



**POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER**
For Leicester,
Leicestershire & Rutland

Your Communities - Your Commissioner

Police and Crime Panel

September 2024

Neighbourhood Policing

Report Date	September 2024
Report Author	Lizzie Starr, Director of Performance and Governance
Security Classification	Official

Purpose of Report

1. In his role as the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) the Commissioner is required to establish a Police and Crime Plan and deliver such a plan and bring together community safety and criminal justice partners to make sure local priorities are joined up.
2. The PCC brings this report to outline for the Police and Crime Panel how he is fulfilling his duty to hold the chief constable to account for the policing of neighbourhoods.

Request of the Panel

3. In their role to scrutinise the actions and decisions of the PCC, the Commissioner requests that the panel examines the contents of this report. He would specifically like to ask the panel their opinion on the following questions;
 - a. Is the Panel supportive of the work update provided by the PCC?
 - b. Would the panel like to make any recommendations to the PCC in relation to any of the work outlined within the report?

Summary

4. It is the opinion of the PCC that the Chief Constable is prioritising neighbourhood policing, but that there is still work to do to ensure that local communities and their representatives know what to expect. As such the PCC will continue to ensure that Neighbourhood Policing is prioritised across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. It will be an integral part of his new Police and Crime Plan.

Background, Relevant Data and Trends

Neighbourhood Policing

5. The PCC sees Neighbourhood Policing as the cornerstone of the policing service across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. As such he requested that the Chief Constable bring a paper to Corporate Governance Board (CGB) detailing how this was being made a priority within the force. The discussion at CGB highlighted that:
 - a. The Chief Constable also saw Neighbourhood Policing as a priority and as such protected the numbers of officers allocated to neighbourhoods.
 - b. That increased demand was impacting on the abstraction rates of officers from neighbourhoods to be able to respond to other activity.
 - c. That ongoing financial pressures, although avoided to date, could start to impact on the model in place across LLR.
 - d. That the Chief Constable was encouraging new and innovative ways for the Force to be efficient in this area.
6. More detail on these points are covered in the sections below.

Neighbourhood Officers

7. The force commitment to neighbourhood policing has remained the same as it was following the last 2015 change programme, which was driven by public sector austerity cuts. Despite significant efficiency savings carried out year on year, our allocated resources have remained consistent throughout all other internal changes.
8. Across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland we have made the most of the uplift funding provided by the Government to employ more Police Officers. Local Neighbourhood Policing has been a key deliverable of my Police and Crime Plan and as outlined within that I was pleased to endorse the Chief Constable's proposed refresh of Neighbourhood Policing Strategy for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland in 2022.
9. The number of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) dedicated to neighbourhood policing has risen from 181 in 2018 to 200 and the number of Neighbourhood Officers has risen from 151 in 2018 to 175. Although it should be noted that the actual number in the organisation at any one-time will vary depending on vacancies.
10. Due to the fiscal challenge and the force requirement to overcome a £5.4m budget deficit in 2023/24 and a £8.6m budget deficit in 2024/25 it may be necessary, in the coming years, to revisit the numbers allocated to neighbourhood policing.

Increasing Demand:

11. The role of Neighbourhood Policing remains as important as ever, but policing has become more complex due to changing crime types, international to local events, more complex interactions between communities and increased expectation on policing services due to increased threat and harm.
12. The broad and varying demands on time have a significant impact on the demand of the Neighbourhood Policing Team. For example, adopting additional expectations such as the National Operation Bridger requirements, to ensure defence of democracy through improved engagement and visibility with MPs and improving safe spaces for women and girls through commitment of resources to the Nighttime Economy, through Operation Vigilant.
13. These are exceptionally important priorities but still add up to an additional demand that must be met.

