



POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

16th September 2013

Introduction

This report sets out a summary of the commitments I have undertaken since the last Police and Crime Panel meeting held on 12th June 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.

IMPORTANT WEEK FOR REGIONAL COLLABORATION

Posted: Friday 31st May 2013

Tuesday 28 May

The Ministry of Justice has now published its programme of Wiltshire courts sittings 2013/14. You may remember that I had concerns over most of the trials being held in Chippenham and raised this with the courts service during the consultation. It was also raised in the House of Commons by MP for Salisbury John Glen and in part we have had some success.

It seems that there will be more business held in Salisbury, but there is only one trial court in the matrix for Swindon. On the face of it this means that people from the Swindon area facing trial and witnesses in those trials will be travelling to Chippenham. I will be finding out more next week to see how the video link programme is progressing, as this should reduce the inconvenience. Last week I visited the Witness Support service in Swindon but given the number of trials that will be held in Chippenham I think I better pop over there and see what the facilities look like. Not the outcome I'd hoped for.

Last week the Home Affairs Committee published its report on PCC's financial matters. It seems that some of the information in the report was inaccurate, in respect of Wiltshire that inaccuracy was very small, but I would clarify that it is my intention for the Office of the PCC (OPCC) to cost no more than the police authority that it replaced. An early glance at the draft accounts for last year show that we have come in under budget by at least £50,000 to March 2013. The Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCCs) is preparing a benchmarking document for PCCs. I will be looking at that later in the week to see if it will be useful in making comparison between the OPCCs across the country.

Wednesday 29 May

This was a big day for regional 'things'. The PCCs from across the south west meet every month and today we were hosted by Avon and Somerset at their very splendid headquarters outside Bristol. Since coming to office we have been looking at the potential for collaboration and that work continues.

Today I was able to sign two collaboration agreements. The first which covers all five forces was in respect of Special Branch. The benefits of which will be to enhance interoperability, improve efficiency, remove duplication, increased resilience and capability, mitigate risk and threat in the south west. The second collaboration is between ourselves, Avon and Somerset and Gloucestershire in relation to roads policing, dog units and firearms. Again this will improve efficiencies and resilience as well as given us a cost saving in Wiltshire. Both these build on the governance agreement that we agreed last month – whereby our Chief Constable has operational responsibility for incidents in the county and as PCC for Wiltshire and Swindon I have an equal voice with partners in the strategic arrangements.

We also visited the new firearms training facility for a topping out ceremony. This is being built for these three forces. It will be open in January and will be a tremendous facility for our staff. There is absolutely no way we could have provided this for Wiltshire alone.

Thursday 30 May

I'm mainly in the office today progressing a number of pieces of work, including looking at benchmarking of OPCCs and further work on our proposed business forum meeting in September as well as meeting with Wiltshire and Swindon council leaders at our regular monthly meeting.

FIRST PUBLIC PERFORMANCE MEETING

Posted: Thursday 6th June 2013

Friday 31 May

One of the exciting things about this job is the breadth. Today I have been chairing a group looking at the sentencing guidelines for environmental crime. The Sentencing Council is made up of the judiciary and academics but has no directly elected members of the public. It seems to me that my office can bring the public voice to these consultations. We invited farmers and borough council officers who work in environmental enforcement to give us their views. This allowed us to make comments from real experiences of crimes, such as fly tipping in farmers' fields.

Later in the day I saw the first draft of a business case in relation to Community Speed Watch. It is a good piece of work and believe that the solution offered is the right one, to enable more support to volunteers involved and those wishing to get involved. We will be getting together again in about two weeks and I hope then to have a commissionable product, something people involved with Speed Watch across the county are crying out for.

Sunday 2 June

There was great pride in Devizes today as the town council granted the Freedom of the Borough to the Rifles. It is the largest of the infantry regiments and has a long history through amalgamation including the Berks and Wilts. Back in time Devizes was a garrison town and the Major General reminded us that soldiers would have paraded on the town square right back to the civil war and the battle of Roundway Down. I was honoured to be part of the civic party and to meet the young soldiers, some of whom had recently returned from Afghanistan.

Monday 3 June

Meeting first thing with South Swindon MP Robert Buckland to discuss the night-time economy then on to an interview with community radio station Swindon 105.5 fm. When I was last there I met two young people who were taking part in a project supporting the Youth Offending Team by learning how to present on radio. I had offered to come back and be interviewed by them, so was disappointed to hear that one had pulled out due to peer pressure.

We spent that afternoon preparing for the public performance meeting tomorrow, before going to Salisbury to visit the Women's Refuge. For obvious reason the location is not public, but it is a very homely and supportive facility. I spent an hour or so with the trustees, one of whom is a retired Wiltshire Police Deputy Chief Constable, Stephen Long. It was good to meet up with him again and to share some of his passion around reducing domestic violence.

Tuesday 4 June

Later today we have the first public performance meeting in Trowbridge so at 8.15am I had an interview with BBC Wiltshire. They continued to publicise the meeting for the rest of the day. A package by one of their reporters was very complimentary about the profile the office is achieving in the county and the work we are doing. I'm sure the comment about me "being there at the drop of a lens cap" was well meant!

The sun came out during the day, and with it concerns that the Atrium at County Hall would be a very warm place for the meeting. Deputy Chief Constable Mike Veale joined me to present the [year end performance report](#). The objectives for last year were set by the Police Authority and I was pleased to report that most had been met. There are areas that continue to need focus and these are identified in the Police and Crime Plan. I was pleased that Wiltshire Council leader Jane Scott and Police and Crime Panel Chair Richard Britton were able to attend, as did the press and, importantly, the public. Questions were mainly operational around traffic speed on our roads, and I was able to update those at the meeting on the work being done around Speed Watch. As well as the constabulary's performance, we heard about the work of the Youth Offending Team. The next meeting should have reports from a wider range of initiatives I'm funding as well as being focused on the performance against my plan. Attendance wasn't large, despite the extensive coverage by BBC Wiltshire. Will there be more in Salisbury in September?

