

# Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia e-newsletter



**Issue 2 - March 2014**

Community Ambassador Coordinator, Paul Deneen, Barrie and Bill join in a clean-up of Hereford city centre on Sunday 16 February as part of the T4C scheme.

## → A message from your Police and Crime Commissioner

As many of you will know, I had an exploratory operation last month after being diagnosed with lung cancer just before Christmas.

I am recovering well and have managed to attend a few public meetings over the last few days.

However, further tests have confirmed that I will need to undergo a course of chemotherapy, which I have now started. I will remain in touch with my office and will work from home throughout my treatment.

My Deputy, Barrie Sheldon will continue to support me and attend any public meetings on my behalf.



The first meet your Deputy PCC event took place on Wednesday 5 February at The Hive in Worcester.

## → Meet your Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner and Safer Neighbourhood Teams

My Deputy, Barrie, your Safer Neighbourhood Teams and our partners will be on hand to answer your questions and address any concerns you may have as part of a series of engagement events taking place across the West Mercia area.

So far, events have been held in Worcester, Bewdley and Kidderminster and they have been a great success.

For further information and to find out where future events will be, please click [here](#).

Please come along and let us know your views.

## → Update on the budget and precept

The amount people pay for policing through their council tax will increase by 1.99 per cent, roughly equivalent to inflation.

This increase, which has been supported by the Police and Crime Panel, equates to an extra 7p per week for a Band D household and will mean that I will have an extra £1.7 million per year to spend on policing.

I understand that times are difficult and this is not a decision I have come to lightly. The Government's austerity measures mean that we need to plan to save a further £21.8 million over the next five years.

The police precept has been held at zero for the last three years but it is vital the base budget keeps pace with inflation. Without the increase, the budget cuts needed would be even greater.

Income raised through council tax is a vital source of police funding and I have to think about the future. By asking people to pay a little more I can protect frontline policing over a longer period of time.

In making this decision I have taken into account how I can use our current reserves. I intend to use them to create an "invest to save fund" which will help speed up the delivery of the required savings, such as bring forward a number of key technology improvements to achieve earlier efficiencies.

To find out more, please visit [click here](#).



Community Support Officers from West Mercia Police.

## → Introducing my new Community Ambassadors...

A new initiative has been launched to bring the public and communities closer to my role as Police and Crime Commissioner.

Five Community Ambassadors – one for each of the force's territorial policing areas - will foster relationships to support the empowerment of communities to create their own answers to crime and disorder and issues that affect them. And, to promote and encourage applications to my Commissioner's Grant Scheme, which can inject cash to help deliver solutions. A sixth Ambassador will focus on communications.



The Community Ambassadors take part in their induction day at Hindlip Hall in Worcester.

In addition, Ambassadors will promote my Community Engagement Strategy and help raise the profile of the important work of my office.

In essence I want my Ambassadors to be my eyes and ears on the ground. They will help communities and groups to be a strong voice on policing and crime and disorder issues. I want people to participate more, to share more to inform me about what matters to them.

Other areas of focus for me are issues surrounding victims of crime, witnesses and vulnerable people. I also want to better engage with children and young people. If children are disillusioned and have no focus, I want to know.

Businesses and rural communities will also receive support from the Community Ambassadors. I need to stress that my Ambassadors will provide me with a broader focus and identify efficiently and effectively areas of local concern where my office, together with the active support of neighbourhood police and safer neighbourhood teams, can make a real difference.

## → My Community Engagement Strategy

It has been my aim to be a strong voice to ensure people's views are taken on board when deciding police priorities. I want people to take time out and read my recently published [Community Engagement Strategy](#) and tell me what they think.

This strategy will help me in holding the Chief Constable to account about how our police force engages with local people.

Among its aims is to develop 'diversionary' activities for young people, particularly those at risk of offending. Like one being developed in Shropshire which will use sporting opportunities as a diversionary mechanism.

Neighbourhood and rural watch schemes will also be strengthened and I propose partnerships with agencies, such as councils to develop opportunities for rehabilitation of offenders.



The strategy also proposes launching a Community Volunteer Scheme where local people will be my 'eyes and ears'.

Volunteers will link directly with the force-wide Community Ambassadors. Ambassadors are a direct local point of contact for me, tasked with developing community links and encouraging people to get involved in creating safer neighbourhoods.

I want this strategy to inspire people to be leaders in their communities and to bring those communities together; to motivate them to protect themselves and their homes.

Volunteers and communities who have made a significant contribution to cut crime and disorder will be recognised at a planned annual conference that will also promote and share best practice.

