

CAMBRIDGESHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL	Agenda Item No. 8
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Report of Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner

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PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Police and Crime Panel (“the Panel”) with an update on how the Police and Crime Commissioner (“the Commissioner”) is engaging with the public to obtain greater public participation and what value this is having.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the report.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 3.1 Item 6 – To review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, by the Police and Crime Commissioner in connection with the discharge of the Commissioner’s functions.

Item 8 – To support the effective exercise of the functions of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (“the Act”) sets out the statutory duties placed upon Police and Crime Commissioners, Chief Constables and Police and Crime Panels regarding the administration and governance of police forces. The Policing Protocol Order 2011 (“the Protocol”) enshrines the Act into some key guiding principles.

- 4.2 In exercising the powers conferred under the Act the Commissioner has a duty to “provide the local link between the police and communities, working to translate the legitimate desires and aspirations of the public into action”.

- 4.3 In turn, the Protocol enables the Panel to scrutinise the Commissioner in the exercise of his statutory functions, but does not provide for the Panel to scrutinise the Chief Constable.

- 4.4 The Commissioner’s Police and Crime Plan 2013-16 (“the Plan”) sets out a commitment by both the Commissioner and Cambridgeshire Constabulary (“the Constabulary”) to engage effectively with the communities they serve, understand their concerns and respond effectively.

- 4.5 The Plan includes a number of the Commissioner’s personal pledges such as to be the “Voice of the people”, using public feedback to continually support and challenge the provision of policing in Cambridgeshire.

5. PURPOSE OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

- 5.1 Public engagement is central to the Commissioner's work, that of his office, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), and the Constabulary. The Commissioner and the Constabulary work together to understand the concerns of the public, businesses, partners and communities, sharing what they have learned in order to better respond to their respective needs.
- 5.2 Effective public engagement and their participation is key in a number of ways in making a difference. It has been shown to help shape and influence the Commissioner's work, the local priorities of the Constabulary, ensured accountability, and improved trust and confidence in policing.
- 5.3 The Commissioner's engagement work and the consequential public participation takes a number of forms and methods, across a range of audiences, with different outputs and outcomes to facilitate a two way flow of information. As a result of engagement with the public, the Commissioner has taken a number of actions to respond to these concerns and to hold the Constabulary to account.
- 5.4 The Commissioner has:
- **Listened** to and **responded** to public concerns through correspondence, public meetings and surgeries;
 - **Sought the views** of the public to obtain their feedback for example on the Commissioner's proposal on the policing element of the Council Tax (the precept) and on a survey of 101 call handling;
 - **Worked with partners** to tackle crime and disorder;
 - **Provided funding to deliver outcomes** through projects, capacity building and involvement in preventative community schemes such as Speedwatch and Neighbourhood Watch in response to public concerns.

6. THE VALUE OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- 6.1 It is not always easy to accurately determine how individual actions influence levels of public confidence. Engagement measures all work together to reassure people that the Commissioner is delivering a police service that is well managed and one the public can trust and have confidence in.
- 6.2 The success and impact engagement has had in obtaining greater public participation can be easily evaluated for some forms of engagement. For other engagement activities it can be less tangible by its nature but by no means less important. For example, the Commissioner's recognition of the public's concern regarding 101 call handling has meant that the Constabulary has been constantly held to account for this, with call handling times improved. The Commissioner's engagement with young people has increased through his Youth Fund. This Fund issues grants to projects that provide diversionary activities to offer an immediate solution to anti-social behaviour and crime but also help to motivate young people in the longer term by increasing their skills, confidence and employment prospects.
- 6.3 The Commissioner monitors public opinion and public satisfaction through both the Performance Working Group and through the Business Coordination Board. These forums enables the Commissioner to support and scrutinise the Constabulary on a number of performance issues including the levels of crime, how the Constabulary is responding, and the levels of public satisfaction with the service received.

7. LISTENING AND RESPONDING

- 7.1 The Commissioner and the OPCC continues to receive and respond to all requests for information from the public, the media and partners, receiving in excess of 120 pieces of correspondence per month which require following up and responding to.
- 7.2 The Commissioner attends a range of community meetings, responding to people's questions and listening to their concerns. This includes Town Council meetings, Parish Council meetings, Local Police Panel meetings and other Community Groups.
- 7.3 The Commissioner's Outreach Workers act as his "eyes and ears" on the ground. They speak to the public in many forums, such as Parish Council meetings, at Police Contact Points, through schools liaison and at a range of conferences and events. Outreach Workers also work with local policing teams and with partner agencies to co-ordinate local activity and respond to public demand. What they learn they are able to feedback directly to the Commissioner to help shape and influence priorities and initiatives.
- 7.4 The Commissioner holds regular surgeries across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough offering one-to-one appointments with the public to discuss their specific issues of concern. The Commissioner and Constabulary officers attend Street Surgeries in urban centres and at Police Contact Points, which provide for further opportunities to engage and raise issues of concern with the Commissioner.
- 7.5 By listening to the concerns of the public, businesses and representative groups, numerous engagement events have been hosted by, or had input from, the Commissioner or the OPCC. These have proactively explored and addressed a range of crime and disorder matters such as rural crime, human trafficking and cybercrime.
- 7.6 A monthly newsletter highlights some of the work being undertaken by the Commissioner, the OPCC and the Constabulary which allows people another way of feeding back their thoughts and observations.

