



OFFICE OF
Police & Crime
Commissioner
for Cheshire

David Keane

**To: All Town and Parish Council Chairmen in
Cheshire West and Chester**

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Date: 07 November 2017

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Dear Chairman

MEETING WITH TOWN & PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

I wish to remind you about the meeting I will be hosting with Parish and Town Council representatives from across Cheshire West and Chester to be held on **Tuesday 21 November at 6.30pm** in the **Civic Suite, Civic Hall, Civic Way, Ellesmere Port, CH65 0AZ**.

As you will be aware I am fully committed to working with partners in order to improve community safety and I welcome the views of Parish and Town Councils on these matters.

I hope that you are able to attend or if not, please feel free to send a representative to the meeting. To assist in making the necessary arrangements, please advise who will be attending from your Council by contacting Lesley Booth either by email lesley.booth@cheshire.pnn.police.uk or by 'phone 01606 364103.

I attach for your information a copy of the issues raised and actions undertaken from the last meeting on 25 July 2017.

I look forward to meeting you or a representative of your Council and developing a productive relationship during my term of office.

Yours sincerely

David Keane
Police & Crime Commissioner

cc Chief Inspector Simon Draco (Ellesmere Port)
cc Chief Inspector Mike Evans (Chester)
cc Chief Inspector Simon Meegan (Northwich)

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**ISSUES RAISED AND ACTIONS FROM THE COMMISSIONER'S MEETING
WITH TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS IN CHESHIRE WEST & CHESTER
25 JULY 2017 AT WEAVERHAM COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Attendance

Name	Organisation
David Keane	Police & Crime Commissioner
Matt Walton	Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner
Sergeant Gary Weaver	Cheshire Constabulary
Bob Holt	Acton Bridge
Clare Ballantyne-Roberts	Acton Bridge
John Oliver	Acton Bridge
Keith Reading	Barnton
Rebecca Cosgrove	Dutton
Judith Critchley	Frodsham
Mallie Poulton	Frodsham
Clive Lovering	Littleton
Ian Walton	Manley
Mark Boyle	Moulton
Deryn O'Connor	Norley
Derek Bowden	Northwich
Andrew Warrington	Saughall & Shotwick Park
Jenny Young	Saughall & Shotwick Park
Mike Johnson	Saughall & Shotwick Park
Ted Lush	Tarvin
Eileen Bland	Weaverham
John Freeman	Weaverham
Peter Wilkinson	Weaverham
Gina Lewis	Winsford

The Commissioner welcomed all to the meeting and offered his thanks to Weaverham Parish Council for hosting the meeting. The Commissioner also offered his thanks to all in attendance and explained that, with approximately 285 parish councils across Cheshire, he is unable to attend individual meetings and, therefore, this meeting provides an opportunity for parish councils to be heard.

The following issues were raised by the Parish/Town Council representatives in attendance:

(1) Northwich Town Council expressed concern with regard to the A556 Northwich Bypass. It was suggested that the varying speed restrictions (between Northwich lights and Davenham roundabout) presents a major safety issue as it encourages drivers to exceed the speed limit in an area populated with school children.

Response - The Commissioner stated that road safety remains a key priority within his Police and Crime Plan and that he wishes he was able to determine speed limits within Cheshire. Unfortunately, however, the Constabulary is only able to enforce speed limits determined by the Council. The Commissioner recommended the Parish Council contacts the Highways department at Cheshire West & Chester to request that changes to the speed limit is considered and offered his support in writing to the Council should this be requested.

Sergeant Weaver confirmed that the Council is currently gathering evidence and that speeding convictions are also taken into account.

- (2) Tarvin Parish Council** stated that the number one priority currently is the use of drugs and levels of ASB at the King George Playing Field and nearby woodland. It was suggested that the issue is worse than ever and the greatest concern within the local community. It was noted by the Parish Council that whilst the local PCSO is visible, this is not 24 hours a day and greater visibility is required.

Response - The Commissioner stated that, unfortunately, this issue is replicated throughout Cheshire and that the lighter nights throughout the summer exacerbate the issue. Although PCSOs are provided with ASB training and changes to the shift pattern now provides PCSO cover during the evening, there will never be a PCSO available 24 hours a day. That said, the Commissioner explained that although he doesn't have the authority to task officers and PCSOs, he will raise the issue with the Chief Constable and ensure this is a priority for the local PCSO. In addition, the Commissioner explained his desire to not only provide one PCSO per community in the near future, but also a 'task force' of PCSOs that would be available to focus on areas of need that would adopt a problem solving approach as opposed to simply moving the issue to the next Parish.

Sergeant Weaver confirmed that there remains a function on the Constabulary website that enables residents to engage and suggest priorities within their local community.

- (3) Weaverham Parish Council** stated that whilst it wishes to adopt the '20's Plenty for Us' policy, Cheshire West and Chester Council has suggested that this is unenforceable and signage is too expensive.

