

## Police and Crime Panel, Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2017

Question from John Hale, County Councillor for Colney Heath & Marshalswick:

**What action is the force taking to ensure it has sufficient officers and staff available to fulfil its resourcing model and meet the demand on its services, while also taking into account the wellbeing of its workforce?**

### **Context –changing nature of demand across Hertfordshire**

We know that the picture of demand in policing is changing. Across the country we see that only 17 per cent of Command and Control calls result in a crime being recorded, with a significant proportion of what the police do relating to 'public safety and welfare'. Police are now the first and last resort dealing with a range of incidents, including those relating to mental health.

Crime is becoming increasingly complex in its nature - fraud, cybercrime, child sexual abuse, human trafficking and coercive domestic abuse which all require more investigative resources to solve. We know that the Crime Survey for England and Wales does not fully account for all crime including cyber enabled crime such as fraud.

Like other forces up and down the land, Hertfordshire has experienced a marked increase in demand across the key areas of policing activity. Over the last three years there has been a:

- 9% increase in incidents
- 33% increase in the volume of reported crime
- 47% increase in reported Rape offences
- Reported offences relating to child abuse, trafficking and adult safeguarding have increased by 78%
- 48% increase in reported cases of domestic abuse
- In the last year there has been a 7% increase in incidents requiring attendance, a 10% increase in 999 calls and 2% increase in 101s

HMICFRS reported in their inspection this week that domestic abuse continues to be an area of demand throughout 2017/18. The report states that whilst the amount of domestic abuse actually taking place is not rising, much more is being reported which is resource intensive. As a result, the call on police resources is expanding significantly to provide a service to those victims who would have been let down in the past.

In 2016/17, I reinvested £10.3m in resourcing these areas of demand of which £3.6m was specifically invested into supporting the expansion of the DAISU unit with 80 officers and staff. There was also an increase in resources to support growth in areas of safeguarding, cybercrime and victims services.

### **Financial context**

Clearly our response to meet these unprecedented rises and changes in demand needs to be set within the context of the continued challenging financial arrangements. Only this week I gave evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee and gave my views on BBC Look East and ITV

regarding the need for changes in regulation to enable PCCs to use their democratic mandate to support funding. £1.00 a week on council tax would make all the difference.

### **Profiling Demand**

The Constabulary are working with Process Evolution, an evidence based consultancy to better assess and understand current demand and forecast future demand. The outcome of this work will enable efficiencies to be made and show where areas of investment are needed.

The recent HMICFRS inspection on Efficiency showed that the Constabulary's understanding of demand is developing well. Its use of resources, understanding of demand and planning for the future were all graded as 'good'.

The first strand of the Demand Management Review (Project Odyssey) has started to understand the demands on staff and the efficiency of the response policing model in relation to double crewing, shift patterns and appointments.

Based on an establishment of 525 FTE the review showed that:

- Officer utilisation stood at 82% (higher than the 70 - 80% target)
- 81.9% of emergency 'immediate' incidents were responded to within 15 minutes against a target of 85%
- 62% of calls to less urgent 'priority' incidents were responded to within 60 minutes against a target of 80%

### **Double crewing**

In relation to double crewing, the Constabulary recognise that the original policy around double crewing has not been consistently adhered to and has been taking place on shifts which do not require double crewing. Following a thorough analysis including accounting for officers' welfare, double crewing has now reduced by 18%.

### **Shift Patterns**

Changes to the shift pattern of the Response Teams are being considered to ensure the most efficient way to match resources to demand. The force will be entering a formal consultation process shortly with staff to consider welfare and only following feedback from the consultation, an assessment of resources and the demand profile, will changes be made.

### **Neighbourhood Policing**

You will know that I set out in my manifesto and my *Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan: Everybody's Business* my commitment to protecting local policing across the county. Neighbourhood policing remains the model of policing in Hertfordshire. Based around the 10 district model, it provides the foundation for community engagement, trust and confidence.

I am not looking to make any cuts to frontline policing, in fact I will be investing in more frontline officers over 2017/18 to better reflect the rise in demand and the growing population of Hertfordshire, which is projected to grow by 9% between 2011- 2019.

Only this week we had 12 new PCSOs starting with the force and we will continue to bolster support to the wider policing family through our Special Constabulary and pursue new opportunities available including Volunteer PCSOs.

### **Supporting the welfare of officers and staff**

Considering the welfare of officers and staff remains our first priority when any changes are being proposed to resourcing structures [*may want to give the example of reversing the proposed changes to custody shift patterns*].

Charlie Hall, my Chief Constable has put in place a series of measures to support the wellbeing of staff at what is a very pressurising time. Aside from the formal consultation processes with staff, the Constabulary hold a series of engagement days with managers (Sergeants upwards) called 'Valuing Leaders' which encourage staff to recognise stress and spot the signs and understand where they can go to get help and support.

The Constabulary are signed up to the mental Health Blue Light campaign with MIND which provides specific targeted support to help officers and staff cope with change and pressures arising from the job. There are also a number of wellbeing champions who have undergone specialist awareness training to act as a point of contact, challenging stigma and encouraging colleagues to talk about mental health.

The Constabulary have also used the employee engagement survey called 'Your Voice Matters', developed by Durham University, to understand how officers feel about their working environment, professional relationships and leadership support. The survey will be undertaken again this year to understand what has changed and areas for improvement. The Chief Constable will be using evidence from that survey to develop a programme of work and I will be asking for updates to ensure that we reflect on that feedback in any decisions that we take.