8. WORKING WITH OTHERS

- 8.1 The Commissioner and the Constabulary use a partnership approach with Community Safety Partnerships across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to tackle crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour. Since coming into office the Commissioner has provided over £760,000 of grants to Community Safety Partnerships to tackle and reduce local fear of crime and anti-social behaviour at a very local neighbourhood level. Their activity includes preventative work with young people to reduce anti-social behaviour initiatives for families, working with the vulnerable and supporting victims. This work contributes to the Commissioner's vision to create safer, stronger communities by tackling crime and reducing victimisation.
- 8.2 The Commissioner is regularly contacted by people that have, or know someone with, mental health issues. A number of agencies are responsible for providing appropriate care and support for those suffering mental crisis. The Commissioner was instrumental in bringing together senior leaders from Cambridgeshire and Peterborough agencies to agree a shared statement of what people experiencing mental health crisis should be able to expect of the public. This Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat local declaration was signed in November 2014.
- 8.3 One of the most common concerns raised by the public is that of road safety, particularly with regard to speeding cars and unroadworthy bicycles. The Commissioner has been a strong advocate of the Speedwatch scheme which allows the public to get actively involved in monitoring the speed of vehicles through their neighbourhood. Last year the scheme checked 150,000 vehicles and sent out 13,000 advisory letters. It is a good example of how volunteers and the police working together can address public concern in a very visible way. The Commissioner is also an advocate for the annual LIT (Lights Instead of Tickets) scheme,

targeting cyclists riding without lights. February 2016 saw the launch of the Commissioners £100,000 Road Safety Casualty Reduction Fund aimed at reducing the number of road collisions in Cambridgeshire.

9. OUTCOMES

- 9.1 Some examples of the demonstration of the value of the Commissioner's engagement and the value this is having are given below.
- 9.2 As a result of the public's concerns regarding dwelling burglary, both the Commissioner and the Chief Constable have made this a priority, sharing a vision that all burglaries should be investigated. Operation Hunter is a recent example of the proactive response taken in a drive to improve the Constabulary's handling of domestic burglary and the importance of victim care. In addition the Commissioner has provided grant funding of over £300,000 to the Shrievalty Trust's 'Bobby Scheme' which provides a free service to vulnerable victims of burglary aged 60 or over and those who had not been victims but nonetheless were vulnerable. Security advisors repair minor damage caused by criminals, installing locks, bolts, peepholes, door chains and alarms. Satisfaction rates for victims of burglary remain high, at 91% in the 12 months to December 2015.
- 9.3 The feedback the Commissioner received from victims of crime was that their experience was further exasperated by the fact that they had to deal with a variety of support services. In response to this, the Commissioner took the opportunity to provide an integrated victim support service centred around the Victims' Hub. This has transformed the service provided to victims of crime in Cambridgeshire. Since its launch in October 2014 the Hub has had over 10,000 victim referrals, has contacted over 8,000 of those victims (over 2,000 were unable to be contacted after three attempts), and provided support to over 6,000 victims (over 1,000 victims declined support). The number of people who have been supported is significantly higher than under the previous victim support arrangements. This service contributes to the high levels of satisfaction from the victims of crime in Cambridgeshire regarding how well they were supported by the police.
- 9.4 Concerns by communities over anti-social behaviour has led to the Commissioner providing grants to help divert youngsters away from crime through the Youth Fund. So far over £55,000 in grants have been issued between 37 projects involving over 1,800 young people. For example, a grant of £2,000 was issued to the Garage Community Trust in Stretham to engage young people in a 'bike maintenance and repair' project. The Waterlees Youth Service Providers won funding towards the running of the drop-in project at Wisbech. Continuing with the youth theme, the establishment of the Volunteer Police Cadets has engaged dozens of young people (aged 13-18) in policing, proving a valuable asset for the Constabulary and acting as ambassadors for their generation. The scheme has also involved many people volunteering to become Volunteer Leaders, giving up their time to train and mentor the young people.
- 9.5 The consequence of drug and alcohol misuse is a common source of public concern. The Commissioner has provided a grant of £94,000 to the Cambridge Drug and Alcohol Action Team and £166,000 to the Drug Intervention Programme in Peterborough. On a smaller scale, the Commissioner has also provided a grant of £5,000 of Alco Blow devices. Trialled in Cambridge City these devices are used by door staff to identify if customers have been drinking to excess and staff can use the results to refuse entry if they so wish. The feedback from business has so far been positive.
- 9.6 Police visibility is perhaps the single most common topic raised by the public. People would like to see a more visible police presence in the place where they live. While it is not possible to return to an idealised world where there is a uniformed officer on every corner, the Commissioner is working with the Constabulary to maximise the number of officers available and the number of hours they spend in the community. Local police numbers have been maintained over the last three years despite the significant financial cuts made. Maintaining officer numbers is the Commissioners stated aim, seeking cost savings from other business

