

APPENDIX A

Case Study – Rural Crime

Report date – November 2016

1. Introduction

- 1.1.** The Police and Crime Plan (Refreshed) 2016-18 states that ‘there will...be a continued focus on...rural and wildlife crime that blights our countryside’.
- 1.2.** The refreshed plan identifies one of the key factors to drive further improvement in policing and community safety for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire as ‘develop a mechanism for defining and monitoring rural crime.’
- 1.3.** The refreshed plan highlights a need for ‘more preventative action for members of the rural community through an alerts system, a local neighbourhood policing presence for reporting crime and recovering stolen goods’.
- 1.4.** The Commissioner’s strategic priority Theme 1 (protect, support and respond to victims, witnesses and vulnerable) references the importance ‘to ensure that that any changes to the police operating model does not affect response times, especially in rural areas.’
- 1.5.** The Commissioner’s strategic priority Theme 3 (focus on those priority crime types and local areas that are most affected by crime and anti-social behaviour) sets a new objective for the force to ensure that rural crime does not increase and a new target to monitor the proportion of rural crime compared to 2014-5 – again reference is made to the importance that any changes to the police operating model does not have any adverse impact on rural communities.
- 1.6.** A rural crime control strategy utilising the 4P’s of pursue, prevent, protect and prepare, was developed in autumn 2015.
- 1.7.** In 2015 the Commissioner developed a dedicated web site¹ to provide rural crime prevention advice describing a number of initiatives put in place to assist people living in rural areas. He produced a rural crime leaflet² which includes information on the dedicated Rural Special Constables team, the 24 hour Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras (ANPR), the Community Road Safety Programme as well as a new dedicated Nottinghamshire Rural

¹ <http://www.nottinghamshire.pcc.police.uk/Our-Work/Rural-Crime/Rural-Crime.aspx>

² <http://www.nottinghamshire.pcc.police.uk/Document-Library/Public-Information/Newsletters-and-Publications/Rural-Crime-Leaflet.pdf>

Watch website³. The leaflet was sent out to 200 Parish Council to increase awareness of the activity taking place.

2. Performance management

2.1. Rural crime performance is measured and monitored as an integral part of the force's monthly performance and insight report, which informs the Force Performance Board

2.2. Two targets within the performance and insight report that relate directly to rural crime are the monitoring of the percentage of grade 1 and 2 incidents attended with the recommended timescale for both rural and urban areas, and the reduction in the levels of rural crime compared to 2015-16.

2.2.1. Grade 1 and 2 incidents

In October 2015 the Force attended 4,147 incidents classified as Grade 1 in an urban area. 83.5% of those incidents were attended within the target time of 15 minutes. This increases to 91.5% when an additional five minutes is added to the target i.e. within 20 minutes.

In October 2015 the Force attended 633 incidents classified as Grade 1 in a rural area. 82.3% of those incidents were attended within the target time of 20 minutes. This increases to 91.3% when an additional five minutes is added to the target i.e. within 25 minutes.

In October 2016 the Force attended 4,422 incidents classified as Grade 1 in an urban area. 79.3% of those incidents were attended within the target time of 15 minutes. This increases to 88.4% when an additional five minutes is added to the target i.e. within 20 minutes.

In October 2016 the Force attended 690 incidents classified as Grade 1 in a rural area. 74.2% of those incidents were attended within the target time of 20 minutes. This increases to 84.8% when an additional five minutes is added to the target i.e. within 20 minutes.

Grade 1	Oct 2015			Oct 2016		
	15 min	20 min	25 min	15 min	20 min	25 min
Urban	83.5%	91.5%		79.3%	88.4%	
Rural		82.3%	91.3%		74.2%	84.8%

Grade 2	Oct 2015		Oct 2016	
	60 min		60 min	
Urban/rural	69.2%		63.1%	

Both rural and urban Grade 1 incidents saw an increase in October 2016 when compared to October 2015. However, rural Grade 1 incidents increased by more i.e. +9% (57 incidents) compared to urban areas +6.63% (275 incidents).

