



# Annual General Meeting held on 5 October 2024

## Minutes

### 1. Apologies for Absence

The Chairman welcomed and thanked those present for attending.

Apologies were received from Alan Paul, Phil Ingamills, Michael Salter, Kim Kynaston, Sandra Green, Martin Green, Daniel Davis, Wendy Mendham, Keith Horgan and Roland Randall.

### 2. Approval of 2023 AGM Minutes

The draft 2023 Annual General Meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

### 3. Darryl Preston, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Police and crime commissioner

Thank you to all the NW volunteers. Darryl has been privileged to have been the PCC for the past four years. He meets some fantastic people across the county, including fantastic volunteers who are not being paid but have a shared passion to keep our communities safe. It is important to have a joined-up approach and there are some great examples of this. Darryl gave his background in policing which is remarkably rare for a PCC. We are largely a safe county compared to others. Darryl has a passion for child protection & safeguarding. He outlined the statutory duties of PCC which include holding the budget for policing, and commissioning victim & witness hubs. He has been successful in getting funding for more serious crimes. He hires and fires the chief constable. He outlined that the demand on policing is significantly up, but traditional crime has gone down. He is currently developing the new police and crime plan for Cambridge and Peterborough.

Neighbourhood crime is significantly down with burglaries down 30%. There has been a change in how criminals commit crime with less high risk and low reward crimes. ASB is down due to youth worker intervention. Although it has become more acceptable to carry knives, reported knife crime is down 25%. Hospital admissions for knife crime is also down 54%. Prevention will be the main theme of his new police and crime plan. The true success of policing is the absence of crime, and he is keen to focus on early intervention.

Neighbourhood Watch is the largest crime prevention charity in England and Wales. Crime is changing and online fraud is not counted in figures. Sadly, this is not just a police matter as a lot of perpetrators live in hostile countries where they can't be prosecuted. Surveys highlight ASB, drug dealing, fly tipping, speeding/road safety are the things people care about the most. He visited a school recently and youngsters say they are worried about knives, drugs and gangs. Young girls particularly also want their own safe space.

### 4. Chairman's Report - *Happier and kinder together*

Robin was pleased to report that Neighbourhood Watch now has 1,185,615 supporters with an extra 1300 just in Cambridgeshire. Robin detailed his experience of keeping an eye on a local resident who had lost her husband and dogs in quick succession. Sadly, she died three weeks later but he took comfort that she wasn't on her own. Robin is also involved in the local youth club where youngsters are often referred by the school as a problem but may not have been appreciated for their talents. They are generally only a problem for a short while as they may feel they have lost the respect of others. Robin has set up a green dog scheme to deal with the dreaded dog poo issues. Robin has a rule that he talks to everyone he meets whilst out on a dog walk. Alan Paul started up ATM Watch in Peterborough and this has been rolled out successfully across the county.

---

Robin gave everyone a mandate to be kinder, look after each other and talk or smile at people - it costs nothing! Be a realistic optimist and see life as it is, but focus on what is good. It's about all of us making the world a better place.

Sir Robert Peel - "The Police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence."

*Robin Sutton, Chairman*

## **5. Sandra Bauer, Head of Policy, Partnerships and Projects, NW HQ**

Sandra thanked our volunteers for the difference they make – it is amazing!

Sandra outlined that Robin is one of founding members of Cyberhood Watch. We now have 200 ambassadors, and they go out to groups and individuals to signpost and give advice on Cybercrime. We are always recruiting so get in touch if you interested. Cybercrime is up 40% and scams are going to get even more sophisticated with the development of AI. Robin does all the training of Cyberhood Watch ambassadors and the Home office see us as an example of good approach. Robin is starting a pilot project with Neighbourhood Watch. Cambs are doing great work!

The Community grant programme opens shortly. Please do bid as there are several hundred pounds up for grabs.

A project to communicate with older and vulnerable residents about the digital rollout is being funded by BT to ensure no vulnerable person is left without access.

Sandra presented Robin with a trophy and certificate for all his work.

## **6. Treasurer's Report**

John apologised for the late circulation of his report as his accountant was in Croatia! Our year end is 30<sup>th</sup> June, and our situation is slightly more complicated by the fantastic grant money we receive for Safer Streets 4 and 5, funded generously by the PCC. We retain a reasonably healthy bank balance of c. £3.5k. We make a little money on signs and a big thank you to Kevin who looks after all the signs. We are now asking you to pay for postage or arrange collection please. We made a slight loss of £108 which is not concerning.

Thank you to Stuart Spink FCA for his time in examining the accounts and producing these documents. The accounts were unanimously approved.

*John Fuller, Treasurer*

## **7. Elections of Members to the Executive Group**

The Chairman had circulated the current members in advance of the meeting that were prepared to stand for re-election. All members are staying on except one. One member was co-opted in advance of the AGM.

