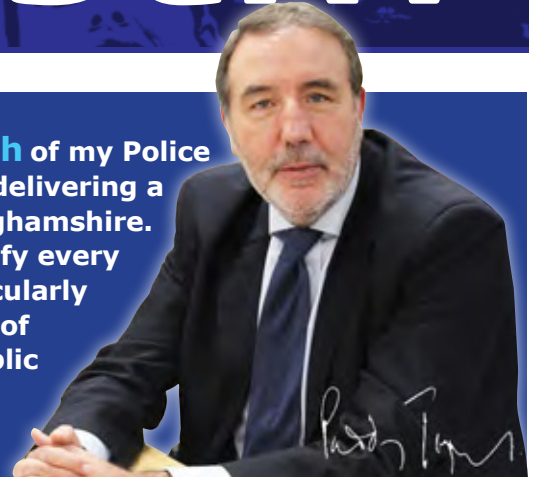


THE BEAT

It's now just over a full year since the launch of my Police and Crime Plan and we're already well on our way to delivering a more enhanced and visible policing service for Nottinghamshire. Financially, nothing has changed and the need to justify every penny we spend continues. However the future, particularly in terms of victims of crime and those who are at risk of offending, looks very positive indeed. Policing is a public service and we are working very hard to ensure we deliver what our communities need most.



Tough times mean tough decisions

When you have to save nearly £13m it is inevitable that changes have to be made and the police estate is one area where we feel we can deliver positive change for the future while reducing costs. However, I know that people living in the areas where stations are to be relocated, or front counters closed will understandably wonder what this will mean to them.

Protecting our frontline and ensuring we deliver a visible police presence within our communities continues to be one of my top focuses. The financial challenges we've faced in previous years have not eased and this year alone we need to claw back a further £12.7m in efficiency savings to help us fill the gap left by a reduced policing grant from the Government. I've always been honest that safeguarding police officer and PCSO strength will require compromise and this is now becoming clearer in the work we are undertaking to evaluate how we use our police estate.

We are currently consulting staff and our local community partners over a variety of proposals to relocate some stations and reduce the number of front counters open to the public.

The plans include closing the current police stations in Sneinton and the Meadows and cutting back on the times when some front counters are open to the public. Importantly, we are not withdrawing the police presence in these communities, we are becoming more accessible to the public through co-location with other organisations and increased use of mobile technology which will keep officers out on patrol for longer periods.

If the proposals go ahead, officers and staff from Sneinton will relocate to St Ann's Police Station and a community police facility set up before Sneinton Police Station is put up for sale to release some capital funds. In the Meadows, officers and staff will relocate to Riverside and a community facility open ahead of the sale of the station itself. Meanwhile, nine front counters will remain open to the public.

We are also asking for views and suggestions on our proposals to sell Arnold and Carlton police stations and create a new multi-public services hub at Sir John Robinson House, shared with Gedling Borough Council's community protection team and Nottinghamshire County Council.

Plans include a new community police station in Carlton and Oxclose Lane and Bulwell police stations will undergo a refurbishment.

Anyone wishing to find out more about the plans, or give their views to the Commissioner can visit <http://www.nottinghamshire.pcc.police.uk/Get-Involved/Consultations-and-Surveys/Police-Stations-and-Front-Counters.aspx>

Consultation closes at the end of June.



Recruitment

I'm pleased to say that by the end of March this year we had recruited nearly 80 additional police officers (with a further 20 in the pipeline), and the number of PCSOs had swollen by 67, taking the total to 335.

We know that further recruitment depends upon the success of the Force's savings plans in other areas, but I am well aware that people prefer bobbies to buildings so we are doing what we can to ensure that this is what they get. The Force now has a budgeted establishment of 2,109 officers which, compared to the 2011 in April last year, is a significant increase.

I'm also delighted to see the success of the Police Cadet Scheme, with 69 accredited Police Cadets at the end of March. It is just fantastic and to their credit that in the first year they shared top place in the National Volunteers Police Cadets Competition – they were joint winners with Scotland.



In the coming months there will be a focus on encouraging volunteers, including Special Constables, volunteer PCSOs and Parish Constables to support the local policing teams

in their work. These people will provide a vital link between local communities and the police.

