

POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

26th March 2013

Introduction

This report sets out a summary of the commitments I have undertaken since the last Police and Crime Panel meeting held on 6th February 2013. I write a weekly blog which provides a brief overview for the public of what I have been up to. This is published on my website (www.wiltshire-pcc.gov.uk) and the content of these blogs is copied below for the Panel's information.

FEBRUARY BEGINS

Posted: Friday 8th February 2013

Friday 1 February

Today I had an office based day working on my forthcoming Police and Crime Plan.

Monday 4 February

I was supposed to be taking a driving assessment this morning, but having tripped on a kerb on Saturday, instead I had to get someone to drive me to work as I have either a cracked rib or am very bruised. As a result I was confined to bed on Sunday to watch 'The Big Questions' about the ethnicity of police and 'Sunday Politics', where a fellow PCC was on. I am looking forward to seeing the analysis of our forthcoming police officer recruits to see if they are representative of our community.

I chaired the joint Force and Office of PCC (OPCC) management board this afternoon (sitting very still!). In the evening I attended the Force awards ceremony, where the good work and service of officers and staff was recognised. I was pleased that a member of the public Andrew Carnegie from Malmesbury was also recognised for his part in catching a thief.

Tuesday 5 February

In between formal meetings I popped over to County Hall in Trowbridge to join a neighbourhood community surgery. It was my first visit to the new county hall atrium and it was bustling, including lots of public engagement with the officers. In the afternoon I visited community radio station Swindon 105.5 which is working with young offenders, engaging them in making programmes and broadcasting. This is an excellent project and I look forward to being interviewed by the participants at the end of their six week course.

I attended two Swindon localities this evening, so I'm feeling a bit like a 'travelling performer' as I'm on first at the town centre and last on the agenda at Meadowcroft! Joking aside, I'm pleased that a member of the public came to a meeting just to make contact with me. That is the message I want to get out - Area Boards and Locality meetings are where the OPCC will be.

Wednesday 6 February

The first of my monthly meetings with Jane Scott, the leader of Wiltshire Council and Rod Bluh, the leader of Swindon Borough Council, took place today. This relationship is so important to me as the basis of our partnership working to give best value for the taxpayers' pound. The holding of the precept at £157.77 is now official so that's another piece of business finished for the next year. I had another Area Board in the evening in Seend and then was off to London for a course starting early tomorrow 'Working in Partnership to tackle and prevent Crime'.

Thursday 7 February

The conference was really useful and, as ever, it was good to meet up with some fellow PCCs and share our experiences and knowledge. It was back to Wiltshire in the evening for the last of the Area Boards / Locality meetings in this cycle in Westbury. I've just looked back in the diary and I haven't had a week day evening at home for about a month!

OUT AND ABOUT

Posted: Friday 15th February 2013

Friday 8 February

Today I had my first meeting with some of the editors from our TV, press and radio. We hope to hold these quarterly and this time covered a wide range of topics, from my first impressions as a PCC through to more detailed matters, such as the consultation on the use of courts in Wiltshire. It was good to meet them all informally and explain more about my role.

Monday 11 February

We hosted the third and final workshop with the voluntary community sector on the draft Police and Crime Plan in Trowbridge today. At the session we discussed victims, reoffending and public confidence. I was particularly heartened to see a number of people from neighbourhood watch at the event.

Tuesday 12 February

I was in the House of Commons today for a conference on reducing crime through early intervention hosted by MP Graham Allen and addressed by Minister of State for Crime Prevention Jeremy Browne.

There were five PCCs at the conference and I think we will all continue to be involved with national charity the Early Intervention Foundation. This charity reflects the work that has been done with troubled families in Swindon and Wiltshire, and which I hope to build on.

Wednesday 13 February

I was still out and about as today I was at Cheshire Constabulary HQ for a meeting of the steering group of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCCs). This representative body of us all is finally beginning to take shape and should be a valuable service to me and my team.

Thursday 14 February

I 'paraded' at 8am for a briefing before spending the morning with Trowbridge neighbourhood officers. The whole morning was spent on foot.

