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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Hello everybody,

I hope that many of you were among those who attended my second Annual Parish Councils' Conference on Wednesday 20 September at the Central Bedfordshire Council HQ in Chicksands.

First may I say a huge thank you to the Leader of the Council, James Jamieson, for allowing us to have use of the venue for the second year running to allow as many representatives of parishes and town councillors from across the entire county to attend as possible.

We asked the parishes for their top three crime and policing challenges; the result was overwhelming – in this order the concerns that were voiced were speeding, nuisance motorbikes and the visibility of policing.

As you will see from the attached article, I made sure that specialists from within Bedfordshire Police were on hand to detail all the activity that is planned, or underway, to deal with these pressing issues.

I look forward to sharing the results with you over the coming months.

Yours,

Kathryn

**Kathryn Holloway**  
**Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire**

### PCC spells out cost of police pay award in Bedfordshire

Bedfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner Kathryn Holloway has welcomed the pay award for police officers announced by Government last week but spelled out the implications for her cash-strapped force.

The Government announced a pay award for police, as expected, of 1% but added a one-off payment of a further 1% from September 1 2017 which it intends to be funded from police cash reserves. The Commissioner pointed to the very limited amount of reserves held by her force and the funding crisis which future rises could present.



“Police officers everywhere put their safety on the line every day they work on the frontline and deserve recognition of this and a pay increase. In

Bedfordshire, this is particularly true since we have just over 1,000 officers to police a population of 644,000 with some of the greatest challenges anywhere in British policing including the third highest terror risk in the country, the cross-over of Serious Organised Crime with London, as it's so near to us, and an increasing gangs issues involving young people across the county as a whole. While a pay cap on public sector salaries could not possibly last forever, we need to be in no doubt of what this means for Bedfordshire Police as people can see for themselves that we are having to find double the amount that had been budgeted for,” said the Commissioner.

“The Policing Minister referred to reserves held by police forces generally amounting to some £1.5 billion and suggested that policing could easily afford the rise, as a result. It's right that some forces hold comfortable levels of reserves but this isn't even remotely the case in Bedfordshire which has just £3m in general reserves, the amount usually used as a benchmark in the public sector for the very minimum which should be kept for an emergency – at just 3% of income.

“In the past, the pay of police staff has tended to rise in line with police pay awards so, if I have to rely on the general reserves and spend nothing at all on developing the force or its buildings, if we assume pay awards for both sets of employees as we move forward, at 2% a year we would have to find £900,000 extra and £1.8 million at 3%.

“You don't have to be a mathematician to spot that this would wipe out Bedfordshire's reserves in three years at 2% and less than 18 months at 3% and we already knew we were heading for a financial black hole in 2019-20 without any pay increase above the 1%,” warned Commissioner Holloway. Read more [here](#).

## Greyfriars marked for quality homes says PCC

Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner Kathryn Holloway has announced that Greyfriars Police Station in Bedford town centre is to become a residential development after a “very successful” bidding process.

A total of 16 bids were received by the PCC for the Greyfriars Police Station building with the preferred bidder, and all those in serious contention, seeking to create a residential development on the site. The Commissioner stressed that she wants to ensure that the development will fit in with the council’s plan for the town centre and help to further reinvigorate Bedford.



“It’s been a very successful bidding process and the high value placed upon the site now, and interest shown in it, reflect the way Bedford Borough Council has been effectively transforming the centre of Bedford recently, particularly the brand new Riverside development of flats, a cinema and restaurants in a location only minutes away from the Greyfriars site on foot. I’m not going to jeopardise that in any way and want the residential development of Greyfriars to be of high quality to reflect this approach to transforming the centre of Bedford as we all want the town to be an attractive and safe place to live, work and visit,” said Commissioner Holloway.

“I made sure that the council was part of the process to consider the outcome of sealed bids and we intend to work very closely together to make sure the successful bidder receives all the information necessary to proceed with a planning application for a quality residential development which must reflect the local plan,” said the Commissioner.

The sealed bids process closed on September 1 and was overseen by agents Lambert Smith Hampton. A report from the agents was then considered by a panel comprised of the Commissioner, the CEO of Bedford Borough Council Phil Simpkins, the independent chair of the Police and Crime Panel Paul Cain and the Chief Finance Officer for Bedfordshire Police and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Phil Wells. Read more [here](#).

## PCC chairs Annual Parish Council Conference to discuss policing in Bedfordshire

Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, welcomed the county’s Parish and Town Councillors last week (20 September) to have an “honest and open” discussion on policing in Bedfordshire at her second Annual Parish Conference.

