

LEICESTERSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY 2008/09

BYRON RHODES

My main task this year as Chairman of the Authority and the Finance and General Purposes Committee was to ensure that the Constabulary was adequately funded so it could meet the objectives set by the Authority in the policing plan.

The Force needed to recruit an additional 105 officers and 22 support staff but lacked the money. So in February 2008 the Authority had reluctantly agreed to increase the council tax precept by 15.43%. The Government intervened and threatened the Authority with capping. I led the battle to persuade the Government to allow the increase to stand. We were supported by the Councils and Local MPs, five of whom joined me in a delegation to see Ministers in May. Following that meeting, Ministers agreed to let the 15.43% stand but restricted future increases in the next two years to 3%. This left a potential deficit which has been eliminated by careful financial management so the Force is now funded for the next 2 years.

I also served on the Human Resources and Consultation and Communications Committees and maintained an oversight of the other committees and panels to ensure that their work was co-ordinated and consistent with the Authority's strategic objectives. I also acted as the Lead member for Risk Management, ensuring that the Authority's risks were prioritised and managed.

I take an active interest in the performance of the Force overall and in particular the Melton LPU. I meet the Chief Constable regularly to discuss strategy and performance.

Since taking office as Chairman I have represented the Authority on the Regional Collaboration Board and the Council of the Association of Police Authorities (APA). Last September I was elected to represent the East Midlands Authorities on the APA Board. At the same time I became chairman of the APA policy network for citizen focus and partnerships. The main task of this body is to develop policies and good practice guidelines for improving people's confidence in the police.

Byron Rhodes.
22 April 2009.