

Police and Crime Plan Review 2015

Briefing Note



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Plan Review 2015 – Briefing Note

1.0 Background

Police and Crime Plans are a statutory requirement for all police force areas introduced as part of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. The plan is an important mechanism for communicating Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) intentions to the public, partner agencies, the Police and Crime Panel and others. PCCs have a duty to keep the plan under review and may vary an existing plan or issue a new one at any time during their period in office. The decision to vary a plan may be triggered, for instance, by significant national changes (eg to the Strategic Policing Requirement), or as a result of changes in local risks and threats as evidenced by the stated priorities of key local partner agencies.

Following publication in 2013 of his original Police and Crime Plan 2013-2017, the PCC for Thames Valley last reviewed and refreshed his Plan in 2014. To meet the obligation to keep the Police and Crime Plan under review, the PCC committed to undertake an annual review of local and national priorities, and to do so in alignment with budgetary cycles and the strategic assessment and planning cycles of Thames Valley Police (TVP) and Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) (see Appendix A for a summary of the Police and Crime Plan Decision Timeline).

This briefing note summarises the results of the first 'test run' of this exercise which was undertaken by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for Thames Valley during November and December 2015 for the purpose of identifying the up-to-date range of priority areas of local partnerships whose business areas involve crime, crime reduction or victimisation. The overall aim of the exercise was to inform the PCC on any significant changes in local priorities, particularly whether new priorities had emerged, which might warrant a refresh of the current Police and Crime Plan.

A limited number of local authority partnerships were the focus of this exercise, including :-

1. Community Safety Partnerships
2. Local Children's Safeguarding Boards
3. Local Adult Safeguarding Boards
4. Health and Wellbeing Boards
5. Thames Valley Police

The latest priorities of each partnership/agency were identified through a desk-top exercise involving a review of publications including:-

- a) Strategic Assessments
- b) Partnership Plans
- c) Annual Reports

d) Business Plans

A total of 26 reports were reviewed for the purpose of this 2015 pilot exercise (however, see '*Further Procedural Decisions*', items 1 and 2, below).

2.0 Outcome of Scanning Exercise

The scanning exercise undertaken highlights that partners identified different sorts of priorities, some involving identified **types of criminality** (such as child sexual exploitation), some highlighting **key groups of concern** (such as young offenders, or vulnerable people), and others describing **mechanisms or internal processes** for addressing the priority areas (eg raising public awareness or establishing quality standards). Notably, and understandably given their relatively new statutory footing and mandate, many of the stated priorities of Local Adult Safeguarding Boards (LASBs), for instance, were focussed on developing processes and ways of working rather than specific business areas. For the purpose of this exercise, which was designed to highlight any significant gaps or omissions in the existing Police and Crime Plan, the focus of this report is on specific business areas or themes rather than mechanisms and processes (however, see '*Further Procedural Decisions*', item 3, below).

The summary of priorities provided below does not attempt to weight priorities based on relative importance to partners (however, see '*Further Procedural Decisions*', item 3, below) but it does differentiate the more common, or universal, concerns from issues with a more localised focus.

Universal Priorities recognised by most areas/partnerships in Thames Valley:-

- Vulnerable people¹
- Drug-/alcohol misuse²
- Sexual offences (including CSE)
- Domestic Abuse
- Anti-Social Behaviour

Major issues in parts of Thames Valley or for some partnerships:-

- Re-offending or young offenders
- Violent crime
- Terrorism/radicalisation³

¹ 'Vulnerable people' was cited frequently as a priority area, sometimes using this general term and, at other times, drilling down to more specific groups of concern eg. elderly people.

² Abuse of drugs and alcohol is primarily an underlying driver for other crime, but it is included here due to the high frequency with which this was cited as a priority for local partnerships.

³ It is worthy of note that the assessments and annual report reviewed here were produced prior to the Paris terrorist attacks on 13th November 2015, In the light of those attacks, it is possible terrorism

- Cybercrime

Particular local challenges which are high impact in certain communities:-

- Human trafficking/slavery
- Burglary
- Night-time economy
- Rural crime
- Prostitution
- Metal theft

3.0 Decisions of the PCC

On the basis of this review, the conclusion is that the priority areas identified across Thames Valley by partnerships with cross-cutting business areas linked to those of the PCC are captured within the existing Police and Crime Plan. Therefore, **the recommendation not to refresh the Police and Crime Plan prior to the end of March 2016 was accepted by the PCC on 17th December 2015.**

Also supporting this recommendation is the statutory duty on PCCs to issue a new Police and Crime Plan as soon as practicable after taking office, and before the end of the financial year in which the Commissioner is elected. As the next scheduled election for PCCs is in May 2016, the newly elected PCC will be required, in any case, to develop and issue a new Police and Crime Plan after the election by no later than 31st March 2017.

Further Procedural Decisions

As this current exercise was the first pilot of the PCC's Police and Crime Plan Decision Timeline (shown in Appendix 1), the following further recommendations seeking to improve the methodology adopted in future iterations of the process were agreed by the PCC:-

1. The scanning exercise should be widened to include the priorities of other partnerships such as Youth Offending Boards, and other criminal justice and emergency services, including but not limited to, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), Prisons, Ambulance, Fire Services etc.
2. The review methodology should be expanded to include a partner survey to supplement the desk-top approach taken here.
3. The priorities mapping exercise should separately identify and summarise priorities as 'crimes', 'target groups', 'mechanisms', or 'internal processes'.

may become a more prominent and consistent priority among agencies than this assessment implies.

4. Future methodology should also take into account relative weightings of the priorities (eg. based on threat, harm and risk).
5. Future methodology should also scan and incorporate wider issues of national significance

APPENDIX A: Police and Crime Plan Refresh - Decision Timeline