Response - The Commissioner confirmed that he would enquire with the Roads Policing Unit in relation to whether the policy would be enforceable. The Commissioner reiterated that road safety remains a key priority within his Police and Crime Plan and regularly discusses road safety with the Chief Constable. Although there remains four Constabulary speed vans that cover the main 'A' roads across Cheshire and the yellow fixed cameras are due to become digital, many incidents/accidents occur on side roads and residential areas. As such, the PCSO training programme in relation to the use of TruCam is ongoing and this will ensure PCSOs are able to fulfil this priority within their local communities.

Updated Response - *The Commissioner discussed the '20's Plenty for Us' policy with the Constabulary following the meeting. The Constabulary confirmed that 20mph speed limits are enforceable providing there is a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) in place from the Local Authority. As such, the Constabulary can and does enforce 20mph speed limits where a TRO is in place as opposed to a sign only scheme. It would appear that Cheshire West and Chester (CWAC) Council has a four year programme to roll out 20mph limits/zones in all residential areas that fit the criteria (speed limit assessments on roads with an average speed under 24mph).*

- (4) Saughall & Shotwick Park Parish Council** questioned why there had been cuts to Roads Policing given that there had been 40 deaths in the last year at a cost of £40m.

Response - The Commissioner stated that this remains a key priority for the Constabulary and not just the Roads Policing Unit, with a commitment to ensuring that resources are used in the most efficient way. Although the number of fatal collisions had decreased, the Commissioner confirmed that he will continue to do everything he can until there is a culture change across Cheshire with regard to speeding.

- (5) Littleton Parish Council** stated that the use of a SID in four different locations is currently raising awareness and education within the local community. The Council

meets with the PCSO every six weeks and most recent results suggested that 85% of recordings were in excess of 35mph, some of which were in excess of 50mph (speed limit of 30mph).

Response - The Commissioner welcomed the use of SIDs within local communities and that the TruCam training for PCSOs and subsequent enforcement should not only aid awareness and education, but also the existence of multiple Community Speedwatch initiatives across Cheshire.

- (6) Weaverham Parish Council** expressed concern that local school pupils are walking down Gorstage Lane as the school bus is currently out of service. Should this continue into winter, there may be additional road safety concerns due to road layout and excessive speed.

Sergeant Weaver confirmed that he would look into this matter and discuss with the local PCSO.

- (7) Weaverham Parish Council** suggested that the speed limit between Cuddington and the High School should be 40mph maximum.

Sergeant Weaver stated that the Constabulary is only able to continue to enforce speed limits determined by the Council.

- (8) Saughall & Shotwick Park Parish Council** suggested that main roads should continue to adopt a national speed limit but there should be the introduction of a blanket speed limit for all unclassified roads.

Response - The Commissioner stated that this remains a national issue and would be unable to adopt in isolation across Cheshire. Nevertheless, the Commissioner suggested he would be willing to raise the issue in national forums.

- (9) Tarvin Parish Council** requested statistics in relation to road safety within Cheshire West and Chester as well as the local community.

Response - The Commissioner stated that as he does not hold this information, he would encourage contacting the Constabulary who would be happy to provide such information.

- (10) Weaverham Parish Council** suggested that sentencing for serious speeding offences is too low and that PCC input is required.

Response - The Commissioner stated that discussions are ongoing at a national level. That said, the Commissioner confirmed that although he has no legal power, he is able to influence and challenge performance to hold the Criminal Justice System to account.

- (11) Frodsham Town Council** suggested that the current policy of Council's determining speed limits is baffling but thanked the Commissioner for an excellent Road Safety Conference. The Town Council also stated that there are currently issues on a Friday and Saturday evening in relation to the Night Time Economy and asked the Commissioner if there was any assistance available in providing CCTV.

Response - The Commissioner stated that although there are clear benefits of CCTV (act as deterrent and provide evidence), the Constabulary is unable to provide CCTV in every Parish area due to associated costs. The Commissioner suggested that the cost could, however, be shared and welcomed a collective approach between the

Constabulary, Cheshire West and Chester Council and the local business network to explore opportunities. The Town Council was encouraged to discuss this with Cheshire West and Chester Council as well as local businesses. In addition, the Commissioner welcomed applications to his Safer Communities Fund as this could provide some financial assistance should applications be successful.

- (12) Moulton Parish Council** stated that despite part funding a PCSO, there had been no response or visibility of a PCSO in the previous 12 months.

Response - The Commissioner apologised on behalf of the Constabulary and urged the Parish Council to contact the Constabulary to request a refund. The Commissioner stated that a review of PCSOs has highlighted inequality between contribution of funding and service provided between Parish/Town Councils. Furthermore, there is currently an uneven spread of PCSOs with some provided to Parish/Town Councils free of charge. The Commissioner confirmed his desire to ensure equality across Cheshire with not only a named PCSO per community by early next year, but also additionality where a contribution is made by a Parish/Town Council.

- (13) Saughall & Shotwick Park Parish Council** suggested that the new system proposed by the Commissioner will lack local knowledge.

Response - The Commissioner stated that neither he nor the Constabulary can guarantee local knowledge but in order to understand a local community, you need to be part of a local community. The Commissioner explained that PCSOs are vital to the structure of local policing and expects to provide a good service with PCSO patrols based on local priorities and intelligence. It was suggested that residents are more likely to engage with named PCSOs and this will ensure the Constabulary is connected with communities, one of the four priorities of the Police and Crime Plan.

