Welcome to my regular roundup of what’s been happening in Derbyshire to improve your safety. I would like to start by saying thank you to all those who helped support my campaign to get more police funding from central government.

We made our point about the need for additional funding, but the government decided that this should be raised from local taxpayers.

The fight therefore continues!

Hardyal Dhindsa
Derbyshire Police & Crime Commissioner

A stronger police presence is on everyone’s wish-list. While our financial issues are by no means over, our budget for 2018-19 will help us deliver what everyone in Derbyshire wants – more police officers.

These reinforcements are critical to protecting our future and I’m deeply grateful that local people understand this. More than 70% of residents who took part in my recent survey were willing to pay an additional £12 a year towards policing to keep Derbyshire safe. While I would prefer to see the money raised coming directly from government, I cannot deny the positive impact this extra £4.4m will have on safety in communities.

The 6.6% rise in council tax, which was advocated by policing minister Nick Hurd will generate an additional £4.4m this year. I am working with Chief Constable to see how we can use this extra funding most effectively, sustaining neighbourhood policing and meet new challenges regarding cyber-crime, modern slavery, human trafficking and other so-called hidden crimes.
NEW JOINT HQ UNVEILED

Our pioneering collaborative projects with the Fire and Rescue Service were the subject of a special celebration in January, when both the Joint Police and Fire Headquarters (HQ) and Joint Training Centre (JTC) were officially opened.

This cements a very prosperous and innovative partnership between two organisations at the forefront of public safety in Derbyshire, and we are keen to explore new opportunities in the coming months.

More than 80 stakeholders turned out to mark this fantastic milestone in both our histories and were given a taste of the powerful capabilities of our new facilities, including some impressive demonstrations of the training provided at the new training centre.

Not only are these buildings state-of-the-art, they serve a highly practical purpose, allowing two organisations, whose expertise and responsibilities often overlap, to rehearse a combined emergency response which will no doubt save lives.

ASHBOURNE ROYAL SHROVETIDE FOOTBALL

Few sporting events are as gripping as the annual Royal Shrovetide Football match in Ashbourne which I had the pleasure of enjoying at close-hand this year!

It was a great privilege to be invited to this historic event, held annually on Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday, and watch history come to life as the Up’ards and Down’ards battled their way to victory – more than 500 years after the game was first played under the reign of Henry II.

The spectacle truly is something to behold and I would like to thank the organising committee for inviting me to be a part of this year’s event. We’re lucky to be one of the very few places in the world still to host this two-day event and I have pledged to support it in any way I can.

Photo: Michael Hope Smith - threesixsevennine.co.uk
Helping people with their problems is key to cutting crime and I’m a great believer in the ability of people to change. But people have to be ready and willing to accept help.

A whole team of agencies are tackling the problems of street drinking, drug-taking, begging and antisocial behaviour in Derby City Centre but when all attempts at intervention have failed, enforcement remains the only answer.

Police made 90 arrests in the first weeks of 2018 and made 156 dispersal notices (which allow police to move on groups of people engaged in antisocial behaviour). More than 400 people were also spoken to and offered advice about their behaviour. The emphasis remains on supporting vulnerable people to break the cycle of harm. But there are tough penalties for those who resist and we’re not afraid to act. Better still, it’s working!

Changes to police meetings

We’re revamping the way we hold our policing meetings to encourage more local people to get involved.

From now on, meetings will be held in the evenings to make it easier for working people to attend and will be more public-friendly, with presentations from the Force, partners and myself rather than reports. We’re also going to be known as the Strategic Priorities Assurance Board or SPA for short to ensure meetings focus on my Police and Crime Plan. Live Q &A sessions will continue to be held at the start of each meeting.

To check the dates and times of forthcoming meetings visit: www.derbyshire-pcc.gov.uk

Innovative arrangements to promote safer travel in the city centre are continuing to prove their value with a successful hate crime prosecution in 2018.

Taxi marshals recently intervened when a city cabbie was subjected to racial abuse, promptly alerting the police, which led to the arrest of an off-duty New York policeman who admitted racial abuse and received a substantial fine.

This shows the strength of the collaborative work taking place in the city centre to protect the public and is yet another example of how the taxi marshals, who are there to prevent confrontations and promote safety in the night time economy, are going above and beyond their duties to make the city a safer place to visit.
The projects, which will share a total of £192,635, address a range of priorities outlined in my Police and Crime Plan including supporting victims, keeping vulnerable people safe from harm, tackling drugs and alcohol and increasing support for those with mental health issues.

Successful applicants include Al Hurraya, Chesterfield Locality Children’s Partnership, Crossroads Derbyshire, Diversity Watch Ltd, Fixers, Pathways of Chesterfield, South Derbyshire Mental Health Association, The Enthusiasm Trust and St Peters Quarter Derby.

Two further organisations – Chesterfield & District Neighbourhood Watch and Freedom Delivers - received small grants in the fourth round of the small grants scheme, sharing a total of £4,500.

Nine community safety projects will be receiving vital funding after successfully applying for a large grant in my Community Action Grant scheme.

New grants for community-based crime prevention

Campaigners have moved one step closer this month to securing new laws to protect police dogs and horses in the line of duty and I wholeheartedly support their efforts.

The Service Animals (Offences) Bill had its Second Reading in the House of Commons on February 23 following strong cross-party and public support.

Finn’s Law Support

The Bill calls for the introduction of a new offence of attacking a service animal following the case of Hertfordshire German Shepherd Finn who was seriously injured while chasing a knife suspect last year. It also advocates a toughening of sentencing powers in situations where a service animal is injured. Such provision already exists in other EU countries and in Australia, USA and Canada.
My sweeping tour of Derbyshire continues and we’ve really hit the ground running in 2018 with a particularly mammoth expedition across the Derbyshire Dales on February 9!

In the space of a few hours we visited Hulland Ward in Ashbourne, Fenny Bentley, Idridgehay, Shottle and Turnditch. A lot of ground was covered and it turned out to be a really productive, if chilly, day.

Earlier this month, I attended the Safer Neighbourhood Area Forum in Ticknall where there was a good local turnout to discuss issues such as speeding and accident recording. I will review these with the Casualty Reduction and Enforcement Support Team unit and the Chief Constable and consider what action to take.

New model reduces pressure on emergency services

One of the pilot projects I supported last year is delivering fantastic results in relieving demand on police and health services.

Derventio Housing has been working with partners to support 25 people with chaotic lifestyles including drug and alcohol dependency, homelessness and mental health problems, intervening early to reduce reliance on key emergency services.

The project, which received £25,000 last year from my Community Action Grant and brings together health providers, police and housing, has already exceeded targets, delivering a 76.19% reduction in 999 calls, 100% reduction in police attendances and 96.77% reduction in primary care/emergency admissions.

LISTENING TO YOU

There is a myriad of ways in which I am ‘listening to you’. My survey is one such way, which you can do on the website, or in person at one of our roadshows.

However, you can always get in touch
Phone: 0300 122 6000
www.derbyshire-pcc.gov.uk
Fax: 0300 122 7797
Email: pccoffice@derbyshire.pnn.police.uk
Twitter: @DerbysPCC
Facebook: www.facebook.com/DerbyshirePCC

FOOTNOTE

This newsletter is produced to give you an overview of the work of my office and of course, me! We are always open to ideas for articles and if there is some area of our work that you would like to see in here, either as a regular update or a one-off please get in touch.

I’m always pleased to hear from members of the public so please, if something is concerning you, or you wish to compliment the service you have received, either pick up the phone or email us.