Community safety investment

Earlier this year I announced a fresh round of funding grants aimed at helping community safety projects support victims of crime and reduce offending. A total of 63 organisations and projects have applied for the scheme seeking a total of £1.25m. We are now finalising the details with the successful applicants who will share a pot of £350,000. In addition, £124,000 of extra funding has been awarded to help us improve the services provided to victims now and into the future.

The successful projects, which will be unveiled shortly, will receive individual funding grants up to a value of £25,000. They are all designed to help deliver the goals I've set out in my Police and Crime Plan and include a heavy focus on victims' services, working with young people at risk of sexual exploitation, BME-led projects which improve relations between the community and police, reducing the impact of drugs and alcohol on levels of crime and antisocial behaviour and working with offenders to address mental health issues.

I've also supported schemes which provide diversionary activities for people at risk of offending and those which empower residents to take responsibility for safety in their area.

European Migration Seminar: New and Emerging Communities

Academics, police officers and equality campaigners gathered together back in March for a seminar looking at the impact of European migration on policing and the wider community. Little study or research has been undertaken on whether migration is placing any additional pressures on public services including policing and this conference allowed us to gather the perspectives of a broad range of experts on what is happening on the ground.

The event welcomed presentations by Robert McNeil from The Migration Observatory at the University of Oxford and equality diversity human rights manager Fiona Washington, from West Midlands Police as well as Superintendent Paul Burrows from the Force.



The issues raised during the seminar will directly contribute to a research project to be commissioned later in the year which will fully examine the impact of migration on policing and community safety. We need to better understand how our local communities are coping with the influx of newcomers and the impact of this relocation on police budgets and resources.



Crime in numbers

The good news is that Nottinghamshire continues to be safer than it was two years ago despite recording a small increase (0.7%) in the total number of offences in 2013-14. This slight rise is naturally disappointing, however, putting it into perspective, the number of recorded crimes is still less than half that of a decade ago. A very positive picture also emerges when you look at specific categories of crime which recorded a decrease, such as vehicle theft with 47 fewer offences and theft from a vehicle which recorded 88 less offences. Such reductions are testament to the hard work of frontline officers who have used directed patrols and capture cars among other tactics to drive down vehicle crime alongside targeted crime prevention campaigns. There was also a reduction in criminal damage offences with 464 fewer crimes reported along with while drugs offences dropped by 83.

In reality, it is becoming increasingly difficult to protect our performance position and deliver the kind of sweeping reductions we've reported in the past due to our ongoing financial difficulties. That said, we are working more closely than ever with our partners to share the burden of keeping our streets safe and pooling resources to achieve the kind of outcomes that top all of our agendas.

Figures show that between April 1 2013 and March 31 this year crime rose in the county by 474 offences. Overall figures took into account a rise in domestic burglaries (406 offences), sexual offences (139 offences) and violent crime (742 more offences).



I'm really pleased to say that the innovative Alliance Against Violence Campaign, created by the Force's corporate communications team, won a Gold Award at the National Public Sector Excellence in Communications Awards ceremony, earlier this month. This campaign aims to persuade people that violence is not the answer, a stance with which I wholeheartedly agree.

Best Bar None launched

Tackling alcohol crime is one of my key priorities and requires a collective approach to have any real impact. With this in mind we have agreed to fund, in conjunction with Nottinghamshire County Council, the nationally recognised Best Bar None scheme which promotes a safer environment for revellers and responsible management and operation within licensed premises.

Best Bar None has been adopted by more than 100 towns and cities across the UK – including Nottingham City – and has contributed to a reduction in alcohol-related violence, as well as making people feel safer and increasing trade in pubs and clubs taking part.

Nottinghamshire's Best Bar None will initially run for three years and will be led by a Project Board of key stakeholders and administered by Mansfield District Council. The County Council's Community Safety Committee has agreed to contribute half the £30,000 costs of setting up the scheme, with the remainder being funded by my office.

We all want Nottinghamshire to maintain a thriving night-time economy but safety needs to be paramount. Hopefully this scheme will provide accredited pubs and clubs with enhanced credibility which will draw the right customers and ensure those who do visit their premises can enjoy a safe night out.





Domestic Violence Conference

Experts from a variety of backgrounds attended the first Nottinghamshire Domestic Violence Conference this month to look at how they can work more closely together to improve the service victims receive.

The event, which was held at Nottingham Race Course in partnership with Nottingham - based domestic abuse specialists Equation, was attended by more than 80 delegates and discussed the current support provision available in the county.

