

**Summary of issues submitted at ‘Policing in 2012 and beyond’ Public Meeting, held at Leicester Town Hall on 12 January, 2012**

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You asked about

**Can you still tackle the prolific crimes relating to drug dens and burglary despite the reductions in funding?**

Answers

Yes we can. This year, when we have seen cuts in funding and the number of officers and staff, we have still achieved overall reductions in crime. Since 1 April 2011, the total number of crimes in Leicester City dropped by 5.8%, which means there are 2,039 fewer victims and burglary is down by 8.8%, which is a reduction of 211 crimes. In relation to drugs, we closed down over 160 cannabis factories and between July 2010-June 2011 recovered drugs to a value of £12.2 million.

We will continue to focus on the crimes that matter most to local people through our local neighbourhood officers and specialist units, such as the dog sections with its highly trained sniffer dogs.

You asked about

**Will the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) be effectively scrutinised?**

Answers

The PCC’s work will be scrutinised by a Police and Crime Panel comprising members of local authorities and two independent members of the public. The City Mayor has an automatic right to sit on this panel if he or she wishes.

The Government believes that the PCC will also be held to account by the electorate at the ballot box.

You asked about

**What happens if the PCC and the Chief Constable disagree?**

Answers

The Chief Constable remains responsible for operational policing and the PCC will be responsible for governance and for holding the Chief Constable to account. The PCC has the right to dismiss the Chief Constable if necessary, but it is envisaged that any ‘everyday’ or strategic dissension would be tackled at an early stage through normal working processes.

You asked about

**What are the criteria for the recruitment of the PCC?**

Answers

The PCC will be elected by local people. Information on who can stand and associated regulations and requirements can be found at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/police/police-crime-commissioners/> or by following links on the Police Authority website at <http://www.leics-pa.police.uk/resources/police-and-crime-commissioners/>

You asked about

**In order to increase community safety, the amount of council tax paid towards policing needs to increase. How will we 'sell' this to the general public?**

Answers

We are currently considering three options for the council tax precept and meetings such as these will help shape our decisions.

In our consultation we have consistently been told by the public that they would like to invest in policing, so we hope that they will support any decision to increase the amount paid towards policing.

You asked about

**Has the 'Spend to Save' programme delivered savings?**

Answers

Yes. The organisation, which has always been lean, has been helped by projects such as IR3 which tracks the movement of each police vehicle and the amount of patrol time spent in relevant areas. As a result of this, and comparing resource and demand we have been able to take 40 cars out of the fleet due to better resource management and the investment in technology.

You asked about

**Does Social Media, such as Twitter and Facebook, help the community communicate with the police?**

Answers

The Chief Constable has his own Twitter account @CCLeicsPolice and Leicestershire Police has over 18,000 direct followers on our various Twitter accounts, which means that we communicate directly with 18,000 interested people. It's one way of communicating that helps us reach a wider audience. Social Media is a very good and very useful communications tool, but we accept it is not the only way to communicate. The Police Authority also uses Twitter to share information with our communities and this account is @LeicsPA. Social Media is an important means of engagement.

You asked about

**Will the force composition reflect that of the community in the City?**

Answers

Currently 9% of staff are from BME backgrounds but the composition needs to reflect the whole community and that includes the increasing number of Eastern Europeans. While we do everything we can to encourage diversity in recruitment, there remains the fact that at the current time we are not recruiting as we once were. We have made progress but there is more to do.

You asked about

**Will there be a marketing campaign to recruit more Special Constables?**

Answers

Yes. There is a Specials Open Day on 30 Jan 2012 and we hope that people will turn up to find out what it's all about. We currently have over 250 specials, of whom 45 are from BME communities and all of whom are highly valued.

You asked about

**Will you train more officers to deal with Public Order incidents so that dependence on external officers is reduced?**

Answers

No. We have over 400 trained PSU officers, and we didn't need to ask for assistance from other forces during the disturbances in Aug 2011. We believe we have about the right number to keep it balanced and the financial implication of training more is not beneficial to other areas of policing.

