



Cambridgeshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner

To: Business Coordination Board

From: Chief Executive

Date: 25 February 2015

VOLUNTEER POLICE CADET SCHEME

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Business Coordination Board (“the Board”) on the work undertaken to introduce a Volunteer Police Cadet Scheme in Cambridgeshire and to keep the Board sighted on national developments.
- 1.2 This report relates to work under the Police and Crime Commissioner’s (“the Commissioner”) Police and Crime Plan (“the Plan”) Objective 4 – Keeping People Safe.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Board is invited to note the contents of the paper.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Commissioner pledged to “*support work with young people to divert them away from a life of crime*” in the Plan.
- 3.2 Volunteer Police Cadets (VPC) is a uniformed voluntary youth organisation run in 36 police forces. It aims to promote a practical understanding of policing among all young people and encourage the spirit of adventure and good citizenship through volunteering in the community. It also provides opportunities for structured youth engagement and diversionary activities.
- 3.3 The Commissioner publically committed to setting up a pilot cadet scheme in Cambridgeshire and recruited a Volunteer Co-ordinator to design and implement it. Initial feedback from members of the public and elected representatives has been extremely positive. The scheme is being supported by Cambridgeshire Constabulary’s (“the Constabulary”) ACPO team.

4. Volunteer Police Cadet – Thomas Deacon Academy, Peterborough

- 4.1 The unit launched in November 2014 with 33 young people. PC French has taken on the day-to-day running of the unit and is supported by a team of 15 leaders (seven

police officers, six Thomas Deacon Academy (TDA) teachers, and a member of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) who all volunteer in their own time as well as an external volunteer).

- 4.2 The VPC are following the national VPC programme and have completed their recruit level. They are now working towards their Grade 1. The weekly meetings usually take the following format:
- Parade and drill
 - VPC session input (which has included communication, pocket notebooks, personal safety and lost property.)
 - Physical activity / team building
- 4.3 12 VPCs took over the Constabulary and OPCC as part of the Children's Commissioner's 'Take over' Day in November. As a result, the Cadet Unit are working through a number of actions with the Safer Schools Team and Insp Paul Rogerson with regards to stop search and youth engagement.
- 4.4 VPCs received their uniform and made their cadet oath at a ceremony on 21st January 2015 which was attended by friends, family and local dignitaries. Now, in addition to their weekly meetings, cadets are also expected to volunteer for at least three hours each month. This could be supporting local policing initiatives or getting involved in their local community.
- 4.5 The VPCs embarked on their first volunteering duty on 11th February 2015 where they joined regular officers to provide crime prevention advice to shoppers in Peterborough's City Centre. They have plans to support the Mayor's Civic Event as well as the Whittlesey Cycle Race.

5. Volunteer Police Cadets – Soham Village College, Soham

- 5.1 Soham Village College (SVC) is working in partnership with the OPCC to introduce the second scheme in East Cambridgeshire. This was following an approach made to the OPCC by PC Bonilla and Sgt Davis.
- 5.2 Recruitment has launched for VPC and we already have 17 leaders (two members of SVC, nine from the Constabulary, two OPCC staff and four external VPC) on board. The unit will be launched in April 2015.

6. National Volunteer Police Cadets

- 6.1 In October 2014, the All Party Parliamentary Group for Children published a report following its inquiry into Children and the Police. The report identified Volunteer Police Cadets as a good way to break down barriers and negative perceptions. The report sets out 24 recommendations with one recommendation specific to Volunteer Police Cadets:

"Recommendation 5: The National Police Lead for Police Cadets should encourage police forces to work with the National Volunteer Police Cadets to extend the reach of the VPC programme to a greater number of children and young people, including through the junior programme for 10-13 years old which is currently under development. In addition, police forces should align

with the National Volunteer Police Cadet framework when operating VPC programmes for 13-18 and 10-13 year olds to promote consistency in practice.”

- 6.2 The National Volunteer Police Cadets were successful in obtaining funding from the Uniformed Youth Social Action Fund. The fund was set up by the Cabinet Office from LIBOR Fines. The National VPC has awarded £5,000 to Cambridgeshire to help set up new units in Peterborough and Wisbech.
- 6.3 VPCs from Cambridgeshire will join Cadets from across the country in November 2015 when they take part in the Lord Mayor’s Show in London.

7 Next steps

- 7.1 The OPCC is now working with the Constabulary to introduce further schemes in Fenland and Cambridge City.
- 7.2 Wisbech has been identified for the scheme in Fenland and in addition to the main unit there will also be a satellite unit at Meadowgate School for those young people who cannot access the main stream unit. At Meadowgate, the VPC sessions will be run through PSHE sessions.
- 7.4 Initial contact has been made with the Constabulary, which will hopefully result in a scheme being in place shortly. Two Police Officers currently volunteering at the TDA unit want to transfer to Cambridge once it is up and running.
- 7.5 The OPCC is currently reviewing the governance of the scheme and is looking to establish a working group to ensure appropriate procedure is developed and learning shared across the Constabulary.
- 7.6 The Commissioner has allocated funding for the VPC scheme in 2015/16 and is looking to local businesses to financially support the scheme. In addition, the units will embark on fundraising projects to pay for additional activities.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 The Board is invited to note the contents of the paper.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Document(s)	“It’s all about trust”: Building good relationships between children and the police - http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/1164355/appgc_children_and_police_report_-_final.pdf
Contact Officer	Hannah Watson, Volunteer Co-ordinator, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner