

Cheshire Neighbourhood Watch Association

Minutes of Annual General Meeting on Thursday 17th November 2022 at 6.30pm on Zoom

1. **Present:** *CNWA Committee:* Julia Griffiths (Chair), Keith Stokes (Treasurer), Heather Thompson, Graham Bushill, John Powell, *Cheshire Constabulary:* C/Supt. Peter Crowcroft; Clare Harrison; *Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators:* John Szostek, Mike Docker.

Apologies: *CNWA Committee:* Mike Jones (temporary Secretary) *Cheshire Constabulary:* Insp. Jason Murray, *Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators:* Eleanor Liles

2. **Welcome and Introductions:** Julia confirmed there were no objections to this meeting being recorded. She continued to welcome everyone to the meeting and introduce the agenda for the evening. Julia explained that there would be a slight change to the agenda with the Local Policing Report by C/Supt Peter Crowcroft first.
3. **Local Policing Report by Chief Superintendent Peter Crowcroft:** Peter explained that he is head of Local Policing and is over the nine Local Policing Units (LPU) that make up Cheshire Constabulary. Each LPU is led by a Chief Inspector. There are four Superintendents (one for each Local Authority area) who manage three Chief Inspectors each. There are approximately 1,700 police officers and staff across the nine LPUs.

Over the last six months Cheshire Constabulary have managed to get to:

- 90% of grade 1 calls within 15 mins (emergency response)
- 80% of grade 2 calls under one hour (priority response)

Cheshire Police is one of the highest performing forces in terms of answering you in your hour of need.

As the World Cup and Christmas approaches the force will be placing a focus on Domestic Abuse (DA) – be that in the home or on the street when people are out and about. It is not just DA but Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) – everything from a wolf whistle to a serious sexual assault and a domestic incident. Cheshire Police Officers will take positive action. Cheshire is top in the country around the detecting that crime and making arrests around that crime. The message is ‘victims will be supported, and offenders will be arrested’.

Cheshire Constabulary has implemented a robust action plan to tackle domestic abuse during the busy World Cup period. This year’s World Cup is the first time that a global men’s tournament has taken place out of the traditional summer period. It is anticipated that licensed premises will be very busy during this time, especially due to the overlap with the start of the festive period. Keeping people safe in the night-time economy (NTE) and managing domestic abuse incidents are key focus areas.

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Additional officers will be patrolling busy NTE hotspots with safety vehicles on standby to help those who are feeling vulnerable.

A first in the country, the force will also be using safety vehicles. These are to be used to help any vulnerable individual. The new 'safe space' vehicles will be situated in areas where there are high levels of night life. They will be clearly visible with the Constabulary's Safer Streets branding and provide a safe space for vulnerable people. The vehicles contain on-board equipment such as defibrillators, first aid kits, phone chargers and bottles of water. They will be staffed by officers and community safety specialists from partner agencies who will be on hand to ensure that anyone in need of help is cared for until they are able to go home safely.

Cheshire is one of the safest police forces in the UK.

The 40th Anniversary event was held earlier this year, to celebrate Neighbourhood Watch (Home Watch as it was) starting in Mollington, Cheshire in 1982. Chief Superintendent Crowcroft stated that he would like to continue to celebrate Neighbourhood Watch working in partnership with Cheshire Police for many years to come. He believes that the network is invaluable to the force by coordinators and members helping every single day by giving the force information, reporting things, and taking the time to pass on crime prevention messages. Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators and members are one of the reasons why Cheshire has one of the lowest crime rates in the country. He wished to reiterate that he will continue to support the CNWA as we move forward.

4. **Chair's report and Finance report** Julia presented her final report as Chair as she stood down at the AGM after serving as Chair for three years. She will remain on the Committee for a few months to hand over to the new chair.

The Finance Report was presented by Keith Stokes, Treasurer. Financial year to 30th September. Presented four years due to the redraft of the accounts shown previously. Would usually only show two years for comparison. It is based on accounting for costs when they're incurred rather than paid for.

Copies of both reports are provided separately on the CNWA website (www.cheshirenw.org).

5. **Election of Committee members** as shown

Role	Nominated	By	Seconded
<i>Chair</i>	Heather Thompson	Julia Griffiths	Graham Bushill
<i>Treasurer</i>	Keith Stokes	Graham Bushill	Heather Thompson & Mike Docker

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6. Any Other Business:

Keith Stokes: The quorum on the Constitution for meeting attendance is three, but there is no quorum for AGM attendance.

Julia asked the two Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator (NWC) attendees if they

John Szostek stated that since they had a new PCSO they have had no communication and no meetings as previous. He has a number of new residents within the area of his scheme and would like to invite them to be part of his scheme but unfortunately has nothing to forward onto them.

It was explained that we have moved to v4 of the Alert system this year which may have caused an issue. The Inspector for Northwich, who is also the LPU lead for NW at Cheshire Police has recently sent out an email asking that the LPUs make sure all their PCSOs have access to the new version of Alert and are messaging out on a regular basis.

The Cheshire Police website (www.cheshire.police.gov) is also a useful tool to find out who your local PCSO and PC are if you do not know. You can simply type in your postcode and you can find out various information about your area.

Mike Docker explained that he lives in a rural area and is a parish councilor. The area where he lives has had a couple of PCSOs due to long-term sickness, and then the replacement moving roles within Cheshire Police. He would like to meet up with other local NWC but this hasn't happened yet. It was explained that there are a number of ways to do this:

- Using the Neighbourhood Watch Network's (NWN) website www.ourwatch.org and putting your postcode in 'Find our local scheme'. This will provide the details of the seven closest schemes.
- Asking your local PCSO to contact the other NWCs
- Registering on the NWN's Knowledge Hub to speak to other coordinators across England and Wales at <https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/knowledge-hub>

Heather took the opportunity to thank Julia for being the Chair of CNWA for the last three years and believes that has some big shoes to fill as Julia has done an amazing job and would like to acknowledge that. Graham and the team also support this.

7. Julia thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 19.45 hours.

Clare Harrison (Minutes)