

Community Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Neighbourhood Policing Team annual update, Ch. Insp. Mark Thorley -
Neighbourhood Policing Team Commander.
Compiled 23rd February 2022

This 12 months compared to the previous, January 2021 - 2022.

Last year, I reported a 10% reduction in recorded crime.

This year I report an 8% increase.

Whilst not welcomed such an increase is not surprising given that I have reported reductions for the past three years and as the Covid pandemic retreats and life starts to get back to normal so do crime statistics.

That being said, within these statistics there are still significant reductions in some crimes and ASB.

Incident demand (calls for service).

Moorlands - down 4 %

581 fewer calls for service

All crime

Moorlands – up 8 %

337 more crimes

Burglary residential, Last year I reported a reduction of 22%, this year sees further reductions of 15%, (18 less offences).

Criminal damage, Last year a 14% reduction, this year a further reduction of 6% (35 less offences).

Theft from a Motor Vehicle, Last year a 34% reduction, this year a further reduction of 27% (27 less crimes).

Theft of motor vehicles, Last year a 24% reduction, this year a reduction of 9% (6 less crimes).

Sexual offences, shows an increase of 20% (36 more crimes) with increases in Rape and Other serious sexual offences.

I understand the concern this may cause, any increase in an area such as this is concerning, but to offer reassurance.

I can confirm that the work we do to investigate and monitor such increases in crime show that repeat victims, offenders, or locations are not an issue with regard to sexual offences.

It is also the case that in recent years we have come a long way in reassuring victims of sexual abuse that they will be supported when reporting a sex crime, whether that be a recent crime or an incident in their past, I raise this as a significant number of these reports have been historical reports.

Any report of a sexual offence will be investigated by skilled investigators seeking to support the victim and bring offenders to justice.

Less serious violent crime with Injury, Shows an increase of 32% (131 more crimes). The greatest percentage increase (129%) being assaulting an emergency worker (9 more), and Section 47 assault, up 35% (126 more).

Leek town and Cheadle town are the most common locations for these incidents, accounting for 91 of the increased incidents.

However it should be remembered that the night time economies in these towns have become active after long periods of being closed or having reduced numbers due to the Pandemic, so they will show increases as they become busy again.

The Moorlands town centres continue to be some of the safest to visit in the County.

That being said a plan is in place with our licensing colleagues to review and take action against any licensed premises found to be contributing to, or having become a focal point for, any increase in violence.

Outcomes

In the past year positive outcomes from investigations sit at 17%, an increase of 5% (up to 800 from 433). This includes 291 charges or postal requisitions, 152 community resolutions and 263 cases where the offender has been subject to diversionary, educational or intervention activity, or when it was not in the public interest to take further action.

ASB

Moorlands – Last year I reported a 10% reduction, this year I report a further -15% reduction (259 fewer incidents)

This year saw us move away from the “stay at home” Covid orders of 2020/1 with greater freedoms being given back, so it is reassuring to see that as the community have ventured back outside ASB issues such as “rowdy and inconsiderate” have remained low (-8% 78 less). Especially given the large increase in tourism into the area, which I will touch on later.

Road traffic collisions

There continues to be reductions in those killed or seriously injured on the roads of the Staffordshire Moorlands.

Currently there is a 79% reduction in collisions classed as Killed or seriously injured.

One less person died on the Moorlands roads during the last year, one less than the year before, but still one too many.

There have been fourteen less collisions which have resulted in serious injury (-82%).

The NPT hold a monthly road policing operation with the support of partners such as the force road crime team, and VOSA.

During this operation we use the information received from the community and apply the knowledge we have to best target identified areas for antisocial use of vehicles, and the fatal four causes for road deaths, mobile phones, drink and drugs, speed and seatbelts.

Tourism

It became clear this year that the “Staycation” trend led to the Moorlands continuing to be a very popular destination for tourism, with visitors travelling from across the Midlands and further afield to visit.

Throughout the spring, summer and autumn of 2021 many days of the week were busier than a hot sunny bank holiday would have been previously.

In response to calls for service from concerned residents, and visitors, the policing team formed a working group of interested partners such as the Council, the National Trust, Peak Park Rangers and FARS.

Collectively we worked to identify the issues being experienced, aligning the problems with the most appropriate partner best placed to deal with such issues as traffic congestion, littering and parking problems.

This collaborative approach has been successful in adapting to what may well be a welcome boost to the local economy, whilst maintaining harmony in the many villages, and seeking to preserve the beauty and feel of the area for future generations to come.

Of note despite concerns that such tourism could lead to an increase in wild fires such as those we had in 2018 this has proven not to be the case to date.

Annual overview.

Another challenging year for your neighbourhood Policing team, with the Covid pandemic continuing to present problems, from staff shortages due to outbreaks within our own or force resources, mass tourism, the resurgence of the night time economies, to increases in public protest across the force meaning staff often being called upon to work harder and longer to fill the gaps left.

We have introduced, and piloted for the force, Facebook live community policing engagement.

Moorlands officers have approached local Facebook groups such as LeekTV and Cheadle Forum to ask if they could hold engagement sessions on their group pages.

Officers then being able to introduce themselves, update communities as to what we are doing, and seek the concerns and views of the communities they police to better guide our priorities, and subsequently the action we take.

This has been a great success with such events being seen by thousands of viewers each time, receiving many compliments.

This will continue to supplement the existing engagement we undertake.

I am lucky in that I continue to be supported by a great team who work tirelessly to provide the Moorlands community with the best service they can.

This includes our Special Constables whose active and continued support sees many of them giving up numerous days and weekend nights to support their communities during peak periods.

We say goodbye to Mr Morgan and welcome our new Chief Constable, Mr Noble, who brings plans to return to a local policing model which will see resources move back to the Moorlands from the city hub they moved to in 2018.

I see this as a positive for the Moorlands, bringing Policing back to a local level under the control of the local commander.

Details of the new operating model are included in the link below.

Resources.

I have 21 Neighbourhood Police Constables, I currently carry one vacancy.

I have a team of 18 PCSO's.

I have three NPT Sgts.

I have one NPT Inspector Deputy

I have 2 Investigating Officers (IO's) though one post is vacant.

I have a Vulnerability coordinator who works within the harm reduction hub at Leek.

Until June as part of the current directorate policing model our response Policing continues to be supplied from a central hub at Hanley who move to deployment locations across the Moorlands at the start of their tour of duty.

The NPT is led by myself.

Ch. Insp Mark Thorley.