SUMMARY OF WOODFORD HALSE PSCO LIAISON MEETING
held on Thursday 27th October 2016, 2pm in Foot Wise Podiatry office

Present:  Cllr Gary Denby (GD)  PCSO Liaison and single point of contact
          Cllr Pat Knight (PK)  Parish Council Highway Warden
          Sgt Sam Dobbs (SD)  Daventry Police
          PCSO Carl Barton (CB)  Daventry Police

CC:  Woodford cum Membris Parish Council

1. Background

The meeting was called to discuss in a constructive way, how CB’s profile and visibility may be increased around the village.

GD was keen not to open-up the current PCSO contract, with which the Parish Council are essentially satisfied. However, as SD explained later, this will have to be addressed in 2017.

2. PCSO Twitter Account

On Monday CB completed his PCSO Twitter training. SD is keen for the PCSOs to have named Twitter Accounts and to raise their public profiles, by taking opportunity to record some of their activities and especially those brought to a satisfactory conclusion. The restricted size of Tweets means that individually they do not consume undue time and effort, and an image can easily be added as support (it also saves typing lots of words!).

An extra bit of software is required to smudge-out specific number plates or other identifying attributes CB.

SD does not know if these Tweets can be made available to Facebook or on the Parish Council web page www.woodford-halse-villagesignpost.co.uk
Therefore GD will discuss this with the site administrator John Williams.

SD prefers to consider this as added Accessibility rather than Visibility. CB will not necessarily be roaming around the street being seen, but members of the public can be aware of when CB’s in the village, where he’s been and even where he’s stopping for his break… so they can catch up with him for an informal chat if they wish. This is an alternative to the Daventry Police Front Desk on 03000 111222 extension 341010. The 101 and 999 service is also available.

3. Funding and the Police & Crime Commissioners

The previous Police & Crime Commissioner Andrew Simmonds may have been predisposed to losing many PCSOs. In order to maintain officer numbers, many back office support and strategic functions were cut, including the management of PCSO contracts!

This has led to some inconsistencies, which will have to be addressed. One example being that a PCSO is required to give 1 month’s notice of leaving, whilst the contracts have six month’s notice for termination. In
the past, the five month’s gap could be covered by moving an existing officer across, but nowadays there are NO spare officers...

Another issue is that Councils now adopting PCSOs for their community are having to fund the full 100% of the PCSO costs. The 50% contract presently benefiting Woodford Halse will increasingly be seen as unfair.

Another area that needs to be addressed is the possibility of a three year contract, with a one-year get-out clause for the Parish Council. However, this may have ramifications for the union which looks after PCSO interests.

The new Police & Crime Commissioner Stephen Mold appears to be more appreciative of PCSOs and their public facing role.

4. **Community Protection Notices (CPN)**

SD described how CPNs are being used to inhibit anti-social behaviour and other persistent problems. Introduced in 2014 by Theresa May during her time as Home Secretary, they use the civil courts and can be invoked by the Police, the Council or Housing Authorities. They can set more general conditions than the criminal courts. This should make community policing more effective in future.

5. **Our PCSO public profile**

5.1 CB has been highlighted in the village’s monthly magazine: What’s On in Woodford (WOW). The November 2016 issue includes Carl and his surgeries on the front page, with an update on the village library where they are held. It was agreed that CB will draft a couple of more personal items for future issues, perhaps along the lines of ‘Why I became a PCSO’, or ‘What I like about being a PCSO’ or even ‘A Day in the life of...’.

5.2 SD described how the PCSO at Earls Barton is using a Strava App on his mobile www.strava.com/mobile enabling others to track GPS locations. GD and PK thought this was going too far and was too intrusive. The odd Tweet on where he’s been in the village and where CB’s having his next break should suffice, with interesting pictures to support it.

5.3 To raise the profile (and funding support) of our PCSO, head office REALLY DOES need to see Incident reports. It is of no use referring to things which happened six months ago. Incidents need to be current, preferably happening now. This does not criminalise anyone, but allows for proper monitoring, follow-up, warning notices and for summarising the successes! **It is acceptable for a Parish Councillor to call 101 and report an incident on behalf of a third party** (at the time).

6. **Any Other Business**

6.1 PK reported that the Woodford Speed Watch endeavour has collected 300 signatures and requires a further 200 signatures to take full effect. The village has a Vehicle-Activated Sign (VAS) to highlight speeding, along with a list of approved sites. CB is up to date on his speed gun training and it should be possible to organise a group of officers for the odd ‘blitz’.
Close to the firestation would seem the most appropriate location, though we do presently have some unofficial traffic calming measures there!

6.2 There has been recent anti-social use of the Sara Field area of the village. It will be useful if CB can put in appearances there, especially in the evenings.

6.3 Anti-social parking remains a sporadic problem. It will be useful if CB can put in appearances near to the village school, especially at drop-off and pick-up times (when scheduled to be on duty in the village).

6.4 It was agreed that we shall meet again towards the end of January 2017; to be arranged by group email after the New Year ALL.