

## **POLICE AND CRIME PANEL**

### **6<sup>th</sup> February 2014**

#### **Introduction**

This report sets out a summary of the commitments I have undertaken since the last Police and Crime Panel meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2014. 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](http://www.wiltshire-pcc.gov.uk)) and the content of these blogs is copied below for the Panel's information.

#### **PRE CHRISTMAS BLOG**

Posted: Thursday 2nd January 2014

##### **Friday 13 December**

New contracts for drug services have been given out in Swindon and today was the first opportunity I have had to visit CRI in Swindon. The service is provided in a different way to the forerunner so it will be interesting to see the stats over time. I'm pleased that they do not just want to put people on a maintenance routine, but equally recognise that recovery can be a long haul.

From there I attended the Community Safety Partnership meeting in Trowbridge. I'm really pleased to read the minute of their last meeting in which they recognise the need for strategies across Swindon and Wiltshire for some activities, which is certainly how I would wish to approach commissioning next year.

Back to Devizes for updates on IT and gate crime, both serious areas of work in differing ways.

##### **Sunday 15 December**

Salisbury Cathedral is impressive at any time, but with over a 100 voices belting out Christmas carols it was very moving, especially the junior choir. This was all part of the BBC carol service which will be broadcast on Christmas Eve and Christmas day. Felt like the start of Christmas.

##### **Monday 16 December**

I think, for today, I'll just list the diary and let the reader guess!

8.30am - Chair of Police and Crime Panel brief  
9.30am - Neighbourhood Watch project managers  
10am - Freedom of Information request briefing  
10.30am - Visit from the Home Office transformation team regarding probation reform  
12noon - Force performance review  
1.30pm - Correspondence  
2pm - Finance and budget review with officers  
3pm - Meeting with review of PACE petition  
4.30pm - Victim commissioning planning

##### **Tuesday 17 December**

The One Swindon board is always a full day, but as the projects come together the interdependences become more clear too so it is time well spent. I will be doing my independent domestic violence adviser review after Christmas which links in with this work, but there was also some links we could make with health around communications and a really good paper on a multi agency town centre team, exactly per the Police and Crime Plan.

All that said I had to leave early to get to the Wiltshire Cabinet Transformation Board. There were some good stories around system thinking reviews and I'm looking forward to my training in the new year.

##### **Wednesday 18 December**

I will be spending the Christmas break on preparing the precept (police and crime element of council tax) speech and presentation for the next year. Today we have the spending review details and it seems I am to lose more than I thought. In addition to top slicing for the government's innovation fund and the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) an extra slice has been taken for Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC). Overall the funding reduction for Wiltshire was 4.34 per cent, and given the savings

that have been made, and taking account of those planned, I can't help feeling that I will be looking for an increase in the precept of the police and crime element of council tax.

In the afternoon I attended the Wiltshire Criminal Justice Board. A slightly sad occasion as the closure of the probation trust in Wiltshire was explained. However, looking at the positive there was full support for a meeting with the registered social landlords in Wiltshire to see what their take is on their responsibility to the community in providing housing for offenders is.

#### **Thursday 19 December**

Good to welcome new members of the audit committee to this businesslike meeting. This was followed by a meeting of the Ethics Committee. I have been asked to join as the work progresses, but whether the PCC will be a regular fixture when the system is mature is still being debated. Good to hear that everyone wanted publicity both internally and externally around anyone who is dismissed from the service, and that the College of Policing are taking a lead in ensuring that those who are dismissed or leave whilst under investigation don't subsequently turn up in another force.

Blog readers will know that I meet the council leaders every month. Amongst other things on the agenda today was the late night levies. These are made on licensed premises and are there to compensate both the council and the PCC, police, for the additional costs of policing the so called 'night time economy'. I will be meeting with chairs of the two licensing committees in the new year to get their views. In Newcastle it is raising a good sum of money to compensate the costs.

Christmas present evening at the soup run in Swindon and I was called in as the duty driver was stuck on the motorway. Clients very appreciative of the gifts of chocolate, gloves etc provided by some of the churches.

#### **Friday 20 December**

An update on the estate and a chance to give my ideas to the Deputy Chief Constable about how it should develop was followed by a meeting with the Inspector in charge of custody. It was timely to hear her take on the drugs intervention programme support in custody having met the providers in the last couple of weeks.

