

Report to the Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel

Title: Themed Item – Community Safety Partnerships

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Background

- 1 Community Safety Partnerships (CSP's) were introduced in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to be made up of 'responsible authorities' and some who sit as a result of local agreement. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 made no significant amendments to the role and remit of CSP's, however it meant changes to their working context as funding for crime and disorder reduction (or community safety) would be funnelled through the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). It is worth noting that the former 'Community Safety Fund' initially allocated in 2013/14 has now been absorbed into the general Police Grant allocated to PCC's. Therefore, the allocation of funding at a local level for community safety and crime and disorder activities, and mechanisms for its distribution, are at the discretion of individual PCC's.
http://www.local.gov.uk/documents/10180/7530798/L12_702+comm+safety+workbook_23400.pdf/bdcc7a4b-4dcc-4761-b465-06dc0bfd2548
LGA Councillor Handbook
- 2 Home Office Guidance (PCC Update July 2011) states that PCC's will be supported to work effectively with other local leaders to prioritise resources to suit local needs and priorities. There is a duty for both parties to co-operate and have regard to each other 'relevant priorities in carrying out their respective functions'. This duty to have regard to each 'others' priorities exists even if the PCC were not to provide funding to CSPs. PCC's have the authority to require a report from a CSP where they are not content that the CSP is carrying out its duties 'effectively and efficiently'.
- 3 CSP's are held to account by local overview and scrutiny committees using powers given by the Police and Justice Act 2006.
- 4 The statutory obligations for CSP's are as follows:-
 - Strategic Group to direct the work of the partnership
 - Regularly engage and consult with the community about their priorities and progress achieving them
 - Set up protocols and systems for sharing information

- Analyse a wide range of data, including recording crime levels and patterns, in order to identify priorities in an annual strategic assessment
- Set out a partnership plan and monitor progress
- Produce a strategy to reduce reoffending
- Commission domestic violence homicide reviews

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/police-and-crime-commissioners-and-community-safety-partnerships>

- 5 CSP's are encouraged to take an actions orientated rather than a meetings orientated approach and also to focus on reduced bureaucracy, value for money and improved delivery of services. CSPs consist of five 'responsible authorities' - police, relevant local authorities, fire and rescue authorities, probation providers and Clinical Commissioning Groups and are under a duty to assess local community safety issues and draw up a partnership plan setting out their priorities.
- 6 The Thames Valley is made up of a complex partnership landscape comprising of a number of local government structures including two tier (District and County Councils, and Unitary, Authorities) working alongside a range of other organisations which also configure themselves at a local, County and Thames Valley level. These Local Authority areas vary in geography and demography quite substantially. One of the strengths of the Thames Valley is the diversity of its population. Universal priorities which affect all areas of the Thames Valley include violent crime, domestic and sexual abuse, anti social behaviour, burglary and theft and safeguarding issues. CSP's in the Thames Valley have many years experience of working collaboratively to maximise opportunities to reduce crime, disorder and anti social behaviour.
- 7 The PCC and CSPs have a duty to take each other's priorities into account and in the Thames Valley the PCC works closely with the CSPs to achieve this. The Office of the PCC (OPCC) attends most CSP meetings and fund and host regular Thames Valley wide events where all CSP Managers and the OPCC have the opportunity to come together to share learning and look at opportunities for joint working.
- <https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/police-and-crime-plan/working-in-partnership/community-safety-partnerships/>
- 8 According to some research undertaken by the Centre for Public Scrutiny relations between Panels and CSPs and Scrutiny Committees appear to be sporadic and ad hoc. In many instances, the fact that many Panel Members sit on CSPs is the only reason that any liaison does occur. There is often not an effective mechanism for intelligence and data to be shared between Panels, CSPs and their corresponding scrutiny committee. Updates are given on the work of the Panel to CSP's but Members may wish to consider whether this is sufficient or whether the Panel should be developing more formal mechanisms for information sharing and also feeding in information regularly from CSP meetings. It is important to note however that the reticence to engage with CSP's could be an issue of time and resources or it could be a concern about focusing on the operational business of CSP's rather than the need for the Panel to work more strategically. Where the Panel proposes to look at issues relating to the CSP, such matters should relate back to the PCC's strategic priorities, to the Police and Crime Plan and to the budget rather than to local concerns best dealt with by CSP Scrutiny Committees.
- <http://www.cfps.org.uk/police-and-crime-panels-the-first-year/>
<http://www.cfps.org.uk/library-monitor-12-community-safety/>
 CFPS Scrutiny of Community Safety Partnerships
- 9 This Panel previously had a local issues item where the local Community Safety Manager attended (at this point the Panel was rotating meetings around the Thames Valley) to provide an update. However, this was changed because there was a concern it detracted from the Panel's Scrutiny function. The Scrutiny Officer is making contact with Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee Officers to find out their work programme for the ensuing year to feed this