Wednesday 5 June

For 40 years Wiltshire Constabulary has been organising the 'motor show' for police vehicles. It started in the garage at headquarters, expanded to the gym and then out grow the site. After a few years in at Wroughton, the show is now held in Telford. The correct name for the organisation is the National Association of Police Fleet Managers Conference and the show is called 'Blue and Amber'. There certainly were lots of blue and amber lights and an opportunity to look at many of the vehicles available to us on the national frameworks, as well as the surrounding products and services. I have in the past been asked why Wiltshire Constabulary

don't buy more Hondas, especially as they are made in Swindon. I now know the answer, and it is around specification and value for money procurement. There is a Honda model available, but not one we would use extensively. Perhaps I should meet with Honda UK and encourage them to bid in the next framework agreement.

From Telford back to the south of the county to the South West Area Board in South Newton. The meeting was very well attended and, as at previous meetings I have attended, speeding was an issue, both in the villages and on the A303 / A36. I was able to give some reassurance around Speed Watch. I'm really looking forward to launching the new support scheme.

Thursday 6 June

I'm usually in the office here in Devizes at around 7.45am, in time to help open the shutters in the canteen at 8am. Blog readers will know I was working on Sunday, got home at 6pm on Monday, 8pm on Tuesday and 9.30pm yesterday having left home at 7am for Telford.

Not surprising then that this morning I'm 'cross' about a letter to one of the local papers suggesting that because of my outside interests I don't have time for the job. Correctly, on appointment I have to list any outside interest on a register. The writer says I work in two "sizable development companies". The two companies are, in fact, both non trading and dormant. For one the balance sheet shows assets of £14 and the other £134. Before taking this job, and one of the qualifications for doing it, was my accountancy background. However, recognising that I would not have time to work in the company that bears my name, I got my P45 on 30 November last year. Obviously the company continues to exist, and in time when I complete my term as PCC I will probably return to it. As for the two Stainless Design Services companies, where my interest is as Company Secretary and not as Director, these both date back from appointment some 20 years ago when company law required a company to have secretary. This requirement was removed some years ago, and it is only since compiling the register that I have thought that it's not needed any more. It is a measure of the time the new role takes that I haven't found time to complete the paper work with the director to resign.

It is disappointing to see comments in the press like this. And likewise I understand that the report of the Home Affairs Committee was similar misinformed. Figures for Wiltshire were wrong, but not as wrong as for some of my colleagues in the south west. The fact is that the new office will cost less than the predecessor body. An early look at the accounts for last year to 31 March show that my office expenditure came in at least £50,000 below budget and I think that in the final accounts, when all recoveries have been accounted for, this figure will be double that.

Today I have meetings scheduled all morning until 2pm, then to Royal Wootton Bassett for 3pm, and out this evening.

VISITING AWARENESS RAISING INITIATIVES

Posted: Thursday 13th June 2013

Friday 7 June

I was introduced to another police charity this morning, Embrace - Child Victims of Crime. This is a charity supported widely by the police service which provides things like replacement bikes right through to holidays for children who have been victims of crime. They take their recommendations from police officers so I hope all our officers know about the charity.

Today is the launch date for £1 million Innovation Fund. This fund is about supporting community and voluntary initiatives throughout Wiltshire and Swindon which will help towards achieving my six main priorities. Read more about the fund on a [dedicated page of this website](#)

This afternoon I visited the Junior Good Citizen event in Swindon. This is coordinated by a Police Community Support Officer in Swindon and involves partners from Swindon Borough Council, Wiltshire Fire and Rescue, British Red Cross, British Transport Police (on behalf of Network Rail) and Wiltshire Police. It is about raising awareness of emergency situations and personal safety. Each group of year six students spent 15 minutes on each session. I was impressed how focused the presentations were in getting over specific safety messages and I look forward to visiting the Wiltshire equivalent in Potterne in the summer.

Saturday 8 June

Across the county partners are hosting summer drink drive roadshows, and I visited the event in Devizes this morning. There was a shocking wreck of a car, in which a young lady lost her life, on display which should sober up the thoughts of anyone who is thinking of drinking and driving.

On to Melksham where the local Neighbourhood Watch and Neighbourhood Policing Team had put on what might be described as a fair - bringing together partners from health, Good Neighbours, anti-social behaviour officers and the Melksham Youth Advisory Group along with tea and cakes. Although it was a very sunny day, there were a good number of people coming through the door. At the event I also signed a zero tolerance campaign against discrimination in society.

Monday 10 June

Homeless projects are very close to my heart and so I was very pleased to visit the Gateway project in Chippenham. Based in the Salvation Army this project provides not only food, clothes and somewhere to be during the day, they also have an impressive support mechanism to help move on those who are homeless or in danger of becoming so.

The rest of the day was taken up with meetings.

Tuesday 11 June

I was invited to speak in London at a conference entitled Tacking crime – the new policing landscape. It is always good to meet up with other PCCs and my fellow speakers were Alun Michael from South Wales and Olly Martins from Bedfordshire. I also met the shadow policing minister David Hanson MP, which was very useful as he considers the Labour party response to the introduction of PCCs.

Wednesday 12 June

This morning staff and I attended the Police and Crime Panel quarterly meeting. There is a new panel following the elections and it was good to meet some of the new faces. We engaged in a lively discussion around the performance report for 2012 – 13 and Appeals Adjudicator Professor Allan Johns was able to give his first update on his work around complaint appeals. I also had chance to speak to the panel about my activities since we last met.

Thursday 13 June

Thursday seems to be a day that gets packed out with meetings. I have meetings with the Wiltshire Criminal Justice Board, following which I'm working on my response to the Anti-social Behaviour Crime and Policing Bill. This is going through the committee stage in the House of Commons at present. The bill includes criminal behaviour orders replacing anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) and the introduction of a community trigger. This trigger is set locally and I will be consulting on this. It also covers minor offences being prosecuted by the police in courts, so there is a lot to think about.

This afternoon I have meetings on Community Speed Watch and Neighbourhood Watch, both of which blog readers will know I am seeking to support from my office.

HIGH SHERIFFS, HOT CHOCOLATE AND HAPPY CAMPERS PREPARE FOR SOLSTICE

Posted: Thursday 20th June 2013

Friday 14 June

The office of High Sheriff is a medieval judicial post, but today is largely ceremonial.

High Sheriffs take a keen interest during their year of office in initiatives which promote inclusiveness, especially of young people, and reduce crime.

