



Public Questions – Local Priorities (27 February 2018)

Questions asked by the public about policing matters in their local area have been answered by Julia Mulligan, your elected Police and Crime Commissioner.

Questions and answers are grouped by area as per the meeting. We have grouped similar issues within those sections so that you can see what others are asking and how we have responded to them, and then alphabetically by surname.

County Command (Harrogate, Craven, Richmondshire and Hambleton)

Concern: Low level crime and anti-social behaviour

Question from Richard Christian, BluSkills Ltd

“Do you feel that the community’s concerns regarding anti-social behaviour are as a result of a draw down in Police and PCSO presence on the street, with Police moving to vehicle bourn reactive tactics instead of community policing and foot/bike patrols? Do you see this as an issue and are you looking to address it?”

“I see many early teen aged groups loitering in kids play areas and on the streets. Most of these areas are poorly lit and offer cover for smoking of recreational drugs and alcohol. How are you working with local authorities as part of a prevent strategy to create dedicated spaces and activities for the younger generations to enjoy positively rather than turning to anti-social behaviour and is there a desire to light areas which currently offer a safe haven for drug taking.”

Answer:

A central part of my role as Commissioner is to be the voice of the public, and I have made it clear through the ‘Reinforcing Local Policing’ priority in the Police and Crime Plan that local policing remains important to the public. This is reflected in the Chief Constable and my decision to increase officer and PCSO numbers to 1400 and 214 respectively.

As you will know, policing consists of many different departments that are able to respond to the differing needs of the local community. In Ripon, there is a Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) that undertake patrols and local problem solving, especially around anti-social behaviour. There is also a response team that responds to emergency calls and at any one time, day or night, there are 2 Response Officers on duty in Ripon and more can be called in from Harrogate, Knaresborough or Thirsk. These teams are supported by specialist departments such as the Rural Task Force, Operational Support Units, Firearms Support Units, Roads Policing and the Dog Section, which are tasked to the area as and when required.

The NPT in Ripon consists of 1 Police Sergeant, 2 Police Constables and 5 Police Community Support Officers which has remained the same over the last 2 years. PCSOs will always patrol on foot or bike in the town centre unless for a pressing operational reason, and the officers will conduct a variety of foot, cycle and vehicle patrols as they are able. There is an active patrol plan

which includes the playparks and problem areas to which you refer, which is changed and adapted as new information is received.

Active patrolling helps to deter and divert anti-social behaviour, but the NPT is also embedded within a Community Safety Hub in Harrogate District Council, working closely with them when an issue is identified to consider the best intervention strategy. Lighting, diversionary activities and dedicated spaces are considered within this, but they are within the remit of the Council rather than the police. Police officers would provide advice to Councils as to how these might prevent crime and work closely on developing these tactics. The police are also involved in providing 'designing out crime' advice during planning for new developments, though it is not compulsory for developers to adhere to this. Lastly, when required, local Councils can implement Public Space Protection Orders, as Harrogate Borough Council have recently implemented to minimise street drinking and related anti-social behaviour in Harrogate town centre.

I also have a Community Fund, which anyone can apply to, and supports projects that reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. If you have any ideas for your local area you can see more about the fund and apply here - <https://www.northyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk/how-can-we-help/community-projects/apply-community-fund/>

Lastly, unless crimes are reported the police cannot respond and will not have the intelligence information to build a picture of what is happening. It is very important that residents report all and any crime and any suspicious behaviour or activity to the police so that they can build up a proper picture of what is happening. This can be done via 999 if there is an immediate danger or the crime is still in progress, via 101 if it is not an emergency, or anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0900555111. If residents feel unsafe, or are concerned that there seems to be a rise of crime or suspicious activity in their area then they should ring 101 and speak to the police.

Question from Terence Couchman, North Stainley

"Dear Mrs Mulligan, I should be grateful if you would ask the appropriate police officer, how closely or if at all, trail hunting is monitored in North Yorkshire. I have heard local reports, from reliable people, of foxes being chased, 'accidentally' or not, and very possibly caught and killed. Only a few weeks ago the hounds of a local hunt rampaged through the village of North Stainley in pursuit of a fox. Elsewhere, in January, hounds of the Romney Marsh hunt, in pursuit, invaded a private animal sanctuary and several elderly animals remain missing probably dead. This is 'anti-social behaviour' and should be treated as such by the police. Hunts seem to be cocking a snook at both the Hunting Act and reasonable behaviour."

Answer:

North Yorkshire Police run Operation Sage which monitors organised hunts. Each of the seventeen hunts in North Yorkshire has been assigned a liaison officer who take a preventative approach to issues arising from the hunts, with an open dialogue to ensure that each hunt understands the law relating to hunting, and making it clear that behaviour such as that described here will not be tolerated.

It is very important that residents report all and any crime and any suspicious behaviour or activity to the police so that they can build up a proper picture of what is happening. This can be done via 999 if there is an immediate danger or the crime is still in progress, via 101 if it is not an emergency, or anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0900555111. If residents feel unsafe, or are

concerned that there seems to be a rise of crime or suspicious activity in their area then they should ring 101 and speak to the police.

There are investigations ongoing into hunts around the county for illegal hunting, and reports of such will be investigated. Similarly such anti-social behaviour such as that described where there is possible damage done to property and disruption the police welcome all reports in order to build evidence so that hunts can be handed Community Protection Notice or Community Protection Warning. As already explained, please report anything you are concerned about to the police, who will take the appropriate action thereafter.

Questions from Elaine Davies, Harrogate

"1. On a number of occasions I have been frightened by cyclists who race alongside of me on the pavements in Harrogate. I always thought that pavements were for pedestrians but it seems that pedestrians now have to look out for cyclists as well as mobility scooters. Why are cyclists allowed to ride both on and off pavements as well as in pedestrianised areas? The local police helpers have no power over them. As cyclists have no registration documents I cannot report them if they knock me over.

