



Philip Secombe  
**Police and Crime  
Commissioner**  
for Warwickshire

**Item 3**

# Report to the Police and Crime Panel

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**Report on the work of the  
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner**

*23rd March 2017*

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## **1) Purpose:**

The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Panel with an update on the key activities that have taken place since the panel last met on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2017.

## **2) Investment in mobile technology**

I pledged in my Police and Crime Plan to modernise policing in Warwickshire and ensure that our officers and police staff have the right technology and training in place to do their jobs efficiently and effectively. I am pleased to report that an investment of £4.030m capital in mobile technology has been agreed with both Chief Constables and John Campion, the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia.

The investment will see frontline police across Warwickshire equipped with personal-issue smartphones and laptop computers, enabling them to deliver a better service to the public and be more visible to local communities.

Police officers, PCSOs and operational staff will be allocated the mobile devices, giving them access to force IT systems while on the move, allowing fast access to intelligence, the ability to record crime and enabling a quicker response to incidents. By encouraging increased mobile working, police officers and PCSOs will be freed up from having to return to a police base to complete administrative tasks, allowing for a more victim-focused service and creating greater visibility among local communities.

The first rollout of smartphones to around 400 users has started, with more than 3000 smartphones to be issued in Warwickshire and West Mercia during March and April. This will be followed in the summer by a phased roll-out of laptops.

Over many years, police IT technology has not kept pace with the developments most of us now take for granted in our personal lives, such as the ability to use our smartphones while out and about to complete tasks and access services. Quite often victims have found they have better access to modern technology than the officers investigating their crimes and this simply cannot be right.

Equally, the current situation where police officers and PCSOs are forced to return to police stations to sit at desktop computers to complete simple administrative tasks is inefficient and reduces the amount of time they can be out in their local communities.

This new investment, together with the enhanced technologies which will be employed when our state-of-the-art Operations Communications Centre opens at Neville House in Warwick, shows my determination to deliver on that promise and provide a better service for the public.

As a package, these investments will allow the police to provide a more victim-focused service while also being more visible among our local communities. I know this is something which will be very much welcomed by the public.

The successful pilot in Rugby of this equipment demonstrated that as a minimum officers

spent an additional hour out on patrol during an 8 hour shift because the equipment avoided the need to visit the police station to access force systems.

### **3) PCC Grant Scheme 2017-18**

I received 71 applications for funding to address the priorities of the Warwickshire Police and Crime Plan 2016-2020. The applications requested came to just over £2 million, from an allocated grant fund of £1,300,000. My office evaluated all applications individually against the same criteria scoring the application against key areas:

- Value for Money, including future sustainability plans,
- Evidence of need for the project in Warwickshire,
- How the applicant will evidence the direct links, impact and outcomes of the project against the priorities of the Police and Crime Plan.

Applications were prioritised ensuring:

- coverage of priorities across the Police and Crime Plan,
- projects are focused in the most needed/ required geographical locations,
- ranked in accordance with the score and in relation to other projects addressing the same or similar priorities.

Due to the high level of bids received I have not been in a position to award all of the grants as requested. It was a competitive process and I have prioritised my awards in line with my Police and Crime Plan priorities. Once I have received back all the signed Terms and Conditions from the successful applicants I will publish details on the OPCC website of all the grants awarded.

### **4) Recruitment of Independent Custody Visitors**

*Independent Custody Visiting is the well-established system whereby volunteers attend police stations to check on the treatment of detainees and the conditions in which they are held and that their rights and entitlements are being observed. It offers protections to both detainees and the police and reassurance to the community at large."*

— Home Office Code of Practice, 2003

As Commissioner I have the responsibility for administering the Independent Custody Visitors scheme in Warwickshire. Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs), as they are known, have the power to turn up to police custody blocks unannounced to talk to detainees and make sure that everything is operating as it should. That includes checking on the detainees' welfare – for example, whether they getting enough to eat or drink, or any required medical help or medication. It also includes checking that police officers are following all the correct legal processes and protocols. Any issues found by the ICVs can be immediately raised with the custody staff, while a wider report also comes back to me to ensure that overall standards are being maintained.

