



My Pledge To You

Stephen Bett's first year
as Norfolk's Police & Crime Commissioner



During my campaign to become your Police and Crime Commissioner, I made a pledge of ten things I would deliver on your behalf.

That pledge has since become the foundation for my work, and that of my Deputy, Jenny McKibben. It has also become the backbone for my Police and Crime Plan for Norfolk.

15th November 2013 marks one year since I was elected. It's been a busy and challenging time but, all in all, very positive. I would like to take this opportunity to tell you a bit about what I have been doing to deliver against my pledge. I hope, by doing so, to give you a way to judge how I am doing.

PCC's Pledge To You

- Keep Norfolk one of the lowest crime counties in the country
- Fight serious and organised crime
- Support victims of crime, vulnerable and elderly people
- Protect the frontline in the face of cuts
- Protect local policing from privatisation
- Use targeting and prevention to reduce demand on police
- Work with young people to stay clear of crime
- Listen carefully to the community, reaching out to minority communities and the disengaged to ensure policing is fair and equitable
- Reject party politics and work with other Independents to provide a national voice
- Use restorative justice to achieve long-lasting solutions

1 Keep Norfolk one of the lowest crime counties in the country

When I became your PCC, I pledged to keep Norfolk one of the safest counties in the country. Having worked with the Constabulary for many years as Chairman of the Police Authority, I knew I was taking on an already high-performing force with a history of driving down crime year on year. But I also knew the financial pressure that the Constabulary was under due to Government funding cuts, and understood the potential impact that could have on the Force's ability to continue performing at that level.

I am proud to say that, despite the challenges and thanks to the strong leadership of chief constables Phil Gormley and Simon Bailey, your police force has performed brilliantly this year and Norfolk remains one of the lowest crime counties in the country. However, none of us is complacent and, given the financial hurdles ahead, I know there is much more to do.





PCC's First Year

- Stephen sets priorities for police and partner agencies tackling crime and disorder. Focus is put on reducing crime types which cause the greatest harm to the county's communities and tackling the re-offending responsible for 32% of crime in Norfolk.
- Your PCC helps to fund local projects working with offenders, supporting the county's most vulnerable and helping young people to stay clear of crime.
- Stephen faces tough decisions over the short and longer-term leadership of the Force as Chief Constable Phil Gormley announces his appointment to the National Crime Agency in June. The Constabulary is placed under the 'competent direction' of then Deputy Chief Constable Simon Bailey (pictured above) while Stephen takes stock and reflects on the way forward. 'Excellent leader' and 'home-grown talent' Mr Bailey is appointed Norfolk's substantive Chief Constable in October.
- Figures released by the Office of National Statistics in the same month show that crime in Norfolk continues to fall. The county remains one of the safest in the country with 44 crimes per 1,000 population, against a national average of 66.

2 Fight serious and organised crime

Within my Police and Crime Plan, I have set the Chief Constable targets to reduce serious violence and sexual offences associated with the night-time economy, and to improve detection rates for these crimes. I am in regular contact with the Protective Services command which leads on this work and I am closely monitoring Force performance against the targets.

Serious and organised crime frequently crosses county and national boundaries and often, therefore, cannot be tackled by Norfolk Police in isolation. Norfolk and Suffolk constabularies have been working together to share specialist resources for some years now, and I meet regularly with Suffolk's PCC to ensure such collaboration continues and grows. I have also developed links with other PCCs in the region to extend that joined-up approach to tackling the key issues affecting us all.

More broadly, Norfolk benefits from linking with the Eastern Region Serious and Organised Crime Unit (ERSOU), and the recently established National Crime Agency, which now has Norfolk's former Chief Constable, Phil Gormley, as its Deputy Director General.

3 Support victims of crime, vulnerable and elderly people

When I ran for election as your PCC, I pledged to support victims. But the word 'support' doesn't really extend far enough; I want to be a victims' champion and play my part in ensuring victims' needs remain at the heart of policing and criminal justice.

I've spent my first year in office looking at what those needs are and how they might differ depending on the type of crime that affects the victim. By this time next year, the responsibility for allocating funding for victim support services in Norfolk will have transferred to me. It is, therefore, vital that I now work on building up an accurate picture of what support is currently available in Norfolk and compare that with what victims are telling me they need.