"2. No police in evidence on the streets of Harrogate. In my opinion this lack of law enforcement leads to further bad behaviour in and around the town.

"3. Young people leaving litter on and around the cenotaph, especially on sunny days. Again a police presence would stop this anti-social behaviour. No one ever enforces the law so people feel they can get away with anything."

Answer:

The Neighbourhood Policing Team in Harrogate conduct regular patrols around the town and will challenge any dangerous cycling that they come across, including cycling on pavements. Local officers are aware of this concern as I have raised it before following reports from other residents.

The police also work with schools to educate young people about the dangers of cycling on the pavement and the fact that it is an offence. We encourage you to report offenders providing as detailed a description of the person and their bike as possible to help build up an intelligence picture and evidence for identification of offenders.

The Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) in Harrogate consists of 6 Police Constables and 18 Police Community Support Officers. They conduct operations to tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) around West Park Stray, Tower Street carpark, and the Valley Gardens. Operation Culminate is also active, carrying out preventative action days to reduce crime and ASB. The NPT are regularly on patrol, and this will also improve with the roll-out of mobile working technology to allow officers to stay out on the beat instead of having to return to the station.

A number of NPT surgeries are planned out and about in the town at locations such as the cenotaph which will provide further visibility. Police Officers will be carrying out bike marking and speaking to residents about their concerns and these will be advertised nearer the time.

Question from Susan Scotter, 1st Easingwold Scout Group

"I write in my capacity as Chair of 1st Easingwold Scout Group. For some time now the Scout Hut in Chase Garth is a congregation point for youth in the area after dark. They persist in damaging signage and depositing litter, bottles, cans, and who knows what else in our car park. This facility is used by very young children who we do not want exposed to alcohol and possibly syringes, drugs. Residents complain to us about the state of the gardens, litter and damage yet there is little we can do without local police support on patrol. I rarely see any police officers or Community Support Officers ever in Easingwold. I would like to know how you can help us to resolve our problem please?"

Answer:

It is very important that residents report all and any crime and any suspicious behaviour or activity to the police so that they can build up a proper picture of what is happening. This can be done via 999 if there is an immediate danger or the crime is still in progress, via 101 if it is not an emergency, or anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0900555111. If residents feel unsafe, or are concerned that there seems to be a rise of crime or suspicious activity in their area then they should ring 101 and speak to the police.

Unless crimes are reported the police cannot respond and will not have the intelligence information to build a picture of what is happening.

The police were not aware of this problem, but they will now make contact with you in order to discuss it further and help resolve it.

Concern: Road Safety / Safety Camera Vans

Question from Richard Christian, BluSkills Ltd

"I have seen an increase in Mobile speed camera van presence in North Yorkshire over the last few months. It seems the placement of these units are aimed at high offender areas such as motorways rather than high risk areas such as 30mph zones, schools etc. What can you do to reassure the public that you aren't looking to increase funds for the service through fines over the priority of increasing safety in built up areas and could the funds dedicated to these units be better used by putting more versatile traffic officers on the roads?"

Answer:

Safety Camera Vans (SCVs) deploy to approximately 480 locations across North Yorkshire, and are deployed for one of four reasons. The first is where they have been fatal collisions or ones resulting in serious injury – such as the A1(M), A64 and others, as well as rural roads such as those through the dales. The second is where communities have raised speed concerns, and there is evidence to show consistent speeding, many of which are in villages or towns. The third reason is known motorcycles routes, given that they are particularly vulnerable road users, and again these tend to be main roads. Lastly, the police also target sites that are known for anti-social road use, such as the use of mobile phones.

The worst 5 roads in North Yorkshire for fatal and serious injury collisions in North Yorkshire are the A64, A59, A19, A61 and the A1(M), therefore it is imperative these are regularly monitored by SCVs to improve the safety of those road. They are not in those locations for any other reason, or because of a high volume of traffic.

The number of SCVs has risen over the years as the public continue to make it clear road safety is important to them. Policing our roads, however requires a suite of different activities, and Roads Policing Officers and SCVs are different elements of that suite of responses. SCVs enable us to monitor roads at multiple different locations to prevent accidents and save lives, and are proven to have reduced casualties on our roads by 20% since their introduction, and also seem to lead to better driver behaviour. Roads Policing Officers carry out a range of functions, from responding to any crime, to having specialist skills to enable them to deal with complex traffic collisions or bring an HGV to a stop.

I will be publishing an Annual Report for the Safety Camera Vans, as I have done previously, which will detail every location the SCVs attend, numbers of violations and other detailed information. If you have any specific questions about particular locations you can see where the SCVs will be deployed here, and for what reason - <https://northyorkshire.police.uk/what-we-do/road-policing/safety-cameras/>

Question from John Ketchell, Ribble Bank Parish Council

“As I write, the Air Ambulance has just set off to hospital carrying the latest victim of a serious road traffic accident on the A65 between Settle and Long Preston. As you may be aware, accidents on this stretch of road are frequent, often serious, and sometimes fatal.

“The A65 carries lots of traffic and, as usual, the accident brought this heavy traffic to a standstill. I could plainly see all this from my garden in Rathmell on the other side of the valley. The next step on these occasions, is that A65 traffic approaching the scene of the accident from east or west is diverted along the minor road through Rathmell. As anticipated, shortly after the incident the whole of the A65 traffic began to flow through Rathmell village in both directions. I am not complaining about this - using this minor road is the only sensible way to keep traffic flowing - but the nature of the road does need to be appreciated particularly where it passes through the village.