information through to Panel Members. The Chairman has also been invited to become a Member of the Buckinghamshire Safer and Stronger Bucks Partnership Board. The Vice-Chairman of the Panel is also a Member of the Safer Oxfordshire Partnership Oversight Committee which is Member led and meets twice a year. Both Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire have an officer co-ordinating group which undertake a strategic and commissioning role, whereas the District CSP's work in partnership to tackle community safety issues.

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/safer-oxfordshire-partnership>

10 Other areas which are important to note about CSP's are as follows:-

- Each year, the Strategy Group for community safety commissions the strategic assessment. This is an audit of all the crime and disorder, substance misuse and reoffending that has taken place across the CSP area over the previous year, and seeks to predict the key issues and identify priorities for the partnership by highlighting risk. The strategic assessment should be closely aligned to the background evidence underpinning the police and crime plan. Partnership priorities should be established via a combination of the hard quantitative evidence established in the strategic assessment and through consulting the community. This is a statutory duty on CSPs.
- Additionally each CSP needs to hold one face the public meeting.
- Many CSP's structure themselves to provide a strategic oversight and a number of delivery mechanisms to ensure that actions outlined in partnership plans are undertaken. This should be a highly tactical meeting bringing agencies together to problem-solve chronic issues on a geographical basis.
- Each CSP should have an information sharing protocol with a Designated Liaison Officer in each Responsible Authority to assist in the sharing of datasets, including depersonalised information. The best mechanism would be to utilise data in the form of analytical problem profiles to properly understand an issue, then apply problem solving methodologies to address them.
- Community Safety Partnerships need to work very closely with neighbourhood policing teams, and tackle the priorities highlighted by communities through consultation.
- Priorities for CSP's tend to include domestic abuse and reducing reoffending through Integrated Offender Management Schemes.
- A CSP can offer access to commissioning and procurement services to PCC's
- The key strength of CSPs is their ability to be flexible and design multi-agency responses around local need.

11 For Members information there is a briefing note attached (which has also been noted by the Panel) on the Police and Crime Plan which followed a scoping review of Community Safety Partnerships in respect of their strategic priorities.

<http://sbdc-spider2.southbucks.gov.uk/democracy/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=289&MIId=2384&Ver=4> (item 26)

12 Members may wish to consider whether it would be helpful to have some rules of engagement with the Panel and CSP's. West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel have rules of engagement which have specified the role of the Panel and CSP's. This includes the following:-

- The CSP will help the Panel monitor the impact of different community safety interventions and commissioning approaches and to better understand the link between the strategic direction set by the PCC and its impact on crime and community safety in local areas.

- The Panel can in turn scrutinise the decisions and actions of the PCC if he/she fails to have regard to responsible authority priorities or plans or if their funding arrangements and conditions places excessive demands on the CSP's.
- The Panel has an annual meeting with CSP chairs to engage in open discussion about the impact of the PCC and to raise any serious concerns which arise during the year.
- CSP chairs are also asked to brief their Authority's Panel Member in advance of any discussions on the Plan so that the local perspective is sufficiently understood.
- The CSP's are also asked to complete a quarterly briefing note (or the Scrutiny Officer can summarise issues being discussed by CSP's) and the Panel could provide the same for CSP's.

<http://www.westyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk/meetings/2015/friday-17th-july-2015> (item 10 and 11)

<http://www.westyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk/meetings/2014/friday-18th-july-2014> (item 6 Principles of Engagement and item 7)

Community Safety Funding

13 The PCC may made a crime and disorder reduction grant to any person if, in the opinion of the PCC, it will secure, or contribute to securing, crime and disorder reduction. The opinion of the PCC may make such grants subject to any conditions which he/she thinks appropriate. Not all PCC's give allocations to each Council in their area and bids have to be made through the commissioning process. In the Thames Valley as well as the PCCs Community Safety Fund, which is provided to Local Authorities, the Police Property Act Fund is also used to fund some of the activities and joint priorities of the PCC and Chief Constable in local areas. In previous years the PCC has provided funding to local authorities in the Thames Valley for community safety purposes. In 2014/15 the PCC provided over £3.7million from his Community Safety Fund to local authorities and Thames Valley Police to help implement crime reduction and community safety activities. This supports, amongst other things, activity undertaken by Community Safety Partnerships, Youth Offending Teams and Drug and Alcohol Teams across Thames Valley. All Community Safety funded activities are aligned to relevant objectives within his Police and Crime Plan. The current spending is £3.12 m or £1.33 per head of population.

