

## Neighbourhood Policing - Panel response to paper outlining developments and progress to date

Dear Commissioner - thank you for the implementation summary recently provided to the Panel.

The Panel encourages and supports a review of this element of policing. It sits at the heart of the service, helps keep our communities safe, and it is reassuring that the strengthening and improvement of local policing teams remains one of your high level priorities.

The revised structure is based around six pillars - Investigations, Responding to Incidents, Safeguarding, Managing Offenders, Problem Solving and Engagement. Where Response units are not available, the aim is for Neighbourhood staff to assist with investigations and respond to incidents. It is very much welcomed that this will be closely managed to allow Neighbourhood teams to spend more time operating within the other four pillars. The Panel feels that targeted foot patrol implemented alongside community engagement and problem solving will prevent crime and maintain and improve public confidence in the Police. Appropriate staffing of the Response units is key to this working in practice.

Based on the development work that has taken place to inform the strategy,

- What is the full time officer establishment and how many officers have been attached to the Neighbourhood and Response Teams ?
- Does the evidence used to arrive at these figures adequately reflect the requirements of both rural and urban communities ?
- how much time does the Constabulary anticipate Neighbourhood Teams being involved in response work ?
- Will PCSOs be involved in response work or will they be given more local responsibility for public engagement and problem solving ?
- What are the key changes to the shift patterns that will brigade resources ?
- The recruitment of 300 officers was reported earlier in the year as part of the Precept proposal. Will this number balance all retirements and replace existing vacancies ?
- How many of the full time equivalent posts are currently vacant ?

The Panel welcomes plans to strengthen the Special Constabulary and Cadet Programme.

- How will the number of Special officers be increased ?

The Panel agrees that digital mobilisation and a responsive workforce are key to the delivery of the new model. It offers huge potential to use data quickly and make the correct judgement to protect vulnerable people. Technology that ensures that officers and PCSOs spend as little time as possible away from their beats is very much welcomed and the Panel looks forward to a demonstration of the new Qlick Sense technology at its next meeting.

- Do plans under Digital Mobilisation include utilising social media - is it possible to post alerts on sites such as Next Door which has been effective in warning the public of current scams ?
- Do you see a role for Neighbourhood Watch in Neighbourhood Policing ? Will the Panel's recommendation for Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators to use text messaging to disseminate information be adopted ?
- Are all Police vehicles now Wifi enabled ?

The impact of reduced funding means that it is not feasible to achieve the resource levels that have historically been in place and it is accepted that planning for the future must involve a broader approach. Future expectations of the service will undoubtedly be assisted by retaining the confidence of the public and by ensuring that officers have a clear understanding of what the neighbourhood function is expected to deliver.

In principle, the Panel encourages and supports the overall aim of the strategy, but regrets that opportunities to consult the Panel on the proposed strategy were not taken at an earlier stage. If it is possible to provide the detail/clarification requested, the Panel would be very grateful.

Cllr Martin Wale, Cllr Mark Weston, Cllr Jane Warmington,  
**on behalf of the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel**