
Committee, Group or Sub-Group

Police/Parishes Liaison Committee

Meeting Date & Venue

Wednesday 18th April 2018

Report Author

Cllrs Manning & Symes+

Report

Chief Inspector ~~Mark~~^{Mark} Gardner welcomed Parish Council representatives from Barming, Coxheath, Chart Sutton, Collier Street, Headcorn, Leeds, Lenham, Marden, Yalding, Park Wood, East Farleigh & Staplehurst. He was supported by Inspector Mark Hedges and Sgt Haffenden. Following the criticism of the presentation of past meetings and clarification of the role and duties of PCSOs, there has been a step change in a formal approach to future meetings with minutes and agendas distributed to parishes, an update on key issues and specific duties of PCSOs.

A team structure is in place to deal with drugs in Maidstone. Serious violence in Maidstone is at a low level. Online reporting system is very effective and will redirect calls to the correct agency.

Staplehurst's PCSO, ~~Mark~~^{Pete} Gardner, has additional parishes to cover, namely Boughton Monchelsea and Chart Sutton. PCSOs are now committed to regular contact with parishes and must attend at least one Parish Council meeting every three months. If there is a particular problem on the Parish Council's agenda where it is considered the PCSO's presence will help, he/she should be notified before the meeting so they can have the answers ready. This will start with immediate effect.

As a result of Government cutbacks, 4000 police officers in Kent have been reduced to 3000. However, it is intended to increase the number of officers in Maidstone by 200 and the number of staff by 10. Five new volunteers have completed their training and another three are under training. PCSOs operate a 40 hour week – 7am to 5pm or 12am to 10pm, working a three week shift pattern, with a team of six PCSOs on a shift. The rural liaison team will double in size and cover the whole of Kent. PCSOs prioritise criminal and life threatening issues over domestic problems.

Action is being taken on fly tipping with cameras on known areas with a community protection warning. A SmartWater spray will be used on a tip so that it can be traced back. The spray is a traceable liquid with a unique forensic code and can be applied to jewellery, TVs, mobile phones, power tools and outdoor items such as lawnmowers. It is invisible and virtually impossible to remove. Has reduced burglary by as much as 85%.

A representative from East Farleigh complained that they had tried to speak to Staplehurst Transits, without success, over heavy lorries speeding on narrow lanes causing damage especially to Teston bridge. Police liaison recommended AMPR – automatic number plate reader and report to KCC.

On the question of parking, PCSOs can only deal with parking on zig zags. MBC is responsible for vehicle parking.