## → Grant schemes

Would a cash injection help cut or prevent crime and disorder in your area? If you can identify a problem or have an idea to develop an initiative to benefit your community, then I am listening.

Tackling crime and disorder and helping communities feel safe isn't just about effective policing; everyone has a role to play. I am focused on funding initiatives that can make a difference. They can be new or existing project that can change things for the better.

My Commissioner's Grant Scheme is directed to deliver the objectives in my Police and Crime Plan.

I urge groups and organisations to read this plan and I invite them to apply for funding to help me, but more importantly to help their community.

Schemes and initiatives across the West Mercia area are already benefiting from my Commissioner's Grant Fund and match funding can significantly boost any application's chance of success.

Initiatives like the £11,500 part funding of a taxi marshalling project in Hereford that helps weekend revellers get home in safety, or Arley Kings Village Hall where £2,000 helped fund a Youth Shelter installation and equipment costs. In Shropshire the Ludlow Amateur Boxing Club were granted £12,000 to help complete the club's community project and so support on-going diversionary scheme for young people. In Evesham a grant of £3,000 to cut crime and disorder by supporting the town's Street Pastors scheme. And, in Telford & Wrekin a grant of £11,000 to fund a pair of mobile cameras to proactively focus on crime or anti-social behaviour hotspots.

To discover what I can do to support you and your community [click here](#). Here you will find everything you need to know including a guidance briefing and application forms to download.



Barrie joins the Evesham Street Pastors out on patrol.

## → A focus on West Mercia Police Cadets



Telford Volunteer Cadets passing out parade at Hindlip Hall in Worcester.

West Mercia Police Cadets is a force wide volunteer scheme operating in Herefordshire, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and Worcestershire. The aim of the cadets is to support West Mercia's strategy of engagement with young people.

The scheme is aimed at young people who wish to engage in a programme that offers them an opportunity to gain a practical understanding of policing, develop their spirit of adventure and good citizenship, while supporting their local policing priorities through volunteering, working with partner agencies and positive participation in their communities.

For Kate Theodore the cadets helped her realise a dream of becoming a police officer.

"I have no doubt that I have developed as an individual since joining the cadets. The scheme aims to encourage you to step outside your comfort zone, build your confidence and find hidden qualities you didn't know you had – it did for me," said Kate.

"Though many cadets join the police service, others have gone on to completely different careers taking the many skills they have learned with them," Kate added.

To find out more check out the cadets page [here](#).

## → Chief Executive, David Brierley to retire



The new Chief Executive, Andy Champness with David Brierley.

David Brierley, Chief Executive of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, will be retiring at the end of March.

I will be sorry to see David go as he has been a stalwart in providing the support and guidance much needed by both Barrie and I during the challenging, and occasionally somewhat difficult, times experienced during the transition from a Police Authority to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. He was highly regarded by the previous Police Authority, and nationally for his work and contributions with the Association of Policing and Crime Chief Executives. We wish David and his family all the best in his well-deserved retirement.

## → Volunteers needed to join the ChildLine Schools Service

I am backing a recruitment drive for volunteers to join the ChildLine Schools Service whose aim is to help children recognise and protect themselves from abuse and where to go for help when they need to.

The initiative is backed by the NSPCC whose aim is to go into schools to deliver advice and guidance to young people.

The work in West Mercia can only be carried out with the help of volunteers and, ChildLine say a concerted effort is necessary to achieve their goal of visiting every primary school in the force area by 2016.

The service is also backed by West Mercia Police who say protecting children from harm remains a top priority and welcomed the NSPCC initiative. The police also want their own 'hotline' – 101 – to be used if any person is concerned about the safety of a child.

They also recognise that child abuse is under reported and wholeheartedly support the ChildLine Schools Service in its campaign of advice and information to children.

The scheme is a vital component in helping to protect children. Making people aware of dangers and how to report any concerns is of key importance.

For more information about the scheme and to volunteer please click [here](#).

## → Question time event - crime and the criminal justice system in West Mercia

The above event will be held at Worcester University on Friday 7 March 2014 from 5.30pm until 7pm.

At the event, Barrie will outline the progress to date of my Police and Crime Plan. He will also be joined by a distinguished panel from the Criminal Justice Sector, including the Probation Service and Youth Offending Service, to comment on progress and a public audience will be invited to question him and the panel on issues relating to criminal justice, crime and punishment and policing.

If you would like to be part of the audience, please book your place, free of charge, [click here](#).



### 'QUESTION TIME'

CRIME & THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
SYSTEM IN WEST MERCIA

[www.westmercia-pcc.gov.uk](http://www.westmercia-pcc.gov.uk)

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