Hundreds join PCC to help stamp out hate crime

More than 200 people joined Sir Clive, the Chief Constable and Sylvia Lancaster, the mother of Sophie Lancaster who was kicked to death for being a Goth, at an event in Leicester to help raise awareness of hate crime.

The event, which was funded by Sir Clive, included the screening of Black Roses, a film about the killing of Sophie.

Vicious attack

Sophie was 20-years-old when she and her boyfriend Rob Maltby were attacked in a Lancashire park in 2007.

As a result of her severe head injuries Sophie never regained consciousness and died 13 days later.

Following her death, Sylvia created a lasting legacy for her daughter by setting up The Sophie Lancaster Foundation.

After the screening, Sylvia took part in a question and answer panel to discuss the topic of hate crime, along with Sir Clive, Chief Constable Simon Cole and Dr Stevie-Jade Hardy from the University of Leicester’s Centre for Hate Studies.

Sylvia said: “I am so proud to have worked in partnership with Leicester’s PCC and the police as they work to prevent and support victims of hate crimes. In 2015 we should be celebrating, not fearing difference.”

Supporting victims of hate crime and hate related anti-social behaviour is a key priority for Sir Clive, as set out in his Police and Crime Plan.

He said: “I was honoured to support this event alongside The Sophie Lancaster Foundation and the Force.

“It is so important that stories like Sophie’s are told so that people understand the devastating impact crimes like this have on people’s lives.”

Sir Clive backs Force’s decision to challenge “not in the public interest” ruling

Sir Clive has backed the Force in challenging the controversial decision not to prosecute a man suspected of sexually abusing children in care in Leicester over three decades.

Last month the Director of Public Prosecutions announced that there was enough evidence to charge the man, now in his 80s, for offences committed between the 1960s and 1980s.

But she decided in the face of the suspect’s state of health that it would not be in the public interest to bring charges against him. After considering its legal options, the Force has now decided to take the legal step of issuing a letter to the DPP challenging her decision and seeking a review. The DPP has 14 days in which to respond.

Welcome

Sir Clive welcomed the decision taken by Chief Constable Simon Cole. He said: “When the DPP announced her decision last month I described it publicly as “perverse” and against all sense of natural justice. That remains my view.

“I have a statutory responsibility to speak up for victims, to give their views a platform. I wholeheartedly share their view that the DPP’s decision is wrong, and feel it was quite right to speak up on their behalf. The decision to seek a Judicial Review of the DPP’s decision is being made by the Chief Constable. He has taken the first step in this process and he has my full support.”
Cash injection to improve mental health services

This month Sir Clive and his office made a commitment to improving services for people suffering with mental health issues.

During Mental Health Awareness Week, the PCC, Leicester City Council and Leicestershire County Council announced that £60,000 will be invested to provide mental health first aid training to hundreds of frontline staff.

The £20,000 investment from each organisation will allow 12 professionals from different agencies across the city and county, including police officers, healthcare professionals, social workers, housing officers and those working in the voluntary sector, to receive training to help identify, understand and support people who may be developing or already suffering with a mental health condition.

The 12 instructors will then deliver the training to around 600 frontline colleagues across the different professions during the next three years. The training will increase awareness and help to tackle the stigma associated with mental health illnesses.

Sir Clive said: “This funding will provide vital training to hundreds of professionals delivering care to the people of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

“At least one in four people will be living with a mental health condition at some point in their life so I want to ensure they receive the best, most appropriate and timely service possible from all agencies with whom they may come into contact.”

The announcement came at the same time that PC Alex Crisp, who works in the OPCC as the Mental Health Partnership Development Manager, headed off to the USA and Canada to learn about emergency response to mental health.

During his three week trip, Alex is travelling to Memphis, LA, Vancouver and Portland to learn about the different projects and initiatives, before coming back to look at what improvements and developments can be made in Leicestershire.

Thanks to funding from the prestigious Winston Churchill Travelling Fellowship, he is spending time with the Memphis Crisis Intervention Team - a specialised unit that responds to complex incidents relating to mental health and the Los Angeles Police Department, taking part in their Mental Health Intervention Training. He is also visiting an initiative very similar to Leicestershire Police’s own mental health triage car, which sees an officer and a nurse working together in a police response car to provide on-site assessment and intervention for people with psychiatric problems.

Known as Car 87, the program is a partnership between the Vancouver Police Department and the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, and has been running since 1984.

Sir Clive attends a FATAL4 partnership clinic in Oakham

This month Sir Clive spent time with police officers, as well as staff from the Road Safety Partnership as they stopped motorists in Oakham as part of the FATAL4 clinics.

