

## ***The latest news from the Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner***

**May 2017**

Next week will mark the first anniversary of my election to the role of Police and Crime Commissioner - and I can vouch for it having been a very busy 12 months ever since! As someone who arrived in the role having not previously had any background in policing, the past year has been a steep learning curve but an enjoyable one nonetheless.

In my many meetings with officers and police staff of all ranks I have been impressed with their dedication and professionalism and it has been fascinating to see the wide range of activities - many of which go unseen by the public - which take place daily to keep Warwickshire safe.

On taking office, I set out a number of ambitions for how I would seek to shape policing and the wider criminal justice system in the county. These helped form the backbone of my Police and Crime Plan, which was launched in December with the key objectives of:

- **Putting victims and survivors first**
- **Ensuring efficient and effective policing**
- **Protecting people from harm**
- **Preventing and reducing crime**

Since then my office has been working with Warwickshire Police and other partner agencies to deliver against these priorities. The past year has seen considerable progress: I have confirmed major investments in exciting new mobile technology which will allow police officers to have access to the information they need while on the move, increasing their visibility; similar investment in a new, state-of-the-art Operations Communications Centre at Neville House in Warwick, as well as the roll out this summer of new body worn video technology to the frontline (see more on that below).

Elsewhere, my office has made progress towards establishing a new county-wide protocol to tackle the issues brought about by unauthorised traveller encampments. We hope to have all relevant agencies signed up to the protocol in the coming months, giving residents an improved and more coherent response when incursions occur. Similarly, work on my Victims' and Witnesses' Charter is also progressing well, with partners currently being consulted on its draft form. I will also soon be confirming the recipients of my annual grant funding - watch out for an announcement in the coming days.

All-in-all, we have made good progress in developing, consulting on and beginning to deliver against the Police and Crime Plan - but I'm under no illusions that there is still much to do over the remaining years of my term of office. You have my assurance that I will continue to push forward just as hard to ensure that we all benefit from a safer, more secure Warwickshire.

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*Continuing the electoral theme, it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the local elections*

*results which have been announced today across the county. I welcome all those councillors - both new and old - elected to the County Council and send my commiserations to the unsuccessful candidates. As many of you also know, my decision to stand down as a district councillor meant a by-election was held for my former seat on Stratford-on-Avon District Council. I am pleased to congratulate Penny-Anne O'Donnell on her victory as my successor in the Ettington ward.*



**Philip Secombe TD**  
**Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner**

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## **Meeting to discuss criminal justice processes**

A key part of my role as Commissioner is to listen to the public's views and experiences of the criminal justice system, particularly when there are concerns that things may have gone wrong or that procedures are not adequate. Last week I met with Colin Hehir, the father of murdered Nuneaton man Morgan Hehir (pictured left), to discuss his concerns that a loophole in the processes for monitoring offenders on release from prison could have led to the murder of his son.



The meeting was filmed, at Colin's request, by BBC Midlands Today and was broadcast earlier this week. It certainly cannot have been easy to re-tell those events on camera and I commend Colin for the dignity he has shown ever since Morgan's death in October 2015. Having heard the details of the case, I too am keen to understand whether processes within the criminal justice system provided adequate protection for the public.

Morgan's killer, Declan Gray, had only months before been released from prison, having served a full sentence for manslaughter. While there are national guidelines which police and other agencies follow to monitor violent offenders upon release from prison, the fact that Gray had served his full term meant that, under existing rules, there was little in the way of supervision and monitoring that could be undertaken by the police and other agencies, with tragic results.

This brings into question whether the powers that the police, National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Companies currently have to monitor individuals convicted of serious violent crimes in these circumstances are adequate. While it's clear that agencies are all working extremely hard to protect the public from dangerous offenders, I think it is right to take

stock and examine whether improvements can be made to help those agencies further minimise the risk to the public.

I gave Colin the assurance that I will convene a meeting in the coming weeks with the relevant agencies to discuss the concerns highlighted by Morgan's death. This will help me to further understand what if any shortcomings may exist in the current public protection arrangements and examine how they can be overcome. I'll keep you updated with progress.

## Positive ratings from HMIC

Ensuring that Warwickshire Police obtains as a minimum 'good' overall ratings in all areas of the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) inspection programme is one of the firm pledges I made in my Police and Crime Plan and something I have been holding the Chief Constable to account for in delivering.

HMIC gave its final overall assessment of Warwickshire Police recently and I'm pleased to be able to report that the force has achieved 'good' ratings in each area of the PEEL inspection programme, which looks at police efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy. This marks a step forward from the previous year's reports, where the force had been rated as 'requiring improvement' for effectiveness and legitimacy.



I am naturally pleased that the progress made by the force over the last 12 months has been recognised by the inspectors. The improved ratings come as a result of the hard work and commitment that officers and police staff make on a daily basis, serving their local communities and protecting the vulnerable. It is pleasing to see the many examples of this recognised in each of the individual HMIC PEEL reports.

There is no complacency, however, and maintaining and wherever possible improving on these ratings is the new challenge faced by Warwickshire Police. The reports each suggest additional ways that the force can make improvements and, with its past track record of delivering against these recommendations, I am confident this is achievable.

In addition, the investments I am making in new technology and mobile working will

further help to ensure that Warwickshire Police continues to move forward, delivering a better service our local communities and victims of crime.

