

The Chiefs written response to the public question from the PAM 19th September 2023:

The Chief Constable will continue with the plan for the reduction in the number of PCSOs to 50.

The decision to reduce our PCSOs stems from a very difficult funding position faced by Lincolnshire Police which leaves a significant funding gap over the next 3 years. The additional money that we will be receiving from the Home Office will enable us to maintain our police officer numbers. Without the grant we would have been in the position of having to reduce police officer numbers, as well as reducing the number PCSOs. We remain fully committed to our neighbourhood policing model and we know that our visible presence in neighbourhoods plays a vital role in keeping our communities safe. Over the past 18 months we have added 13 Community Beat Managers to our neighbourhood teams, 47 constables and 5 sergeants to our local response teams as well as creating a Rural Crime Team and Roads Policing Team dedicated to reducing harm in our communities. As a result of this we have seen rural crime figures fall significantly in the past year and, for the first time in over a decade, the number of fatalities on our roads is reduced. Whilst I recognise that the loss of PCSOs is being felt across the community, they are one element of a much wider team to work in conjunction with other agencies and the public, that are there to support our communities and to prevent crime across the county. We are also recruiting 10 new Constables through 'Police Now' who, once trained will be dedicated to neighbourhoods for the next 2 years.

The loss of some of our PCSOs has to be weighed against other areas of policing; the level of risk carried, and the types of resources required in order to mitigate and manage those risks to the best effect possible. We continue to invest in high-risk areas of policing, including Child Sexual Exploitation and Rape / Serious Sexual Offence investigation and support. These are both areas where significant harm is being experienced in our communities. This also includes additional resources to manage Sex Offenders living in our communities and protecting residents from coming to harm as a result.

We have also made investments in the Force Control Room and 101 Call Handling teams as our performance in this area has not been where we would expect it to be, and it is imperative we improve this to ensure calls for help are answered and responded to quickly.

Whilst we recognise that this sometimes leads to us making very difficult decisions, we will continue to strive to make the most effective use of our resources in order to make Lincolnshire the safest place to live, to work and to visit.