

Report to Buckinghamshire County Council

Title: Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel update

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1. Police and Crime Panels are responsible for supporting and scrutinising the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) in each police force area in England and Wales. Panels are scrutiny bodies with a range of statutory functions and have responsibility for scrutinising and supporting the PCC's activities over a range of policy areas. Ensuring the Panel provides effective scrutiny is a challenge given the limited resources available to fund Panels and the limited powers provided for in legislation.
2. Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel is made up of 18 Local Authorities and two independent members and the composition of the Panel can be found via the link below. There are usually Membership changes during May due to elections or appointment changes. The Chairman is Trevor Egleton and Vice-Chairman, Kieron Mallon.
3. The Thames Valley PCC is Anthony Stansfeld and his Deputy is Matthew Barber. A key document which is used to scrutinise the PCC's performance is the Police and Crime Panel which can be found via the following link. The Panel scrutinise a key area of the Plan at each of their meetings. The Plan can be found here: <https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/police-and-crime-plan/>
4. The precept meeting was held in February 2019 where the Panel agreed with the PCC's recommendation of a precept increase in council tax of an additional £24 (Band D equivalent). This increase, after funding pay and price rises, would enable an investment of around £8.5m in a number of police priority areas as follows:
 - To improve services to the public through contact management by reducing 101 call handling times (£1.3m) – Additional call-handling staff (around 45) would be recruited to deal with the volume of calls and to improve outcomes to residents
 - To increase frontline policing by recruiting additional officers and staff to respond to increasing crime demand and complexity (£2.5m)
 - To improve investigative capacity and process for complex crimes (£2.2m)
 - To increase the Digital Development Programmes (£2.5m) and increase digital capability by exploiting the modern platforms which have been investing in – This involved increasing the number of laptops for Police Officers, improving Wi-Fi capability in police establishments.

5. The Panel scrutinise the PCC and not the Chief Constable. However, sometimes it is necessary to look at operational issues which relate to strategic issues. Some of the themes and subjects the Panel have looked at include:
- Looking at the governance of the **South East Regional Crime Unit (SE ROCU)** and how the Police and Crime Commissioner held the Chief Constable to account for the performance of SEROCU. Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCU) form a critical part of the national policing network and provide a range of specialist policing capabilities to forces which helped them to tackle serious and organised crime effectively. This Unit is involved in the fight against 'County Lines' drug and gang crimes.
 - Monitoring the PCC performance on the various strategic priorities contained in his Police and Crime Plan
 - Asking the PCC for his views on the report by the Home Affairs Committee on **"Policing for the Future"** which looked at policing in view of the rising crime figures and the budgetary constraints. The PCC reported that he agreed with many of the findings in the report. Nationally there has been an upturn in crime, although in the Thames Valley this has been less. Reference was made to the changes to the recording of crime which had affected the crime figures. For instance one crime could involve a few incidents, which had to be recorded individually. The Home Office had also changed the criteria of certain crimes, with for example household burglary now including outside sheds. The overall picture, however, was of rising crime and a reduction in the number of Police Officers. There has been a reduction of 20,000 Police Officers nationally; the Thames Valley Police budget had dropped in real terms, by £100m since 2010/11. Those who committed crimes which went undetected carried on committing more crimes and the cycle continued.
 - The Panel continued to scrutinise the **Thames Valley Police Contact Management Platform**, which was the platform TVP used for 999 and 101 calls. The PCC reported that during testing of the system, a number of performance, integration and system instability issues had been identified. It had been agreed that additional essential testing and resolution of systems infrastructure problems and instability issues be completed, before the system went live, in April 2019. An additional £4m had been allocated to the CMP project would come out of the Police Reserves budget.
 - The Panel continued to monitor and scrutinise the **new Local Policing Model**. This change in the approach to policing came out of Thames Valley Police's 2014-15 Delivery Plan which included an action to review the approach to Neighbourhood Policing in light of best practice nationally and emerging College of Policing evidence. The strategy for the delivery of neighbourhood policing for Thames Valley Police was intended to complement the commitment of working together to make communities safer, and comprised the following four elements: Visibility - to increase public confidence and reduce crime; Engagement - to enable the participation of communities in policing at their chosen level; Problem solving - to identify, establish causation, respond and address local problems and Community Resilience - to increase public involvement in policing.
6. The Preventing CSE Sub Committee and Complaints Sub-Committee have also met this year. One of the main outcomes from the Preventing CSE Sub Committee is that a TVP

single point of contact (SPOC) is being piloted for a year, and funded by the PCC, in relation to taxi licensing safeguarding. Unfortunately, there have been difficulties recruiting to this post, but the Panel will continue to monitor this and keep local authority licensing authorities informed.

7. In February 2019, the Panel held a Confirmation Hearing for the new Chief Constable, John Campbell.
8. The PCC has provided updates on how TVP are tackling knife crime, Domestic Violence, cybercrime and the work carried out by CSPs.
9. For further information the PCC and PCP Annual Report is normally submitted to the June meeting of the Panel. There is also a twitter page which provides useful information on national and local policing issues @thamesvalleypcp.

Bill Bendyshe Brown

Bucks County Council representative on the Police and Crime Panel