I'm pleased to report that in Warwickshire there were 82 visits to custody carried out in 2016, with

no serious issues identified - but it's vital that we retain a good pool of volunteers to provide the public with assurance that the current high standards are maintained.

I'm keen that we encourage new people to come forward and join the well-established schemes we have here in Warwickshire, from as wide a range of backgrounds and ages as possible. It's a fascinating and important role, so I'd urge people who want to do something beneficial for their community to come forward and find out more.

To be eligible to apply you must be over 18, live or work in Warwickshire, and have been a resident of the UK for at least 3 years. You will not be suitable if there could be a conflict of interest e.g. you are a serving police officer or Justice of the Peace (Magistrate). All applications are subject to police vetting.

### **5) Force Performance:**

The Quarter 3 Warwickshire force performance report can be found at **Appendix A**. On receipt of the report I asked specific performance questions to the Chief Constable and Chief Superintendent Alex Franklin-Smith. The responses to my questions were shared at the Planning and Performance working group meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2017.

### **6) Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) PEEL Effectiveness Inspection:**

I am pleased to report that Warwickshire Police has been rated in its overall judgement as 'Good' as part of HMIC's PEEL Effectiveness Inspection, an improvement on last year's assessment. The overall finding of 'Good' demonstrates the clear progress Warwickshire Police has made in the last 12 months and follows similar 'Good' assessments during the Efficiency and Legitimacy inspections.

The HMIC PEEL programme draws together evidence from its annual all-force inspections. The evidence is used to assess the effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy of the police. HMIC introduced these assessments so that the public will be able to judge the performance of the force and policing as a whole.

The latest report determines how effective is the force at keeping people safe and reducing crime. However, although the overall judgement was graded 'Good', HMIC have identified some areas that still require improvement. The overall summary is as follows:

- How effective is the force at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe? – *Requires Improvement*
- How effective is the force at investigating crime and reducing re-offending? *Good*
- How effective is the force at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm, and supporting victims? *Requires Improvement*
- How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime? *Good*
- How effective are the force's specialist capabilities? *Ungraded*

In the latest report, HMIC found advances had been made with digital investigations capability; the way in which the force tackles serious and organised crime; and also found that previous concerns

about how the force responds to missing and absent children and more widely to vulnerable victims have all been addressed.

The HMIC inspectors also assessed that Warwickshire Police has good arrangements in place to respond to national threats, including being well-prepared to respond to an attack requiring an armed response.

The overall good grading reflects the hard work and commitment to serving local communities and protecting the vulnerable that is demonstrated by officers and police staff on a daily basis. There can be no complacency, however, and there are still areas which HMIC has identified where further improvements can be made.

Warwickshire Police has a good track record of delivering against these recommendations and I will continue to hold the Chief Constable to account to ensure that they are acted upon in the same constructive way. In addition, the investments I am making in new technology and mobile working will further help to ensure that Warwickshire Police continues to move forward, delivering a better service our local communities and victims of crime.

The inspection report and my response to the Home Secretary in relation to the inspection findings can be found at **Appendices B and C**.

## **7) OPCC Staffing**

I am pleased to report that Helen Earp has been appointed as Policy and Research Officer leading on Vulnerability for the OPCC. Helen joins us from Warwickshire County Council and her previous experience working in the community safety arena will complement the skills and experience of other members of the OPCC team. The decision to appoint a Policy and Research Officer leading on Vulnerability emphasises my commitment to supporting the Chief Constable in delivering on the long term aspiration of 'being great at protecting the most vulnerable'.

In light of the new Police and Crime Plan and the appointment of Helen, a review of the roles and responsibilities of the office has taken place to ensure there is OPCC scrutiny and capacity to drive forward business in all aspects of my plan. The roles and responsibilities of the Policy and Research Officers are detailed at **Appendix D**

## **8) Unauthorised Traveller Encampments**

In January, I organised a meeting in Nuneaton to discuss the situation in the county of unauthorised traveller encampments - an issue that I know from my mailbox is one that continues to frustrate local residents and businesses.