The Commissioner reiterated his desire to ensure a named PCSO based within a local community and welcomed communication with any parish council that is yet to be visited by a PCSO. The Constabulary remains in a period of austerity with funding in 2020 anticipated to be approaching £70 million lighter than in 2010. With c.£4/5million saving to be made every year until 2020, the Commissioner's aim remains sustainability, although continued cuts in funding will inevitably result in changes to policing.

The Commissioner stated that he expects PCSOs to have a local base within each community and welcomed offers from communities to provide that local base to not only enable a PCSO to spend as much time as possible within the community, but also a place where local residents know where that PCSO will be during certain hours. The Commissioner stated that he wants to move back towards local community policing by providing a named PCSO that is visible within a local community base.

The Commissioner also stated that some Police Stations may close in the future following the conclusion of the estates review. Whilst each of the eight LPUs will continue to have a main Police Station that will continue to act as a point of contact and place of safety, there will also be a tiered approach with a larger number of local bases. The Commissioner discussed the idea of co-location (within parish council buildings, schools, leisure centres) as this will save money and increase the number of Police bases within communities.

- (14) Frodsham Town Council** welcomed the idea of a new local base within Frodsham.

- (15) Weaverham Parish Council** stated that the variance between wards means they cannot be treated the same.

Response - The Commissioner acknowledged the inequality between areas and suggested that the old Borough wards may be required. Whilst consultation would close in the Autumn, the Commissioner stated that his priority is to ensure equality across Cheshire with one PCSO per community. As such, each community may get one PCSO 'free of charge'. It would be dependent on local priorities if an additional PCSO would be required so a Parish Council may wish to save the funding previously provided. The Commissioner explained the difficulties that a one third contribution of a single Parish Council may not result in a second PCSO.

- (16) Frodsham Town Council** stated that the proposal was much fairer and that this would bring a level playing field across Cheshire. It was suggested that the one third contribution that the Town Council current offers could be spent on crime prevention should the community be provided with a PCSO 'free of charge'.

Response - The Commissioner stated that he would welcome this or, as an alternative, multiple wards could join together and share a second PCSO for that area.

- (17) Winsford Parish Council** thanked the Commissioner for the recent open day at Police Headquarters and stated it is great that Winsford Police station is being used by new recruits as this increases visibility.

Response - The Commissioner thanked Winsford Parish Council for the feedback.

- (18) Dutton Parish Council** enquired whether any money saved from the closure of police stations would stay local to that area or be used within the 'main pot' for Cheshire.

Response - The Commissioner stated that any capital receipt would be spent across Cheshire but that he would be open to conversations.

- (19) Dutton Parish Council** expressed concern with regard to the Bluelight Collaboration and, in particular, the informal arrangement between the Constabulary and Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service.

Response - The Commissioner stated that he was comfortable with the agreements in place with Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service. The Commissioner also stated that some Police Stations may close in the future following the conclusion of the estates review. Whilst each of the eight LPUs will continue to have a main Police Station for response, there will also be a tiered approach with a larger number of local bases across Cheshire.

- (20) Frodsham Town Council** stated that the national cuts to Police funding is the main issue and that if the public still expects the Constabulary to continue to police big events such as Creamfields, concerts and Chester Pride, then old Police estate should be closed and sold.

Response - The Commissioner stated that difficult decisions will lead to a better service provided to Cheshire residents. As an example, the Commissioner discussed the non-recent sexual abuse enquiry that highlighted the extent to which the Constabulary was tremendously under resourced. The Commissioner explained how two bids to the Home Office for an additional £250,000 funding enabled the large scale investigation. Nevertheless, the requirement to 'go with a begging bowl' was not an ideal situation.

(21) Moulton Parish Council enquired about the middle layer of estates for officers and PCSOs.

Response - The Commissioner confirmed that the estates review was ongoing but that the Constabulary is promoting agile working with all officers and PCSOs provided with tablets and encouraged to work in areas that will encourage public interaction. The Commissioner stated that previous decisions with regard to a PCSO centralised model was not ideal and that the proposal to ensure one PCSO per community will ensure most of the 37 hours a week will be spent within that community.

(22) Frodsham Town Council suggested that whilst PCSOs will need to be at a central venue on occasions for morale and supervision, the Commissioner was thanked for his honesty and transparency.

Response - The Commissioner welcomed ongoing conversations.

(23) Littleton Parish Council enquired about the level of funding spent on Cyber Crime.

Response - The Commissioner stated that cyber crime remained one of the biggest challenges given there is no geography but there will continue to be investment in prevention. Another big challenge is cyber bullying linked to suicide, particularly given social media is now 24/7, and this will be a big priority for school liaison and PCSOs in the future.

(24) Frodsham Town Council commended the work of the Constabulary in relation to the Herbert Protocol.

Response - The Commissioner stated that a similar project for children in care was ongoing but welcomed the support of all in attendance to increase awareness within local communities.

The Commissioner thanked all for attending and closed the meeting.