I was pleased to meet William Wyldbore-Smith who recently took up office and to share with him my experiences of some of the projects around Wiltshire which seek to address these issues. He has agreed to visit some of the projects with me and was very supportive of the Police Cadets initiative which we are currently working on.

The High Sheriff sits on a panel of the Wiltshire and Swindon Community Foundation, which distributes money from the PCC's fund (formerly known as the police property fund).

I visited one of the beneficiaries of the fund this evening: the Calne Young People's Bus. This sets up between 6pm and 8pm every Friday in the Sainsbury's car park in Calne. It gives young people an opportunity to play games, drink hot chocolate and generally hang out in a safe and supported environment. The young people are very supportive of the project. During the evening, a few people who had outgrown the project called in just to say hello. It seemed to me to be a very worthwhile voluntary project.

Saturday 15 June

It must be summer: it's raining. However the Old Town Festival went ahead as normal at The Lawns in

Swindon. The local Neighbourhood Policing Team were there, supported by the Special Constabulary and, whilst it was wet, it was still busy with people enjoying themselves, giving me and the Constabulary a chance to talk about our respective roles.

Monday 17 June

The Director of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC), which is our national body, called in at breakfast time to talk about national developments around joint working and sharing of good practice between Commissioners. It is early days but whilst we comment about working in silos within Wiltshire, equally it would be very silly for the PCCs to work in silos as well.

The Business Crime Forum which I am hosting now has a confirmed date of Friday 6 September and my first business crime survey will be launched a week today.

Robert Buckland, MP for Swindon South, and I were invited to a meeting of Pubwatch in Old Town, Swindon. It was extremely well attended with some 20 landlords and club owners present. We were both impressed by their concerns over violence in the night time economy and their recognition of the part they have to play in ensuring a sensible level of drinking.

Most were independent licensees, rather than employees of national chains, which focused their interest on the whole of the Old Town economy. They did raise issues about CCTV and the Pubwatch radio system and I hope we will be able to support them in improving both.

I was briefly introduced to a national charity which is just starting a presence in Wiltshire called Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide. I am not sure how much help I can be to them, but I will look to pass their contact details to officers and partners who have to deal with family and friends in such sad circumstances.

Tuesday 18 June

I really believe there is a head of steam around regional collaboration by police forces and was pleased to attend, as an observer, a meeting of chief constables and senior officers as they continued to thrash out those areas of common work which could be better done on a regional basis. It is still a work in progress, but, as one chief constable said, "we must get away from talking a lot and actually get on with this."

Wiltshire Council sponsor a Good Neighbours scheme which has representatives in each of the areas of Wiltshire. They act as a source of information and signposting for individuals on a one-to-one basis. It could be as simple as providing a bus timetable or arranging a hospital visit. This is done in conjunction with Age UK. Last year saw more than 1,700 clients being helped. I have seen advertisements for this service in some of the villages, but it was good to hear at firsthand what they are doing.

This evening I visited another project in Stratton, Swindon, funded by the Community Foundation from the PCC's fund. This is a project called BIOS.

It works with young people where they are. In this instance it was a hard standing football pitch next to a community centre in Stratton. Rather like the bus in Calne there was hot chocolate available (with marshmallows!).

The young people were very welcoming at their kick-around session. It gave me an opportunity to talk to them about their relationship with the local officers.

They spoke warmly of PCSOs, but had reservations about how they are seen by the wider police family. One of the young people actually wants to join the police and is currently doing a public service course at Swindon College. I wonder if I could offer her a day with me going around the constabulary?

Wednesday 19 June

There are new responsibilities for individual councillors within Wiltshire Council and Cllr Jonathon Seed has responsibility for the campus projects. These are absolutely core to my Police and Crime Plan and to the delivery plan of the Chief Constable. So it was timely to have a session with Cllr Seed and bring him up to date with what my office can do to support the joint vision of policing from campuses alongside council services. I hope I will have the opportunity to meet all the area board chairs next week.

In the evening I attended the Bradford on Avon area board in the lovely village of Westwood. There were about 50 people there and I managed to speak to most of them in the half hour spot before the meeting. They raised no issues with me and were keen to tell me they were well supported by the neighbourhood team in that area.

Thursday 20 June

Stopped in Avebury on my way from home to the office to see the start of the Solstice operation. During my

walk around the village I was pleased to meet the chairman of the parish council as well as several villagers and to hear how reassured they are by the operational policing plan for the two days. They were particularly keen to tell me that they had had an input into the plan.

I spoke to most of the officers who were there at the beginning of their 12-hour shift and then walked round the campsite to speak to those who had come to celebrate the Solstice. I hope everyone has a good time.

Just down the road from my office, the Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) are doing a roadshow in Market Place, Devizes. So I took the opportunity to support them and meet people visiting both them and the popular weekly market. I am very supportive of the NPT being in the market. During the election campaign, when I visited all the markets in Wiltshire, I was struck by just how many people you can have a face to face conversation with during the course of a morning.

After meetings in Salisbury this afternoon I shall be visiting the police operation surrounding the Solstice in Stonehenge. This is a much bigger operation than the Avebury one I saw this morning. But it has been successfully run now for several years and all the agencies working together have a robust plan. I am afraid I won't be staying to see the sun rise at 4.50am as I have a day's leave tomorrow and don't want to spend it sleeping ...

SALISBURY POLICE STATION PROPOSALS ANNOUNCED

Posted: Thursday 27th June 2013

Monday 24 June

Early morning start at BBC Wiltshire radio station in Swindon for the launch of the business crime survey.

The survey is designed to help me understand the extent, nature and impact of crime and anti-social behaviour faced by the business community. Business people can read about this and [complete the survey](#) on a dedicated page of this website.

It was on to Melksham to meet with the neighbourhood team during one of their visits to a day centre for elderly people. I had an opportunity to speak to them and was impressed by the reassurance they gain from contact from their neighbourhood policing officers.

Chief Constable Pat Geenty spent the morning in Salisbury with staff updating them on proposals that would see Salisbury Police Station extensively refurbished to house the new South Wiltshire University Technical College (UTC). This agreed in principle decision would then see police officers and staff sharing Wiltshire Council premises in the city, with a long term view of being based at the Salisbury campus.