Whilst the volume of incidents classified as rural and urban are significantly different, the performance in terms of percentage attended within the target time in October 2015 is comparable (albeit slightly less for rural incidents).

In October 2016 whilst both rural and urban performance has reduced it is more pronounced in rural areas i.e. -8.1% for rural incidents compared with -4.2% for urban incidents.

Grade 2 incident attendance times are monitored by the Force however they are not sub-divided into rural/urban categories and therefore any geographical impact of increased or reduced performance is not available.

In October 2015 the Force attended 5,656 incidents classified as Grade 2. 69.2% of those were attended within the target attendance time of 60 minutes.

In October 2016 the Force attended 4,705 incidents classified as Grade 2. 63.1% of those were attended within the target attendance time of 60 minutes.

The overall number of Grade 2 incidents reduced by 951 in October 2016 when compared with October 2015 however attendance within the target time also reduced by 6.1%.

2.2.2. Reduction in levels of rural crime

Year-to-date the Force has recorded 5,538 rural crimes, an increase of 240 offences (4.5%) on last year. Over the same period crime in urban areas has increased by 913 offences (2.4%).

The rate of offences per 1,000 population in rural areas (year-to-date) is 25.97 compared to 44.80 in urban areas.

Rural areas continue to record an increase in Burglary offences (+138 or +18.3%) and Vehicle offences (+38 or +5.5%), while these same offence types in urban areas are seeing very small change.

The impact of a Force-wide NCRS (National Crime Recording Standards) audit process is yet to be fully realised within some of the above described figures and therefore some caution should be attached to any interpretation at this stage.

3. Strategic activity

3.1. The Commissioner's Delivery Plan details six areas of activity within the strategic framework to support action to tackle rural crime.

3.1.1. Consider using technology in rural areas to support farmers e.g. FarmWatch and smartphone.

The commissioner has funded a text alert pilot scheme which compliments Neighbourhood Alert and allows for text messages to be sent to rural communities. Since April 2016, 2,926 sign-ups have been achieved. Whilst the volume of texts sent to date has been small and from a small number of front-line officers, consideration is being given to increase this by expanding access to include Control Room functions.

A dedicated Facebook page for rural villages to the far east of Newark and Sherwood is being trialled by the local district Police commander to establish and build understanding of what works practically in terms of engagement, communication and support.

A proposal to utilise Drones within a rural context and with potential benefits in other areas was considered at a strategic level but is placed on hold until the national trials are complete. Other forces are currently trialling Drones on behalf of the College of Policing and the Force will reconsider the proposal pending the outcome of that work.

3.1.2. Work with partners and Force to better understand and respond to wildlife crime in rural areas.

The Commissioner attended the re-launch of the Nottinghamshire Police Rural Crime Working Group in late 2015. Chaired by the Force-lead this group includes representation from the Environment Agency, Angling Trust, Countryside Landowners Association, National Farmers Union, and local farmers. Throughout 2016 this has been expanded with invitations to Nottinghamshire County Council, District Councils, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service and the Welbeck and Serlby Estates.

In July 2016 developing relations with Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust led to wildlife crime officers (including rural special constables) benefitting from a one-off training input provided by the Trust. This provided knowledge, understanding and learning for the officers to support them in their role. Strategic relations with the Trust have also been developed and opportunities to fund and provide further training to facilitate a better response to wildlife crime are being explored.

In October 2016 Force funding has been allocated to allow wildlife crime officers to attend specialist training regarding the international trade of endangered species – ensuring that the Force has the skills and knowledge available to respond to such issues.

Nottinghamshire County Council is in the early stages of developing a rural crime strategy.

