



Lancashire
POLICE AUTHORITY
 Your County, Your Police, Your Say

“DIALOGUE”

Issue 8 - August 2008

Central

“Investors in Policing”



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Editor note: We want to ensure that this newsletter is addressing the issues that are important to you. If you have any suggestions about any issues or topics you would like us to include in the next edition, please contact Danielle Norton on 01772 531209 or e-mail danielle.norton@lpa.lancscc.gov.uk

www.lancspa.gov.uk

“TACKLING COMMUNITY CONCERN”



CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT
PETER WHITE

Having been in post now as Divisional Commander for seven months, I have seen the full breadth of work that police officers and police staff do. Work continues in relation to criminal damage and anti-social behaviour which is an area of great concern to members of our community as this affects their quality of life. Crime continues to fall albeit we are not complacent and we are very aware that this situation can change very quickly.

In the last publication I spoke of my concerns regarding gangs and gun crime and I am pleased to say that the police, our partners and our communities continue to work towards reducing this problem and I am firmly of the belief that the key to solving many of the problems facing our communities lies with the engagement of partners and a multi agency focus on people and places. It is essential that children and young people are given all the support necessary to help them avoid becoming involved in criminality.

The community of Preston and its surrounding area can be reassured that the police are very focused on their responsibilities and whilst partnership working is essential, we are very clear about our role in protecting the public and will continue to focus our activities on those who choose to commit crime and anti-social behaviour.

“Police send out school holiday warning”

Fifty five cans of lager were unceremoniously poured away down the drain by Community Volunteer Claire Sumner. They had been seized over the Bank Holiday weekend from underage youths who were caught with their illicit drinks in public parks around the Ashton and Lea area.

The action was followed by letters to the parents of the youths involved and two individuals received £80 penalty notices for buying alcohol on behalf of underage youngsters.

Sergeant John Lovick said: “Every weekend, staff from Lea Police Station seize alcohol from underage youths who are



Restorative Justice in Action

Young people have cleaned graffiti off a church and neighbouring building in a Restorative Justice ‘punishment’.

The move came after a group of children were caught spraying graffiti on the community centre and the premises next door to it. A Restorative Justice Conference was arranged, attended by Father Paul from the Sacred Heart Church and about eight members of the church community. The group of seven young people aged around 16 years included five who had sprayed graffiti on the walls.

PC Stuart Bromley Said: “The conference was a great success bringing the offenders and aggrieved parishioners face to face. There was no shouting or arguing with each other just a constructive discussion along with a positive outcome agreement. The victims and parishioners were enthusiastic with the agreement and encouraged at seeing the offenders wanting to make right their wrong.

“Restorative Justice intervention is a really positive solution. It enables the victims to speak directly with the offender/s and question them as to their motives and why they had chosen to damage their property, and the offenders can hear how their actions have affected the victims.”



drinking in public places. I want to send out a warning to youths and their parents that officers will be out on patrol to target this activity.”

“Seizures will continue over the summer months and penalty notices will be issued to any adult believed to be supplying alcohol to underage drinkers.”

“Drunken youths involved in anti-social behaviour bring misery to the community and we will continue to work closely with our partners to eradicate this problem.”

“BURGLARY FIGURES AT ALL TIME LOW IN CITY”

Preston has been officially recognised as the UK city with the seventh lowest burglary rate.

A survey carried out by national insurance company Endsleigh ranked Preston just ahead of Exeter, Chester and Belfast in a top 10 list.

This news follows a significant reduction in the number of burglaries in Preston over the last three years – with statistics showing a drop from 969 in 2004/05 to 687 in 2007/08. In addition, the number of cases where burglars have been caught has risen from 19.8% in 2004/05 to 27.9% in 2007/08.

The decrease is largely thanks to a series of measures put in place to tackle the problem, led by Preston Strategic Partnership and the Safer Preston Partnership – which is responsible for reducing crime and anti-social behaviour across the city.

Sgt Nigel Parkinson, crime prevention officer for the Safer Preston Partnership, said: “The reductions are great news for Preston. Not only are residents less likely to be a victim of burglaries, but we’re more likely to catch criminals who commit them, which should reassure people across the city.”