I think this is really positive news, offering new education and training opportunities for young people in Salisbury and the south Wiltshire area. You can read more about this in the [news section](#) of this website.

Later on I was pleased to be invited to a meeting of the Wiltshire Area Board chairs. It gave me the opportunity to share with them the news of my plans for Community Speed Watch. This includes appointing two full time posts to offer more support to volunteers and investing in a new IT system.

Tuesday 25 June

On behalf of my fellow Commissioners I attended a meeting of the Criminal Justice Council at the Ministry of Justice in London. This was chaired by Lord Justice Gross and discussions were around police led prosecutions, troubled families and the Victims' Code. It was really useful to me to sit with those in Whitehall who have responsibility for drafting the legislation or advising ministers. I hope I was able to provide them with useful information from the grass roots of a rural PCC.

In the afternoon I had an extensive interview with the Salisbury Journal in relation to the developments and changes in policing in the area. I expect during the forthcoming months I will again be speaking in-depth to the Journal and other media about this proposal.

In the evening I attended the launch of the Fredericks fund in Salisbury. This is a charity which makes small loans to those who have poor credit ratings to help get them started in business. It also importantly offers mentors to support them in their early years.

Wednesday 26 June

How time flies...this is my second meeting with the National Farmers' Union (NFU) and County Land Owners Association. This time I was joined by the Chief Constable. Quite a number of operational issues were discussed with him and I was able to agree with the representatives that we would start working on a crime

survey specifically for farmers and land owners, in much the same way as we have done for businesses. In due course this will feed in to a rural forum.

The independent audit committee met in Salisbury in the afternoon. I was pleased to meet two new members and understand that they will be joined by two more at our next meeting. We have now agreed the terms of reference for the committee, which supports both me and the Chief Constable. The accounts for the year were reviewed and will be signed at the end of the week.

During the course of the meeting we were all awaiting news of the government's spending review. Although the details were a bit sketchy it seems that early on indicative figures show we may be looking indicative savings of between £4 million and £5 million in 2015/16. I now await more details on the figures.

Thursday 27 June

The Police Foundation has got doctoral student from the University of Oxford conducting research into the impact that PCCs are having and their experiences since the election. I spent an hour being interviewed by the student and I look forward to seeing his findings in the early autumn.

This evening I'm off to Salisbury Area Board. I don't have a speaking part on the agenda, but no doubt there will be many people there who would appreciate further clarification our intentions around policing in Salisbury. Much of this is operational and so I am pleased that Deputy Chief Constable Mike Veale is planning to join me.

OUT AND ABOUT INCLUDING SALISBURY AREA BOARD

Posted: Thursday 4th July 2013

Friday 28 June

Understandably there was lots of interest at the Salisbury Area Board last night about the proposals to relocate police services in the city and for the South Wiltshire University Technical College (UTC) to be based at the current police station.

The Area Board Chair kindly extended the meeting so that the discussion around policing didn't dominate the main meeting. One agenda item was about the closure of the bus station. Several speakers mentioned the number of young people using it to go out of county for their education. I couldn't help thinking how a UTC would help the city. In the extended meeting Salisbury Sector Inspector Andy Noble gave an excellent presentation around how policing is and will be provided in the city and south Wiltshire.

My Friday started quite early with a Wessex Chamber business breakfast at Bradford-on-Avon, where I was able to promote the [business crime survey](#). This is designed to help me understand the extent, nature and impact of crime and anti-social behaviour faced by the business community in Wiltshire and Swindon.

Saturday 29 June

Trowbridge was full and the sun was out for the first of a two day event for Armed Services Day. I joined the mayors of several of our towns to meet veterans and serving members of the armed forces as well as touring the many exhibits. In addition to the forces from today, various re-enactment enthusiasts had set up, ranging from scenes from the Boar War to a spitfire pilot with his MG. This was a great spectacle, keeping history alive. As well as neighbourhood policing officers, Special Constables and a very noisy police car, I also met off duty officers who were taking part as exhibitors, whether that be as British Legion biker or an Army cadet officer. An excellent event.

Monday 1 July

I thought I would tot up my hours last week - 75. I should deduct an hour a day for travel so I'll settle for 75 plus Saturday!

After a busy last week, it was good to have some time in the office and catch up in the day. Then it was off to Chippenham Area Board in the evening.

Tuesday 2 July

For the first day since taking office I had a diary free from meetings. It has to be said this is because two meetings were cancelled, but it was refreshing to have time to actually read and write rather than going from meeting to meeting.

Wednesday 3 July

The youth offending teams from both Swindon and Wiltshire came in to give me a quarterly update. The numbers entering the court system continues to fall and I was interested to read that Class A drug use

among young people is falling, with cannabis being the drug of choice for boys and alcohol for girls. This is one for further thought.

The Junior Good Citizen event in Wiltshire is happening at the Scout Hall in Potterne. Just as in Swindon, young people come for a half day and attend a number of scenarios about being safe. This is a partnership event and runs for two weeks. I was impressed by the props, including an alleyway full of dangers and a mock prison cell. I must admit that I hadn't thought of the family holiday being ruined because a young family member had a cannabis warning and could be excluded from entry to many countries at the airport.

This evening was the East Locality meeting in Swindon. Their networking sessions follow the meeting, so it was a good opportunity to hear the concerns of the residents, but it has to be said many issues raised were to do with parking and traffic, which are primarily local authority matters.

A WEEKEND AT THE WILTSHIRE SHOW

Posted: Thursday 11th July 2013

Saturday 6 July

Thursday and Friday were taken up with back-to-back meetings in the office and letter writing so I'm looking forward to a weekend out and about.

First thing Saturday morning the Chief Constable and I attended the annual meeting of Wiltshire and Swindon Neighbourhood Watch. We were able to share with those present some of the operational frustrations and concerns around the cost of supporting Neighbourhood Watch in the county. We were greatly encouraged by the work they are doing with their new website and their enthusiasm to embrace new technologies. We very much look forward to building on this to create a sound basis for Neighbourhood Watch in the county.

As part of our community engagement, we are working up a programme of events to attend and the first significant one of these was at Barbury International Eventing and Show. It gave us an opportunity to work out how best to do things in the future, and I have to say I am pleased with the work done on setting up our stall. In fact Saturday was quite a quiet day from a public point of view but we are told Sunday is busier.