In October 2016 in response to a spate of hay-stack fires Nottinghamshire Police and Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service jointly staffed a vehicle to ensure that rural farmers and communities in the affected area of Oxton/Gonalston and the A6097 corridor received crime prevention advice, fire reduction advice and reassurance in a

single joint-approach. Discussions continue to explore if such a joint-approach could be beneficial and should be developed further as part of inter-operability working.

3.1.3. Work with partners to protect local environments and wildlife crime through cross border working

Throughout 2016 Nottinghamshire Police through the Rural Specials Team and the Environment Agency have undertaken joint patrols and operations to tackle angling/fishing crime under the auspices of Operation Traverse. On occasion these operations have included volunteer water bailiffs as well as the Angling Trust. These bankside patrols are extremely well received by the angling community and provide valuable reassurance, presence, and activity to tackle the issue.

Operation Bifocal is a joint Nottinghamshire Police and rural community operation to tackle issues of hare-coursing, lamping and off-road 4x4 vehicles damaging crops and land. Through the rural crime working group and networks developed through the regional wildlife crime enforcement group chaired by the force lead this operation has been developed to include adjacent forces. Whilst still developing five dates throughout the autumn and winter of 2016 have been identified as cross border operations with activity from South Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire Police. Two such dates have already taken place allowing for relations and techniques to develop and operational learning to take place.

3.1.4. Develop a mechanism for defining and monitoring rural crime by postcode if possible

There is not at this current time a national definition of rural crime.

The Nottinghamshire Police definition of rural crime has been agreed as 'any crime or anti-social behaviour that occurs in a rural area as defined by ONS (office of national statistics) methodology of rural/urban classification at Census output area level.'

The Force-lead is currently working with other tri-service collaboration forces to look at the current definitions and the possibility/feasibility and viability of a consistent regional approach.

Mapping overlays allow data to be identified, presented and analysed according to rural/urban classification which is felt to be more accurate and detailed than use of postcodes.

3.1.5. Work with partners and take steps to enhance intelligence gathering e.g. communities, rural crime and cybercrime

Through the re-invigoration of the Rural Crime Working Group, development of strategic links with the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust,

Neighbourhood Alert text pilot, and trial of a rural specific Facebook page a number of efforts are being made to enhance intelligence gathering.

The inception of the Bassetlaw ANPR shield provides a further enhanced intelligence capacity and asset compared with 2015.

The District Commander for Newark and Sherwood is currently developing a horse volunteer scheme. Although not yet implemented and still at an early stage the aspiration is to work with yards, initially small in number and within Newark and Sherwood, to build the scheme from the ground up. The scheme would include a dedicated Facebook page and access to digital equipment which would allow incidents, evidence and circumstances to be captured. It is envisaged the scheme would provide valuable eyes and ears in rural locations whilst going about the usual and normal business and would not be tasked or directed.

- 3.1.6.** Recruit more volunteers (especially BME) to support policing, including cadets, rural specials, specials, volunteer PCSOs and neighbourhood watch.

Nottinghamshire Police has a rural specials pro-active team which is based at Ollerton Police Station. Their activities support operations such as Bifocal and Traverse already described above as well as providing reassurance, visibility and presence in rural locations.

Recruitment for Rural Parish Special Constables is currently underway lead by the Citizens in policing Department which will see further support to policing in rural areas.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1.** The Commissioner's commitment through his leadership and support has changed the approach and focus to rural crime.
- 4.2.** The benefits of specific rural crime activity which involves and includes rural communities in the planning and implementation as well as other partners and agencies are improving relations, addressing trust and confidence, as well as impacting on perpetrators.
- 4.3.** The rural crime working group provides a partnership forum and governance structure to deliver the control strategy as well as rural crime activity, involving partners, agencies, and communities.
- 4.4.** The focus on rural crime remains with a number of activities and ideas in formative and developmental planning stages which will maintain the attention and focus on rural crime.

Chief Inspector Andy Rooke
Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood
Force-lead for rural crime