

Have **your** say

CHESHIRE Police Authority listens to what people want from their police service. One of the ways that we do this is at meetings which we hold in your area.

Please feel free to attend any meeting in your area so that we can consult you on important policing issues, determine policing priorities and listen to your views and suggestions for improvement.

Future Meetings

Future meetings would be held at 7.00pm on the following Tuesdays:-

- **7 October 2008**
St. Lukes Church Hall, Holmes Chapel
- **20 January 2009**
Town Hall, Congleton

How to get in touch Community Action Team

YOUR local Community Action Team (CAT) is available to solve problems in your neighbourhood. Leave a message on one of the following numbers and they will return your call within two days or email them at the address provided below:-

Congleton 0845 458 6382

congleton.cat@cheshire.pnn.police.uk

Covering Congleton, Middlewich, Holmes Chapel, Sandbach and Alsager.



Cheshire Police Authority
www.cheshirepa.police.uk

Mission
To work in partnership with Cheshire Constabulary and officers to create safer communities, and increase confidence and satisfaction in policing.

Vision
To ensure an efficient and effective police service, that is built on neighbourhood policing and tackles all levels of criminality, and makes the citizens of Cheshire safe and well served.

Aims

- To assist in achieving a consistently high performing force.
- To ensure improvements in performance and service, underpinned by robust governance structures and appropriate Member support.
- To provide senior and more effective engagement with stakeholders.
- To increase partnership working (both with the Constabulary and externally).
- To be a community leader in policing and community safety.



Cheshire Police Authority
www.cheshirepa.police.uk

Non-emergency calls **0845 458 0000**

Only use **999** if...

- There is danger to life
- Violence is used or threatened
- A serious crime is in progress or likely to occur
- A suspect is nearby
- There is a Road Traffic Collision involving personal injury or danger to others
- A vulnerable person needs urgent assistance

Cheshire CRIMESTOPPERS
0800 555 111



Cheshire Police Authority

Have **your** say

Congleton

July 2008



Have Your Say Chairman:
Police Authority Member
Anne Doran

THIS newsletter gives information about the Have Your Say meeting held on 1 July 2008 at Middlewich Civic Hall.

21 members of the public, local community representatives and press attended the meeting.

The Authority's Chief Executive, Mark Sellwood, the new Area Commander Chief Superintendent Paul McHugh, and Inspector Mark Gammage who is the local officer responsible for policing Congleton NPU, were present to answer questions.



Mrs Doran explained that the Authority was trialling afternoon 'Have Your Say' meetings to see if they gave a better opportunity for people to attend and raise issues.

Mrs Doran gave an update on the Authority's budget for 2008/09 and announced that the Government had decided not to limit the budget this year which was welcome news.

The latest edition of 'Your Policing' newspaper was being distributed to all

households in Cheshire.

Mrs Doran commented that the Criminal Justice Board were seeking to provide the public with more information about the criminal justice system. The aim was to bring the justice system and the community together, to improve services and encourage people to get involved in volunteering roles, such as mentoring for local youths or becoming a magistrate – see the end of this newsletter for more information.

⦿ Serious and organised crime

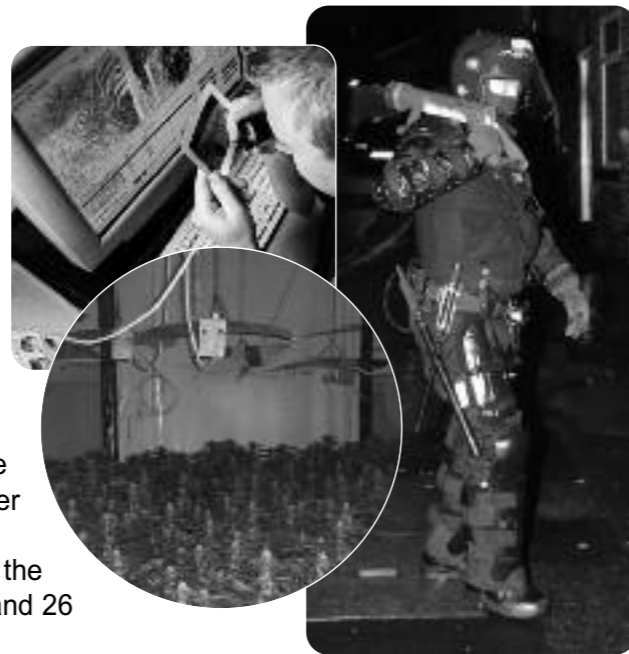
Chief Superintendent Phil Thompson, Head of Crime Operations, discussed the work undertaken by the Constabulary to tackle serious and organised crime in Cheshire.

Crime Operations was based in Constabulary Headquarters and had 520 staff working in specialist roles such as intelligence, forensic investigations, major crime and Special Branch. The specialist units in the Crime Operations Department provided support to local policing and enabled Area Commanders to focus their resources in neighbourhoods. With public support, the Authority had made a significant investment in the Department to ensure the Constabulary could better respond to the threat of terrorism and tackle serious and organised crime.