“Here, the road has narrow sections, an awkward T-junction with limited visibility, a number of residential entries onto the road where sight lines are poor, and no pavements for the many pedestrians who use the road. The speed limit through the village is nominally 30mph and, occasionally, traffic conforms to this.

“Paradoxically, in some respects the road is safer when a heavy flow of A65 traffic is passing through the village since the sheer volume of vehicles can result in slightly lower speeds. This respite is offset, however, by the increased probability of residents being squashed against the wall by a heavy goods vehicle - HGVs are not normally allowed on the road. Today, the A65 traffic seems to be a little lighter than usual - an unfortunate feature since this results in much of it routinely exceeding the 30mph limit.

“Regardless of whether the A65 is closed or open, the problem and dangers of traffic speeding through the village is long-standing..... very long-standing, and the Parish Council and individual residents have for years sought to have this problem resolved. Other villages with apparently fewer dangers, seem to benefit from speed cameras, camera signs, smiley-face signs, traffic police and so on but Rathmell gets no attention despite its frequent pleading.

“Perhaps action on this issue will only occur when we have had a fatal accident in the village. If this is the case then please let us know.”

Answer:

Road safety is high on the public's priorities, and we have many roads in North Yorkshire that get high volumes of traffic though they may be narrow and unsuitable. The police will do their best to help manage this where speeds are found to be unlawful. However, it is always worth a discussion with your District Council about whether Highways can undertake any infrastructure work to improve road safety, such as by putting in a pavement or footpath. It would be worth making this approach through your Parish Council.

The police have not had a formal complaint regarding speeding in Rathmell since 2013 when, following data being collected from the road, the average speeds were found to be within expected limits. However, as that was a number of years ago the issues may have changed and if you still have a speeding concern in your village, please complete a speed concern form which will trigger a Speed Management Protocol assessment. The police will collect speed data, review collision data and decide what should be the appropriate solution. This may add your village to the list of Safety Camera Van locations for speed enforcement, result in signs to remind people of the speed limit and tell them their speed, or offer Community Speed Watch where residents can participate in monitoring speeding.

The speed concern form can be found at <https://northyorkshire.police.uk/what-we-do/road-policing/community-speed-watch/>.

Questions from Kath Clark, and Lesley Cooke, Cononley

1. *"Road safety is a major concern for Cononley. Cononley is treated as a rat run for morning commuters because Station Road and Colne Road in Crosshills are congested. At morning 'rush hour', it is not unusual to get up to 200 vehicles an hour whizzing through the village in order to get to Skipton via the back Skipton Road or beat the congestion by joining Keighley Road. The same volume of traffic returns via Cononley in the evening.*

"Most of Cononley is within a 20 MPH zone. NYCC Highways are unable to offer improved signage, infrastructure enhancements or speed cameras, so residents have been running a Community Speed Watch group for the past 6 months. Our speed data has confirmed that there is a speeding problem through our village. My question is:

"What do we, as residents need to do in order to apply for one of North Yorkshire Police's mobile speed vans to operate in Cononley?"

2. *"Along with other residents and in line with the North Yorkshire Police Speed Watch Scheme, monitoring has/is taking place on Cononley Lane between the A629 and the level crossing in Cononley. Personally, I think this scheme is a strong step in the direction of supporting road safety and the NY Police in the days of overstretched police resources. I have two questions:*

"Is there data to show how well this scheme is working across the local area?"

"Is there a scheme which might be able to apply to parking? It's only a matter of time before there is an accident at the level crossing at Cononley with cars parking on the double yellow lines and inhibiting the flow of traffic, causing understandable exasperation."

Answer:

There are two successful Community Speed Watch (CSW) groups active in Cononley covering the 30mph area, though they have only been active since November 2017 so it is still too early to

assess the impact that they have had. However, data from across North Yorkshire provides strong evidence to show that the presence of CSW does reduce speeding.

Previous speed assessments in Cononley have shown that mean speeds are below the signed limit which is why Community Speed Watch (CSW) was offered to the village. However, the Traffic Bureau continue to monitor and assess the data from speed watch sites in order to evaluate whether those assessments need to be reviewed. This has happened elsewhere in the county and has led to the police reviewing the site again and deploying safety camera vans in the area as a result. However, this depends on the information being recorded via the CSW scheme.

If there are concerns about other roads not covered by CSW then you should submit a new speed concern form available on the NYP website. This will then allow the deployment of speed data loggers to record actual speeds, and dependent on the outcome, this could result in the deployment of a safety camera van if speeds are found to be above the signed speed limit.

The speed concern form can be found at <https://northyorkshire.police.uk/what-we-do/road-policing/community-speed-watch/>.

Enforcement of parking is carried out by Civil Enforcement Officers managed by local Councils and concerns should be raised to them. However, where there is dangerous parking that creates a dangerous or unlawful obstruction we would encourage you to report it to the police. Please report details of what is happening to the Traffic Bureau via 101 (option 2) and they can assess whether an offence is being committed and help you to identify the appropriate authority to deal with it.

Question from Jackie Kennedy, Leeming Bar Parish Council

"My first concern is following the opening of the relief road the traffic flow through Leeming Bar and Aiskew on the A684 has decreased but I feel the speed has increased.

"I know myself and several residents have expressed there concerns through 95 Alive but we all feel we are not been taken seriously.

"Also the issue of illegal lorry parking in Leeming Bar again concerns have been expressed with the relevant bodies but we are not informed of outcome."

Answer:

I can reassure you that your concerns are being taken seriously. A number of speed concerns have been raised and assessments undertaken. This has resulted in Safety Camera Van enforcement on Roman Road and Northallerton Road, and an offer of Community Speed Watch for Leases Road. If there are concerns for other roads then please submit a new speed concern form to trigger an assessment.

The speed concern form can be found at <https://northyorkshire.police.uk/what-we-do/road-policing/community-speed-watch/>.