Activities include:

- Work with Preston Care and Repair – to identify vulnerable properties belonging to elderly or disabled people. The police then carry out crime prevention measures
- Work with local Neighbourhood Watch Schemes, such as the provision of safety advice, the introduction of ‘no cold caller zones’, and reporting anti-social behaviour
- Marking property with the invisible ‘Smartwater’ to make it easier to catch burglars and identify stolen property

Nigel added: “We’re pleased that the hard work is paying off and helping to make Preston a safer city. The figures speak for themselves and prove how well we’re working together to tackle burglary.”

For more information about burglary prevention, call the Preston police crime prevention office on **01772 209781**.
For information about Preston Strategic Partnership, visit www.prestonstrategicpartnership.org.uk.

Bullying Awareness Awards

Businesses from Preston joined together to support police and parish council officials in recent Bullying Awareness Awards.

Pupils from Lea Endowed Primary School were excited to have members of the Lea and Cottam Parish Council and local police officers in school to judge their posters and poems describing why it is wrong to bully others.

PCSO, Gareth Pugh who arranged the bullying awareness awards said: “I was shocked to discover that last year over 30,000 children and young people called Childline about bullying. A great deal of bullying now happens on MSN so I thought that we should broach this with the local school outlining what bullying was and why it is so wrong.”

Headteacher, Kathryn Middlemiss added: “The children revealed things to the police officer that we did not know were happening. It is important that they have another person that they can contact when school is closed.”



Local officers from Lea Police Station - PCSO’s Gareth Pugh and June Anyon - along with representatives from Lea and Cottam Parish Council, Chairman Alex Butler and Clerk Bill Mcennerney-Whittle helped judge the awards.

The local businesses involved were MacDonalds who donated three £10 vouchers, the Pig and Whistle a £10 voucher, Halfords two £10 vouchers, Blockbusters two £10 DVD rentals. The Odeon cinema two sets of family guest passes, X-men hats and Spiderman badges, Chiquitos gave two meal tickets as well as two cinema tickets as well as a party for the reception class and grade one class.



“LANCASHIRE INVESTORS GET UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL AT OPEN DAY 2008”

Start with 7000 tickets, a mix of weather, add our very own ‘Bond, Investor Bond’ coin character and what do you get? A fun filled, activity packed Police Authority marquee at the Summer Nights Open Day launch, at Police Headquarters, Hutton.

Lots of activities were available for people to take part in at the Police Authority stand where members of the public were invited to give their views on policing priorities by spending ‘policing pounds’, rate their awareness of neighbourhood policing and talk about policing services. There was also the opportunity to ‘win back your council tax’ by grabbing golden tokens from the money grabber machine – where the Authority gave away £135 (the average amount paid from council tax towards policing) kindly sponsored by SMSR research.



Chief Executive Miranda Carruthers-Watt was pleased to welcome so many people to the Authority’s stand. She said: “There was no doubt that they were enjoying a wonderful day out. There was so much to see and do, I was delighted that so many people visited us to have their say on policing. They loved the money grabber machine and of course everyone likes to try and win some money, but people were also keen to put their views forward on policing and get involved. This shows that ‘Investors in Policing’ is really working.”



What has Investors in Policing achieved?

Since its launch, Investors in Policing has enabled the Authority to raise awareness of its role and to encourage people to become more involved.

It’s about shaping policing services: as council tax payers, you have the right to have a say in the way your money is spent on all local services and this includes policing.

Have your say!

You can give us your views by:

Telephone: 01772 533587
Email: info@lpa.lancscc.gov.uk
Visiting our website:
www.lancspa.gov.uk

Quick Glance

We asked - Do you know your local officer?
74% said yes, 26% said no.



Investors indicate top police investment choices by spending policing pounds

We gave members of the public £135 ‘policing pounds’ and asked them to spend it against the nine policing emphases that the Authority sets for the Constabulary each year. The top 5 choices were:

1. Public safety
2. Serious and organised crime
3. Anti-social behaviour
4. Counter terrorism
5. Violent crime

The bottom line

We asked - Are the police good value for money?
82% said yes, 13% said no.



Future investment areas identified

When asked to identify further policing priorities the top responses were :

1. Having more police
2. Tackling street crime (guns and knives)
3. Combating youth crime and protecting young people



“Winning Back your council tax”

The lucky winners of the £135 prize were the Patel family from Preston. Mr Patel said “I am delighted to win this prize and it was a real surprise. I enjoyed thinking about how I would spend my ‘policing pounds’ and the whole family, especially the children, thought the event was interesting, informative and worthwhile.”

PICTURE: INVESTOR BOND, THE PATEL FAMILY AND MIRANDA CARRUTHERS-WATT



“We win award, thanks to you!”