I wish I could say that Corporate Management Board was in festive mood, but the cuts are greater than had been expected, so the force is under pressure. The Chief will be announcing that he will be phasing out the position of Chief Inspectors, in a move to make the management structure flatter and more cost effective. This has my full support.

The Neighborhood Watch project board met in the afternoon and we are now in a position to move forward. I have asked for monthly meetings and now having decided the direction of travel I want to get some momentum behind the re-launch.

I joined the police teams in Salisbury at 11pm to see the activity in 'club land'. However we never made it, being called to two domestic violent incidents, one driven by eight pints of lager, which took us through to the team's end of shift.

#### **Saturday 21 December**

At 10.30pm I joined the police in down town Swindon. It was pleasing to see the Chair of the licensing committee out as well, but it was a quiet night by any standard. We were joined by a drugs dog and there were a couple of cannabis warnings, but the overall impression was that it was quiet.

I will be in the office on and off over the break, but no blogging until the new year, so Happy Christmas and health and safe new year to all.

## **BACK TO BUSINESS WITH A BANG**

Posted: Tuesday 14th January 2014

#### **Monday 6 January**

I hope readers had a good Christmas break. I was in the office on some of the days and took the opportunity to go out with police officers in Salisbury and Swindon, but I also managed to spend two very enjoyable days ganderflanking\* with my family.

The weather seems to dominate. Whilst "PC Rain" quietened the night time economy it also brought hardship to many of our residents. I'm told that drivers just ignore road closed signs, adding to the misery of those who have floods close to their houses. The season of goodwill is over.

The new year started early for me with a 7.30am speaking engagement in the south of the county at the men's fellowship group in Warminster.

Then it was back to the office to discuss the volunteering strategy of the constabulary and the wider implementation of my Police and Crime Plan. When you look around there is so much volunteering going on. But it has to be more than just membership.

Consultation on the police and crime element of the council tax (known as the precept) starts today. I am proposing an increase of around £3 for an average property. This translates to a range from £2.10 to £6.30 a year, and is designed to protect frontline local policing. Lunchtime was spent doing back-to-back media interviews. Then there was a chance to share my proposals with the Chief Constable and his team, as well as to practise the presentation I will be using at area boards and localities.

After a drive-time interview with BBC Wiltshire, it was off to Chippenham for the area board. Home by 9pm which, given a 6.30am start, was an easy introduction to the new year!

### **Tuesday 7 January**

An office day. I trawled through police performance figures, prepared for the Victims' Forum on Friday and wrote a speech for the Ministry of Justice next week. My colleague in Dorset has invited me to join him on a visit to the Policing Minister next week, so more research is required into how our Neighbourhood Justice Panels are doing.

### **Wednesday 8 January**

The Chief Constable and I had our quarterly meeting with the National Farmers' Union and the Country Land and Business Association (CLA). I'm pleased they are supporting my plans for a rural crime survey and we will also be holding two rural crime conferences later in the year, in the north and south of the county. I was very pleased to hear the Chief Constable talking about the recruitment of specials from the rural community. Very encouraging.

### **Thursday 9 January**

Community Speed Watch is now growing in an orderly and supported fashion. We had an update from the team, and I'm very happy with how it is going. An interesting thought was about the letters which are sent to errant drivers. We discussed who should sign the letters. But I'm tempted to preprint the envelopes with "Swindon and Wiltshire Community Speed Watch" on the front.

The briefing was followed by one on roads policing and, in particular, the number of people killed and seriously injured. A total of 23 in Wiltshire last year bucks the regional trend. Our education programmes are robust, and I will continue to support them and other initiatives to make our roads safer.

At lunch time I visited Doorway in Chippenham, a drop-in centre for homeless and vulnerable adults. Doorway received £9,000 from my Innovation Fund towards the drop-in sessions. I was pleased to speak to staff, volunteers and guests.

In the evening I attended Salisbury area board to talk about the precept. Another long day.

### **Friday 10 January**

My Innovation Fund has supported Splash, which helps to reduce anti-social and negative behaviour by providing inspiring activities for young people during the school holidays. I was pleased to visit the Splash team this morning and to meet the two new members of staff whose posts I am funding.

Mid morning I held a Victims' Forum in Trowbridge where the question was 'why do victims not report crime?' We then asked for solutions. I look forward to reading the distillation of the thoughts. It was certainly an informative session with good input from black and minority ethnic delegates.

Where Community Safety Partnerships sit in the new world is still an issue for all Police and Crime Commissioners. I hope that bringing together the two boards in Swindon and Wiltshire will broker a better and closer working relationship.