Enforcement of parking is carried out by Civil Enforcement Officers managed by local Councils and concerns should be raised to them. However, where there is dangerous parking that creates a dangerous or unlawful obstruction we would encourage you to report it to the police. Please report details of what is happening to the Traffic Bureau via 101 (option 2) and they can assess whether an offence is being committed and help you to identify the appropriate authority to deal

with it. It is not clear who has been dealing with the specific parking issues you mention, but if you want to call the OPCC on 01423 569 562 we can take further details and try to assist further.

Question from Peter Raybould

"When will action be taken against the operators of croft circuit for their lack of control when holding events.

"Last year there were a number of events/activities which created dangerous driving during arrival/departure from the circuit (captured on video).

"During the Boxing day rally, cars were parked (abandoned) on both sides of west lane which is classified as a 60mph speed limit, because the circuit did not have adequate parking due to weather conditions, reducing the road to single carriageway. These are on going problems for residents of west lane."

Answer:

The local Neighbourhood Policing Team are aware of your concerns, and the local beat manager PC Mark Wood, after meeting with yourself has spoken with the new circuit manager. She is very keen to work with the local community, and where they have events they will task their traffic management company to manage vehicles arriving and leaving the site. The circuit have been asked to provide NYP Operations Planning team with a list of this year's events, and that way we can look to task a local Neighbourhood or Roads Policing resource into the area.

Given how keen she is to work with the community you may wish to organise a community meeting with them through your local Parish Council. The police would be happy to attend should they be invited.

The circuit have also been encouraged to share event information with the Safety Advisory Group which is a multi-agency meeting run by Richmondshire District Council. Wider planning or noise issues need to be raised with your local council.

If you wish to speak to PC Mark Wood again, please make contact with him via the 101 telephone system and he will call to see you.

Question from Chris Taylor, Dalewood Walk Neighbourhood Watch Group

"Can the police do more to prevent vehicles speeding in Stokesley and particularly on Tanton Road"

Answer:

A speed complaint was received for Tanton Road, Stokesley, and a speed management protocol assessment was conducted. This area has been deemed suitable for enforcement and a safety camera site has been identified. A safety camera motorcycle has been deployed to this area (site reference 6336) and the police will continue to enforce speed restrictions in this area.

Customer Experience

Question from Gerry, Neighbourhood Watch, Hambleton District

"The two email messages below are self-explanatory. My point is that training, or validation of Police training, appears to have been inadequate in this case. As NHW members, we spend a lot of effort to get people (the public) to be involved and to report such matters to the Police; to receive this sort of response from the Police is lamentable. Why did the training fail?"

Dear All, this appeared on the potto patter facebook page today, along with some images of the two men involved. The incident happened in broad daylight which indicates how bold these guys are. (The white van was found to have false number plates, DL04 EDF, as advised by Stokesley police.)

Today at 11 52 a white van drove past our house (Swainby) then reversed back to outside the gates, which were locked. One man got out and looked through the hedge at the side of the gates. The other man looked over the gates and then rang the buzzer, no one answered the buzzer so the other man climbed through a small gap in the hedge next to the gates while the other kept look out. The man walked down the driveway and looked around until someone working at the house saw him and spoke with him. He said he was looking for scrap and that we had told him it was ok for him to take some things. He was challenged on entering through the hedge when clearly no one was in and the gates were locked and when told to leave he persisted to ask for scrap. Will be reporting to police with images of the two men and van registration.

Images of the top of the van (a Ford transit type) and two men were captured and given to Stokesley police. A comment was made on potto patter that "they (the police) said they didn't recognise the men and weren't bothered about having these pictures on their records." I find that a strange comment to make but perhaps we can discuss it with Sgt Ross at the next meeting, Tim? It surely makes people question what's the point of reporting anything if it's dismissed so readily. We need to foster the idea that what people report is taken seriously, as indeed I hope it is.....!!

Ross, Christopher <Christopher.Ross@northyorkshire.pnn.police.uk>

18 Feb (4 days ago) ☆ ↩

to T, Cathy, me, Mark ▾

Tim/Cathy,

Thanks for this. I have identified the incident this relates to and spoken with the aggrieved. I now have the images which are recorded on the occurrence. I will speak with the officer who attended and it is unfortunately a decision made from inexperience (independent patrol for less than a week) and I am fully satisfied not any other reason and that the report was not dismissed or not taken seriously.

The males involved have been identified with one wanted for two substantive offences and the other charged with them and appearing at court later this month. They were also prosecuted by NYP for an offence back end of last year.

Kind regards

Chris.

Answer:

Clearly this response was below the standard we expect in North Yorkshire Police, and North Yorkshire Police apologise for that. Sergeant Ross will be attending the next NHW co-ordinators meeting on 13 April. After reviewing the incident and the response, he considers this to be due to the inexperience of a new officer and not a failing in training, which, as in any job, does take time to embed.

Question from Pauline Lockley, Huby

"Quite some time ago, I applied to be NW coordinator for Kingsway, Huby. Received the sign, but NOTHING else, despite several phone calls to ask about regular updates, e mail addresses (or at least contact with others in Huby so we could combine knowledge. We even thought of having a dedicated Facebook page for anyone to report on, something I would have discussed with other coordinators in the village.

"Imagine my surprise therefore when in the 'Village News' a plea for a new coordinator for this area was asked for as 'the person doing the job no longer feels capable'.

"As I know nothing about this, my question is 'what is going on?'"

Answer:

We are sorry for the confusion and inconvenience. Thank you for your continued engagement and desire to be closely involved. Neighbourhood Watch is a valued part of the policing family and we support many groups across North Yorkshire. To ensure we take this matter forward for you, a local officer will be in contact with you to discuss this further. Please do let us know if this does not happen, or you continue to be unhappy with how it is working.