As part of the shift we joined officers from Selwood Housing to a property in which squatters had taken root. The tenant had not been seen for five months, although housing benefit had continued to pay their rent. The flat was a complete wreck, but was occupied by a young rough sleeper. I hope that the drug and alcohol agencies we referred him to reacted because otherwise he would have been sleeping on the streets of Trowbridge again. I hope to revisit the flat when it has been refurbished ready for a more reliable tenant.

DRAFT POLICE AND CRIME PLAN LAUNCHED THIS WEEK

Posted: Friday 22nd February 2013

Friday 15 February

I spent the morning interviewing for the new post of Independent Adjudicator. We have appointed Prof. Allan Johns. Allan has experience from his time on Wiltshire Police Authority but more importantly he is 'independent' and will be keeping an eye on professional standards within Wiltshire Police on my behalf as well as independent adjudicating internal matters. This is a good step away from complaints about the police being determined by the police.

In the afternoon I had the opportunity to speak to a crowd of young people from all over Wiltshire at Devizes Corn Exchange. The feedback for the plan was useful and I have promised regular contact through a youth forum.

Monday 18 February

I was saddened to hear that Kevin Dunne (Aka Codger) had died. He was well known to the homeless services in Swindon and was sleeping rough in a multi-story car park. He is the last of a group of six or seven street drinkers who have all now died. The sad part is that there is a new generation coming along behind him. Codger had offered to join the interview panel for the Chief Constable.

Most of the day was spent putting the final touch to the draft Police and Crime Plan. Everyone in the office worked really hard and I hope it will be widely read. To read the draft plan visit the [Police and Crime Plan page](#) of this website. You can also give your views via a feedback form on the website.

Tuesday 19 February

Today I did some media interviews regarding the draft plan consultation trying to get the message out for people to read it and give their views.

Thursday 20 February

Attended another meeting of all the PCCs, which is really useful as we all develop our roles up and down the country. We were also addressed by Lord Justice Levinson about our relationship with the judiciary. I am glad that he thinks our role should include promoting community impact statements to put before sentencing courts. When someone's actions affect a whole community it is our role to speak on behalf of that community, the victim.

RURAL CRIME AND BUSINESS BREAKFAST

Posted: Thursday 28th February 2013

Friday 22 February

I had an excellent start to a Friday morning with a full English breakfast at the fabulous new county hall in Trowbridge with Wessex Chamber of Commerce. This is my second chamber visit and I am beginning to make useful contacts with the business community in Wiltshire.

In the afternoon I visited a meeting of Home Truths, a charity which supports victims of domestic violence and abuse. The 20 people present gave me a great deal of help in formulating my views on the proposed changes to where court cases are held in the county.

Monday 25 February

My office has now published its responses to the consultations on the courts sittings in Wiltshire and on proposed changes to the services provided by the probation. We need to set up a new section of this website as it is apparent that Commissioners will be asked to comment on a number of these sorts of things. I am now looking to set up a group to advise me on the consultations on sentencing of sexual offences.

Tuesday 26 February

This morning I was on early morning patrol from Marlborough station with the Wiltshire Police Rural Crime Team. We were being filmed for a piece on BBC Points West about hare coursing and rural thefts, with people using byways as routes to escape.

This was followed by five meetings in the office with various organisations which I need to have good working relationships with. I must do a count sometime of the number of different organisations I have met since taken office.

Wednesday 27 February

I was invited to speak at the domestic abuse forum, which was having on of its regular meetings. This forum encompasses many organisations supporting victims of domestic abuse. I look forward to their inputs into the draft Police and Crime Plan.

Thursday 28 February

A very cold start to the day on top of a hill being interviewed by BBC Wiltshire radio on rural crime again. The issue of people coming into the county for hare coursing and the associated crime that results is having a real effect on confidence among those who live in our rural areas, often many miles from another household. Finding out about this was good input for me towards my 'commissioning' relationship with the Chief Constable.

I am very sorry to hear that Rod Bluh, the leader of Swindon Borough Council, will be standing down from this role. I have enjoyed working with him during the past three months as we try and shape this new office. Relationships between me and the leaders of Swindon and Wiltshire councils are so important to providing the best service to people in the area.

INSPIRING WEST SIDE STORY PRODUCTION AT ERLESTOKE PRISON THIS WEEK

Posted: Thursday 7th March 2013

Friday 1 March

I attended a Police and Crime Panel meeting in the morning, followed by an interesting visit to Wessex

College. I was able to spend some time with one of the young people, talking about her ambitions for university next year as well as having a full briefing on the college's care provision from the directors.

