



STOWMARKET PUBLIC MEETING

A public meeting was held at The Cedars Hotel, Stowmarket on Tuesday 20 September 2016 at 18:30 hrs.

PRESENT:

Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner

Chris Jackson (CEO to the PCC); Tim Passmore (Police & Crime Commissioner) and Vanessa Scott (Policy Officer to the PCC).

Suffolk Constabulary

Inspector Chris Galley (Locality Inspector, Stowmarket), Sgt Andrew Martin and Gareth Wilson (Chief Constable).

1. POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER OVERVIEW

1.1 The PCC welcomed around 39 members of the public to the meeting and made introductions. The PCC gave a presentation on the key elements of his role and action taken over the past year. A copy of the presentation slides will be attached to these notes for the record.

2. POLICING UPDATE

2.1 Following an overview of the position across the county from the Chief Constable, Inspector Chris Galley gave a presentation on policing in the Stowmarket area; a copy of their slides will also be attached for the record.

3. KEY AREAS OF DISCUSSION

- **BETTER COMMUNICATION** – There was some concern expressed by Gislingham Parish Council that the communications were poor. When people reported issues local feedback was not always received and more could be done by the force to link with the local community and get messages out. The Chief Constable acknowledged that communications could sometimes be improved but the force was proactively updating its local newsletters and using social media and police connect to get messages out to local people.

- SPEEDING – A number of concerns were raised about speeding on the Old Ipswich Road in Claydon and in Pettaugh. The complainants were advised that the details of their concerns would be passed to the Speed Enforcement Team.
- SUFFOLK LOCAL POLICING REVIEW – Newmarket Town Council advised that they have lost their PCSO, who always acted as their point of contact and dealt with the smaller issues. There was a view expressed that the loss of PCSOs was preventing visibility. The Chief Constable advised he recognised the importance of regular communication and although there were not the resources to send a PCSO or PC to each Council meeting, there was still an expectation that local teams would make contact. The Suffolk Policing Model meant that in addition to the Safer Neighbourhood Team officers operating in the local area, the wider force response and investigation resources could be called upon where needed. He also explained that the model enabled a wide range of civilian staff to support local areas for example in call answering, investigations and analytical support.
- 101 CALL ANSWERING – There were occasions where people had waited a long time for a response to 101. People advised that they sometimes feel they are calling about dangerous situations or doing their ‘citizen’s duty’ and feel calls should be answered. One lady explained the struggle she had had reporting a crime at a police station where the phone outside the police station would not get through to 101 and there was no public access to the building. The Chief Constable advised that he was aware that on average people can wait up to 4 minutes for their call to be answered but that on occasion people are left waiting a long time, which he accepted was not a good service. He advised that if there is threat to life or property people should dial 999. To improve the call waiting times he explained that the force had recently invested in more call taker provision and better technology to improve the service.
- CCTV – Discussion regarding the pros and cons of fitting CCTV as a deterrent and the legal requirements around installing CCTV in a public place. The Chief Constable said the police would be happy to offer advice.
- YOUNG PEOPLE – There was a discussion about the relationship with the police and young people and how it could be improved. It was felt that young people feel fearful of the police rather than viewing them as there to protect them. There was a further view that the lack of facilities for young people did not help. The PCC advised that the work in the Constabulary to introduce 3 PCSOs to work with schools across Suffolk was to help improve the relationship between the police and young people.
- CREDIT CARD PROTECTION – A member of the audience raised awareness about the credit card sleeves that were available to some Neighbourhood Watch Schemes which could prevent people fraudulently skimming contactless cards.

The PCC thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 20:45 hrs.