Alan Paul – Peterborough	Patrick Kadewere – Huntingdon
Kevin Evans - East Cambs	Carol Leonard – Cambridge City
Robin Sutton – Fenland	Kirsty Carter – South Cambs (Cambourne)
Frederick Roy Gerstner – Fenland	John Fuller – South Cambs (Histon)

---

Alan Wilcher – Fenland	Geoff Varley – South Cambs (Sawston/Linton)
Daniel Davis – Huntingdon/St Neots	Amanda Large (Police representative)

If you would like to join, please get in touch with Kirsty Carter. We can then co-opt you onto the committee. The Chair, Secretary and Treasurer will be elected at the first meeting after the AGM.

Thank you to the Executive for all their hard work.

#### **8. Police Cadet, Aaron Forsey**

Feedback last year was wonderful so he's back again!

Aaron is 17 and has been a cadet for 3 years. He is a cadet with the Huntingdon unit, based here at Police HQ. Aaron outlined the aims of cadets which is not primarily to recruit police officers. It is designed to inspire young people to be a good citizen and to participate positively in their communities. It is a youth organisation run by the Police, like army and navy cadets. They have a wide range of activities including supporting officers at local events, weapon sweeps, bike/cat c marking at Kwik fit/railway stations, tool marking, speed checks, trading standards test purchases and volunteering in their local community e.g. community fridge. They raised £800 last year for the road safety trust by spending a night in police custody. High Sheriff Cadets are largely ceremonial, and Aaron was one last year. Being a cadet develops youngsters personally and professionally with teamwork, leadership and development. It is excellent for your CV and employers. There is no average parade night, and it is a very varied two-hour session. Aaron is currently running a fundraising project for cadet coins and patches which every cadet or leader can buy. Money raised will go towards a police related charity e.g. Magpas.

#### **9. Rogue trading - PS Amanda Rossiter & PC Jody Skells**

Organised crime, money laundering and structured crime neighbourhood support team. Several criminals were arrested for catalytic converter theft in East Cambs and this led to a drop of 97% following their arrests. Rogue traders are also involved in other types of crime. A family run group were cold calling people for gardening work, often young men going out and giving out sob stories to try and get work. Sometimes they do a trial run and then re-target the same people and pass on details to others. Victims are often pressured into making quick decisions. Some perpetrators wear Check a Trade top to make them look legitimate, or they over inflate the costs of materials. Thankfully these rogue traders have now left the County and gone into Herts. Amanda Large highlighted rogue traders advertising in village magazines. This doesn't mean that they are legitimate!

Fraud or bogus traders/door-to-door sellers involve money up front in advance. Pressure selling, unfair contracts, overpriced or substandard home maintenance or improvements. Be wary of opening your door to strangers or letting them into your home. Ask to see ID and make a note of the company name and phone number. If you have let someone in, be wary and ask them to leave if needed. There are specific laws about door-to-door sales. Always pay for any goods or services by credit or debit card. They will often tell you something to make you act quickly and carry out a threat. If in doubt, take their details and say you will get back to them.

Rogue trading should be reported to the police. People often feel embarrassed to report an incident, but the information given helps police build a picture of offending. Get registration numbers and any other details if possible. If pressure selling tactics are in progress, call 999. Video doorbells are a great active deterrent. Most legitimate companies will have a web presence. Personal recommendation is always best as reviews can be faked.

---

Assume nothing, believe no-one, check everything and discuss with family or a friend.

**10. Sergeant Mark Rabel, Positive Active Sergeant - AI in Fraud and Crime**

Mark is privileged to speak for the third year running. Neighbourhood Watch are our eyes and ears of the community. Barclays Bank are also here today as they are doing a lot of work on preventing scams. Colleagues are also here recruiting for special constables.

AI is quite a dry topic. There was a BBC news article this morning where AI was used to replicate a school principal's voice to spread racism and antisemitism. AI is machine learning that simulates intelligence and is used extensively by criminals. Fraud makes up 40% of crime in the UK, generally from countries that don't cooperate with the UK. Deep fake technology, AI phishing and social engineering via AI are very easy to access and use. Mark asked people to guess which was a real image [www.whichfaceisreal.com](http://www.whichfaceisreal.com). Online shopping sites capture data based on what you are browsing and personalise adverts accordingly. Automated trading and scams, automated fraud detection evasion and credit card fraud are becoming more sophisticated with AI writing code for you.

A ransomware attack is the most dangerous to companies. Financial loss, psychological impact and loss of privacy are the biggest impact on individuals. Cambridgeshire still reports an average of £2-4 million lost a month to fraud, with the majority online. A lot of work of fraud and cybercrime is to demythologise them. Awareness and Education is key with two step verification recommended. Please avoid over sharing on social media.

Just Pause is our best friend!

**11. Rasa Pienaar - VP customer care leader for Peterborough and local fenland sites**

Barclays are working with young people to talk about managing their money and financial scams. Rasa is always happy to visit schools and talk to students.

24-hour protection is in place as they are always checking for suspicious activity on bank accounts. You may receive a text message or a call from the bank's automated system to confirm the transaction. Sometimes they may delay or decline transactions that they think are unusual or even block an account. Please keep contact details up to date so they can get in contact quickly.

The bank will never ask for passcodes, passwords, PiN or card details. They will only ask you to reply Yes or No.

She also reiterated the message to just pause and take time to think before replying to any message or call.

**The Chairman closed the meeting at 13.03 and thanked all who attended.**