Question from Diane Lowe, Chamber of Trade, Grassington

"At a meeting of the Grassington Chamber of Trade concerns about the lack of police presence in Grassington were raised. Even at our major events, i.e., Dickensian Festival and 1940's we have only had the presence of Community Officers. Up to 2015, we had PC Simon Crossley. He was our Village 'bobby'. One who we could always turn to for help and guidance and was always there when assistance and reassurance was required. Simon was more than just a number on a roll call he was a friend to countless numbers of residents and visitors not just for the Grassington Community but for the whole of Wharfedale and beyond.

"Simon was always very much in evidence in the village, he made himself known to everyone and was hugely respected. His presence was very reassuring to residents and businesses alike. We are aware he was moved to Skipton for operational requirements but we feel like we have not only lost a valuable asset to rural policing but we have lost our friend. His move was a loss to the village and The Dales. His move has been detrimental to the Policing of our communities. Your manifesto outlines the importance of Protecting the vulnerable and The importance of Rural Policing yet without Simon's valuable presence it seems unfair that our nearest Police Officer is over 10 miles away Skipton. We are aware that North Yorkshire Police have a 'presence' in Grassington of two PCSO's but these officers are limited as to their abilities. Not being able to deal with confrontational occurrences or respond to emergency situations. You, as a resident within a rural village, must understand the importance of rural police officers in rural villages and communities. We miss Simon and want him back as we feel we are getting second rate Policing from North Yorkshire Police yet we pay the same, if not more, than those living in Towns or Cities."

Answer:

I am very aware of the value that individual officers can bring to their local communities, in particular rural communities, especially when they are based there over a significant period of time and are able to embed themselves in the community. The Chief Constable is also aware of this, and it is never a decision taken lightly to move such an officer, and we know how loved and respected PC Crossley was in Grassington.

Whilst PC Crossley no longer works from Grassington itself, that does not mean he will no longer work within that area. He will on occasion, but I understand this is very different from a more permanent presence. However, the police also have to think of other communities and the best thing for everyone. The public expect the police to respond to and deal with crime across North Yorkshire in the most appropriate manner and in the most cost-effective way.

Police Community Support Officers are a valuable link between the community and the police to help build a picture of what is happening locally as they feed directly into the local Neighbourhood Policing Team and the understanding of local needs. PCSOs are also a good communication channel from the police to communities with updates and information. PCSOs are able to help communities with a broad range of problems and we would very much recommend building close links with the two PCSOs based in Grassington. They are based and work directly in Grassington and the surrounding area and are unlikely to be called away, unlike response officers. In the future we hope your PCSOs will be as respected and loved as PC Crossley.

To ensure you have the best possible understanding of the decision to move PC Crossley to Skipton, it is important to note that response teams, of which PC Crossley is a part and which are different to Neighbourhood Policing Teams in that they respond to emergencies, work on a 'borderless' model in Craven (and more widely in North Yorkshire) whereby any officer can be sent

to any location regardless of from where they parade. This is facilitated by mobile working technology which means that officers do not need to return to stations but can spend more time in their communities. A distance of 10 miles from a response base is not uncommon in North Yorkshire, and response times for Grassington are within our service standards enabling officers to still deal with confrontation and respond to emergencies properly.

The police's decision to base Response Officers in Skipton was taken as part of a review of demand and resource allocation. The Grassington area consists of four wards which have had the following number of calls for service over the last 12 months:

- Grassington: 236
- Upper Wharfedale: 258
- Barden Fell: 542
- Gargrave and Malhamdale: 1055

In the same period, Skipton East had 1768 calls for service, and Skipton South had 1480.

As Gargrave and Malhamdale and Barden Fell are more easily accessible from Skipton than Grassington and are significantly busier than the other two wards the decision was taken to move PC Crossley for reasons of efficiency. Previously he paraded on at Grassington and was then invariably called away to Skipton.

We hope this explains the rationale, and hope the PCSOs will prove to be as valuable to the community as PC Crossley. It is very important that residents report all and any crime and any suspicious behaviour or activity to the police so that they can build up a proper picture of what is happening. This can be done via 999 if there is an immediate danger or the crime is still in progress, via 101 if it is not an emergency, or anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0900555111. If residents feel unsafe, or are concerned that there seems to be a rise of crime or suspicious activity in their area then they should ring 101 and speak to the police.

Scarborough and Ryedale Command

Concern: Road Safety

Question from J. Harrison

"It was a general comment regarding Scarborough. Cars can be parked on the pavement in most parts of Scarborough and in the National News it has been stated a few areas in England were beginning to be policed to stop them.

"Hay Lane around the corner onto High Street Scalby is the area I am particularly concerned about.

"Recently, after having had a back operation, I attempted to work down Hay Lane to find 2 cars parked together on the pavement – the only way pass was to go onto the road – cars travelling towards you from behind. This felt very uncomfortable and unsafe particularly when trying to concentrate on balancing."

Answer:

Generally speaking, enforcement of parking is carried out by Civil Enforcement Officers managed by local Councils and concerns should be raised to them. However, where there is dangerous parking that creates a dangerous or unlawful obstruction I would encourage you to report it to the police via 101. The police can take action, e.g. give Fixed Penalty Notices, and in Scarborough specifically there are warning notices of inconsiderate parking through the Scarborough Considerate Parking Scheme.

Please report details of what is happening to the Traffic Bureau via 101 (option 2) and they can assess whether an offence is being committed and help you to identify the appropriate authority to deal with it.

Concern: Wildlife Crime

Question from Andy Brook

"NO What they did yesterday in Helmsley Square was disgusting!! Targeting Tourists who come to the area telling them what they believe is going on in Rural North Yorkshire within Shooting Estates and Grouse Moors and Birds of Prey!!