A host of prominent speakers shared their experience and expertise on the day including Polly Neate, Chief Executive of National Women's Aid, Nick Romilly, Public Health Manager at Nottinghamshire County and Nottingham City Council, Superintendent Helen Chamberlain, head of public protection at Nottinghamshire Police and women's rights and anti-violence campaigner, Deputy Commissioner Chris Cutland.

On the day, delegates heard how partnership working and cross-sector communication was vital to achieving positive outcomes for domestic violence victims, especially when most organisations faced budget restrictions. One of the key themes to arise out of the event was the importance of education and early intervention to changing negative perceptions about relationships and relationship behaviour, especially among teenagers who had witnessed violence involving their parents.

As result of the conference discussions, I will now establish two executive groups covering the county and city which will work together with the third sector to progress plans for service improvement.



Street Triage scheme launched

April saw the launch of a Street Triage scheme involving a partnership between NHS organisations, police and local authorities across Nottinghamshire. The new service sees specially-trained mental health nurses from Nottinghamshire Healthcare join police officers on callouts in unmarked street triage cars throughout the county where vulnerable people need immediate mental health support. The nurses will also be available to give telephone advice to police officers and help them decide on the appropriate healthcare service to refer to.

The scheme has been commissioned to deliver wholesale improvements to the support provided to those with mental health problems and learning disabilities, especially those who are picked up in public and require help and support rather than police intervention. The aim is to divert vulnerable individuals away from the criminal justice system to a more appropriate care setting. Such a move will also reduce demand on police time and allow officers to focus on crime.

I'm delighted that we've taken this step to safeguard the dignity and rights of these vulnerable people. This scheme will widen the choices available for those who suffer from mental health problems and ensure they are treated appropriately from the outset. I'm very encouraged at the success being reported elsewhere in the country where such a system exists.





Police and Crime Panel

The Police and Crime Panel – the official body set up to scrutinise the actions and decisions I’ve taken as Commissioner and to review my progress – met at the end of april to monitor any current developments in community safety.

The meeting covered a broad range of policing areas including the findings of the recent HMIC inspection into Nottinghamshire Police’s response to domestic violence in the county and the ongoing work to improve services to vulnerable victims. It also reviewed an annual performance report for the 12 months up to March 31 which provided an overview of the progress made against the pledges I’ve made within my Police and Crime Plan, particularly around the seven strategic priority themes.

The Panel, made up of councillors and independent members, plays a very important role on behalf of the public, ensuring that my pledges and goals for crime reduction and value for money spending are continually measured against actual performance data. It also ensures that I’ve considered the priorities of community safety partners in the county and consulted appropriately with victims and members of the public. It has now been just over one year since my Police and Crime Plan came into force and the Panel received a detailed report on my achievements against policing targets during this time.

Further updates will be provided to the panel throughout the year.

Keep Track of YOUR Crime



If you are a victim of crime you can now have direct contact with the officer investigating their case 24 hours a day via a secure online messaging system.

Deputy PCC Chris Cutland said: “Victims of crime tell me that they want to be kept better informed about the progress of the investigation into their crime.

The Deputy Commissioner explained: “Police officers, by the nature of their work, are not always available.

They work a variety of shifts, including nights. But this is not a problem with Track My Crime as the officer can send an update at any hour, which will be waiting for the victim to view at their convenience.”

The system is also very secure meaning that, as long as victims of crime keep their details safe, they and the police will be the only ones to know details about their crime.

“Track My Crime is designed to make that easier for everyone.”

The new system is simple to use and it lets the victim send non-urgent updates to the officer investigating their case, as well as being able to see updates from them.

If you have been a victim of crime and wish to be updated via Track My Crime please contact the officer investigating your case. They can then ensure that you are able to access the system so that you can register. Track My Crime is available on the Nottinghamshire Police website.

KEEP ON TALKING

I’m delighted that so many people contact me, with problems, compliments and comments. This is particularly important as I need to be able to listen to your views and learn from them and also know that you can keep up to date with what my Deputy, my team and I are doing.

Whatever I do, I am answerable to you, the electorate. You can contact me at any time to ask questions or put your views across.

You can visit:

www.nottinghamshire.pcc.police.uk

You can follow me:

@PaddyTipping and @NottsPCC
or **Facebook PaddyTipping or NottsPCC**

You can write to me at:

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