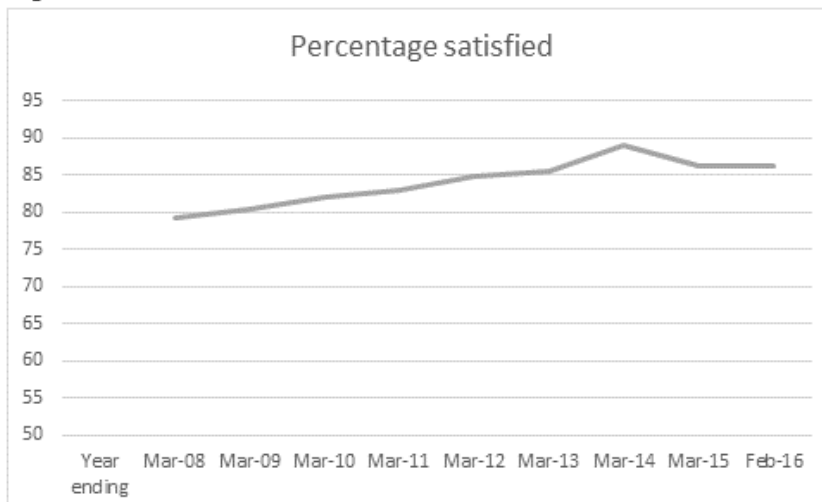
areas. New technology has been embraced and is being rolled out to all staff and officers. This allows officers to send and receive real time data and complete paperwork while out and about, reducing the need to return to a fixed base and increasing the time in the community. Police Contact Points have been set up in popular locations, such as supermarkets, at advertised times making it easier for people to contact local officers. The Commissioner has asked the Constabulary to review how Special Constables may be used in some communities to patrol their local patch and increase visibility.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) is an independent inspectorate, inspecting policing in the public interest, and rigorously examines the effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy of police forces to tackle crime and terrorism, improve criminal justice and raise confidence. In the most recent HMIC report on Legitimacy, HMIC found that the Constabulary understands the importance of good and effective engagement with its communities and it uses a broad range of methods to do so with many great examples of officers listening to and understanding local concerns and responding to them well.
- 10.2 HMIC’s report on Effectiveness 2015 found that of those who have been the victim of a crime in Cambridgeshire in the 12 months to 31 March 2015, 86.5 per cent were satisfied with their whole experience with the police. This is higher than the national victim satisfaction rate of 83.8 per cent over the same time period.
- 10.3 Over the longer term, there has been a steady rise in victim satisfaction from year ending 2008 to today as shown in the graph below.

Cambridgeshire Constabulary Victim Satisfaction Results

All categories exc Hate Crime



source: CORA- V.U.E - victim user experience

- 10.4 The performance update from the Constabulary to the Commissioner shows that the current public satisfaction level (12 month rolling average) for “dealing with local concerns” is 73.7% (68.2% in December 2012) and “Satisfaction with service delivery” is 85.8% (85.6% in December 2012).

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

A detailed paper on the evaluation of the Commissioner's engagement was considered by the Commissioner's Business Coordination Board at its meeting on the 25th February 2016 – 'Evaluation of the Police and Crime Commissioner's public engagement'.

<http://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/work/business-coordination-board/2016-2/bcb-february-25th-2016/>

'PEEL: Police Legitimacy 2015 – An inspection of Cambridgeshire Constabulary', HMIC, February 2016

<http://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/peel-police-legitimacy-2015-cambridgeshire.pdf>

'PEEL: Police effectiveness 2015 – An inspection of Cambridgeshire Constabulary', HMIC, February 2016

<http://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/police-effectiveness-2015-cambridgeshire.pdf>

'Cambridgeshire Constabulary Quarterly Performance Update to December 2015', and 'Cambridgeshire Constabulary Quarterly Report Data to December 2015', Business Co-ordination Board, February 2016

<http://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/work/business-coordination-board/2016-2/bcb-february-25th-2016/>