The clinics are designed to reinforce concerns about speeding, using mobile phones, not wearing seatbelts and drink driving. During the three hours, more than 20 motorists were caught committing FATAL4 offences, and two women were detained for drug-related crimes.
PCC investment helps Matthew turn his life around

A group of young people who have turned their lives around thanks to funding by Sir Clive have celebrated their achievements at an award ceremony in Loughborough.

Around 70 awards were handed to youngsters aged between ten and 18 who took part in the TwentyTwenty mentoring scheme, designed to encourage and support disadvantaged, disengaged and hard-to-reach young people.

Sir Clive invested £150,000 in the organisation's project last year in order to help reduce offending and re-offending, one of the key priorities as set out in his Police and Crime Plan.

One of the awards given was the Most Inspiring Student Award, and was presented by Sir Clive to 17-year-old Matthew Hirst (right).

Matthew was well known to the police for issues relating to anti-social behaviour when he was referred to TwentyTwenty. He had poor attendance at school and no interest in gaining an education.

Through the mentoring scheme, Matthew was paired with full-time mentor Christian Zamore, who acted as a role model providing advice and guidance.

Thanks to the project and his mentor, he left his past behind him, passed his GCSEs and is now studying Sports and Physical Education through a programme run by the Leicester Tigers. Matthew said: "I'm really happy to be receiving this award. My life has completely changed and I couldn't have done this without all the support and guidance I have received."

Matthew's mentor, Christian said: "Matthew has been through so much and made many poor decisions but I am happy to see that our support has given him the chance to change. He has completely turned his life around and I couldn't be more proud of him! It's been a pleasure to mentor him and I have enjoyed every moment."

Sir Clive said: "Being able to see the positive impact the funding has had on young people's lives is the part of my job in which I take the most pride and greatest pleasure."

Volunteers needed for custody check inspections

The OPCC is on the lookout for a team of volunteers to make unannounced welfare visits to people in custody.

From next month (June) new recruits are needed to become independent custody visitors.

The volunteers are given full access to people who have been detained in any of the Force’s custody suites, to carry out checks on their welfare and the general condition of the cells.

Sir Clive said: "Independent custody visiting is primarily designed to highlight any current, or potential, issues in the custody areas. If there is a problem or complaint, most issues are dealt with at the time. However, more serious issues are forwarded to the police to resolve and the outcome is reported back to me. I also believe the fact that custody suites are subjected to an independent assessment gives members of the public greater confidence in the custody system.

"I am tremendously grateful to those people who give up their time to carry out these visits."

Volunteers must be over 18, live in the force area and have been resident in the UK for at least three years. Full training is given and expenses paid. The deadline for applications is June 30.

To volunteer, or for more information, email alex.adley-sweeney@leics.pcc.pnn.gov.uk or call the OPCC’s office on 0116 229 8980.
Workshop to help support victims of domestic violence

Sir Clive has funded a special workshop to enable voluntary organisations to share information and ideas about the provision of sexual and domestic violence support services.

It was organised as part of Sir Clive’s commitment to support and engage the voluntary and community sector to reduce crime, particularly domestic violence, a priority outlined in his Police and Crime Plan.

He has made clear his intentions to improve support services for victims of sexual and domestic violence by providing practical and emotional help to aid the recovery process.

The workshop provided an opportunity for local organisations to come together to discuss best practice and included a presentation on work taking place elsewhere in the UK to stimulate ideas and debate.

Sir Clive said: “The feedback from the event has been extremely positive and has demonstrated the value of shared thinking and a partnership approach to enhance the help we deliver to vulnerable victims in the future.”

Video to showcase work of the PCC over previous year

A video is being made to highlight the achievements of the PCC’s office over the last twelve months. It’s one of several communication channels that will be used to publish the annual report.

A more traditional-looking written report will be published, as usual, on the PCC’s website.

But in an attempt to reach a wider audience and to raise greater awareness of the work of the PCC, a video is currently being produced by the Communications and Engagement Directorate.

The film will show the range of work undertaken by the Commissioner and his office, including engagement events with the public, commissioning activity and the work of the ground-breaking Youth Commission.

Chief Executive Paul Stock said: “The work undertaken by the PCC is significant and wide-ranging, but we recognise that not everyone is aware of this.

“Hopefully the video on our website will help increase awareness of the good work that is being done to support and safeguard communities in Leicester, Leicestershire and in Rutland.”.

Sir Clive rewards the achievements of young people

Sir Clive helped mark the end of a year-long ‘early intervention’ project he funded by presenting a number of young people with certificates of achievement.

Delivered by Catch 22, the programme called Community Action Against Crime (CAAC) teaches children who are at risk of offending and anti-social behaviour, how to care for a local woodland and respect their environment.

Thanks to the £37,000 investment from Sir Clive, Catch22 were able to run the project with children from across Leicester, including Eyres Monsell, Saffron Lane, Braunstone, Spinney Hills, New Parks and Hamilton.