Saturday night I joined South Swindon MP Robert Buckland as well as other agencies, including an alcohol awareness charity and the police. They were engaging with people and offering them useful advice about the impact of excessive drinking on their personal safety.

Sunday 7 July

The sun is out yet again and at Barbury so are the public. I wouldn't say that people have been rushing to our stall but we have had some useful conversations, shared some concerns and, most importantly, been visible and available. It was also good to spend some time with our colleagues from Wiltshire Police's Rural Crime Team, Marlborough Neighbourhood Policing Team and a specialist firearms officer as well as the Bobby Van and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service who were on the same pitch as us during the weekend.

Monday 8 July

The postbag in the Office of the PCC always has letters about Community Speed Watch and not far behind are concerns about 20mph speed limits. The difference between limits and zones is pretty unclear to the public and it seems that misunderstanding goes right through to the recommendations of senior officers in the country in respect of enforcement. Speed limits are put in place by local authorities and so I was pleased to meet representatives of Wiltshire Council to start a discussion aimed at bringing greater clarity to the issue.

There is exciting news today that Swindon has been selected as one of a handful of places across the country that is well placed to develop a successful community budget and will receive government support to do so. I'm sure more news on this will follow in the coming months.

Tuesday 9 July

About every quarter the PCCs get together in London and today was one of those days. We had a full programme of speakers including Minister for Victims and Courts, Helen Grant; Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary, Tom Winsor; Minister of State for Policing and Criminal Justice, Damian Green; Director of Public Prosecutions, Keir Starmer QC; and Home Secretary, Theresa May. I have to say that listening to all these people did bring about a certain amount of information overload, especially as we also want to find time to network among ourselves, but I suppose it is early days and everyone wants to talk to us.

Keir Starmer made a really interesting point about working with partners. Concerns have been raised about information sharing. Mr Starmer said that if you are fully integrated and not just co-located this concern should not arise.

In the evening, it was back to Wiltshire and I went to Sutton Benger to speak to a dining club who I think were very appreciative as it was well past 11pm when we got up from the table!

Wednesday 10 July

What superb premises Gloucestershire Constabulary have. We were there for the regional meeting of PCCs and Chief Constables today, continuing our discussion about greater regional collaboration. We have now decided that at each of our meetings we should have some presentation that interests and educates us. Today was the Home Office ICT company, which gave us a briefing about what they believe they will be able to do for us once they are fully up and running. It was only a half day session today so it was a rather crowded agenda. We have agreed to make best use of our time in the future by meeting for a whole day.

Back in county I had a meeting with representatives from Wiltshire and Swindon about Neighbourhood Justice Panels, a radio interview about Community Speed Watch and then attended the Swindon South Locality meeting in the evening.

Thursday 11 July

This morning I was pleased to meet Gordon Seabright, Chief Executive of CTC, the national cycling charity, who gave me a booklet about its road justice campaign. CTC aims to improve road safety by encouraging the justice system to treat bad driving more seriously. It wants to see accidents involving cyclists investigated more thoroughly by police officers. It was good to hear from Mr Seabright that Wiltshire Police is held in high regard by the cycling community for the way it investigates such collisions.

During a visit to Marlborough I met Gerald Isaaman of Marlborough News Online and discussed local issues. Then it was off to St Joseph's Primary School in Devizes to join pupils during a drugs awareness lesson. I'm visiting the session run by Wiltshire Life Education Centre in its specially designed mobile classroom as the charity received a £3,000 grant from my PCC Fund, administered by The Community Foundation for Wiltshire & Swindon.

This evening I'm attending Trowbridge Area Board followed by dinner with the Chancellor George Osborne.

THE CHALLENGE OF DEVELOPING A BRAND IDENTITY

Posted: Thursday 18th July 2013

Friday 12 July

My first visit to the Swindon Chamber of Commerce breakfast club which, like any chamber event, is an excellent way of networking with the business community, especially so during a period when I am keen to encourage people to complete my business survey. The speaker was talking about branding and of course that is something that all we PCCs are constantly working on as we develop this new role. Unfortunately our initials do not help. I am a Police and Crime Commissioner – not a Parochial Church Council or the Press Complaints Commission ...

In the afternoon I had the chance to meet the councillors of Salisbury and to give them a run-through of the presentation that I will be taking part in on Wednesday about the future of policing provision in Salisbury. The meeting confirmed to me that there is a considerable amount of mis-information and lack of thorough knowledge about what happens at the Wilton Road station and how policing is delivered in the 21st century. I hope that is something we can put right over the coming weeks.

Saturday 13 July/Sunday 14 July

Weekend off!

Monday 15 July

7am: In the BBC studio as the Innovation Fund closes today. This is my £1m fund for projects that aim to break the cycle of crime. I know that we have had a good response and that, in the first round, it is likely to be considerably over-subscribed which will present an interesting challenge to myself and those I have asked to help me assess the applications.

We hold up Monkton Park in Chippenham, where both council and police services are now based, as a working example of the future model of policing and public service delivery in Wiltshire. I was pleased to take a Swindon councillor around the offices because I would like to see neighbourhood policing embedded and more accessible in the localities of Swindon. Luckily there were some officers there who confirmed that it is working to the public benefit and that it serves their operational policing requirements.

You know that time is passing when quarterly meetings come around. Today it was good to meet the chairs of the Safeguarding Boards for both adults and children in Swindon and Wiltshire. We were able to provide an update on the continuing demand for information through Clare's Law and the progress on the establishment of multi-agency safeguarding hubs (MASH) in both Swindon and the county (where police officers and partner agencies share offices). These hubs are extremely important and I will be doing all I can to facilitate their establishment.

SpeedWatch is an emotive subject for the residents of Wiltshire and Swindon and an initiative that is amazingly popular. Work is continuing to make sure that the correct support is in place for our volunteers

and today was a meeting of the three partners – Swindon Borough Council, Wiltshire Council and Wiltshire Police - to update on the progress as we head towards the co-ordinators' meeting in September.

In the evening I attended the Fire and Rescue stakeholders' forum in Trowbridge. Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service is going through a period of public consultation about the provision of its service and the distribution of fire appliances and manned stations through the county. I think from what was said that they will be working much more closely with Dorset Fire and Rescue in the future. But I think we have to recognise the national debate that is taking place around the blue light services as mentioned by the Home Secretary.

