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Newsletter

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Chair's Opening

Cllr Chris Matthews has been appointed as the new Police Authority Chairman to Safeguard Local Policing



Members of Humberside Police Authority unanimously elected Cllr Matthews as their new Chair for the coming year at the Authority's Annual General Meeting held on 29th June 2010.

Cllr Matthews, the former Chair of East Riding Council, said that he was delighted to have been appointed. "This is a wonderful opportunity to continue the progress the previous Chairs have made and make sure that local people receive the policing service they deserve".

Speaking about the challenges he faces in his role Cllr Matthews has considered carefully the priorities for the year ahead. He highlighted his determination to safeguard local policing services and stressed his commitment to the provision of real accountability for local people.

"There are undoubtedly some serious challenges ahead and the way in which policing is delivered will have to change. But our main aim will not. The Authority will continue to make sure that local people continue to receive an outstanding policing service. We are here to safeguard policing on behalf of local people, which is why I want to hear from people, not just when things aren't going so well, but when they are pleased with the service that they have received, so that we can learn from this."

Cllr Matthews went on to say that he felt his experience of change management and public sector reorganisation will stand him in good stead in the coming months. "I've been a councillor for over 10 years," he said. "I understand public expectations and the need to protect frontline policing. This is why we will work with the new Government to develop their proposals for policing, so that local concerns can be taken into account. To do this effectively, I want to raise the visibility of the Police Authority, so that people know who to

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"Securing outstanding policing for local people"

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turn to and how they can put their views across. It's important that people understand that there is an independent body working on their behalf to represent their views."

On the financial picture, the new Chair explained how the Authority has a planned and managed approach to cutting cost.

"Obviously, policing is not immune to the financial challenges posed to all public sector organisations. I'm pleased that in Humberside we are ahead of the game thanks to the Authority's decision in March 2009 to ask the Chief Constable to find ways to save £15M to help balance our budgets. However, dependent on funding reductions, there will be more to be done and it is our job to make sure that does not impact on the services that people value most.

"We are committed to our neighbourhood policing programme, it has been so popular with communities, raising their confidence and reducing the crimes that affect them where they live.

"I'm under no illusions that there will be some difficult decisions to be made but we will ensure the best possible policing service for all our residents.

"As part of this we will explore the opportunities for collaboration with other forces and authorities. Collaboration will not impact on local policing, but it should, over time, provide us with savings that can be reinvested locally. The sort of area ideally suited to collaboration is something like scientific support, which has proved effective elsewhere, or computer systems.

"To make sure that we continue to provide the necessary balance of support and challenge to the Chief Constable, I see part of my role as driving a programme of continuous improvement in the Authority itself. The recent HMIC and Audit Commission Inspection found that we are performing adequately and highlighted the improvements that we are making. If we can continue to improve, obviously we will be even more effective which in turn has a positive impact on service delivery.

"We have robust plans in place to achieve all of this and it is my job to ensure that we put those plans into practice."

"Crime will fall if people work with us" says the New Vice-Chair

The Annual General Meeting also saw Grimsby-based councillor Steve



Beasant elected as the Authority's new Vice-Chairman.

The self-proclaimed former 'hoodie' said that one of the main areas that he wants to see addressed is the stereotypical view of young people as 'trouble in waiting'.

"It's the very small minority that give the rest a bad name," He said. "I was a hoodie as a teenager when I wore my balaclava, but things were different then, people were more tolerant. I wasn't a threat, nor was I doing anything wrong. Like many teenagers today, my friends and I enjoyed hanging out on streets and looking at the shops, but no-one minded or thought we were about to commit a crime. There were fewer distractions then and we didn't have all the technology that everyone uses today, so we were expected to entertain ourselves."

Acknowledging the brutal economic challenges facing the police authority, he added: "We are in a very difficult financial climate, like everyone in the public sector. The police service is not immune from the cuts that are likely to impact on all public services. What we need to do is work smarter to deliver even better results, but with fewer resources. That's no mean task.

"I believe we can meet this challenge, by working in partnership with everyone. I don't just mean other local authorities, but the voluntary sector and most importantly the general public. They are the people who know what is happening, they have local information and if they work with us, we can nip things in the bud before it's too late. Together, we can stamp out anti-social behaviour, I really believe that."

Mr Beasant said he had been elected in the "most challenging year possible", but is optimistic for the future.

"We have already seen a reduction in crime in all offences this year, and I am sure we can make further reductions."

Mr Beasant is also the portfolio holder for community safety at North East Lincolnshire Council. He will work alongside the new Chairman, Councillor Chris Matthews as the Authority addresses the challenges ahead.

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Lead Member for Your Area

Humberside Police Authority works on your behalf to influence policing by ensuring sure the Chief Constable and his Police Officers and Staff deliver the policing priorities and address the crime and disorder issues that are important for you and your neighbourhood. The Authority is progressive, always looking for ways that it can improve how it works with the public so as to support the delivery of 'outstanding policing' in a way that meets your expectations. In order to make it easier for you to voice your opinions, concerns or satisfaction with policing in your local area the Police Authority has selected Lead Members for policing in your area. On your behalf, your Lead Member will;

- Act as the focal point for the Police Authority in Local Authority Area meeting regularly with the Police Commander to discuss policing issues and concerns;
- Scrutinise crime and disorder levels in the area gaining an understanding of what action is being taken by the police to reduce their levels. When it appears crime and disorder is rising your Lead Member will be seeking answers on your behalf as to what more can be done by the Police and their partners;
- Ensure your neighbourhood policing teams are providing opportunities for you to meet with them and tell them what your policing priorities are. Your Lead Member will challenge the police to ensure times and places of meetings are publicised and that priorities you identify are translated into action;
- Maintain an overview of significant or persistent issues of public concern relating to crime and disorder and challenge the police and partners to take action to resolve them;
- Arrange public meetings in your area so as to allow communities to seek further, more effective, resolutions to persistent local crime and disorder problems that have not been resolved to their satisfaction.