With your help Lancashire Police Authority’s Investors in Policing Campaign was rewarded with the ‘Community Engagement through Scrutiny’ Award, from the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS).

At the awards ceremony in London, Judge Andy Sawford, Chief Executive of the Local Government Information Unit, said: “I liked Lancashire’s campaigning approach and also their ambition and scale. This was about using scrutiny to raise public awareness and it had clear and impressive outcomes.”

Malcolm Doherty, Chair of Lancashire Police Authority said: “Everyone in Lancashire who has given us their views and enjoyed our innovative methods of consulting them has helped us win this award. It is proof that local people do want to help shape local policing delivery and that we have provided them with the opportunity to do this. It also demonstrates that the Authority offers people very good value for money.”

PICTURE: NAOMI WALKER, DANIELLE NORTON AND JOHN HEALEY, MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT



“SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS & WITNESSES”

As a victim or a witness of crime it's important that you know what's happening, whether the offender has been caught and what the outcome is.

Over the last two years the Police Authority has worked closely with the Constabulary to focus on improving the service provided to victims and witnesses. Authority Member David Winthrop explained: "Keeping victims and witnesses informed is tremendously important. That's why Witness Care Units, formed in partnership with the Crown Prosecution Service, have been introduced. They provide a single point of contact for those cases going to Court, giving support and information throughout the process.

"People giving evidence are also offered help from Victim Support's Witness Service, a confidential service designed to help them through what can be a stressful time.

"We have monitored the progress made using a process called VICMAN, which checks that people have been kept properly informed."

Other successful initiatives include promoting the use of Victim Personal Statements, so that victims can explain to the Courts

how a crime has affected their life.

Facing up to the impact of crime

Making offenders take responsibility for their actions is central to the Restorative Justice process.

Restorative Justice focuses on the victim receiving some form of compensation or amends from the offender, which victims say they find more satisfactory than other forms of punishment. This alternative method has been very well received. Those given a conditional caution, which is usually only offered to first time minor offenders, are expected to admit their offence and make good the harm they have done. The case doesn't go through the Criminal Justice System, saving time and money for the taxpayer, and the offender doesn't end up with a criminal record for a very minor offence.

Mr Winthrop added: "Victims are pleased to see offenders putting their wrongdoings right and the number of re-offenders goes down."



Delivering Results on your investment - Protecting People 2008

When local people supported the Police Authority with extra funding through the police part of their Council Tax, the Constabulary pledged to address serious and organised crime and terrorist activities.

Protecting People Week, a hugely successful operation held in May, saw a number of important achievements including:

- Almost 200 people arrested
- £130,000 worth of drugs seized
- 41 people charged with Class A drugs offences
- 8 cannabis farms discovered
- £31,880 cash seized
- 60 illegal cars taken off the streets



Chief Constable Steve Finnigan was keen to show the public of Lancashire what they can expect from a top-class police force and demonstrated, through a series of high profile operations in every geographic area, that when he says his priorities are to invest in serious and organised crime, counter terrorism and neighbourhood policing, that these promises transfer into action.

Congratulating the Force, Chair of the Police Authority, Cllr Malcolm Doherty who went out with the officers on the first day of the operation, said: "This is not just a one off crackdown. I know that the Constabulary will continue to target crime in each division, proving that the extra investment local people have made in their police force is paying dividends."

Tell the Police Authority what you think. Log on to the website www.lancspa.gov.uk

Lancashire Crimestoppers is top!

Calls to the Crimestoppers charity from people living in the county have increased and one in four calls has resulted in a detection. According to Home Office figures that put Lancashire as the joint top performing Crimestoppers board in the country alongside Leicestershire.

PC Kay Armstong, who co-ordinates the Crimestoppers hotline said: "Crimestoppers is a valuable tool for people who do not wish to be identified by the Police but have information on crime. Information from people in Lancashire helped with the success of the recent Operation Protecting People in the county.

"If people are afraid to ring the police with information about criminal activity then we would urge them to pass it anonymously to Crimestoppers. There isn't a call line identifier, calls are not traced, and calls by a landline don't appear on an itemised bill."

The head of the county's Crimestoppers charity, Mrs Gail Porter, said: "We act on all these calls and we are really pleased with our current success but we would urge people to continue to contact us with any information they have about crime in their area."

Crimestoppers can be contacted round-the-clock on 0800 555 111.