"All this will do is drive a deep wedge between the public and people who live and work on estates. Shooting here in Yorkshire is worth millions to the local economy and many families depend on it!!!

"I thought North Yorkshire Police had set up their new head quarters in Helmsley there where that many!! With the report that's just come out it's time you sorted real crime out and how you deal with it!!!"

Answer:

The public briefing session was part of Operation Owl, an ongoing operation to raise awareness of and to prevent raptor persecution and wildlife crime partly through public engagement, education and information dissemination. The majority of those spoken to were from the local community, most of whom support our focus on targeting the illegal persecution of wild birds, and please be assured that the police were certainly not targeting tourists.

North Yorkshire Police are working closely with the estates and grouse moors as part of this, and directly with gamekeepers and estate managers to ensure they understand the law and their responsibilities, and to help them to educate their staff. They have at no point implicated estates or moors that are law abiding as perpetrators and would not do so, preferring to work with them to prevent and reduce harm and crime.

Forty people attended the initial public briefing, four of whom were game keepers representing local moorland and shooting associations and who support the aims of the operation and agree with us that raptor persecution is unacceptable.

The fact that North Yorkshire is the worst place in the country for this type of crime should concern the public. Illegal traps cause unnecessary suffering not only to birds, but to domestic pets and wildlife at large, with the potential to poison dogs and even children.

On the last part of your question, assuming that is in relation to crime recording in North Yorkshire, you can see my response to the report on my website, and there will be a Public Accountability Meeting on Crime Data Integrity at the end of April – more details can be found on

my website: <https://www.northyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk/police-oversight/governance/governance-process/corporate-scrutiny-board/>.

Question from James Gurling, Wombledon

"I am the river keeper for the Ryedale Anglers Club Ltd. When I contact the Police to report poachers on the River Rye the usual response I get is that they will follow it up later !I have friends who are gamekeepers and they get very quick response from the Police when there are dog men in the area. So my question is, when are the Police going to take angling offences seriously?"

Answer:

North Yorkshire Police are working closely with the Angling Trust and Environment Agency to tackle illegal fishing and theft of fish. We have adopted Operation Traverse, which is the Angling Trust response to this, and have placed guidance to dealing with these offences in front line vehicles and the force control room to increase understanding.

When reporting angling offences you may wish to reference Operation Traverse so that the control room can better understand and respond to your problem.

A member of the Rural Task Force will be in touch with you to discuss your concerns in more detail.

Concern: Operation Kingfisher

Question from Cllr Mike Potter, Pickering

"Since Sep 2017, almost £1m of taxpayers money has been spent on policing the fracking operation at Kirby Misperton KM8.

"Upwards of 50-60 officers have been routinely deployed from all over N Yorkshire and elsewhere, removing a significant number of officers from front line policing on a long-term basis. Given the full range of criminal activity these officers have been stopped from policing to instead police non-violent, peaceful protest from a limited number of people, could you please tell me precisely whose decision it was to prioritise manpower and funding in this way. It would also be helpful to include the evidence that Operation Kingfisher would be proportionate, affordable and sustainable in terms of manpower and funding.

"What direct impact will the cost of Op Kingfisher have on proposed increases to the NYP precept for council tax increases due from 1 April 2018."

Answer:

I am very aware that this is a very prominent matter for local residents, as well as the public across the county. The cost of the policing operation up to the end of January 2018 was £621,787. The cost of the operation in January 2018 was £48,101, down 17 per cent on the previous month. The policing of this operation is covered by North Yorkshire Police budgets, which include a contingency for policing operations such as this, and the cost is kept continuously under review.

The public should rest assured that none of the precept increase this year will be going towards paying for Operation Kingfisher. When costs pass the 1% of our budget threshold, I will apply to the Home Office to recover costs for this operation, which is in line with national policy and which

other PCCs have done before for similar operations. As part of my commitment to openness and transparency, I will continue to publish the cost of Operation Kingfisher on my website on a monthly basis. Should you want to see previous discussions about the deployment of officers you can view previous meeting where this was discussed here: <https://www.northyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk/police-oversight/governance/governance-process/corporate-scrutiny-board/>.

As the public would expect, North Yorkshire Police are constantly reviewing the progress of Operation Kingfisher, and the number and level of policing resources deployed at the site. It would be irresponsible both to not have enough officers available so that they could not deal with any eventuality, and to have too many so that they are unnecessarily abstracting officers from other teams around the county. Resource levels are therefore constantly under review in order that they are commensurate with the nature of the risk at the time, for the safety of the public, the rights of people to peacefully protest, and for the rights of the energy company to undertake their business.

A Gold commander (a member of the Chief Officer Team) is responsible for the policing of the site, and a different Gold commander is in place to oversee 'business as usual' policing to ensure the impact of the protest at Kirby Misperton isn't overly impacting on policing elsewhere in North Yorkshire.

Senior officers meet daily to minimise the impact on our policing functions. Consideration is given to how many resources are required on that day, and whether resources can be handed back to their relevant districts. Workloads, demands from the public and ongoing incidents other than Operation Kingfisher are catered for with appropriate numbers of resources being allocated to ensure there is no detrimental effect on our policing responsibilities. For example, on many days in January, the majority of police officers due to attend Kirby Misperton were redeployed to policing duties elsewhere, and the only officers present at the site were Police Liaison Officers, whose role it is to engage with the protest community. They were also redeployed back to their areas when there was no protest activity.

The public should rest assured that during this time we are still running business as usual and will continue to provide the high-quality service that the public expects across North Yorkshire and the City of York.

York and Selby Command

Concern: Low level crime and anti-social behaviour

Question from Dave Perry, Drax Parish Council

"Many of our local villages are experiencing a tidal wave of petty crime. Thefts from oil tanks, vehicle break-ins and random thefts from houses, sheds and gardens happen on a sickeningly regular basis.