Looking forward to the weekend. The first week back after the break has been very full on!

(\*Ganderflanking is an old Wiltshire word for aimless messing around)

## IN SALISBURY FOR ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS AND DISCUSSIONS ON ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

Posted: Monday 20th January 2014

### Monday 13 January

Monday morning 8am in Salisbury for a discussion on ethics and integrity. It is not surprising that this is on the agenda for all PCCs and many are setting up independent boards to look at the Constabulary. Work on the Wiltshire model continues and I am sitting on the project board. I don't think that I should be there in the long term once the new scheme is set up. This is interesting work and exactly the sort of thing that we should have some support from the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) on, as effort across the country, in investigating local solutions must be enormous.

The Chief and senior managers are holding a series of briefings with staff in Salisbury about the progress on estate changes there. I don't yet know what topics at all the meetings has been, and there are more to come, but this one was dominated by parking. However the project team seems to have addressed this. Our staff are very lucky that parking is available at so many locations across our estate.

Back to Devizes for a series of briefings, from Victim Support, finance and a session on police performance. There has been quite a lot about recording of crime in the papers. This is an area which I do believe the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) have a role to play and the expertise to comment. I am hearted that we are reviewing our procedures again to ensure that crime is correctly recorded. For my part I think the best contribution I can make is to ensure the Police and Crime Plan does not encourage or influence perverse or inaccurate reporting.

My first area board of the week in Pewsey. I was speaking at the weekend around that area, so some may have heard it before!. Mixed reaction of the £3.15 increase, but on balance I think it is supported. Time will tell.

### Tuesday 14 January

My quarterly meeting with Chairs of the Adult and Children Safeguarding Boards. I hadn't appreciated that the adult board was not statutory, but that will change in the later in the year. We talked about protecting the number of police staff in public protection units, child sexual exploitation and links between the Community Safety Partnerships and safeguarding.

Then on a train to London to meet Martyn Underhill the PCC from Dorset. With his MP, Oliver Letwin, we had a meeting with Damian Green, the policing minister. It was primarily about neighbourhood justice panels. We are ahead of Dorset, but our issues are the same. We both want the minister to consider extending the scope of the panels. We also expressed our continuing concerns over the distance that victims and witnesses have to travel to court. Notwithstanding video links being established, we both still feel that with technology, and certainly for cases where a secure 'dock' is not required, the court could be peripatetic i.e. based in various places for short periods. Also mentioned was the funding of appropriate adults, before the bell rang and the MPs all trooped off to vote. We exited against the flow and spotted lots of well known faces.

A short walk across the park took us to the Ministry of Justice where we spoke to the Academy of Justice Commissioning. As part of my preparation for the role I attended several of their meetings and did the 'A to Z' course that they sponsor. I'm told their website, <http://www.academyforjusticecommissioning.org.uk/index.php>, will have the speeches. They certainly were filmed.

### Wednesday 15 January

In advance of my briefing to the Police and Crime Panel, the BBC interviewed me about the proposed increase in the precept. My presentation to the Police and Crime Panel was the same as that I'm using at the area boards and localities. It was useful to have some technical feedback on the script, which we can now adjust. We also showed a film on restorative justice and I was able to share with the panel the news from the minister following my meeting yesterday.

Following the meeting, it was a long drive to Salisbury, due to the continuing flooding, for another staff briefing. Parking does seem to be a dominate issue together with personal space at work. The new working methods will be a culture change. The organisation has been used to space.

### Thursday 16 January

I'm a great supporter of the Health and Wellbeing Boards, but it is a struggle to learn a whole new language especially when the agenda is very health orientated rather than the well being agenda. However the Deputy Chief Constable and I were able to add our "10penth" to the debate.

Eric Pickles is in the county. Apparently he is the person who sets the level at which a precept has to be call. Not sure how this sits with localism and as my funding has moved from his department to the Home Office. This seems to be a link that should have been removed at the same time as that change was made. On the positive I am hearing that the freeze grant may be consolidated, which would be good news.

This sort of uncertainly over the grants makes speaking with conviction difficult! I was nearly drowned out at the Trowbridge Area Board at County Hall by the rain on the roof. Anyway, again, I didn't get the vibe of major opposition, but we must wait for the feedback. Quite a number of questions about getting grants from the [Innovation Fund](#) or the Police and Crime Fund in the Community Foundation, so here is the link for that again. <http://www.wscf.org.uk/>.

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