Dog Unit; Civil Contingencies and Public Order Planning Unit; Counter Terrorism and Domestic Extremism Unit; Roads Policing Unit; Pensions Administration Unit; Firearms Licensing Department; Graphics and Print Department; and Organisational Support.

5.2 **Maintaining Local Police Performance**

5.2.1 Engagement: The importance of ensuring effective engagement with the public is recognised by all concerned. This was the approach needed to respond to the changing organisational, partnership and technological environment. As part of Operation ReDesign, an engagement project was established in April 2011 to consider the strategic direction and implementation of Force and Police Authority engagement and communication. The result of this work was a Joint Engagement Strategy, which received final endorsement by the Authority in June 2012.

5.2.2 The strategy aims: to strengthen the position of Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Police Authority (and its successor policing body) as listening, predictive and responsive organisations in line with the Local Policing Plan priorities in order to contribute towards increased confidence and satisfaction by local communities and other stakeholders. The strategy and accompanying interim guidance has been embraced by the area commanders and heads of department. The project board continues to meet and work on the delivery of the plan continues and is reported in more detail at agenda item 11.

5.2.3 Restorative Justice (RJ): In the drive to bring broad benefits to the community and to reduce bureaucracy, officers and staff have been encouraged to think differently and to use their professional judgment. Part of this overall culture change has been the introduction of RJ, which provides an alternative to the traditional process of arrest and punishment. Crucially, the approach is victim-centred so that, with their approval, offenders are allowed to make amends for committing offences. The approach avoids the criminalisation of young people and has been largely responsible for a significant decrease (83 per cent since 2008) in the overall number of young people going through custody suites. Since its introduction in April RJ has provided a positive outcome in 1,200 cases in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and has saved significant police time and associated costs.

5.3 **Reducing Crime and Disorder**

- 5.3.1 Latest crime statistics: The annual crime statistics are testament to the way in which the Authority and the Force have risen to the challenge of providing a swift and sure response to issues of crime and disorder. Overall crime was reduced by more than 8 per cent in 2011/12. There were almost 5,000 fewer victims of crime 2011/12, more crimes were solved and confidence improved. Other headline figures include: burglary down 16.4 per cent; robbery down 32.4 per cent; vehicle crime down 14.9 per cent; and serious sexual offences down 9.6 per cent.
- 5.3.2 Since 2008/09 the number of offences recorded in the county has fallen by more than 20 per cent. Similarly detection performance is a success story, with the year ending on a detection rate of 31.1 per cent, 1.2 per cent better than 2010/11, 4.4 per cent improved on 2009/10 and the best year end performance recorded to date.
- 5.3.3 Comparison to peers places Cambridgeshire in the top half of the peer group at year ending March 2012 (compared to the bottom half at the same point in 2011). The force's performance is particularly notable having gone from being a force on HMIC 'special measures' several years ago, to achieving some of the best results ever and punching above its weight, despite the financial challenges it faces.
- 5.3.4 Confidence and satisfaction: Alongside fewer victims of crime, and improved detection performance, the Constabulary has seen victim satisfaction improve to 84.8% at year end, some 1.8ppts above that achieved at March 2011 year end; performance was better than peer average at year end, reversing the situation at year ending March 2011. The key way in which the effectiveness of the Joint Engagement Strategy is measured is through confidence and satisfaction statistics. At 70.5% the proportion of those who agree the police are dealing with the things that matter has marginally improved compared to last year.

5.4 **Keeping people safe**

- 5.4.1 Partnership working: The six district-based statutory community safety partnerships bring together police, local authorities, fire and rescue, primary care trusts, probation and other local representatives to tackle crime and disorder. The Police Authority has worked hard to develop relationships with partners to create a Victim and Offender Needs Assessment (V&ONA) as an evidence base to inform the 2013 Police and Crime Plan. The V&ONA has allowed the Authority to get a picture of victims, witnesses and offenders and ensure greater awareness of their needs.
- 5.4.2 Multi-Agency Referral Unit (MARU): Close and sustained partnership working enabled the MARU to be created in April 2011, as a result of agreements with Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council. Domestic abuse and child protection services for Cambridgeshire and adult services for Peterborough are based at the unit, which also includes members from the advocacy service, health service, mental health service, women's aid and refuge and housing. Cases are referred to the unit and assessed by the team. The appropriate agencies are then told when and what support is needed.
- 5.4.3 Domestic abuse: A new domestic abuse safeguarding and investigation unit of specially trained officers has been established to deal with this complex and challenging area of crime. The team forms part of the public protection department. Domestic abuse currently accounts for 22.2 per cent of all violent crime within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Between April 2011 and January 2012 the force recorded in excess of 9,500 domestic abuse incidents and crimes. The result of work in this area has been that the most vulnerable individuals are protected from abuse through the provision of a police and partnership response that meets the needs of the individuals whilst challenging the behaviour of offenders.
- 5.4.4 Integrated Offender Management: The IOM programme is structured so that there is a clear focus on those who commit the most crime. The programme takes a co-ordinated approach to reducing re-offending. A team has been established with other responsible agencies to manage such offenders. A list of top targets is drawn up each month to allow the effective focus of resources and more than 500 arrests were made last year by the dedicated team, which has played a significant role in a reduction in crime in Peterborough.