Tuesday 16 July

Wiltshire Council has published the agenda for its cabinet meeting next week and Chief Constable Pat Geenty and I attended a press briefing in County Hall to deal with the integration paper that will be presented.

The paper, which is available on the Wiltshire Council website, is about Wiltshire Police, my office and Wiltshire Council working together towards creating a strategic partnership in line with my Police and Crime Plan. It is about public agencies working more closely together to provide the best possible services to the public and to work in the most cost effective ways, in light of the substantial public sector budget cut and ever increasing demands for services.

Pending cabinet approval next week, further work will take place looking at where services can be shared. This is an important area and, through Chief Constable Pat Geenty, Wiltshire Police officers and staff will be updated on the plans. I was also happy to speak to two representatives from our local media at the press briefing.

My business crime forum is set for Friday 6 September at the Corn Exchange in Devizes. My business crime survey has been extended until midnight on Sunday 21 July.

Today was the first opportunity that I have had to meet the chairman of the local Institute of Directors (IoD). It turns out that the Institute is very much a national organisation so, while the local branch would be keen to help, their set-up is not the same as a chamber of commerce or Federation of Small Businesses branch. I hope we will find a way of engaging with members of the IoD as business people at director level are important consultees to the OPCC.

In the afternoon I was given a presentation by an organisation called Gateway Associates in the person of Paul Clark, a former MP and transport minister. Gateway are promoting a series of films about road safety for young drivers which they had shown to the road safety offices in both Swindon and Wiltshire earlier in the day. The film I saw was very hard hitting and professional, but I think it is up to the roads policing unit to assess whether screening such a film to young audiences would be useful to their work.

Wednesday 17 July

Back in the BBC studios at 6.45am as this evening there is a public meeting in Salisbury to discuss future police provision in the city.

Towards the end of last week a report on stop and search was published by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC). As part of a normal quarterly series of meetings I met those responsible for oversight of stop and search within Wiltshire Police.

There has been a small increase in stop and searches in the county over the last year. But, whilst this is a really complicated area of statistical analysis (not least given the small numbers involved) I was pleased that the arrest rate following a stop and search was well above the national average.

We agreed there is more work for my office and the force to do in the oversight of stop and search following up on the HMIC's recommendations to PCCs and constabularies.

Neighbourhood panels have been working in Swindon on a trial basis for some time and now the Home Office is undertaking an evaluation. So I had a one hour interview about their effect and my impression of their worth as part of the restorative justice initiative. I am enthusiastic about the concept of neighbourhood justice panels and look forward to some qualitative analysis of their effect which I hope we will have towards the end of the year.

Wessex Community Action are celebrating 40 years of service in Wiltshire and they had a small reception at lunchtime at their new offices in Salisbury. They were very helpful in the run-up to the PCC elections in holding hustings around the county and doing their best to raise awareness of the new role.

The open meeting on future provision of policing in Salisbury, held in the Guildhall, was extremely well attended and very engaging. The meeting was a really useful opportunity for us to counter rumour and misinformation about the proposals as well as to reassure people that quality of service and public protection is key for the Constabulary.

We were also able to explain more about the background to the proposal and how it is part of a longer-term plan for the police to share buildings and some services with other public agencies in the county, particularly Wiltshire Council, and the benefits that brings. Looking forward I plan to update the public on this proposal regularly and as significant developments occur. We didn't finish in Salisbury until 9.30 pm.

Thursday 18 July

First thing this morning I attended a conference on rural crime at Leicestershire police headquarters. As I travel to other HQ buildings I recognise that the quality of provision for our staff in Wiltshire is extremely poor. Not that I would be advocating profligacy, but our buildings do look and feel very 1960s. However the conference here in Leicestershire is in an airy lecture theatre.

We heard from the National Farmers' Union on the cost of farming and agri crime; the National Wildlife Crime Unit, who gave us a case study of partnership working to address wildlife crime and shared good practice and initiatives to prevent vehicle and machinery theft.

The Chief Constable and I already meet the representatives of the rural communities on a quarterly basis, but getting a national view of a common problem will be very useful to me when I am looking at future commissioning.

It was good to read a press release this morning from Wiltshire Police about breaking up an organised crime group operating from a lock-up in Westbury. Tractors were among a haul of stolen machinery valued at £365,000.

I would like to add my praise to the local resident who tipped off Wiltshire Police about the presence of an organised crime group in their area, and to the team of officers whose painstaking investigation led to a Polish national being convicted of handling - and plotting to handle - stolen goods.

A PACKED PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS

Posted: Tuesday 30th July 2013

Friday 19 July

A day of meetings, including Swindon Community Safety Partnership, where we are able to agree the funding flows for the year, which was a useful progression.

Every quarter I have a briefing on stop and search. This quarter I had the opportunity also to consider the report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) "Stop and search powers: are the police using them effectively and fairly?" which was published on 9 July. It raised many national issues, but I was pleased to be reassured that there had been progress on the issues identified by the force before it was inspected by HMIC.

Also today the crime figures for the year ending March 2013 were released. They showed that, overall, crime dropped in Wiltshire by 5.6 per cent, broadly in line with the national trend, and that there were 2,000 fewer victims of crime in Wiltshire and Swindon during the period.

Saturday 20 July

It is unusual for locality meetings to be held on a Saturday morning, but this didn't put off a good crowd from attending the Central Swindon locality meeting at the Civic Offices. There were no strategic issues raised and the Neighbourhood Policing Team were able to reassure the residents. I have an action to follow up on the way sex workers are dealt with. There needs to be a way of ensuring that an area does not become blighted by a poor reputation.

Sunday 21 July

An early morning visit to BBC Wiltshire. Am I the only one awake at this hour? I hope not.

Mayor making and mayoral services take place across the county and, whilst I cannot attend every one, I do attend where I am able. So today it was the turn of Trowbridge. The service was very well attended on a hot afternoon, and it was very good to see the young people involved.

Monday 22 July

A get-together first thing with John Glen, MP for Salisbury. Not surprisingly the provision of police services in the city was on the agenda, but I could not add much more to that which we shared at the public meeting.