Around 40 councillors attended the meeting co-chaired by the Chief Constable, Jon

Boutcher, along with other senior members of the Force to discuss issues such as rural crime, community policing and funding.



“I promised the parishes that I would meet with them every year by holding a Parish Councils’ Conference and I’m delighted at the response to this second event. We asked every council for their top three priorities and they came back loud and clear - speeding, nuisance motorbikes and a need for visible policing.

That’s exactly what the Force is trying to provide as far as possible, despite the limits on our officer numbers,” said Commissioner Holloway.

“To address these top concerns, we assembled a team for the conference to tell parish councillors about the new community teams in the North, South and centre of the county and how they’ll reach out to them and problem solve.

“The councillors heard that the Chief Constable and I want every community officer to know every vulnerable person on their patch, every organised crime group and, at the other extreme, their councillors. They need to visit every school, old people’s home, place of care for children and bail hostel on their territory. That sounds like good old-fashioned policing to me!” said the PCC.

Senior officers delivered updates on the latest successes in tackling crime. Chief Inspector Mark Farrant, who heads up the Rural Crime Team, explained that working alongside local authorities to arrange planned days of action had resulted in 62 vehicles being seized, 11 arrests and 56 speeding offences in the first 6 months of the unit.

There were assurances from Sergeant Samantha Hunt, who leads Operation Meteor, the Force’s response to the biking issue, that police are doing everything they can to catch those causing a nuisance by biking in Bedfordshire illegally. In the last month, a further six motorbikes have been seized. She described how key local petrol stations are no longer selling fuel to riders suspected to be on stolen bikes, or using bikes for anti-social behaviour, after arrangements with police. Read more [here](#).



## PCC backs 999 Appreciation Day to say thank you to Bedfordshire Police

Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner, Kathryn Holloway, has called on the public to join her in showing their appreciation of officers and staff working in the emergency services in a day set aside to do just that.



This Saturday (9 September) marks the first ever national 999 Appreciation Day which will provide the chance for the public and those helped by emergency services to share their stories and appreciation. The idea for the day came about following the terror attacks in Manchester and London, as well as the Grenfell fire tragedy.

“The murder of PC Keith Palmer in the Westminster attack, the incredible bravery shown by officers who ran towards the terrorists in Borough Market while others ran away and the most recent event at Buckingham Palace, where police faced a man with a machete, have really driven home to the public the huge debt owed to police officers. The Appreciation Day for the 999 services is a fantastic opportunity to focus attention on this and for the public to have their say,” said Commissioner Holloway.

“After PC Palmer’s murder, officers in the Metropolitan Police reported members of the public coming up to hug them. It is appalling that it takes an absolute tragedy to make us realise the extent to which the police and their blue light colleagues put their lives on the line to protect us all and I feel that an annual Appreciation Day is the very least that they deserve.

“In Bedfordshire, the public are very much aware of the difficulties facing a force where officers deal with more crimes per head than almost anywhere else in policing. They want to give the very best service to the public that they can even though this force faces one of the largest challenges in policing, with one of the thinnest blue lines on one of the lowest budgets,” added the PCC. Read more [here](#).

## Working together with Bedfordshire Police

The Bedfordshire Police Family Fun Day, which was a joint event with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Force, has raised at least £1,500 for the charity Embrace, with more still to come.



The free family event took place on Saturday (2 September) and over two thousand came to enjoy the sunshine, see the police dogs, police helicopter and various stalls and rides run by the local people of Bedfordshire.

“I am incredibly proud of my team and all the hard work they put in to helping make sure that everyone who attended the Bedfordshire Police Fun Day, not only had a fantastic time, but raised this truly impressive amount for Embrace,” said Commissioner Holloway.

Embrace is a charity which supports children who have been the victim of, or affected by, crime. All proceeds are being donated in the name of former Chief Constable Alf Hitchcock who sadly died earlier this year

and was the Vice President of the charity.

“I was so impressed with how the OPCC team and the Force worked together to create such a fun packed family day that had a focus on engaging with the public and sharing what the police do so well - balanced with raising money for such an amazing charity. We are really pleased that we will be presenting Embrace with a really big cheque in the name of Alf Hitchcock who gave more than 20 years’ service to this charity,” said Interim Chief of staff Clare Kelly. Read more [here](#).

## OPCC social media highlights

## Dates for the diary

### Twitter



View more highlights on our [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) pages.

**Hate Crime Awareness Week** - 14<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> October

### Useful information

#### Police and Crime Plan

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