The meeting at Nuneaton Town Hall involved all of the agencies with powers to deal with unauthorised traveller encampments on public land, including the police, county, district and borough councils. Also in attendance were county MPs Marcus Jones and Craig Tracey, along with representatives of other county Members of Parliament, parish councils, Coventry City Council and

the Office of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner.

The group examined in detail the current legislative powers available to the agencies, as well as discussing recent case studies. Examples of alternative legal approaches, such as the use of injunctions against individuals, were also considered, drawing on experiences from elsewhere in the country.

I have been concerned for some time that, while the agencies responsible for dealing with unauthorised traveller encampments do work well together already, this is often on a case-by-case basis in each district, with no overall strategy to look at the issue on a county-wide basis, which could mean solving an issue in one part of the county only serves to create another elsewhere in Warwickshire. Equally, there could well be learning from each incident that is missed if it is not shared more widely.

The meeting was productive and gave all agencies the opportunity to share their perspective. To move matters further forward, my office set up a working group for representatives from each authority to develop a new county-wide protocol. The working group met for the first time on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March and more detailed discussions were held about current arrangements and how they could be boosted and improved under the protocol. A further meeting will now be arranged to engage with representatives of the Gypsy and Traveller community and agencies which were not present at the working group meeting. The outcome of all of the discussions will then be developed into a draft protocol by my office. This will need to be discussed and agreed by the executive boards of each of the partner agencies responsible for delivery, prior to any formal adoption.

In the meantime, it was agreed that a 'virtual' email group will be formed of the frontline practitioners to assist communications and help enhance the management of unauthorised encampments under existing arrangements. Warwickshire County Council will also be writing to county MPs with specific suggestions as to how current legislation could be improved.

The full minutes of both meetings are published on the OPCC website.

Experiencing similar issues as in Warwickshire, my counterpart in West Midlands, Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson, organised a similar meeting in February to our summit, which I was invited to attend and present at, as it is also important to work closely across the region.

## **9) Advertisement for Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner**

An advert for the recruitment of a Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner is live with a closing date of Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April. Interviews are scheduled to take place on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May. A provisional confirmation hearing is set for 30<sup>th</sup> May 2017.

## **10) Summary of activity since 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2017**

The list is not exhaustive but I have attended the following meetings / events:

- Continued to meet the Chief Constable in private on a weekly basis to hold him to account as detailed above. This has developed into a mature meeting and the records of the open sessions continue to be published on the OPCC website.
- Attended the annual National Crime Agency engagement day
- Met with the Rt Hon Brandon Lewis MP, Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service
- Presented at the Stratford upon Avon District Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Presented at the West Midlands Unauthorised Traveller Camp Summit
- Attended Coleshill Community Forum
- Attended the North Warwickshire Resources Assurance Group
- Chaired the Alliance Governance Group meeting (AGG)
- Met with the National Farmers Union (NFU)
- Visited the force Hate Crime Unit
- Chaired the meeting of the Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group (ESCWG)
- Met with the Home Office Force Insight officer for Warwickshire
- Attended and presented at a Citizens Academy meeting
- Attended Professional Standards Performance Board meeting
- Presented at the Warwickshire & West Midlands Association of Local Councils Annual Briefing event
- Made a presentation to the villagers of Willoughby in recognition of their Supported Village Scheme
- Attended the North Warwickshire Area Committee of Parish Councils meeting
- Attended Rugby Community Safety Partnership meeting
- Spoke at the Warwickshire Rural Crime Meeting

## **11) Decisions of the PCC**

I have made the following decisions since the last Police and Crime Panel meeting:

**WPCC20016** - Not for publication - Exempt from disclosure under s.40(2) (personal information) of the FOIA

**WPCC20017** – Work in progress

**WPCC20018** – Work in progress

**WPCC20019** – Proposed Precept for 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018

A copy of the non-exempt completed decision forms will be published on the OPCC website together with any relevant documents in due course.

### **Appendices:**

Appendix A – Quarter 3 Warwickshire force performance report

Appendix B – HMIC PEEL INSPECTION Police Effectiveness 2016 report

Appendix C - HMIC PEEL INSPECTION Police Effectiveness 2016 - Letter from PCC Seccombe to Home Secretary

Appendix D – OPCC Policy and Research Officers Roles and Responsibilities