



POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

11th June 2014

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 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) and the content of these blogs is copied below for the Panel's information.

IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK

Posted: Thursday 17th July 2014

My last blog dealt with the week ending 22 May. Quite a lot has happened in the intervening seven weeks ...

In the week ending 30 May I had four days' leave and visited Versailles with my wife. I returned to the office on the Thursday for a series of briefings.

On Friday 30 May I made a scheduled visit to Trowbridge to meet the MP for South West Wiltshire, Dr Andrew Murrison. It was during this meeting that my heart stopped. Thanks to the prompt intervention of Dr Murrison and the arrival of the air ambulance I was swiftly on my way to the Royal United Hospital in Bath.

Having established the problem the cardiac unit transferred me temporarily to the Great Western Hospital in Swindon to have installed a cardioverter/defibrillator, which is an advanced version of a pacemaker.

I should say that I have no clear recollection of the days before the event or of the event itself.

Thanks are due to Dr Murrison, the air ambulance staff and the staff at both hospitals. I must also thank the many people from across Wiltshire and Swindon who took the trouble to send cards, flowers, emails and even tweets to wish me well. This meant a lot to me.

At the beginning of July I was given clearance by the doctors for a phased return to work. At the time of writing this amounts to two days a week.

For the past couple of weeks I have been going one day a week to the Swindon branch of a charity called Headway who specialise in the recuperation of those who have had a range of conditions affecting their memory.

These sessions have been very useful as a way of ensuring that I am fit to return to work. They use a range of puzzles and group work to sharpen your memory. They are dealing with people who attend long-term and people like me who only need a few sessions. I have been very impressed by the dedication of the staff and the friendly, supportive ethos.

I was pleased to see the Bobby Van visit Headway to give a crime prevention talk and answer individual questions.

Since I've been back in the office I have attended several meetings with the constabulary and am pleased to have chaired the Commissioner's Monitoring Board which brings together chief officers and my senior staff. It is clear to me that the structures we have put in place in the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner are sufficiently robust to deal with a short absence.

It was great to go to the attestation ceremony for the Volunteer Police Cadets at Gablecross Police Station in Swindon and to meet both the cadets and their parents. I look forward to the scheme being widened to cover the rest of Wiltshire.

It was good to hear that the move out of Wilton Road Police Station in Salisbury to Bourne Hill has gone so smoothly. There are still minor things to sort out, but it is already clear that police officers and the public appreciate having a police station in the centre of the city.

This afternoon (Thursday 17 July) I am visiting Swindon to look at the relocation of the town centre police presence into the civic offices campus.

All in all, I am very pleased with everything that has been done whilst I have been temporarily out of action.

GETTING BACK INTO THE SWING OF THINGS

Posted: Thursday 31st July 2014

Having been back in circulation for some days, this week was booked as annual leave. In fact, I spent it at Marlborough Summer School painting watercolours, but as ever keeping in touch via email and twitter.

It is good to hear the new Crime and Communication Centre at Devizes headquarters is nearing completion and I'm looking forward to visiting it next week.

Having visited the new town centre base for Swindon Police last week, I took the opportunity to visit their old base in Henry Street. We are entering a time of more collegiate working with our council partners in Swindon and Wiltshire.

I will be visiting the new Bourne Hill Police Station in Salisbury shortly, not least to look into some of the Twitter comments about joined-up working. Experience tells me to check out what is being said before reacting.

I think we recognise the need for sensitive information and conversations to be protected, but our requirements are not generally more, or less, than those of social workers and revenue officers.

A BUSY FEW DAYS

Posted: Monday 4th August 2014

Week ending 2 August 2014

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) have been at Wiltshire Police during the week, looking at police integrity and corruption. I fear that HMIC's inspection regime is something of a moving target and I understand that the whole agenda is still developing within the mind of the Home Secretary. However, with my Independent Appeals Adjudicator Professor Allan Johns, I gave my input to the inspection team on Tuesday morning and by Thursday we had a 'hot debrief'. Recognising the magnitude of change, both physically and within the ethos of the Force, I believe we have done very well. But I also recognise that there is some further work to do, much of which will develop over time as the new ethos and processes become embedded. It was good to have recognition of our change from being a solely target-driven organisation to one which is also guided by ethics and values. The final report is some weeks away but I believe we passed muster.

On Tuesday I was also briefed on the Swindon and Wiltshire Community Messaging system which my office is working with Neighbourhood Watch to roll out across the county. Initially there are four Neighbourhood Policing Team areas where it is going to be launched; Malmesbury, Warminster, Swindon West and Pewsey before being rolled wider.

My second day in work I spent at County Hall at the Wiltshire Health and Wellbeing Board. The board is going through a peer review and we were invited to give some input into what the board should look at. It is interesting for me as a member of two health and wellbeing boards, the other being Swindon, to see the different ways in which they are developing. This is a national trend and I hope that the peer review will give us a firm insight into the experiences of others.

Regrettably I didn't get time this week to visit Salisbury, but I am pleased that we have now signed the sale agreement on the old Wilton Road Police Station with Wiltshire Council for the provision of a University Technical College in the south of the county.

I am not able to attend the Neighbourhood Watch annual meeting being held at the Police Headquarters on Saturday morning but I wish them every success in their meeting.

This weekend marks the centenary of the start of the First World War. I am in discussion with the Chief Constable and the Force Chaplain to make sure that we appropriately remember the sacrifice of Wiltshire officers and staff at a suitable point during the year.

A CAUSE FOR PRIDE

Posted: Tuesday 12th August 2014

Week ending Saturday 9th August

This week I had a briefing with the performance team. It is pleasing that there continues to be a fall in crime, but these statistics must be treated with care. I would refer the reader to an article I read in The Magistrate Magazine, written by Joanna Shapland and Stephen Farrall of University of Sheffield. They note that whilst police records show a fall, there is evidence that other sorts of victimisation such as online crime and fraud are on the rise and that the criminal justice system has not really got a handle on this. Recent research at Kent University ([Survey on Cyber Security 2013](#)) gives an insight to what is under the radar.

Locally there is still concern over violent assaults, many of which happen in private. The question is “is this a real increase in incidents or that more victims are coming forward to report what has happened to them”. Clearly there is more work to be done on this subject.

It is also good to be back in the Chair of the Commissioner’s Monitoring Board, with a good, broad meeting this week.

Later in the week I had one of my regular meetings with Superintendent Marion Deegan, whose portfolio covers licensing and much of the Force’s engagement in prevention and offender management. Marion gave me an update on Splash, Bluez & Zuz, Outboxing, Police Cadets and the Bobby Van. There is quite a lot happening around licensing, which is good as the Police and Crime Panel want to look at this next month.

Following this meeting I was interviewed for the internal Wiltshire Police magazine about my time off and the effects my heart condition has had. Then I got the opportunity to go to Filton and meet the crew of the Great Western Air Ambulance that airlifted me to Royal United Hospital after I fell ill in May. It was good to meet them and have a chance to thank some of those involved in the whole episode. (Below is me with John Wood (left) and James Tooley).



On Saturday I was delighted to attend the Swindon and Wiltshire Pride event in Old Town Swindon. It was good to see the constabulary so well represented in the parade. It was also an excellent chance for me to meet some of the organisations which I have funded, such as the Intercom Trust (a charity which supports lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the South West), Swindon Women’s Aid and Swindon’s Fresh Moves Project. (Below is me with Wiltshire Officers and the Police Cadets at the event).



Then, after spending some time at the WW1 exhibition at the [Swindon Museum and Art Gallery](#), I visited several of the exhibitions around Swindon Town Centre marking the anniversary of the start of the First World War.

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