In order to do all this it is important that your Lead Member knows what your views and opinions are on crime and disorder matters in your area. If you are not satisfied with what is being done to deal with a crime or community safety issue you should always try and resolve it by speaking directly to the police first as set out in steps illustrated in the triangle below. However, if you feel your issue is still not being resolved then contact your Lead Member by telephoning him on 01482-334818, sending an e mail to staff@humberside-pa.karoo.co.uk or writing a letter to him at Pacific Exchange, 40 High St Hull, HU1 1PS. Your Lead Member will then contact you within 5 working days to discuss what can be done to resolve your concern. It's also just as important to let us know when things are going well, so do please feel free to write or ring when you are satisfied with policing in your Local Authority area.

Your lead members and photographs are below.

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East Riding of Yorkshire

Cllr John Parsons



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Kingston Upon Hull



Cllr Stephen Hull

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North East Lincolnshire

Cllr Stephen Beasant



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North Lincolnshire

Cllr Jawaid Ishaq



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Your Views on the Future Shape of Policing in an Age of Austerity

Humberside Police Authority has a statutory duty under Section 96 of the Police Act 1996 to make “arrangements ... for obtaining the views of people in that area about matters concerning the policing of the area.”

As a consequence of the deteriorating financial environment the Police Service in England and Wales is expecting to have to make arrangements to meet some large budgets cuts imposed on it by

central Government. As a Police Authority we need to make sure that local people are involved in the process of identifying where these cuts are made and how services need to be shaped to ensure maximum efficiency and effectiveness for local people.

Between now and the end of the year we will embark upon a programme of engagement and consultation events, to elicit as many views as we can from as wide a cross section of the public as possible, in the area served by Humberside Police and Humberside Police Authority.

The next edition of this newsletter will include a survey to gain your views of the budget cuts and what you think this should mean for the type of service you want to see being delivered. We also intend to use our Citizen's Panel to carry out a mass survey and run some smaller focus groups; we will run business focus groups with the help from the local Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses; we will run focus groups with locally elected members from the four unitary authorities; we will continue to use our diverse and minority community group links to elicit views; we will use our website to capture the views of younger people and wider groups through a 'have your say' and 'big conversation' function; we will use new media and a range of other opportunities as we try to ensure that the policing that is delivered is the style that local communities want and need, while at the same time meets the very tight budget restrictions placed upon us.

We will endeavour to keep you informed every step of the way.

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Police Authority carries out Disability Access Visits with Local Residents

As part of ongoing consultation with seldom heard communities, the Police Authority has been consulting disabilities groups across the Force area to gather opinion on local policing. Findings have shown that residents with disabilities' main concerns are access to police stations.



The Police Authority decided to put this to the test and invited a number of residents in North East Lincolnshire with a range of disabilities to attend station visits and carry out an 'accessibility type audit' of the facilities. 17 members of the public with a range of disabilities took part in the visits supported by newly appointed independent member Helena Spencer, Vice Chair Steven Beasant and Ros Taylor MBE, Equality and Diversity lead for the Authority.

The group found that although a lot of improvements had been made during past refurbishments, there were still a lot of accessibility barriers disabled residents would have to overcome when trying to report a crime. Findings included:

- Lack of disabled parking and drop kerbs in close proximity of the

stations

- Inadequate signage and lighting outside of stations
- Emergency cord problems in accessible toilets
- No hearing loops in Grimsby Police Station
- Counter heights were unsuitable for residents in wheelchairs

Although staff were polite and helpful during the visits, the group felt their knowledge of equality, diversity and access issues was limited. For example enquiry desk staff did not know how to check the hearing loop system or how to access a British Sign Language interpreter if one was required.

Helena Spencer said:

'It was a real eye opener carrying out the visits with residents with disabilities to see what barriers they face. We're aware changes can't happen over night but there are some things such as signage that can be enhanced with minimal cost and quickly to improve accessibility.'

The Police Authority is working with the Force to develop a programme of visits to all police stations that are open to the public to assess the suitability of access for people with disabilities. The Authority was like to give a special thank you to North East Lincolnshire Disability Access Group and Foresight for their attendance and expertise on the visits.

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Upcoming Consultation

The Police Authority has a range of consultation with seldom heard groups scheduled for the next few months, this includes:

- Meetings with the Chinese community in Scunthorpe
- Events with children and young people in Hull and Grimsby
- Consultation with disabled residents in Hull and East Riding
- Meetings with black and minority ethnic communities in Grimsby

If you would like to be involved in any of these engagement opportunities please contact Claire Harrison, Engagement and Equalities Officer, on 01482 317007 or email claire.harrison@humberside.pnn.police.uk

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