14. In addition, the challenges of increased policing presence linked to planned events, protests and assemblies remain one of the most significant impacts on local policing, alongside the Neighbourhood Policing presence at football matches and other events.
15. Neighbourhood officers support force operations, protests and events as this is essential to ensure a local response which maintains good dialogue with communities, organisers, partners and key stakeholders. This can in some cases involve weeks of negotiation and engagement.
16. The below table provides a summary of the information provided by the Force in the national returns in relation to protest activity. This clearly shows a significant upturn in protest activity between 2022 and 2023 (+51% for the total number of protests). Early indications from the first four month of 2024 demonstrate this trend is likely to increase.

	2022	2023	2024*
Total Protests	72	109	61*
Internationally Inspired	28	79	36*
Neighbourhood Policing Presence	45	62	35*

*Data to April 2024

17. It is evident that internationally inspired protests have increased significantly (+182% from 2022) and highlights the way overseas events cause increased policing demand locally.
18. The last row in the table shows the volume of protests which had a local neighbourhood policing footprint. This was required to provide local reassurance and manage wider community concerns. In 2023, over 50% of protests had a local element requiring the deployment of NHP teams.
19. In relation to policing football matches, the number of matches at home this season increased to 24. The total number of police officers deployed this season was 2036 or an average 85 officers per game.
20. The officers utilised are a mixture of centralised specialist resources supported by other officers who are public order trained. This will include a number of neighbourhood officers due to their length of service, experience and level of training.
21. In addition to the football and rising protest activity, the force has to police other large events to include the carnival, download and Diwali. However, the Force are also experiencing a rise in other significant cultural events and

celebrations as our communities are ever changing with local events growing in importance and attendance.

22. The force continues to balance the operational requirements with the financial management, however it is the increasing demand that is impacting on the NHP offer more so, than the reduction in the broader force workforce required to overcome the budget deficits.
23. The Force is investing in transformational work to mitigate the impact the budget deficit in 2024/25 could have on neighbourhood policing.

Responding Innovatively

24. Operation Forefront is a force-wide transformation programme to ensure good service and high standards to improve confidence and satisfaction of the public. For Policing in Neighbourhoods, the changes focused on 4 strategic objectives of change which were:
 - a. To enhance the command resilience and strengthen geographic command in City and counties;
 - b. To implement a new and enhanced local neighbourhood policing structure;
 - c. To create greater Criminal Investigation Department (CID) resilience and supervision of junior detectives;
 - d. To introduce dedicated crime managers at each NPA to drive up performance standards and outcomes for the victim and support our young workforce development.
25. Three and Twelve-month reviews have been commissioned to assess the progress and realisation of benefits. The review focused on the four strategic pillars as outlined above.
26. The review highlighted that many of the expected outcomes had been achieved and identified areas of good practice across the team. These areas will be assessed and adopted across all Neighbourhood Policing areas to maximise benefits.
27. A summary of some of the benefits already being realised is shown below.
 - a. Each Neighbourhood Policing Area has an enhanced command team supported by a geographically aligned Chief Superintendent within the City and Counties.
 - b. Chief Inspectors were increased to 5 and allocated geographically to NPAs to oversee delivery of engagement, performance, and welfare of locally deployed staff.
 - c. All NPAs have an enhanced command team with the 5 largest NPAs allocated a second Inspector to support the delivery of services locally.

- d. Crime queue levels across teams have seen a sustained reduction since October 2023.
- e. Positive Outcomes have improved across NPOs and Neighbourhood CIDs since October 2023.
- f. Average investigation length has increased since October 2023 which coupled with increased outcomes indicates improved victim care.
- g. Increase in compliance with Engagement Standards from Neighbourhood Teams

28. In addition, the Force has brought in more efficient ways of working in relation to Neighbourhood Policing specifically. This has been achieved by increasing its use of social media – reinforcing and reinvigorating engagement standards following the “You Said, We Did” approach. This has allowed for more targeted engagement and feedback to local beat issues and ensures PCSOs are focusing on those areas which matter most to our communities.

29. A further review at the 12 month point will be conducted and reported back through the Corporate Governance Board.

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