"These are not serious major crimes, but these is such a high level of them at the moment that many folk are in despair - " what has happened to our previously peaceful life in our lovely village" is a common response.

"What are the police doing to return some safety and stability to our lives??"

Answer:

As Commissioner it is my role to be the voice of the public, and I am very aware, both from personal experience and from the feedback you have given me, of the impact that crime has in rural communities and small villages. That is why I have made it clear through the Police and Crime Plan that local policing must remain a priority. We are very lucky that in North Yorkshire we have the lowest crime rate in England, but if anything, this means that when crime does come to our area it is all the more unsettling.

It is very important that residents report all and any crime and any suspicious behaviour or activity to the police so that they can build up a proper picture of what is happening. This can be done via 999 if there is an immediate danger or the crime is still in progress, via 101 if it is not an emergency, or anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0900555111. If residents feel unsafe or are concerned that there seems to be a rise of crime or suspicious activity in their area, then they should ring 101 and speak to the police.

In the last three months, there have been 12 reports of crime or anti-social behaviour in Drax and Long Drax that have been reported and to which the police have responded, of which two were heating oil thefts, two were vehicle crimes and one was general theft. This is similar to the picture across the year and is in line with the crime rate across the rest of North Yorkshire.

Clearly, however, there is a level of concern which requires reassurance. There has been one other communication from a Drax resident raising concerns about crime in the local area and the local neighbourhood policing team have made contact with this resident to discuss their concern. The Chief Constable and I are supportive of local officers or PCSOs attending Parish council meetings where they can, and you should make a request to your local policing team if that is something in which you would be interested. You can then discuss your concerns in person and the whole community can have a say. You can contact your local policing team here:

<https://northyorkshire.police.uk/neighbourhoods/selby-rural/>.

More generally though, I have invested in technology to allow officers to spend more time on patrol and engaging with the public rather than sat behind desks in police stations, and the Chief Constable has set up what is the largest Rural Task Force in the country. The local Neighbourhood Policing Team and the Rural Task Force regularly patrol the area at various different times during the day and night to deter and proactively disrupt criminals. The police continue to monitor crime in specific communities which will detect any sharp increase and unusual patterns to put extra protection in place. As above, you are welcome to contact your local team to understand what they are doing in your area.

Whilst the police will continue to do what they can, residents should also consider what steps they can put in place to prevent crime and deter criminals, who tend to target poorly lit areas and poorly protected outbuildings. It is always important to make sure that you protect your property as best you can. If you require further advice on preventing crime, then please do request help from your local policing team. The police also run a property marking scheme which can deter criminals and is useful in returning stolen goods once recovered. You may also wish to develop a local Neighbourhood Watch or Rural scheme to support the local community and work more closely with the police. You can find out more information about how to set one up on the police website: <https://northyorkshire.police.uk/what-we-do/tackling-crime/what-you-can-do/watch-schemes/>.

Question from Cllr C. Steward

"The drug dealer next to my office (we are at 20 Bootham) which we have reported three times and the police couldn't care less. When there were police raiding another flat the other day I asked if they could pop in afterwards, which of course they didn't. My question is how many times people should have to report drug dealing from a location before the police take any action."

Answer:

Drugs are a serious problem with considerable impact and are an issue in many communities. We also are getting more feedback in my office from the public about increasing concern about drug dealing and drug use, so your concerns are not in isolation by any means. 'Drugs' will be a thematic at a future Public Accountability meeting and it may be worth engaging with that meeting to understand how the police are dealing with drugs issues in North Yorkshire.

North Yorkshire suffers from various criminal drug gangs, often from outside the area, with the problem spreading to towns and more rural areas. As you might expect there is a great deal of work which goes on behind the scenes to investigate, identify, disrupt and ultimately stop such activity. Dealing with drug trafficking and dealing is often complex, and requires both overt and covert tactics, some of which the public may not be made aware for obvious reasons. Whether or not you can see police activity, it is still very important that residents report all and any crime and any suspicious behaviour or activity to the police, via 999 if there is an immediate danger or the crime is still in progress, via 101 if it is not an emergency, or anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0900 555111. This helps them build a picture of activity which can either direct police deployment or assist in covert operations. So whilst it can be frustrating not to see a problem being visibly dealt with, that doesn't mean the police are not working to address your concerns.

I am sorry officers weren't able to visit you after the policing operation you mentioned. I will pass your concerns onto the local policing team and I hope someone will be in touch soon to discuss your concerns in more depth.

Question from James Wildash, Wistow Parish Council

"We are a small village near Selby and we are becoming extremely frustrated by the number of vehicles that park on footpaths, causing obstructions to pedestrians."

"This issue has been reported to the local police but nothing seems to happen. You as the commissioner for the county need to take this matter seriously and put in place a policy which will work. It's only a matter of time before a serious incident occurs."

Answer:

Road Safety is a collaborative effort in North Yorkshire, and many different organisations are responsible for solving problems, such as parking. For example, enforcement of parking is mostly carried out by Civil Enforcement Officers managed by local Councils, not the police, and the majority of concerns should be raised to them. However, where there is dangerous parking that creates a dangerous or unlawful obstruction you should report it to the police as such.

If the problem is long-term, you may wish to approach your County Councillor and request remedies such as road markings (e.g. double-yellow lines), which would be the responsibility of the Highways team at North Yorkshire County Council.

You can also report specific instances to the Traffic Bureau via 101 (option 2) and they can assess whether an offence is being committed and help you to identify the appropriate authority to deal with it. As explained, more often than not the parking is not a police matter but a local authority one, in which case you would need to contact Selby District Council for further support.

In the meantime, your local PCSO will be making contact to discuss this further.

