



**PRIORITY 6**



## **SUPPORT NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING THAT IS APPROPRIATE FOR BOTH RURAL & URBAN COMMUNITIES**

### **KEY FACTS**

- The number of volunteers assisting Dorset Police has risen from 72 to 172 since the publication of this Plan in April 2013
- There are currently 209 Special Constables working for Dorset Police
- Dorset Police has recruited 113 Special Constables in the last year (a significant increase following a Plan pledge)
- In 2012/13 Special Constables gave over 50,000 hours of their time to help keep Dorset safe

This priority recognises the importance of neighbourhood policing in achieving all of the priorities in this plan. A visible uniformed presence provides reassurance to local communities together with prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour and problem solving with the community and partners when it occurs.

With the Chief Constable, the Commissioner has reversed the recruitment freeze in place since 2009 and welcomed 24 new police officers into the Force. They have also agreed to increase further recruitment numbers over the next year.

### **SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM (SNT) POLICING**

Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) have done much to enhance the service to victims especially where they have suffered repeat offences. It is essential that neighbourhood policing focuses on the effective assessment of threat, risk and harm. Effective systems of early intervention to prevent escalation and to enable multi-agency problem solving are crucial. The Commissioner plays a key role in ensuring that agencies work together and share important information so that effective decisions can be made.

SNTs have an important part to play in all of the Commissioner's priorities in this Plan. Victims and offenders live on their 'beats', and that includes those affected by, or involved in, organised crime or terrorism.

### **SPECIAL CONSTABLES AND VOLUNTEERS**

In recognition of this the Commissioner has pledged to double recruitment of Special Constables and significantly increase the number of volunteers in Dorset Police by 2016. Some will be dedicated to rural and marine areas to provide local, recognisable, and accessible contact. Since the Commissioner took office a number of measures have been introduced to support this ambition. These include the creation of a Strategic Volunteers Board to co-ordinate all Special Constabulary and volunteer activity across the Force; different tiers of volunteering to help remove some of the bureaucracy related to recruitment and vetting, depending on the specific role being applied for; and a renewed focus on the retention of Special Constables.

## PRIORITY 6

### WATCH SCHEMES AND CRIME PREVENTION

The Commissioner welcomes the good working relationships between Dorset Police and Neighbourhood Watch Groups in many areas and will play his part in encouraging these positive and productive relationships in all areas. The past year has seen a positive increase in the number of Watch Groups and there are now over 17,000 contacts across Dorset. (However, there is a need for greater Watch engagement in West Dorset.) It is anticipated that numbers will increase further following the introduction of 'Dorset Alert', a new community messaging system, in May 2014.

Early intervention with neighbourhood teams working with partners to stop crime before it happens is an essential part of this priority. This requires a strategy involving all relevant agencies, whether they are public, private or voluntary, in tackling the behaviours and lifestyles that generate crime and ASB.

### RURAL CRIME

Dorset Police and the Commissioner are working together to embed a fresh approach to combating rural crime. Dorset Police have reviewed rural crime across the county and the Commissioner has met with a number of rural agencies such as the National Farmers Union (NFU), the Countryside Alliance (CA), the Country Land and Business Association (CLA) and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA), to ensure a joined-up approach across the county. Dorset Police has also joined the National Rural Crime Network. It is important that all agencies and communities work together to reduce rural crime. By joining schemes such as 'Stop That Thief', people will feel safer and it will also help to protect the farming community from crime.

### WHAT WE WILL DO

- In response to community feedback the Commissioner will seek to protect Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) numbers as an essential part of Neighbourhood Policing.
- The Commissioner will considerably increase the number of Special Constables recruited and explore incentivisation for them.
- Having established a Force Volunteers Board the OPCC will oversee all volunteer engagement and make better use of volunteers, including mentors and street pastors.
- The Chief Constable will ensure that the marine, rural and urban communities have appropriate neighbourhood policing from Dorset Police.
- The Commissioner will work closely with specific partners to make our neighbourhoods safer such as with the Harbour Authorities across Dorset's coast.
- The OPCC and Dorset Police will ensure that, with our partners, preventing and 'designing out' crime and disorder is a priority for our Safer Neighbourhood Teams.
- The Chief Constable will ensure that Safer Neighbourhood Teams are focused on the issues that matter most to you.
- The Chief Constable will ensure that Dorset Police keep you informed about their work, sharing success.
- Dorset Police will involve you in problem solving.

The OPCC and Dorset Police have started working with Bournemouth University to seek state-of-the-art technological solutions to rural crime.

### WHAT RESULTS ARE WE SEEKING TO ACHIEVE?

- You will see improvements in how relevant agencies share information to solve problems.
- You will see more Special Constables recruited and performing more hours of duty.
- More people will agree that local community priorities are being dealt with.
- You will see a more consistent approach to rural crime issues across Dorset.

[www.dorset.pcc.police.uk](http://www.dorset.pcc.police.uk)



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