We both attended a conference called by the Bishop at Sarum College which was exploring ways in which the Church could help offenders and ex offenders, particularly at the prison gate. No firm outcomes but a useful sharing of ideas.

The Commissioner's Monitoring Board, attended by chief officers, was held in Devizes in the afternoon. The accounts were reviewed, as well as stop and search, police integrity and an update on where we are with various staffing matters.

Then it was off to the Wiltshire Assembly in Trowbridge before joining Marlborough Rotary Club as guest speaker.

Tuesday 23 July

Wiltshire is not due to join the National Police Air Service until 2015, but we need to keep a watching brief on how the service is developing across the country, as well as continuing to support the Wiltshire air ambulance as far as possible.

The meeting was followed by an update on my business crime survey, which is now closed. I am grateful to the 150 or so business men and women who found the time to complete my online survey. Arrangements are now being made for the business crime forum at the Corn Exchange in Devizes on the morning of Friday 6 September. If you would like to attend, please complete the [registration form](#).

I try to join a Neighbourhood Policing Team on a consultation once a week, and today involved a quick trip down the road to Edington. The drop-in was well attended by about 15 people, including the chair of the parish council, so I was able to get a good idea of the local issues.

Back to the office, I had my regular meeting with Prof Johns, the independent complaints adjudicator, before hiking off to Swindon to meet the Salvation Army. They have an interesting cycling safety project which they want to progress alongside their social enterprise, Recycle.

The One Swindon Board met from 6pm until 8pm. It is celebrating the support that is being given from Whitehall for community budgets, now renamed public service transformation. The Chief Constable and I will be working up our detailed response, in addition to the work already being done by the Constabulary around an integrated frontline workforce.

Wednesday 24 July

The weather is good here, and I hope it will be where I'm going for an extended weekend. Back on Tuesday to look at the Innovation Fund applications.

FIRST ROUND OF INNOVATION FUND

Posted: Thursday 1st August 2013

Monday 29 July

Back from a short holiday today to a large envelop of applications for the Innovation Fund. There are 26 applications to read, learn and digest before our advisory panel meeting tomorrow.

Tuesday 30 July

Getting to grips with the progress on community campuses across Wiltshire and interested to note that a planning application is being put in for the Salisbury campus. Corsham is being built and so it seemed a good opportunity to spend some time with councillor Jonathon Seed, who is the lead for campuses at Wiltshire Council. I am sure that there are parts of the police estate that would be suitable for our partners in Wiltshire and Swindon to share with us.

In the afternoon I was joined by Wiltshire Council Deputy Leader Councillor John Thomson, Rosemary Macdonald from the Community Foundation for Wiltshire & Swindon and Wiltshire Police Chief Constable Pat Geenty, who formed an advisory panel for the Innovation Fund. Unfortunately the Swindon Borough Council representative was unable to make the meeting. We looked at 26 applications and were able to support 12. It was pleased to be able to provide this grant funding to a range of projects, which support my six main priorities. It also meant we help to 'unlock' another £163,000 of grant funding. My team plan to make a public announcement during Monday afternoon detailing the successful applicants.

In the evening I attended the Swindon North Central Locality meeting, where cyclists riding on pavements was discussed. However before that I was able to give an overview of the last eight months in office which was very well received by the audience, who I have to say are always very appreciative of a visit.

Wednesday 31 July

Today I was in Swindon for the morning, first at BBC Wiltshire for an interview and then to Gablecross police station to meet members of the Specialist Crime Directorate based there. This is part of an on-going series of visits to operational units in the Force and gave me a good insight of their work, which for obvious reasons is not generally in the public domain.

Thursday 1 August

As a member of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) reference group we have a monthly conference call and today we were able to discuss funding of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and relationship between PCCs and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), both of which are interesting and challenging.

This morning I joined Bradford on Avon Neighbourhood Policing Team at a drop-in session. They were giving out crime prevention advice, with the Bobby Van also attending for part of the day. Attending these neighbourhood policing meetings gives me a good opportunity to be available to meet the public at events already taking place throughout the Wiltshire Police area.

In the afternoon the Chief Constable and I had one of our regular meetings with Wiltshire and Swindon councils, where we discuss both the partnership with Wiltshire Council and other matters of mutual interest.

RADIO DOUBLE ACT PROMPTS FLURRY OF CALLS

Posted: Thursday 8th August 2013

Friday 2 August

Some while ago Chief Constable Pat Geenty and I were asked if we would do a joint phone-in on BBC Wiltshire. Today was our first opportunity. Whilst most questions were operational, the level of the precept (police element of the Council Tax) did come up. Interestingly, two callers were not against an increase if visible policing were to improve as a result. The hour flew by and we were told afterwards that the station had received many more calls than they would usually expect. We have been invited back in November. The breadth of my job and, indeed, the Chief Constable's is such that it is impossible to cover every aspect in an hour and I hope that next time we will get questions that allow us to demonstrate the challenges that come with our respective roles.

Later in the day I was given an update on the progress we are making in Wiltshire and Swindon on multi agency safeguarding hubs. This is important work for Wiltshire Police and our partners as it is about the protection of vulnerable people.

Monday 5 August

For the past few months the MP for Swindon South, Robert Buckland, and I have been chairing a small group of interested partners to see how we can promote the night time economy of Swindon and correct a false image. This arose from a very nasty attack that was covered extensively in the press. The coverage gave the impression that such attacks were regular events, which is not the case. As a result of these meetings Robert and I have had meetings with Pubwatch. This evening I met the Old Town Traders' Association who are very keen to promote the area. As part of this effort we are looking at Safe Places (a scheme to offer help to people feeling frail or vulnerable whilst out and about) and Purple Flag (a scheme which indicates places to go for a good, safe night out).

The highlight of the day was the announcement of the successful bidders for my Innovation Fund. Twelve projects aiming to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and support victims are to get grants totalling nearly £400,000 in the first round of my £1 million fund.

Projects being funded include outreach support for teenage abuse victims, community restorative justice, a boxing referral initiative, mentoring for those leaving prison after short term sentences, and a mobile youth club in Swindon which will use a converted supermarket delivery van.