Question from Neil Wadey

"When are the police going to take action against the people who park opposite road junctions and on bends on Sutton lane Byram instead of just driving past them and ignoring the hazards and potential accidents they are liable to cause?"

Answer:

Road Safety is a collaborative effort in North Yorkshire, and many different organisations are responsible for solving problems, such as parking. For example, enforcement of parking is mostly carried out by Civil Enforcement Officers managed by local Councils, not the police, and the majority of concerns should be raised to them. However, where there is dangerous parking that creates a dangerous or unlawful obstruction you should report it to the police as such. Parking opposite a junction does not necessarily mean it is a police matter and may still be the responsibility of the local authority to deal with.

To deal with this issue permanently, rather than relying on enforcement (which is resource intensive) you may wish to approach your County Councillor and request remedies such as road markings (e.g. double-yellow lines), which would be the responsibility of the Highways team at North Yorkshire County Council.

You can also report details of what is happening to the Traffic Bureau via 101 (option 2) and they can assess whether an offence is being committed and help you to identify the appropriate authority to deal with it.

In the meantime, your local PCSO will be making contact to discuss this further.

Question from Mrs Blackburn, Camblesforth

"I live down a cul-de-sac in camblesforth and have noticed lots of different vans coming up and down the street turning around in front of my house as i live at the turning circle end. I have a horse box which is tucked in my garden in front of my garage and my very trusted german shepherd (thankfully she doesn't miss a trick) however i still feel extremely vulnerable at the moment especially on a night when my husbands at work and i'm left with the boys. especially after last night incident in barlow and the fact i'm now recovering from tendon and ligament damage after a heavy fall.

"My question is please can we have the street lights back on over night? (i really feel for the vulnerable people of our villages, they shouldn't be living in fear)"

Answer:

As PCC I am determined that all our residents should not only be safe, but feel safe as well. For our rural communities this is all the more important, as they can feel isolated and cut off from services.

It is very important that residents report all and any crime and any suspicious behaviour or activity to the police so that they can build up a proper picture of the demand and activity in your area in order to effectively deploy their resources and help protect you. You can do this via 999 if there is an immediate danger or the crime is still in progress, via 101 if it is not an emergency, or anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0900555111. If residents feel unsafe, or are concerned that there seems to be a rise of crime or suspicious activity in their area, then they should ring 101 and speak to the police.

Sadly, street lighting is not a police matter and is the responsibility of the local authority. The police are consulted when there are changes proposed to street lighting, but ultimately it is the decision of your local council. Given that, I would suggest you contact your Parish or District Councillors and raise your concerns with them.

Notwithstanding the above, a local PCSO will make contact with you to discuss these concerns, and the police will also investigate if there is anything of concern regarding the vans using the turning circle.

Question from Carol Farrar, Ryther

"I am a resident of Ryther. Despite the best efforts of our Parish Council with 95 Alive Road Safety, concerns from villagers regarding speeding motorists, particularly motorbikes, are increasing.

"As part of the development of the Police and Crime Plan, Ryther would more than welcome some form of Police visibility during the summer months in an effort to improve road safety. Weekends and mid-week Wednesdays are particularly bad.

"I hope you will consider this request which i and all residents consider to be vital if casualties caused by speeding traffic are to be prevented. It can only be a matter of time."

Answer:

As you say, a lot of work is done in North Yorkshire on road safety, not least police enforcement, which continues to be a priority. Having looked into your concerns specifically, I know a speed complaint was raised via the speed management protocol for Ryther and an assessment was undertaken. The speeds recorded combined with collision data identified that Community Speed Watch (CSW) was the most appropriate intervention to help the community monitor and report speeding. As a result, a CSW group was established in Ryther during 2017 and I would encourage you to engage with this group if you aren't already. If you are concerned about speeding on other roads not covered by the CSW then you are very welcome to raise a new concern through a speed concern form, which will be investigated as per the above.

The Traffic Bureau will review the CSW data from Ryther along with recent collision data and assess the village further to ensure that CSW continues to be the most appropriate solution. The speed concern form can be found at <https://northyorkshire.police.uk/what-we-do/road-policing/community-speed-watch/>.

More generally, I have invested heavily in road safety over the years having heard loud and clear from the public that it continues to be a concern for them. CSW is one of those developments, but we have also greatly increased the enforcement capability, which has seen speeds reduce and lives saved. You can see more about that here: <https://www.northyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk/for-you/road-safety/>.

Your local PCSO will also be in touch with you to understand your concerns further.

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Question from M.P. Holden

"The best you can do for our police service is to get rid of your position and all your staff and use the money to fund more policemen on the street. All your workshops, drop in sessions and questionnaires are just useless froth. You are wasting every body's time and money."

Answer:

There has always been a form of governance of the police service, whether through a PCC or previously a Police Authority. During my first term I saved the taxpayer over £500,000 compared to the Police Authority having reduced the cost of my office, whilst delivering much greater transparency and accessibility.

I am also much more active than the Authority, with regular surveys and engagement events to understand and gather your views, advice surgeries to help you with specific problems, and public events to tell you about what we are doing to improve the service you receive in North Yorkshire. My office often receives over 70 pieces of correspondence a month, some of which are very complex, and I have a full-time caseworker to help respond to these enquiries and support advice surgeries and any complaints.

My focus always has been and always will be on the public, and my team and I do as much as we can to gather information and understanding public concerns and need, as well as what the police are doing, in order to help me hold the Chief Constable to account for the service he provides on your behalf. With them, I work closely with partners, Local Authorities, national bodies and third-sector organisations, and Government departments to learn about the best ideas and practice to ensure we in North Yorkshire are receiving the service we deserve.

I am sure I won't change your mind, but I hope the above is helpful in explaining what I do and how I help improve policing in North Yorkshire and give the public a voice.