

DAPTC Executive of 22nd July 2022 - Agenda Item: 06b Rural Crime Reduction Board – 19th July 2022

On Tuesday this week, Neil and I attended a meeting of the Rural Crime Reduction Board, which was originally scheduled face-to-face at Police Headquarters (Winfrith) but was amended to a virtual meeting (on Teams) in light of the record temperatures and the government recommendations to avoid travelling.

As with the inaugural meeting, the board was chaired by the PCC, David Sidwick. The core membership comprises:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)/Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)• Dorset Police – Chief Inspector representative• Dorset CSP Chair• Dorset Council – Lead Officer for Community Safety• Dorset Council – Waste Enforcement Lead• Dorset CSP's Rural Crime Partnership Coordination Group• Environment Agency | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Natural England• Forestry England• Dorset Association of Town and Parish Councils (DAPTC) - Chief Exec and Chair or Vice-Chair• Farm Management Representative• CLA• Kingston Maurward College• Cornish Mutual• NFU Mutual |
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Other agencies which will send representatives to some meetings, and with whom we are in touch, include English Heritage, the National Trust, Dorset Wildlife Trust and Birds of Poole Harbour.

An early item on the agenda was to agree a change to the Terms of Reference for the Board to include quarterly meetings – as agreed last time. I also proposed the amendment to the correct arrangement of our name and initials – both of which were agreed.

Progress on the Action Plan was reported on by Chief Inspector Andy Edwards, who heads up the Rural Crime Team. The team membership now stands at 13, with a further 4 targeted from the Special Constabulary – interviews are taking place. The “engagement van” has been deployed at several events since the launch event that Neil and I attended at Kingston Maurward on 20th June. They have enhanced their “footprint” in Purbeck with a further dedicated rural crime vehicle and two members of the team based there. In answer to a question that I posed, CI Edwards explained that the team based centrally in Blandford was easily able to deploy across East, North and West Dorset but that deployment into Purbeck was aided by this additional provision. There have been successes on Wildlife Crime – including Hare Coursing, and Heritage Crime – including a recent “Night Hawking” incident at Knowlton Church.

For the 40th anniversary of “Neighbourhood Watch”, DAPTC may be asked to assist with publicity in recruiting new members and groups and in a new “Parish Watch” scheme for rural communities.

This quarter’s “Headline Feature” was on Fly-Tipping: Two vehicles involved in fly-tipping had been seized (and may be crushed). There was discussion on how best to capitalise on the publicity, and also on how to best encourage public involvement. Initiatives from other policing areas were discussed in terms of “best practice” and lobbying for a change in National legislation was considered.

The next meeting is proposed to be on 18th October, when the “Headline Feature” will be “Country Watch - Comms & Engagement / Prevention”

Cllr. KD Johnson
20th July 2022.