

**ISSUES RAISED AND ACTIONS FROM THE COMMISSIONER'S
MEETING WITH PARISH COUNCILS IN CHESHIRE WEST &
CHESTER, 30 JULY 2015
AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE, TARVIN**



The Commissioner reported on the Constabulary's performance which had seen continued reductions in anti-social behaviour and crime which was at its lowest level for 25 years; the recruitment of 53 extra police officers by March 2016; and the developments in information technology which included the roll-out of I-pads to police officers by the autumn. The implementation of a new policing model from 6 July 2015 resulted in the creation of 8 local policing units rather than the previous 19 and the redeployment of 130 officers into neighbourhood policing; and maintaining the funding of the current 220 PCSOs. Under the new model, a designated Beat Constable and PCSO would be assigned to every ward to work predominantly in that area, minimising possible abstractions, and in addition the Chief Constable wanted to allocate a Special Constable to each ward.

Chief Inspector Meegan gave a briefing on the new model and the changes which would see police officers, PCSOs and special constables being deployed from a base in either Chester, Ellesmere Port or Northwich. This would ensure more effective tasking and intelligence sharing and the greater flexibility provided by larger teams to enable a greater focus on the needs of the local community. The Commissioner advised that he would be scrutinising the performance of the new model and challenging the Chief Constable to ensure it delivered improvements.

The following issues were raised about the new policing model:-

1 What would happen to the Police Stations?

Response: The Commissioner advised that they were still operational as they had help desks and contact points located at many of them.

2 How will the changes impact on Parish Council funded PCSOs?

Response: The Commissioner advised that PCSOs would remain aligned to the Parish which currently part funded them, and would only be abstracted for major operational issues. Those PCSOs that were not funded may be abstracted elsewhere if deemed necessary. The Commissioner added that the FOXI system would enable the Constabulary to specifically monitor an officer's location and provide data on how long they spent on patrol or were at a specific incident. Hand held radios were chipped so that the officer nearest to the scene of an incident could be deployed, if they had the appropriate skills. There was a baseline, against which the new model would aim to increase the hours on patrol.

The following issues were raised by the Parish Council representatives in attendance at the meeting:-

3 Malpas Parish Council – advised that they currently shared a PCSO with Farndon but did not know who it was.

Response: The Commissioner advised that the PCSO for each area was published on the Constabulary's website – www.cheshire.police.uk

4 Saughall Parish Council – felt that the Constabulary needed to raise public awareness about the role and remit of PCSOs.

5 Northwich Town Council – what additional support did PCSOs have?

Response:- Chief Inspector Meegan advised that PCSOs were a visible resource, who engaged with the local community. They were not used as police officers and whilst they had some delegated powers, PCSOs were focused on developing local relations and providing valuable local intelligence as they knew their neighbourhoods well. PCSOs were able to call on the support of police officers if needed.

The Commissioner added that there were also over 450 Special Constables in the Constabulary, which was the highest per head of regular officer in the North West, which assisted in policing.

6 Puddington Parish Council – commented about the lack of feedback given to a victim of a burglary in Shotwick.

7 Utkinton and Cotebrook Parish Council – expressed concern about the third change of PCSO within six months, which they felt was not very reassuring for the local community.

8 Tarvin Parish Council – enquired about what action could be taken to reduce the number of road traffic collisions at the Tarvin junction on the A51.

Response:- The Commissioner agreed to raise the matter with the Roads Policing Unit.

Chief Inspector Meegan advised that the Highways Department held data on the number of road traffic collisions and that a joint approach was required with Police enforcement and prevention and the local authority for the road design.

9 Concern was expressed about the number of road closures associated with the Car Fest event and the subsequent chaos for local residents.

Response:- Chief Inspector Meegan accepted it was a temporary inconvenience to local residents, but not a police decision. All the road closures were being managed by stewards.

10 Malpas Parish Council – expressed concern about (a) speeding on Chester Road and (b) the indiscriminate parking of vehicles on double yellow lines/bus stops and road junctions in the village.

Response:- The Commissioner advised that in relation to (a) agreed to raise the issue with the Roads Policing Unit; and (b) the Parish Council should write to the Borough Council who were responsible for enforcing parking restrictions.

11 Oscroft Parish Council – advised that they had an excellent relationship with the Police and the Council's Highways Department, however they were awaiting a response from the Police in relation to the data on traffic speeds, vehicles, etc which had been submitted some time ago.

Response:- The Commissioner agreed to raise the issue with the Roads Policing Unit.

12 Helsby Parish Council – reported that the Police did not take any enforcement action on the information/data that had been obtained from their Speed Investigation Device (SID), however the local PCSO wished to do so, but was unable.

Response:- The Commissioner agreed to raise the issue with the Roads Policing Unit.

Inspector of the Roads Policing Unit response:- The complaint of speeding has been fed into the Speed Management Process and there will be enforcement activity taking place. The Roads Policing Unit and Camera Safety partnership will be engaging in education and enforcement activity. The activity will be monitored on the Roads Policing Team site and will be reviewed in 3 months.

13 Bostock Parish Council – expressed concern about speeding in the village and requested a meeting with the Police to consider what action can be taken.

Response:- Chief Inspector Meegan agreed to pursue the request and has emailed the questioner/Parish Council and is awaiting a reply.

14 Anderton & Marbury Parish Council – concern was expressed about a road in the village (which due to its 'C' category would not meet the criteria for a speed camera) becoming a major route to serve 2,500 new homes being constructed in Winnington.

15 Little Budworth Parish Council – advised that they had approached the Highways Department about reducing the current speed limit on the A51.

The following other issues were also discussed:-

16 What was the Police's view of 20mph speed limits?

Response:- The Commissioner advised that the imposition of a 20 mph speed limit required more than just changing signage, traffic calming measures such as humps/changes in colour of road surfaces were also required to support the reduction. There was a need to justify the

reduction in the limit. Chief Inspector Meegan advised that the Police did carry out enforcement and education in order to change drivers' behaviour.

17 A request for a Police Officer/PCSO to attend Parish Council meetings.

Response:- The Commissioner responded that whilst it was important to maintain interaction between the Constabulary and the local community it was not practical for a police officer and/or a PCSO to attend every meeting.

Chief Inspector Meegan advised that the local PCSO should submit a report if they were unable to attend the meeting.

18 Concern was expressed about a Saughall resident when reporting a snake that she had found in her home, the Call Handler did not know what action she should take.

Response:- The Commissioner asked the questioner to provide him with further details to enable the matter to be investigated.

19 What savings had the Commissioner achieved?

Response:- The Commissioner advised that the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review due in November would require cuts in the region of £8-9m to be made in the 2016-17 budget. £5m savings had been achieved from the 'root and branch' review of the Constabulary which was instigated by the Commissioner. Significant savings had also been achieved by collaboration and working with other forces and partner agencies. The focus was to protect frontline policing and increase visibility in the local communities with an establishment of 1983 police officers by March 2016 and the current 220 PCSOs.