Saturday 2 March

With my wife and friends we all went to see West Side Story at Erlestoke Prison. The production is put on by Pimlico Opera with a few professionals and the rest of the staging and performing being done by the inmates. Just like 'Les Mis' last year, it was an inspiring evening. Last year I had the opportunity to have a meal with some of the cast, and one had obtained a placement in a theatre as a result of the six week project.

Monday 4 March

Kevin Dunn's (Codger) funeral first thing, which was very well attended by his friends as well as representatives from organisations, which supported him over the many years he had been in and out of hostels and sleeping rough. As I mentioned previously, he had offered to join the interview panel of the Chief Constable's appointment.

Tuesday 5 March

I met with Wiltshire Forum of Community Area Partnerships in the morning. I think their role could be better recognised in the Police and Crime Plan and certainly it is a body which should have a part to play in the overall structures. Then I was off to Corsley, near Warminster, for a village coffee morning. This was a very well attended affair with around 30 people, which impressed me. Yet again traffic speed was raised, a recurring issue across the county.

In the afternoon I had a couple of hours with the road policing unit. Within minutes we were tasked to an accident just outside Melksham, no injury, thankfully. But it still took quite a while to record the incident, clear the road and make arrangements for the vehicles to be recovered and the drivers picked up. Members of the public were doing a great job of traffic control when we arrived, they even had florescent jackets!

Wednesday 6 March

This was my first opportunity to meet the new Chief Constables from across the region and the second of the PCCs now monthly meetings. Regional collaboration is key to stretching limited resources and I'm pleased we are getting to know each other better. In the evening I attended a really good consultation meeting which was hosted by Salisbury City Community Area Partnership. Lots of very positive and supportive noises about the draft Police and Crime Plan and I look forward its detailed submission. We have had a lot of comments on the draft plan and will be working through them in the coming week, in advance of the publication at the end of March.

HITTING THE BEAT IN CHIPPENHAM AND SWINDON

Posted: Friday 15th March 2013

Saturday 9 March

An early evening trip to Chippenham to meet the Street Pastors. Excellent partnership working, and I understand the flip flops they give out to late night revellers who have lost their footwear are much sought after!

I then joined the Swindon response team for the night shift, 10pm till 7am. It was bitterly cold night and I'm told it was a fairly typical night of calls to accidents, domestic violence, patrolling Ferndale, and pulling over some drivers for traffic offences. Two hours on an exposed motorway bridge with two people who had rolled their car was a challenge, in more ways than one.

Sunday 10 March

After a few hours sleep, I was pleased to attend the service for the Rule of Law in Salisbury Cathedral. This is the High Sheriff's service for all those involved in the law, and was well attended by judges, magistrates and many others.

Monday 11 March

Consultation on the Police and Crime Plan has closed. I'm not sure how many responses we expected, after all it has never been done before, but I'm not displeased by around 130. There were many positive observations and lots of useful feedback. Now the work starts on reviewing the plan to incorporate the feedback, which will be put on the website by the end of March.

Tuesday 12 March

I have long thought that the Office of the PCC might be a useful place for undergraduates and postgraduates

to do some of their studying, after all the role covers so much across finance, commissioning, performance and strategic planning. This morning I visited the School of Management at Bath Uni, and I think we can progress this, but maybe not this year.

Thursday 14 March

Yesterday I was invited to the Health Improvement Awards given by Wiltshire Council. All those getting awards were well deserved and we were also treated to speeches by Eddy “the Eagle” Edwards and Debbie Flood, the Olympic rower. She was really inspiring and I would love a copy of what she said.

That was followed today by the Pride of Swindon Awards, volunteers giving their time and skills for the benefit of the community (as I’m encouraging in the plan!)

Speaking of volunteers, I’m keen to see a Police Cadet scheme launched in Wiltshire and so I joined up with Wiltshire police staff to visit a scheme in Gloucestershire which has been running for six months. They are happy to share their experience which will help here and I look forward to hearing more as plans come to fruition.

Angus Macpherson
**Police and Crime Commissioner
For Wiltshire and Swindon**