

POLICE AND CRIME PANEL**12th September 2019****REPORT OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR DERBYSHIRE****RURAL CRIME TEAM****1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide a response to the Police and Crime Panel to the questions they have raised about the Derbyshire Rural Crime Team and to provide a briefing on work around rural criminality.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Police and Crime Panel (the Panel) have asked a number of questions about the Rural Crime Team established within Derbyshire Constabulary.

- 2.2 The questions were:

- What services is it providing for rural Derbyshire?
- How is the team comprised, where is it based and how does it work?
- What is the distinction between this newly created team and the existing Safer Neighbourhood Team
- What issues are they looking at and strategies for reaching out to remote communities

- 2.2 Since taking up office, PCC Hardyal Dhindsa has been clear that he is the PCC for the whole of Derbyshire: Urban, suburban and rural.

- 2.3 As a county Derbyshire has very urban communities such as those in Derby City and Chesterfield, as well as very rural communities such as those in the High Peak and Derbyshire Dales.

- 2.4 The types of crimes and issues facing these different communities can often be very different and as a result under former PCC Alan Charles, and continued through PCC Dhindsa, the Force have worked with a small team of officers who have a greater level of understanding of the crime types and potential impacts on these communities.

3.0 RURAL CRIME TEAM SERVICES

- 3.1 The main aim of the Rural Crime Team is to provide a dedicated and effective policing service to the various rural communities of Derbyshire.

- 3.2 This includes working with those communities should they find themselves a victim of crime e.g. fuel or plant theft, fly tipping as well as looking at specific crime types that are perpetrated within rural settings such as the persecution

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and destruction of protected species i.e. raptors, badgers and bats.

- 3.3 A key part of the work has been, and continues to be, building relationships and trust with those who live within Derbyshire's rural communities. This includes working closely with the National Farmer's Union as well as other key stakeholders to ensure that Derbyshire Constabulary's commitment to this area of business is understood out there in communities.
- 3.4 The team provides a co-ordinating function that links into the wider Force and acts as a focus for understanding what works in tackling rural and wildlife crime.
- 3.5 As with any area of policing business there will be specific tactics used which cannot be shared in a public arena, but it is fair to say that an approach that uses the 4 Ps of Prepare, Prevent, Protect and Pursue underpin the work.
- 3.6 The work of the team also supports the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) Rural Affairs Strategy which sees priorities in the following areas:
 - Farm machinery, plant and vehicle theft
 - Livestock Offences
 - Fuel Theft
 - Equine Crime
 - Flytipping
 - Poaching
- 3.7 The team also has a focus around CITES – the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of wild flora and fauna. (This would include the illegal trade in ivory, animal skins and animal parts for traditional medicine.)

4.0 THE TEAM

- 4.1 The Rural Crime Team itself has 7 full time constables and a Sergeant and is supported by an admin support officer.
- 4.2 The Force has allocated a Superintendent as the Gold Strategic Lead, supported by an Inspector as Silver. Both supported by the Rural Crime Team Sergeant as the Bronze.
- 4.3 The Force have 34 Wildlife Crime Officers across the whole of the Force area who have all completed specific Wildlife Crime training. They are supported by 2 co-ordinators who are both former police officers and wildlife crime officers (including one who is a national trainer on the subject).
- 4.4 There are also 2 specifically trained Forensic Wildlife Crime Officers.
- 4.5 This gives a total of 48 officers and staff who have responsibilities that include wildlife and/or rural crime
- 4.5 Members of the Special Constabulary and Police Service Volunteers also support this area of work.
- 4.6 Work is being developed to understand where specially trained PCSOs would

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be able to add value to the work.

4.7 The team have a base at Matlock Police Station and a hub based in Melbourne to support work in the south of the County.

4.8 The work of the team is intelligence led, but they are also able to respond to non-urgent incidents when on duty.

5.0 RURAL CRIME TEAM & SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAMS

5.1 The Rural Crime Team offers an additional layer of specialism that compliments the work of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams.

5.2 Their training has focussed on rural and wildlife crime related issues but there is a clear understanding of the necessary links into Safer Neighbourhood Teams, who will already have links and relationships with local communities.

6.0 ISSUES AND STRATEGIES

6.1 As previously stated the team works based on a 4 Ps approach:

- **Prepare:** Building relationships with stakeholders, understanding what works (locally and nationally), understanding threats and risks
- **Prevent:** Through work with partners providing information, advice and equipment to help prevent people becoming victims of crime as well as disrupting activity of known offenders
- **Protect:** Again by providing information and support to help prevent people becoming victims and providing support to those who unfortunately do
- **Pursue:** Undertaking thorough and effective investigations and ensuring those who are identified are brought to justice including work on organised crime groups.

6.2 The team have built up strong working relationships with key stakeholders including the NFU, NFU Mutual, Young Farmers etc. as well as organisations such as the Peak Park Authority and local wildlife charities.

6.3 Training and support have been provided to the Peak Park Rangers so they are able to identify and report incidents of rural or wildlife crime.

6.4 Work is currently underway to produce a resource that can be distributed to interested parties with crime prevention advice and other useful information.

6.5 The team also work to help deliver the NPCC's strategy where applicable

7.0 THE OPCC

7.1 The PCC remains committed to ensuring that rural and wildlife crime remain a priority for the Force.

7.2 He sits as a Board Member on the National Rural Crime Network.

7.3 Derbyshire were one of the participants in both the National Rural Crime Survey

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and specific project that sought to understand the impact and prevalence of domestic abuse within rural communities. This latter piece of work attracted national interest and the office is currently working through both the national and local findings to understand what the research is telling us.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- i. That the Police and Crime Panel gain assurance about the work that is being undertaken by Derbyshire Constabulary to tackle issues of rural, and wildlife, crime.

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