Tuesday 6 August

I have been asked by the Swindon Soroptimists to help with some research they are doing for the Prison Reform Trust around reducing the occurrence of imprisonment for women. They are particularly concerned about the effect of custody on women which can differ from the way it affects men. The issue covers both sentencing and the provision made for women in prison. One issue that concerns me is that, because there

are relatively few women's prisons, they can be a long way from home which brings an added family pressure. I am particularly interested in trying to visit Eden House in Bristol which is a project to divert women from prison and deal with their complex individual issues.

A chance today to visit two Community Speed Watch groups. First to Akers Way in Swindon where some people will remember there was a tragic accident a number of years ago in which several children were killed. Speed on this road, which is adjacent to a school, is still a local issue. I was pleased to see the Neighbourhood Policing Team officers turn up whilst the Speed Watch volunteers were monitoring traffic.

The second visit was to Chitterne in the middle of the county where the issue concerns a busy road through the centre of the village where there is little footpath provision. Whilst working with them we were given a reverse Churchillian salute by two drivers, one of whom was recognised by the volunteers to be a past offender.

I am looking forward to the relaunch of Community Speed Watch in September.

Wednesday 7 August

First thing in the morning I joined the Chief Constable in Salisbury for the start of a day of action named Operation Harness. Today the theme was safety on the roads. On display in the Market Place was a motorbike on which a young lad tragically lost his life. Officers were checking standards of driving and the state of vehicles across Wiltshire and Swindon. During the day:

- One hundred fixed penalty notices were given to drivers who were caught speeding, not wearing a seatbelt or driving whilst using a mobile phone
- More than 150 drivers were breathalysed
- More than 40 rectification notices were served to drivers who now have 7 days to correct defects to their vehicles
- Four vehicles were seized from uninsured drivers and one vehicle was seized for not being roadworthy
- One person was arrested and charged with theft of a motor vehicle, driving without insurance and driving without a licence.

Mid morning I visited the Devenish Nature Reserve near Salisbury where SPLASH were running one of their activity holidays for young people called Wild Wiltshire. Whilst I was there they were learning camping skills. Unfortunately I wasn't able to stay long enough to savour the lunch they were going to be cooking over the open fire they had made. Many of the young people have complex needs and I am very pleased that I have been able to fund additional support for this organisation through an Innovation Fund grant.

From there I went to Aldbourne to meet the Aldbourne Youth Council who were running a play day on the rec. This is apparently a national initiative although there were only two events in Wiltshire. Young people were given the chance to try archery and there were lots of other play activities. Interestingly some young boys who had been to a previous play day some years ago had offered to come and run a football competition.

The reason I was visiting Aldbourne was that the PCC's fund run for me by the Community Foundation for Wiltshire and Swindon had given the Youth Council a grant of £3,000 towards the decoration of their new youth centre. This building had been donated by a villager and has been renovated with the help and planning of young people in the village. It includes a small charity shop which they run and, to give the scheme some income, there is also a holiday let flat which is looked after by the young people, including the cleaning and maintenance. This is a really good project and it was so good to be shown round by the young people who have been involved and have a pride and ownership of it.

Back to the office for my quarterly meeting with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) where we reviewed some of the reports they have written about Wiltshire Police. These are reports which I discuss with the Chief Constable as and when they are produced. I was particularly pleased to note in the most recent report that HMIC was content that the Constabulary was dealing with austerity in a realistic way.

Thursday 8 August

In the morning I attended the Salisbury Pub Watch group monthly meeting. This is where they discuss those who have been causing trouble in the pubs and clubs of Salisbury and who should be banned. An interesting initiative they talked about concerns under-age drinkers who are stopped at the door. Pub Watch is looking at a community resolution in which these young people are invited with their parents to attend and be given the opportunity to apologise to the landlords.

The rest of the day was taken up with internal meetings.

BACK AFTER LEAVE AND SAD PERSONAL NEWS THIS WEEK

Posted: Friday 23rd August 2013

Friday 9 August

I'm having next week off, so Friday has been taken up with meetings in the office getting ready prior to my leave.

Monday 19 August

Back from a week off. It was unfortunate that I was away for the announcement that we were not going to be able to achieve the relocation of policing services in Salisbury to allow the University Technical College (UTC) to open this year. From the outset I said it was a brave decision to try, and I'm pleased that we have tried and recognised that service might have been compromised by the time scale. It will still happen and in the great scheme of things we will still achieve our aims for Salisbury both for policing and education.

The diary planning has given me a full day in the office. My first Victims Forum will be held on Thursday 19 September and I had an update from Victim Support which is making the arrangements. I also had my monthly briefing on complaints. I'm pleased to see that those relating to incivility continue to drop. New initiatives are now in the pipeline to improve accountability of the process.

My next public performance meeting is in Salisbury on Tuesday 10 September. This will cover all the organisations who are funded through the office and isn't a police only event. Performance presentations can be a bit dry, so we are looking of ways of making it more engaging.

My monitoring board is held every two weeks, and this afternoon was spent looking at the accounts for the year to date. Time flies, and next month I will have to start planning for next year's budget and the medium term forecast of our future finances. Not surprisingly we spend quite a lot of time talking about the police estate. I hope that we will be in a position to publish some further proposals shortly, especially those aimed at making the facilities better for the staff and areas where there has been some underinvestment in my opinion.

Thursday 22 August

When the proposals for the new office of PCC were announced, the first thing my father said was that "you're too old". Thanks I thought!

Perhaps it was his intention to challenge me to stand, because he has been a rock. Sadly he passed away this morning, and so I lose a father, a friend and a 'behind the scenes' member of the office.

His experience in local government and politics was invaluable in preparing for the role. What most people don't realise is that the office of PCC is not a straight swop for the old police authority. It is a different role, but there is a perceived constraint that we must operate within the costs of the old authority. Having my father to act as a sounding board for ideas, policies and actions has been an invaluable addition to the excellent office staff.

Just last night we talked about the provision of housing for released prisoners. I'll have to find someone else to help keep an eye on the national scene and to remind me to do up my jacket button when there is a photographer around!

I'm going to have tomorrow off, but I did feel I had to host the reception for those who have been commissioned under the Innovation Fund. It was good for them to meet each other, and while I didn't stay too long, I left a good networking session in progress. You can now see a photo from the event on my [Facebook page](#) which is now up and running.

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