



**POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER**
for Leicestershire

Prevention | Partnership | Protection

Our ref: PCC2/D

Date: 9 October 2017

Julie Robinson
Head of Neighbourhood Services
Charnwood Borough Council
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Dear Julie

Re: Police and Crime Panel 3 October 2017

Thank you for your question to the Police and Crime Panel, sent on the 11 September 2017 and received on the 29 September 2017.

Neighborhood Policing is a huge priority with the police force and myself. It was one of my key priorities when I stood for office. I was disappointed to hear your comments from local residents in Charnwood and their concerns about this vital area of local policing.

As you may be aware, both Cllr Snartt and Cllr Slater were present at the Police and Crime Panel on the 3 October 2017. They heard directly both from Assistant Chief Constable (ACC), Rob Nixon and myself on the points raised within your question. ACC Nixon reiterated how the force remains committed to a real improvement in the policing of rural communities with a consistent retention of resources allocated to the Neighborhood Policing establishment. In addition, ACC Nixon talked about the operational changes which are about to be introduced, with specific regard to how policing is carried out in rural areas. This will lead to a decentralisation of demand and investigative resources, and will lead to improvements in dealing with rural crime.

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ACC Nixon went on to add that within the Force, there is a growing importance placed on policing in rural areas, with increased emphasis on force tasking mechanisms and the continuation of strong links with existing and new partner agencies and the CSPs. Further collaboration with community groups, alongside the involvement of more volunteers in the process of problem solving, continues and includes local Neighborhood Watch Groups.

My Police and Crime Plan prioritises maintaining Police Officer numbers as far as possible within the resources available to me. In fact, during 2016/17, a further 8 officers were added to neighborhood policing, increasing Police Officer establishment to 1,782.

However, the unprecedented levels of demand placed on Leicestershire Police have meant that great strain is placed on these precious and increasingly scarce resources. I am in regular discussion with the Chief Constable on the very issue of resource deployment and how I can best assist him in this. In that regard, the Chief Constable has designed and is implementing “Op Darwin”, decentralising investigative resources to neighborhoods to support the move to further localisation. ACC Nixon described this in more detail at the Police and Crime Panel meeting.

With so many priorities for the Police; increasing demand and not enough resources, I have been particularly vocal both locally and nationally on the very serious funding challenges facing Leicestershire Police over the Medium Term. Since 2009, this has resulted in financial reductions of over £38m, and over 500 officers (more than 23%).

Between 2006 and 2017 Police officer numbers have reduced from 1 officer per 430 residents to 1 officer per 601 residents. Over the next four years, the Medium Term Plan highlights that if things continue as anticipated, by 2021/22 there will be further savings of over £10.4m to be found. With over 75% of force spending on staff, there are very few other areas for such a high level of savings to be found.

The Chief Constable and I have been actively seeking to increase engagement with partners and stakeholders both locally and nationally and this has included meetings with local Members of Parliament, with Nick Hurd MP, the Policing Minister. Meetings have recently been held with both Parish Councils and local Community Safety Partnerships (CSP's), which covered these key issues. I intend to continue with the regular CSP meetings and I hope that co-ordinators and chairs continue to raise these issues with me.



In terms of both the review on policing and communication that are highlighted in your question, I ask you to bear with the Force whilst they implement Darwin, in order that the impact of the decentralised way of working can be implemented and embedded. I suggest that this is monitored both by the Police and Crime Panel, by a future report to the Panel and at future meetings with Community Safety Partnerships.

Thank you for taking the time to raise your question regarding resident's concerns, I hope the actions outlined in this letter give you some reassurance of the priority both the Chief Constable and I place on local policing and how these actions are being taken forward.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Willy Bach". Below the signature is a blue horizontal line.

Lord Willy Bach
Police and Crime Commissioner

Cc
Cllr David Snartt
Cllr David Slater
Police and Crime Panel Members, via Euan Walters, Democratic Services,
Leicestershire County Council

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