PCC's First Year

- Victims are invited to take part in a focus group to help shape the PCC's Police and Crime Plan for Norfolk.
- Stephen agrees a modest increase in the policing element of the local Council Tax for 2013. As well as helping minimise the impact of ongoing funding cuts, the increase provides vital staffing resources for supporting victims and addressing vulnerability in the wake of the Jimmy Savile case. Five police officers and nine members of police staff are funded, including case investigators, offender managers for registered sex offenders, additional staffing for investigating rape and supporting victims, and a missing person co-ordinator.
- Stephen launches a survey to explore the needs and experiences of victims of domestic abuse. Using victims' feedback, he and Deputy PCC Jenny McKibben bring together domestic abuse specialists and victims' representatives to examine the help and support available to victims. Information gathered kick-starts a PCC-led programme of work to shape the county's response to domestic abuse.
- Stephen recognises the need to provide advocacy support for victims of domestic abuse and provides funding to continue this service across Norfolk. In July, he appoints a Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Coordinator to help him to improve services for victims.
- Your PCC supports the launch of the Safer Places Scheme, giving vulnerable or disabled people somewhere to go if they need help while out and about. The Scheme is rolled out in Dereham, King's Lynn, Gorleston, Cromer, Attleborough and Fakenham, with launches in other areas still to come.



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Protect the frontline in the face of cuts

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Protect local policing from privatisation



Police forces cannot afford to stand alone as we face ongoing funding cuts. There is a limit to how much can be taken out of individual force budgets before you have to look elsewhere for savings. While some PCCs are looking at privatisation, ‘collaboration, not privatisation’ is my mantra.

Norfolk and Suffolk constabularies have been collaborating for over three years now and that partnership has yielded significant savings for both forces. We already have a number of joint units and departments in areas such as protective services, custody, transport and IT, with more to come.

I regularly meet with Suffolk’s PCC, Tim Passmore and the Chief Constables from both counties, to monitor current collaborative projects and agree next steps. Financial pressures won’t be easing any time soon, so we are going to need to become even more efficient in the way we work if we want to avoid becoming a blue-light only service.



6

Use targeting and prevention to reduce demand on police

Jenny and I have met with a number of organisations who work locally to support (to name a few) victims of crime, the elderly, people with mental health issues, those who are affected by alcohol or substance misuse, offenders and vulnerable young people. Discussions have covered everything from youth offending to care for the elderly, domestic abuse to human trafficking.

What has struck us is the sheer amount of expertise, knowledge and skill we have in Norfolk when it comes to recognising and addressing vulnerability. And through those experts we have seen how early intervention can minimise the risk of someone becoming a victim or offending, and how appropriate support can improve opportunities for the county's most vulnerable.

The current financial situation and subsequent changing approaches to service delivery have resulted in organisations and partnerships forming, developing and reshaping within far faster timescales than has occurred previously. Our task is to look in more depth at how the police and other responsible authorities, community and voluntary organisations are currently working together, identify any barriers and, where possible, try to remove them. We need to ensure resources and funds are being allocated to where they are needed the most.

As well as wanting to see victims of crime and the vulnerable supported, I am also committed to protecting the availability of frontline resources. I believe that, by exploring further approaches to collaborating with partners, we can reduce the demand for policing services and those of partner organisations. The financial challenges we are facing are serious and significant, and we need to make sure the services of the police and other agencies are being used in the right way.

PCC's First Year

- Stephen works with police and partners to look at the root causes of crime. Rehabilitation of offenders, support for people with mental health issues, and the impact of drug and alcohol misuse on crime and anti-social behaviour are agreed as priority action areas and included in your PCC's Police and Crime Plan.
- Your PCC awards a crime and disorder reduction grant to the Norfolk Drug and Alcohol Partnership to help fund the preventative work it does.
- Stephen calls for resources to be put in place by health and mental health commissioners and by social services to ensure people detained under section 136 (Mental Health Act) are assessed quickly in a health-based setting.



- The Disability Advisory Forum, made up of volunteers from the local community, works alongside Stephen to help him understand the needs of individuals with mental health conditions. The Forum's members also review the mental health training delivered to police officers in Norfolk.
- Your PCC welcomes closer partnership working between Norfolk Constabulary and Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust. The partnership focuses on sharing information more effectively and developing improved training for frontline police to better deal with people suffering from mental health issues.
- Stephen and Deputy PCC Jenny McKibben bring together probation, the prison service and the youth offending team, along with community sector organisations, to develop a joint approach to the rehabilitation of offenders in Norfolk.

7

Work with young people to stay clear of crime

Norfolk faces particular challenges with regard to young people. We have a high level of people who are not in education, employment or training, and educational attainment is lower here than seen nationally. These things, along with the current economic situation, mean that young adults are more at risk of becoming involved in anti-social behaviour.

I have awarded crime and disorder reduction grants to Norfolk's Youth Offending Team and Norfolk Future Youth to support the work they do with young people.



I spent some time with Norfolk Future Youth – a sport project in Great Yarmouth - to see how the funding I provide is being used to help young people stay clear of crime. The project is working with disadvantaged young people to reduce crime and reoffending in the Great Yarmouth area. It is not just about giving young people

something to do to keep them off the streets and out of trouble. Through sport and physical activity these 'at risk' individuals are learning to change their behaviour and are gaining the life skills they need to move forward.

