



OFFICE OF THE POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR NORFOLK

Ten Point Pledge Progress – January 2013

During last year's election campaign for Police & Crime Commissioner, I made a pledge of ten points that I wanted to achieve should I be elected.

This is my first update on my progress against the pledge, and it seeks to provide the public with a way of monitoring and judging how well I am doing.

KEEP NORFOLK ONE OF THE LOWEST CRIME COUNTIES IN THE COUNTRY

Crime in the county has reduced for eight consecutive years – the last three years has seen it reduce by 15.5% to an average of 45 crimes per 1,000 residents. The average rate across the country is 66 crimes per 1,000 head of population.

I have made reducing priority crime, anti-social behaviour and re-offending important aims in my Police and Crime Plan. Priority crimes are those which cause the greatest harm to our communities and include burglary, robbery, violence and theft of and from vehicles.

Norfolk will continue to champion preventative policing where police searches often uncover offences, typically during searches for drugs and weapons. This reduces the opportunity for offenders to commit crime and I will be encouraging this approach. By doing so, we may see increases in crimes related to proactive policing and this should be seen in a positive light.

FIGHT SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME

Crime and criminals do not respect geographical boundaries. There are a number of collaborative initiatives which are helping to keep Norfolk a safe county.

Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies have been working together to share specialist resources for some years now and, more broadly, we benefit from the Eastern Regional Serious and Organised Crime Unit (ERSOU). In addition to the regional collaboration, the National Crime Agency has recently been established to lead the fight against serious and organised crime on a national basis.

SUPPORT VICTIMS OF CRIME, VULNERABLE AND ELDERLY PEOPLE

Norfolk faces particular challenges in respect of its elderly population – the number of over 65s is expected to increase by 65% in the next 25 years.

I have a specific responsibility to gather victims' views and I expect to receive national funding to commission local services for victims during 2014. In order to help me commission appropriate services for victims, there is a clear opportunity to better understand their needs during this year.

PROTECT THE FRONTLINE IN THE FACE OF CUTS

Frontline resources include all those police officers and staff who have direct contact with the public, whether by phone, online or in person, along with all those who contribute to the investigation process such as forensic analysts.

We can best ensure the continued availability of frontline resources by tackling the root causes of crime, encouraging victims to report at an early stage and by making interventions at the earliest opportunity. Preventing crime and reducing demand is the way ahead.

PROTECT LOCAL POLICING FROM PRIVATISATION

Collaboration and not privatisation was my mantra and will remain my mantra. By continuing the programme of collaboration with Suffolk Constabulary we can make efficiencies that will help us maintain our frontline resources. Eventually 80% of our personnel will be working in collaborated departments.

USE TARGETING AND PREVENTION TO REDUCE DEMAND ON POLICE

Few may realise that a significant percentage of those who commit crime suffer from mental health issues and 70% of Britain's prison population have two or more mental health conditions.

Police will work closely with partners, particularly regarding the areas of alcohol and substance misuse and mental health, where this is known to impact on crime or anti-social behaviour.

WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE TO STAY CLEAR OF CRIME

Norfolk faces particular challenges with regard to young people. The high level of those not in education, employment or training (NEET) in the county, the fact that educational attainment is lower than seen nationally along with the worsening economic situation for young people means that young adults are more at risk of becoming involved in anti-social behaviour.

LISTEN CAREFULLY TO THE COMMUNITY, REACHING OUT TO MINORITY COMMUNITIES AND THE DISENGAGED TO ENSURE POLICING IS FAIR AND EQUITABLE

This is arguably my most important pledge. Policing has to be relevant and fair for everyone and I am committed to ensuring that all our communities receive a fair and equitable service.

Equality and diversity best practice needs to be integrated into our day-to-day business and I am pleased to be supported by a number of specialist advisory groups – Independent Advisory Group, Disability Advisory Forum, Youth Advisory Forum, Norfolk Police Independent Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Advisory Group. All are made up of volunteers drawn from the diverse communities within Norfolk.

REJECT PARTY POLITICS AND WORK WITH OTHER INDEPENDENTS TO PROVIDE A NATIONAL VOICE

I remain committed to continuing the independent stance adopted by the former police authority body and have rejected the influence of competitive party politics in favour of making decisions that are in the best interests of Norfolk people.

Together with my deputy PCC, Jenny McKibben, we hope to play a role in influencing national/regional police and crime issues that will aid the task of keeping Norfolk safe and secure.

USE RESTORATIVE JUSTICE TO ACHIEVE LONG-LASTING SOLUTIONS

Restorative Justice (RA) approaches, where the offender and the offended are brought together to speak, have been shown to help reduce re-offending and assist the victims. RA began in Norfolk a few years ago and challenges behaviour and helps to repair the harm that has been done to relationships and people.

I believe it is right that we continue this path towards becoming a 'Restorative County'.

Handwritten signature of Stephen Bell in black ink.