



WILTSHIRE POLICE

Open letter from Chief Constable Catherine Roper to Police and Crime Commissioner Philip Wilkinson. March 17 2023.

Dear Police & Crime Commissioner, Philip Wilkinson,

The last few weeks have been busy from a Wiltshire Police perspective.

As well as the usual response to our calls for service, we have managed the first ever protest outside of our Headquarters in Devizes. This was a peaceful demonstration, and I was impressed with the community engagement focus of the policing response. We have also had a significant further arrest and charge of a second suspect for Operation Glendale, the tragic murder in Swindon in December 2022. This was as a result of an appeal through CrimeStoppers, and I am grateful to our communities for their assistance.

We have also charged three individuals in relation to a series of offences where a criminal group targeted vulnerable members of our community in the street and distracted them whilst they stole jewellery and other items. I know you and I share an absolute commitment to protect those who are more at risk in our community, and this deliberate targeting was despicable. Others were arrested and we continue to investigate the offences, however I am proud of the relentless focus of my team to identify and arrest these criminals.

From a performance perspective, I have now met with His Majesty's Inspector (HMI) Wendy Williams and her team to discuss the Force response to the recent HMICFRS PEEL report, with my commitment that we will become more focused in our delivery. We are currently preparing for the next Police Performance Oversight Group, and I will shortly provide a further update to you - and more publicly to our communities and stakeholders - in terms of our progress and next steps.

Linked to this, I am pleased to share with you the new Wiltshire Police Plan on a Page. My Chief Officer Group and I have reflected the need to deliver your Police and Crime Plan against strong foundations and commitments. In addition to your oversight, I believe that this plan allows my officers and staff and, more importantly, our communities and stakeholders to hold us to account for our delivery. Shortly, we will also be publishing the more detailed metrics to support the three performance priorities for the Force. Again, through this we will be transparent in our activities.

You and I will have noted the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) report, which within the data considers police perpetrated violence. This is a difficult read, but essential. I will not tolerate any member of Wiltshire Police who behaves in a manner which is anything other than courteous and professional, be that on or off-duty. This will be reinforced by the prominence of our response to VAWG-related crimes and concerns across the county within the new performance framework. I have also dispensed with the services of two police officers over recent weeks, as their behaviours and values fell far below that which I consider to be acceptable.

May I finally reflect that it has been an extremely important few weeks in terms of attending a number of meetings and engagements alongside you, which has enabled me to meet more of our communities and stakeholders. The Calne Area Board gave me an opportunity to meet with the local community and listen to their concerns which was invaluable, and I intend to attend future Area Boards around the county in due course. Attending the High Sheriff Rule of Law Service at Salisbury Cathedral on 12 March was not only a further excellent opportunity to meet more of our communities but was also a moment of pure pride, and further reinforced how honoured and privileged I feel to be the Chief Constable of Wiltshire Police.

Kindest regards,

Catherine Roper
Chief Constable

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