Jenny and I have visited colleges and the county's university to explore the crime and policing concerns of young people and find out how they like to share and receive information. Having some students from Great Yarmouth College spend time in my office, and hosting meetings of Norfolk's Youth Parliament, has given me the opportunity to explore those topics further, as well as giving the young people involved an opportunity to find out more about what I do. I was also pleased to be involved in this year's Local Democracy Week and take questions from young people on my vision for Norfolk.

8

Listen carefully to the community, reaching out to minority communities and the disengaged to ensure policing is fair and equitable

I was elected by the people of Norfolk to influence and oversee the work of the local police force on their behalf. In order for me to be able to fulfil that responsibility, community input cannot be allowed to end with casting that vote.

I want to be able to make choices and take decisions that have the needs of the county's communities at their heart. It is, therefore, vital that I have a full and accurate picture of what communities want from their policing service.

This is arguably one of my most important pledges, and the dialogue that Jenny and I have started with communities is definitely something we need to continue.



PCC's first year

- Stephen and Deputy PCC Jenny McKibben dedicate their first months in office to being in 'listening mode'. They hold community catch-ups around the county to meet communities, groups and businesses and explore their crime and policing concerns. This community input, alongside responses to the 'Making a Difference' policing survey, helps shape the Police and Crime Plan for Norfolk.
- Your PCC attends the AGM of the Norfolk Independent Advisory Group. He pledges his continued support for their work and that of the other advisory groups working alongside him to help police better understand the needs of Norfolk's diverse communities.
- Stephen publishes his equality statement, setting out how he will meet his responsibility to ensure the policing service received by Norfolk's communities reflects their needs and is fair for all.
- Your PCC backs this year's Black History Month celebrations, and presents the winners' trophy at a football tournament in support of the Kick It Out campaign.
- Leaders and policy makers from all over Norfolk come together in response to Stephen's call for action on migration and community cohesion. Representatives of public and community sector organisations voice their concerns over issues facing migrant communities in the county and speak of tensions being driven by perceptions of the effect of migration. By pooling their collective knowledge, police and partners begin to look at how community relations can be improved.
- Stephen holds an event to highlight the crime and policing concerns of Norfolk's rural communities and share information on some of the initiatives being used by Norfolk Constabulary to tackle rural crime. By sharing their own views and experiences, attendees help shape future work to reduce the vulnerability of rural communities to crime.

9

Reject party politics and work with other Independents to provide a national voice

Continuing the stance adopted by Norfolk Police Authority, I remain committed to rejecting the influence of competitive party politics in favour of making decisions that are in the best interest of Norfolk's people.

I have been, and will continue to be, vocal on both local and national issues which I believe will impact on crime and policing and our ability to keep Norfolk one of the safest counties in the country.

PCC's first year

- Stephen expresses concern in an open letter to MPs on the impact of proposed benefit reforms, including Universal Credit and the so-called 'bedroom tax', on the most vulnerable members of our communities. He also highlights the significant effect the proposals could potentially have on crime levels.
- Stephen urges Justice Minister Chris Grayling to think again on legal aid reforms, warning of unequal access to justice and a lack of specialist representation for victims.
- Your PCC contributes to the national debate on compensation culture as a police officer files a compensation claim against Norfolk Constabulary for an injury sustained after tripping on a kerb while on duty. Stephen calls for the claim to be withdrawn and is pleased to see the officer take that advice later in the year.
- Stephen's comments on road signs and frequently changing speed limits receive both criticism and support, sparking widespread debate. He holds firm in his view that changing limits and the associated signage can be distracting and confusing to the average motorist, which is ultimately a road safety issue.
- Stephen teams up with Victim Support to respond to a report on the criminal victimisation of people with mental health issues, calling for national debate on the findings of the report. He highlights the vulnerability of people with mental ill health to becoming victims of crime and says more must be done to support them.

10 Use restorative justice to achieve long-lasting solutions

I fully support the use of restorative approaches (RA) which have been shown to reduce re-offending and assist victims. RA challenges behaviour, repairing the harm done to relationships and people rather than assigning blame and dispensing punishment.

My deputy, Jenny McKibben, participates in the Restorative Approaches Strategic Board which leads Norfolk on its way to becoming a Restorative County.



I was delighted to be able to meet with Victims' Commissioner Baroness Newlove, and talk about our 'best practice' approach to victims. She was very impressed by our dedication to putting victims' needs at the centre of policing and criminal justice, and interested to hear how we are exploring use of RA with crime types such as hate crime and domestic abuse.

Having been involved in the consultation to develop it, I was pleased to see the new Victims' Code offers victims the opportunity to speak in court about the impact the crime has had on them, whether it be physically, emotionally, financially or in any other way. Part of the success of the restorative approaches we already use in Norfolk is giving victims the chance, if they want and are able to, to look the offender in the eye and tell them how their actions have affected them. As well as helping the victim come to terms with what has happened and move on, it also highlights to offenders the human cost of their actions which, for some, is a deterrent to offending again.

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