5.5 **Maintaining the resilience of protective services**

- 5.5.1 **Roads Policing Unit:** The Constabulary has, through a mix of enforcement, education, engagement and technology, kept people safe on our roads and tackled criminals who use them. Actions have included targeting illegal drivers, denying criminals the use of our roads by making the best use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition technology. The focus has been on reducing road traffic casualties, as well as participating in national, regional and local road safety campaigns.
- 5.5.2 **Tackling extremism:** Officers have delivered more than 200 presentations to groups from schools, universities, places of worship, community and statutory partnerships on the risks posed by extremism and what they can do locally to prevent it. This work is part of the Prevent strand of the Government's counter terrorism strategy.
- 5.5.3 **Local response to last summer's riots:** A huge local policing operation was activated in response to the trouble across the country in August 2011. Officers from Cambridgeshire were sent to London to assist with policing the initial disorder, while locally extra patrols were put in place. All available officers and staff were put on 12 hour shifts as the force targeted any potential issues and provided reassurance to communities. The local response to the disorder included the real time gathering of information via the force's Twitter feed which facilitated both the effective focus of resources and the provision of reassurance messages to the public. The result was that there was just one small incident of disorder reported in Cambridge, which resulted in the arrest and charge of 16 people. Social media played a key role in supporting efforts to bring these offenders to justice.

5.6 **Other issues**

- 5.6.1 **Call handling:** The handling of non emergency calls was initially raised as an area for concern by the Police Authority in 2011. Since then the Authority has received a number of reports from the Force identifying the issues that required resolving and reporting back on action taken and improvements made as a result. The initial handling of non-emergency calls has improved; with 89% of calls answered within target compared to 86% last year and improved on recent months. Subsequent waiting times after the initial answer (while waiting to be transferred to the most appropriate person / dept) have reduced. Most recent data shows a notable improvement in abandonment rates for these calls (down to 6.27% in July).
- 5.6.2 **Equality:** In April this year the force agreed a series of equality objectives to help the organisation tackle discrimination, promote community cohesion and deliver a fair service. The 23 objectives, that sit under five organisation aims, form the force's Equality Objective Framework. The objectives have been informed by the results of equality impact assessments and feedback from the community. A recent external report on Stop and Search provided reassurance on its appropriate use. However, the Authority and force recognise that equality, diversity and human rights issues have an impact on all our work and these themes are constantly changing and developing.
- 5.6.3 **HMIC reports:** The Force has been praised for its work to tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB), achieving 'good results' in a report issued by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in September last year. It found that Cambridgeshire has low levels of ASB and moderate levels of crime per head of population. The force was praised for ensuring all relevant staff are briefed on ASB matters, regularly monitoring ASB and for its use of tactics such as anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) and dispersal orders. The force has also been re-inspected in the area of custody, following a critical Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary and Inspector of Prisons report in 2008 which identified significant areas for improvement. The overall outcome of the re-inspection was that the force had come a long way in proactively tackling the issues outlined in the initial report and had implemented most of the actions in response to earlier recommendations.

6. **IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 None.

7. CONSULTATION

7.1 None.

8. NEXT STEPS

8.1 None.

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

9.1 [Overview of Progress, Full Police Authority, 1st October 2012](#)

[Local Policing Plan 2012-15](#)

[Constabulary's Annual Report 2011-12](#)

Previous reports for the full Police Authority, Scrutiny Committee and Finance and Resources Committee which can be found on the Police Authority website.

10. APPENDICES

10.1 None.

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