People can also supply information anonymously on the Crimestoppers website www.crimestoppers-uk.org where there are also details of suspects wanted by police in the district.



CSI: Lancashire

In the glossy world of television, 'CSI' programmes don't have an issue with the big budget costs of forensic materials. In the real world, the Police Authority's role is to ensure top notch 'CSI' results on a Lancashire budget.

Thanks to a groundbreaking project, 14 forces are working together to buy forensic services as a whole to make savings and perform better. The contracts were agreed with the providers in April this year.

This approach will see Lancashire Constabulary save over £1m. By joining together savings on things like DNA mouth swabs, which used to cost £45 per swab, now cost £22. With around 1,000 such swabs being submitted each month, the savings soon mount up!

In addition, turnaround times have improved and the reporting procedure has improved so that we can ensure value for money.

County Councillor Geoff Roper, Chair of the Police Authority's Resources Committee, said: "The project offers many advantages, such as economies of scale, continuity of service provision, reduced costs and greater effectiveness. This is all part of our pledge to the local taxpayers that we will invest their money wisely and to good effect."

The 'QUEST' for Service

Lancashire Constabulary's hugely successful Operation QUEST is now making its way across the force following its first successful trial within Northern Division last year.

QUEST is driving the Police to provide a service tailored to the needs of the public who need their help. Communication Room Operators will be able to offer better initial advice over the phone or members of the public can book an appointment, at a time convenient to them, to see a police officer at a police station 'surgery'. Where appropriate the appointment can be at the caller's home address or other preferred place.

These surgeries have been very well received and have proven their

worth with 99% of customers being satisfied with how their enquiry has been managed. As well as improving the service for non-urgent matters, since the changes came into effect repeat calls to the Communications Rooms have fallen by 52%.



One member of the public who had requested to see an officer said: "The service was very good, a polite response to the initial call, the appointment was made within two to three hours of the call, and the officer attending was very polite and helpful."

Have you experienced the new QUEST system? Let the Police Authority know what you think



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“IMPORTANT NEWS!”

The future of our Police Authority Community Meetings (PACs)

As you may be aware, in recent months we have been reviewing the way we engage and consult with the diverse communities of Lancashire.

Finding out your views on policing and ensuring the local police are answerable to the public is really important to us. Historically, we have used PACs as well as undertaking three pilot Local Policing Boards across West Lancashire, South Ribble and Chorley. What the PACs and the Policing Boards have demonstrated is that whilst you want to get involved you have told us that these approaches may no longer provide the best way.

Through the review we have listened to your views and in the coming months we will be working with our partners who have responsibility for crime and disorder to move from the current PAC process to a new ‘face the public’ approach. This means that the September / October cycle of PACs will be our last.

We are working very hard to ensure that our new form of consultation will be more accessible, and that the local police will be more publicly accountable on the delivery of policing services.

Next Steps

In the next few months there will be a transition process where we move to our new style of meeting. We will keep you updated about the meeting times and venues through our website, newsletters and letters to you.

Whilst we are shaping the way we consult with you there are other ways you can influence how policing is delivered. You can contact us through our website. www.lancspa.gov.uk. Since its launch in February 2002, we have received over 3 million hits with over 14 thousand visitors in June 2008 alone.

We also obtain the views of a broad cross-section of the population through our ‘citizens panel’ – Opinion. Through our latest survey we received the views of over 2500 members of the community on a number of policing issues from confidence in the police to feelings of safety and the use of CCTV.

Finally, we will continue to engage with the community through our public events. Last year we received the views of approximately 900 people on policing priorities during our ‘Investors in Policing’ road shows. In June this year 700 people expressed their preferences on how they would like their council tax money for policing allocated and over 400 people provided feedback on Neighbourhood Policing.

Have your say in the neighbourhood

The Constabulary’s PACT (Police and Communities Together) meetings will still give you the opportunity to discuss policing at a very local level and, of course, you can visit the website or talk to your neighbourhood policing team. If you want more information visit www.lancashire.police.uk

Staying Involved

We are developing a role for people to stay involved in helping shape policing priorities. If you want to help us please let us have your contact details.

If you have any queries please contact us. ian.dickinson@lpa.lancscc.gov.uk

You said:
“How is our money being used and what results am I getting for it?”

You said:
“I want to understand police performance better.”



You said:
“I don’t want to go to a meeting.”

You said:
“I want more interaction and innovation on the ways you consult with me.”