At the celebration day this month around 100 of the young people involved showed films about the projects and the impact the programme has had.

Sir Clive said: “I am thrilled to see that the grant has made such a difference to this project in terms of engaging young people and stopping them from entering into the criminal justice system. I am really pleased that I’ve been able to offer it my support”.

Jo Metcalfe, Catch22’s Service Support Manager, said: “The project has inspired the schools and young people involved to connect and engage with their community. We hope to create a lasting legacy from the work we have done.”
Volunteers recruited for new ethics committee

Seven members of the public are volunteering their time to form a new Ethics, Integrity and Complaints Committee.

Set up by Sir Clive, the aim of the committee is to provide assurance that ethics and integrity are embedded within Leicestershire Police.

They will also ensure that complaints against the police are being handled efficiently and that the correct processes are being followed.

The new volunteers, who come from a variety of backgrounds and all either live or work within the Force area, are due to start their role this summer.

Undertaking an advisory role, the committee will provide a transparent and independent forum that monitors and encourages constructive challenges over the way complaints, integrity and ethical issues are handled by the Force and overseen by the PCC.

They will also assist and support the Force in maintaining clear ethical standards and the highest level of integrity and professional delivery.

Sir Clive said: “I have set up this committee because public support for the police is far from solely dependent upon how well the police control crime. The way in which they carry out their complex, and often demanding, duties is crucial to public confidence.

“I am very excited about this new initiative and look forward to meeting with the seven people who will be giving up their time for this very important role.”

Policy advisor honoured with QPM

An advisor to the PCC has been awarded with a Queen’s Police Medal (QPM) at Buckingham Palace.

Steph Morgan, who was a former temporary Deputy Chief Constable in Leicestershire Police, attended the investiture where she was presented with the medal by the Duke of Cambridge.

Steph retired from the Force in January 2014 and was appointed to be a policy advisor to Sir Clive shortly thereafter.

Following the ceremony she said: “I am very proud and honoured to have received the QPM.

“I have been blessed throughout my career with role models who showed me the way and encouraged me to be the best I could be.

“The trip to the Palace has been very exciting and has proved to be a wonderful experience which I’ve been able to share with my family.”

Bake sale helps fight poverty

Youth Commission member Detchama (Detch) Baptiste is well on her way to raising the £800 she needs for a three month volunteering programme in Bangladesh, thanks to the generosity of OPCC and Force staff.

Detch raised more than £170 selling cakes at Force headquarters, taking her total raised so far to nearly £500.

She is raising money to take part in a project run by charities Y Care International and the YMCA which aims to teach young people across the world to work together to help fight poverty.

Currently studying at Leicester College, with the hopes of working with young people who suffer from mental illness, Detch also volunteers with her local YMCA, as well as being a member of the Youth Commission.

Detch, who is heading to the South Asian country at the end of June, said: “Being a part of this program is a dream come true and will help me to be more successful in both my personal and academic future.”

The Youth Commission, set up by Sir Clive, enables young people aged 14-25 to be involved in finding solutions to crime and making recommendations for changes in OPCC policy and operational policing activity.
Spotlight on community concerns in Market Bosworth

More than 30 residents from Hinckley and Bosworth discussed policing and community issues during the latest ‘What matters to you?’ event.

The event, held at Bosworth Hall Hotel on May 18 allowed Sir Clive, Chief Constable Simon Cole and Bill Cullen, Deputy Chief Executive for Community Direction at Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council to meet members of the public to discuss issues of community concern.

After introductions from the panel, the audience posed questions about issues which matter to them. Topics included police and community communication, ways to report crime, speeding and parking issues.

Held every couple of months, this was the fifth event of its kind. Previous meetings have been in Leicester, Beaumont Leys, Coalville and Market Harborough. The next event is due to take place in July. Check the PCC’s website for further details.

Nominations top 130 for community award scheme

More than 130 special people have been nominated for the prestigious Leicester Mercury’s Pride of Leicestershire Awards 2015.

The annual awards scheme is designed to celebrate Leicestershire’s unsung heroes, those who go the extra mile to make a real and lasting difference to their communities and this year Sir Clive has agreed to sponsor the event.

Individuals have been nominated in a total of eight different award categories, from the Community Action award to the Emergency Services award. The Bravery and Courage category is this year being sponsored by the Force.

Each category sponsor will be meeting later this month to choose their winners and two runners-up.

Sir Clive will then select an overall winner from those eight chosen in each of the categories.

The winners’ names and that of the overall winner will be kept tightly under wraps until the special awards ceremony which this year is being held on July 23 at the King Power Stadium in Leicester.

As well as the individual award sponsors, the category winners and Sir Clive, the evening will be attended and hosted by a special celebrity guest.