You asked about

**Although Birstall's population is growing we have recently 'lost' one of our two PCSOs. What are the prospects of a replacement?**

Answers

In order to ensure service delivery is maintained across all wards it is sometimes necessary to re-deploy staff. These decisions will be based upon levels of crime and ASB and the numbers of staff available for front line duties. The LPU Commander at Birstall will continually review staffing levels across the LPU and will deploy staff accordingly.

We have also just completed our Neighbourhood Review which looks at where our resources are best located. In the current financial climate we may not be able to keep our Neighbourhood Teams to the same strength as they have been. We appreciate the sense of loss of the local PCSO, but communities should be reassured that response teams and specialist support teams such as air support and the dog section are very much there when they are needed.

We really appreciate the importance of visible policing and will do our best to preserve frontline services by reducing 'back office' posts as much as we sensibly can.

You asked about

**What are you doing to tackle crime in the 'Golden Mile'?**

Answers

We are very aware of the issues and further CCTV is being factored into our plans. Crime is in fact reducing in the Golden Mile and we are working hard to police it appropriately and keep crime down. This has included the recent launch of a Crimestoppers' campaign aimed at preventing and reducing the theft of Asian gold jewellery.

You asked about

**What are you doing to ensure the future effectiveness of Joint Action Groups when they are covering more than one ward?**

Answers

We firmly believe that JAGs should be kept as local as possible and we continue to support groups with small grants from our BCU fund.

You asked about

**Why are criminals who have admitted to a crime not always prosecuted? Is this due to budget cuts or because people don't care? Should the CPS be held responsible for any crime these people commit by compensating victims?**

Answers

A sanction detection is where someone is held to account for their actions in some way. It may be that putting someone through the full criminal justice process is not the best way to prevent re-offending, as proven by the success of restorative justice.

The decision whether to prosecute or not is based on future risk of reoffending, or the seriousness of the crime - certainly not due to budget or lack of interest. Our main aim is to hold people to account for their actions, and prevent people from reoffending. If restorative justice is the best way to do this then that is what we will suggest.

There are currently 87,000 people in prison which is indicative of the number of prosecutions.

You asked about

**What are you doing to promote these meetings and get more people to them?**

Answers

Tonight's meeting was publicised on local television, radio, in the press and on Twitter. Invitations were issued prior to Christmas, the local community messaging service has been utilised and personal networks encouraged to attend.

Local Policing Teams are putting up posters in the locality and we are working with our partners to encourage people to turn out.

You asked about

**What are you doing about Hate Crime against Faith Communities?**

Answers

We take all Hate Crime very seriously and welcome reports of such crimes as that shows communities trust us to deal with any problem. The chances are, if you commit a Hate Crime in our area you will be caught.

We have a partnership approach to dealing with Hate Crime. We actively encourage members of the public to talk to us and report any incidents. Neighbourhood officers are available to speak to or if you wish anonymity the "True Vision website (<http://www.report-it.org.uk/home>) provides a wealth of information on how hate crimes can be reported. Additionally, Stamp It Out! (<http://www.stamp-it-out.co.uk/>) is a community led partnership bringing together different groups and organisations all committed to challenging, tackling and stamping out hate within Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

The Constabulary have signed up to the Mencap "Stand By Me" policing promise which connects the police to standing by those who experience hate crime to tackle head-on at the individuals who cause misery in our communities.

Last year police in Leicestershire detected over 60% of hate crimes reported to them.

You asked about

**How will reduction in manpower/officers affect response times? Will Volunteer Community Officers be able to cover?  
How have the cuts affected morale**

Answers

We are having to look at all our options and we have just completed our Neighbourhood Review so that we can work effectively with fewer people and still meet the local priorities.

So far, we are pleased to see that community safety does not appear to be negatively affected by the reductions but we may need to make changes in the future. Back office functions have been squeezed to provide a greater resource to tackle national issues as well as ensuring the delivery of local policy. The plans of our partners are also important as is the role of the voluntary sector.