



## **NEWMARKET PUBLIC MEETING**

A public meeting was held at Newmarket Academy on 28 September at 7pm.

### **PRESENT:**

#### **Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner**

Tim Passmore (Police & Crime Commissioner), Chris Bland (Chief Finance Officer) and Liz Hollingworth (Business Administration and Policy Officer).

#### **Suffolk Constabulary**

Inspector Mark Shipton (Locality Inspector for Newmarket, Mildenhall and Brandon).

### **POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER OVERVIEW**

The PCC welcomed 13 people to the meeting and made introductions. The PCC spoke briefly about the key elements of his role and current priorities.

### **POLICING UPDATE**

Inspector Mark Shipton spoke about policing in Newmarket and the local area; a copy of the handout is available for the record.

### **QUESTIONS ASKED AND SUBJECTS DISCUSSED**

#### **ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

- A number of concerns were raised about anti-social behaviour and criminal activity including misuse of footpaths and cannabis taking, at The Guineas Shopping Centre in Newmarket. Inspector Shipton said that the Constabulary was planning a 'day of action' which would include the shopping centre. The Safer Neighbourhood Team PCSOs were able to deal with any issues arising until 6pm. Enforcement would have to be dealt with by a police officer. However, there had been action recently against individuals which it was expected would disperse the group causing trouble. Inspector Shipton confirmed that the police did address cannabis use however, education and positive action with young people was often used to avoid criminalising people at a young age.
- A member of the public asked whether the police had the equipment to identify fly-tippers who were operating in the Studlands estate area so that the council could enforce action in a partnership approach. Inspector Mark Shipton had acknowledged the problems in the Studlands estate area in his introductory remarks. He said that a community meeting with the police had been arranged and suggested that this issue could be discussed usefully at the proposed meeting.

## BUSINESS CRIME

- In addition to the issues raised at The Guineas Centre, there had been incidents off Newmarket High Street involving ASB and drugs. The Business Improvement District (BID) manager said that businesses had voiced their concern that the police were not addressing these issues satisfactorily. Inspector Shipton said that businesses should be encouraged to report crimes and incidents directly to the police so they could gather intelligence on ongoing issues and take appropriate action.
- The BID manager said that he would welcome further liaison with the local SNT and was developing ideas on how businesses could more easily report crimes particularly as businesses had voiced concern about the length of time callers to the non-emergency '101' were kept waiting. Inspector Shipton said that the PCSO with responsibility for retail and licensing would liaise with the BID manager about organising a meeting with businesses.
- The PCC apologised for the delay to full implementation of the new call handling technology – which will help - and explained that the contractor had experienced some compatibility issues with old technology. Extensive testing was taking place to ensure the new system was robust.

## PUBLIC ACCESS

- Counsellor Robin Millar asked when the new police station would be finished. Inspector Shipton said that work was underway and it was likely to be finished in December 2017. The station was a joint station with Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service. The PCC said that there was a good record of joint working with the Fire and Rescue Service with 8 joint stations operating and five more planned.
- The new station would not be open for general public access and custody for the area would remain at Bury Police Investigation Centre (PIC). The PCC said that, based on evidence of limited usage most police 'front counters' had been closed, saving £750k a year. Three police stations were still open for public access at Lowestoft, Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds.

## TECHNOLOGY IN POLICING

- Counsellor Robin Millar asked about arrangements for providing 'dash-cam' footage to the police and whether videos from members of the public, often shared on social media, could be submitted to the police. Inspector Shipton and the PCC said there was a mechanism for this but as a relatively new development it needed better communication to the public.
- Inspector Shipton outlined the new technologies that were available for police officers to use including Body Worn Video, automatic number plate recognition and mobile working. The PCC said that this investment would help with enforcement and increase efficiency.

## TRAVELLING COMMUNITY

- Members of the public voiced concern with the illegal traveller encampments in the area and the impact on local businesses and residents. The PCC said that police powers were limited unless crimes had been committed and the civil process meant the landowner had to take action where there was an illegal encampment.

- Inspector Shipton clarified that the circumstances for when an encampment had a direct impact on business (in terms of the police being able to move the travellers on) were very narrowly defined and wouldn't apply to the local situation where a supermarket had taken the decision themselves to close at night whilst travellers were nearby.
- The PCC said that Public Sector Leaders in Suffolk had agreed to make progress on approved temporary/transit sites for travellers and each district was considering sites to put forward. There would need to be public acceptance of the new sites but they should help reduce the number of illegal encampments and the current concerns when travellers move on. He said that members of the public and local counsellors should continue to press the responsible district and county counsellors for progress on establishing the new sites.

## DRUGS

- The PCC outlined the Constabulary approach to drug enforcement across the county and the work of the Urban Street Gang Unit in Ipswich. He emphasised the need for the public sector to work in partnership for action to be successful.

***The PCC thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.20pm.***