To see the HMIC PEEL reports in full and to read my responses to each, visit [www.warwickshire-pcc.gov.uk/key-information/hmic-reports/](http://www.warwickshire-pcc.gov.uk/key-information/hmic-reports/)

## Body worn video update

The new body worn video equipment which I am funding for frontline police officers across Warwickshire was last week scrutinised by the Trust, Integrity and Ethics Committee.

The committee – jointly set up by myself and my West Mercia counterpart John Campion – had the chance to quiz operational policing leads for the project, as well as studying the new force policies which will be followed by officers when they receive their new equipment over the summer months.

Firearms and Taser-trained officers will be among the first to receive the equipment in Warwickshire, followed by patrol officers, with all front-line operational officers – including those in Safer Neighbourhood Teams – gaining body-worn cameras during the remainder of 2017.

I think it was important for the Trust, Integrity and Ethics Committee to look at body worn video, as they are very much our ‘conscience’ on the public’s behalf when it comes to ethical matters. The committee had a good a demonstration of the equipment from officers, so that members could fully understand how it will be used and were then able to ask appropriate questions of the force, ensuring they were happy with the policies and procedures frontline officers will be using.

You can see more about the technology and how it works in the video below.

Click video to play.

## Blue Sky Centre performs a vital service

On Tuesday I visited the Blue Sky Centre, located at Nuneaton's George Eliot Hospital, where I met with manager Tony Mumford. Blue Sky is the county's Sexual Abuse Referral Centre or SARC for short, where any victim of rape or sexual assault can go to receive medical care, police intervention (if they wish to report the crime) and help from various other support services. I was keen to be able to visit and get an overview of the services offered and how the centre is operating.

Funded regionally by NHS England, the centre aims to help restore a victim's confidence in the aftermath of sexual violence and assist them to rebuild their lives. The service is open to all - men and women, boys and girls and is a local partnership between the police, health services and voluntary organisations.



During our meeting Tony reflected on the increased demand for Blue Sky's services over the past four years.

While a sad reflection on the continued prevalence of sexual violence in society, it is at least reassuring that the victims supported during that time now receive far higher levels of support than would have been the case before Blue Sky existed.

If you have been the victim of rape or sexual assault, you can contact the Blue Sky Centre for free and confidential advice on **02476 865 505** or visit the website at [www.blueskycentre.org.uk](http://www.blueskycentre.org.uk). If you are at immediate risk of harm call **999**.

## Giving businesses a helping hand to fight crime

In order to help protect businesses in Warwickshire from crime, I fund a Business Crime Advisor, who works with business groups to empower them to protect themselves from crime.

Alex Williams has been in post since September 2015 and has been helping businesses of all sizes, as well as working with groups such as the Federation of Small Businesses, Chamber of Commerce, business support groups such as the Coventry and Warwickshire Growth Hub as well as other smaller networking groups. His work includes the delivery of training sessions to groups of small and medium sized businesses on a range of topics including fraud and cyber crime prevention.



Along with a police support volunteer, Alex runs Warwickshire Business Watch, which consists of a website, the police Community Messaging system, Warwickshire County Council's 'Keep Me Posted Alerts' and a dedicated Twitter account.

The Business Watch website houses a range of advice sheets, news updates and list of events which are of interest to businesses. It also houses an incident log, which lists any incidents of business crime along with crime prevention advice so that businesses can be proactive in protecting themselves from potential crimes.

### Things to look out for



As well as face-to-face training, Alex is going to be running online crime prevention training sessions, meaning businesses can learn how to protect themselves without having to leave the workplace. The first of these is due to take place in June and the topic is cyber crime - so if you'd like to get involved please contact Alex on the details below.

In addition to this, a campaign has recently been launched by the Community Safety team in Warwickshire County Council, in partnership with Trading Standards and my office, asking businesses and residents if they are #Wifisavvy. The scheme encourages businesses that offer Wifi to look at their security and promote safe use of their Wifi to customers. Businesses involved can display a poster and window sticker demonstrating the steps they have taken to protect customers' information who use their Wifi.

If you would like more information on the work of the Business Crime Advisor, please contact Alex at [alexcharleswilliams@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:alexcharleswilliams@warwickshire.gov.uk) or 07920814897. If you would like sign up for messaging alerts about business crime, see the links on the Warwickshire Business Watch homepage [www.warwickshirebusinesswatch.co.uk](http://www.warwickshirebusinesswatch.co.uk), or follow Business Watch on Twitter [@WarksBusiness](https://twitter.com/WarksBusiness).

## Marathon effort nets £2,800 for Refuge

Huge congratulations are in order for Chris Lewis, one of my Policy and Research Officers, who successfully completed the London Marathon, raising funding for the charity Refuge in the process.

Chris, who had undergone a strict training regime prior to the classic round-London race (even managing to forego his usual weakness for chocolate), is no stranger to feats of endurance as a regular member of my office's team in the Wolf Run.

His efforts this time out raised a very creditable £2,800. I'll let you know how the 'Warwickshire Wolves' team gets on in the Wolf Run later in the year.



## The month ahead

Here are some of the key events in my diary for the month ahead:

- **May 9:** Force Commendations and Awards Ceremony
- **May 10:** Warwickshire Youth Justice Service board meeting
- **May 17:** Association of Police and Crime Commissioners' meeting, Birmingham



In addition, I have a weekly meeting with the Chief Constable to hold the force to account and discuss any arising issues. You can find details of these meetings [here](#).

A full schedule of my key meetings and events is kept up-to date online at [www.warwickshire-pcc.gov.uk/event/](http://www.warwickshire-pcc.gov.uk/event/)

**The next newsletter will be published on Friday 2 June**