Dear Sally,

At the end of each financial year I feel it is important to write and update you on how we have performed in the last twelve months and provide you with an insight into what our priorities are for the forthcoming year.  It is with some sadness that I will also have to inform you of my departure and the details of my successor.

Once again I am really pleased to inform you that during the last twelve months we have been able to reduce crime whilst increasing the number of offenders we have brought to justice.  During the last year we have reduced crime by over 6%. This is the 11th year in succession we have successfully reduced crime ensuring that last year there were over 6000 less victims of crime than there were 11 years ago.

Within the last financial year we were again the best performing Local Police Area in Thames Valley delivering a 32% reduction in Dwelling Burglary with 31% detection rate, the highest in Thames Valley, and a 58% detection rate in Violence against the Person with Injury again the highest in Thames Valley

One of the most effective ways to reduce crime is to catch those who are responsible and bring them to justice.  We have again this year increased the number of offenders we have brought to justice.  We have the second highest detection rate for crime within Thames Valley with offenders being brought to justice for one in three of the crimes committed in our district.

The simple facts are that you are less likely to be a victim of crime in South Oxfordshire or the Vale of White Horse than almost anywhere else in the country. Whilst if somebody does commit a crime within our district they are far more likely to be caught and brought to justice

Whilst we are extremely proud of these achievements we do not under estimate the challenges of maintaining these levels of performance and we are committed to striving to further reduce crime.

This year we will again prioritise the reduction of dwelling burglaries.  This is a crime that can have a devastating impact on victims who feel their homes have been invaded and have often lost irreplaceable items, sometimes with huge sentimental value.  Whilst we are proud to have reduced this crime by over 65% in the last ten years we are determined to reduce it still further.

We will be prioritising incidents of domestic violence this year. It has been acknowledged for many years that offences of domestic violence are under reported and hidden within the home.  It is a priority for us to give victims of domestic violence the confidence and reassurance to report these crimes and bring to an end the abuse that many victims have suffered over a protracted period of time.

Tackling rural crime will again be a priority for us this year. We are proud to have reduced crime in the rural community by over 35% in the last year whilst significantly increasing the number of offenders we have arrested. Many of those we have arrested had travelled considerable distances to our area thinking that they would be able to commit crime unchecked, they were wrong and have learnt the hard way that this area is not a soft touch. I am confident they will not be coming back.

We have this year invested a considerable amount of time in tackling an Organised Crime Group in our area who were using vulnerable people to commit crime on their behalf. We have worked with the National Crime Agency, our Major Crime Team and local partners to identify and arrest those responsible whilst ensuring the appropriate safeguarding of those victims who had been exploited. It was particularly pleasing this week to receive a visit from the Home Secretary who praised the success of the operation.

Whilst we are understandably proud of the continued reduction in crime and the increase in offenders being brought to justice, we recognise that we have not delivered this on our own and are extremely grateful for the continued support and assistance we receive from local communities.

We have worked hard over the last year to enhance our Neighbourhood Watch Schemes and community messaging across the district. These schemes enable us to let people know what is happening in their area and how they can help us keep them safe and protect their property. We will be continuing to develop these schemes next year so if you would like more information about schemes in your area please let us know and we will arrange for a member of our neighbourhood team to contact you.

It is with a heavy heart that I will shortly be changing roles and moving to take up the role of Chief Superintendent Neighbourhood Policing and Partnerships at our Force HQ. It will be extremely difficult for me to leave South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse as I have thoroughly enjoyed the last few years and believe that together we have achieved a great deal of success in reducing crime and improving the quality of life for those who live and work in our communities.

I will be replaced by A/Supt Jim O’Ryan who is currently the Deputy LPA Commander at Milton Keynes.  Jim will be supported by Chief Inspector Graham Wharton who will be remaining as the Deputy LPA Commander for South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse. This area has one of the most committed policing teams I have ever worked with and I am confident that with your support they will continue to further reduce crime and keep our communities safe.

Thank you for your support during my tenure as the LPA Commander, I have been extremely grateful for all the help I have received from both South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse District Councils, the County Council, the Town and Parish Councils, the Community Safety Partnership and all those volunteers who support us through the Special Constabulary, Neighbourhood Watch and the Neighbourhood Action Groups. Your support has made the difference in what we collectively have been able to achieve.

Best wishes

Andy

*A.Boyd*

Superintendent

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