Chief Superintendent Thompson explained the role of the Major Investigations Team and CSI's in solving the murder of a man in Rode Heath in April 2007. The investigation required complex forensic examination following a fire at the scene. Two males were subsequently sentenced to 21 and 26 years in prison.

In the last four years the Department had detected all murders in the Constabulary area.

The public asked what types of offences were categorised as 'serious and organised crime' and where the specialist units were located. The Chief Superintendent advised that the category included any offence that resulted in life imprisonment or had a serious impact on the victim such as murder, serious sexual assaults, or where crimes were more than opportunist such as a series of robberies or burglaries targeting vulnerable people. Whilst the specialists units operated throughout the force area, they were all commanded from Headquarters in Winsford.



⦿ Policing in Congleton



Chief Superintendent **Paul McHugh**, Area Commander

Chief Superintendent McHugh outlined his policing career to date and his approach to policing in the Eastern Area following recent appointment as the new Area Commander.



Inspector **Mark Gammage**, Congleton Neighbourhood Policing Unit

Inspector Gammage advised that Congleton NPU had seen reductions in recorded crime, violent crime, burglary and vehicle crime of 11%, 16.5%, 2.6% and 11.7% respectively over the last 12 months. The meeting received details of the work undertaken by the Congleton NPU which included using school children to participate in road safety initiatives by designing posters and signs and challenging motorists for speeding and parking on the pavement; PCSO's engaging with young people and implementing diversionary initiatives including sports events - basketball, football matches and fishing competitions; and a Friday night project. Test purchasing the sale of alcohol to under 18s at licensed and other premises across the borough had been undertaken with firm action being taken against any retailers failing the test. Other recent crime successes included arrests for a variety of incidents including a series of burglaries and supplying drugs in the area.

⦿ Question Time

- Q. Were there plans for the road safety initiative to be undertaken elsewhere?
A. Inspector Gammage said the initiative was to be carried out in all five towns in the borough.
- Q. The need for the police to respond to all violent incidents and the victim to be told what response they will receive.
A. Chief Superintendent McHugh advised that the Call Management Bureau assessed all the information provided by the caller and decided the type of response to be deployed – immediate, prompt (within 1 hour) or whether an appointment with an officer would be appropriate. The caller should receive clear information as to the type of response they will receive.
- Q. A request for more 'Alcohol Free Zone' signs to be located on the towpath in Middlewich.
A. Chief Superintendent McHugh advised that the borough council were responsible for alcohol free zones and the display of signs but he would arrange for the comments to be forwarded to the Council.
- Q. Why was underage drinking allowed in pubs in Middlewich?
A. The Chief Superintendent advised that enforcement action was taken against retailers and landlords who sold alcohol to under 18s and this included test purchasing and support for the Challenge 21 scheme. The questioner was asked to speak to Inspector Gammage after the meeting if he was aware of any particular pubs where this was happening. [Post meeting note: The questioner provided details of the premises involved and that information has been passed through to the local CAT Sergeant for actioning. In Congleton NPU, officers have the ability to conduct Test Purchasing operations without being reliant on Trading Standards, so this will be actioned promptly.]
- Q. Had anyone been caught following the recent vandalism to planters in Alsager town centre?
A. The Inspector advised that nothing had been caught on CCTV and no offenders had been identified. Local officers were continuing enquiries. [Post meeting note: Unfortunately the offenders responsible for this incident were not captured on CCTV and the initial informant
- was from outside the local area. However, the local police officers will continue to monitor the town centre to reduce incidents of this nature.]
- Q. Were there any further plans to hold 'Rock Nights' in the Park in Alsager?
A. Inspector Gammage commented that the event this year was to be more 'family oriented' and would involve additional officers and wardens and mobile CCTV.
- Q. Can the public take photographic evidence of perpetrators of a crime?
A. Inspector Gammage advised that the police relied on public information and evidence to present to Courts. However, he asked that members to the public not place themselves in danger.
- Q. What action can the police take to ensure that motorists who damage hedging to fields advise the land owner?
A. Chief Superintendent McHugh commented that if a motor vehicle incident results in damage to property it must be reported to the police and where possible the owner, however, on some occasions it was difficult to identify the owner.
- Q. A request for enforcement with regard to indiscriminate parking on double yellow lines in the vicinity of the Chip Shop in Sandbach?
A. Inspector Gammage advised that PCSOs had issued a number of parking tickets following the comments made at the last meeting, but would look at it again. [Post meeting note: Local officers have been reminded of the need to take positive action at this location.]
- Q. Why do the police use sirens late at night?
A. The Chief Superintendent advised that under health and safety requirements, when officers were responding to an emergency incident they had to ensure that pedestrians and other road users were aware that they were travelling at speed. All officers undertook regular driver training and were trained to a high standard.

⦿ The work of magistrates

Two local Magistrates discussed the work of the Crewe Magistrates' Bench, which covered the Congleton area and asked people present to complete a survey on criminal justice.

Details on the role of local Magistrates and how to apply to become a Magistrate were provided.