<https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/performance/community-safety-fund/>

<http://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/information-hub/what-we-spend-and-how-we-spend-it/partnership-spending/>

14 However the OPCC Strategic Delivery Plan refers to exploring options for alternative distribution of the community safety fund in 2017/18 and later years. At present the PCC is one of only two PCC's that allocated their entire community safety budget to local authorities. The PCC currently gives flexibility to how the funds are spent and managed with monitoring in place. In West Yorkshire the PCC chairs a force-wide CSP Forum, who collectively agree how the grant monies will be spent for the benefit of their local communities. Other PCC's use a combination of direct commissioning, co-commissioning, earmarked funds for specific community safety purposes and open bidding for discrete fund and activities. Some also take a more holistic approach to the use of community safety and victims' service funding to ensure a more efficient and effective service is provided to some client groups e.g domestic abuse.

15 West Midlands Police and Crime Panel undertook an inquiry into community safety grants and the report can be accessed via the link below:-

<http://westmidlandspcp.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Item-6-Evidence-Pack-WMPCP-23-NOV-15.pdf>

Different ways of funding Community Safety across the Country can be viewed via the links below:-

<http://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/performance/community-safety-fund/>

<http://www.nottinghamshire.pcc.police.uk/Our-Money/Grants-and-Funding/Community-Safety-Fund-2015-16.aspx>

<http://www.sussex-pcc.gov.uk/apply-for-funding/>

<http://www.surrey-pcc.gov.uk/grant-funding-opportunities/>

<http://www.durham-pcc.gov.uk/Finance/Community-Safety-Fund.aspx>

Neighbourhood Policing

16 Members have asked that neighbourhood policing be looked at in conjunction with working with CSP's. Thames Valley Police have commissioned some work by the Police Foundation to inform their own internal review of neighbourhood policing (May 2015) and information from this review shall be referred to below. The review looks at literature on neighbourhood policing across the Country.

17 The report indicates that nationwide police forces are faced with difficult choices in responding to the need to make substantial budget cuts, including reviewing the role of neighbourhood policing. On page 8 of the Police Foundation report it comments that "Funding for neighbourhood policing is no longer ring-fenced, the number of Police Community Support Officers is falling fast and the future of neighbourhood policing is under threat. New and emerging crimes such as CSE pay little respect to traditional borders and present a whole new set of challenges for which the police service is ill equipped. With neighbourhoods becoming increasingly diverse, transient and fragmented, the task of neighbourhood policing is becoming harder as the skills and resources for doing it become scarcer and the pressures to resort to reactive, response-orientated policing rises...The key benefits of neighbourhood policing are long term, important and strategic and hence at risk".

www.police-foundation.org.uk/uploads/catalogerfiles/neighbourhood-policing-past-present-and-future---a-review-of-the-literature/neighbourhood_policing_past_present_future.pdf

18 There is good practice advice on how to maximise the benefits of neighbourhood policing as follows:-

- Allocating resources on the basis of a thorough analysis of demand
- Focusing activity on the reduction of risk, harm and threat
- Working closely with partner agencies to identify and resolve local problems
- Designing fully inclusive community engagement strategies that take account of the increasing diversity of local communities and the needs of the most vulnerable and hard-to-reach.

19 Thames Valley Police in their Delivery Plan in 2014-15 had objectives to 'maximise patrol and uniformed deployment in the most efficient and operationally productive way' (2.2) and to review the approach of neighbourhood policing in light of best practice nationally and emerging evidence from the College of Policing (2.6)

<http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/aboutus/aboutus-stplan/aboutus-stplan-stratplan.htm>

20 In 2013 the National Policing Improvement Agency undertook a survey of all 43 forces to establish what is working well in neighbourhood policing and identify the key challenges that Forces face. Of the 43 Forces, 32 had reviewed or were in the process of reviewing neighbourhood policing. The main findings were as follows:-

- A clearer understanding of the role and function of neighbourhood policing and what should be prioritised, given the reduction in resources
- Forces need to obtain a better understanding of the demand profile for neighbourhood policing teams in order to design their service and allocate resources most effectively.
- Forces need to establish how best to balance proactive and reactive approaches including how to reduce the demand on response officers in order to free up resources for proactive,

problem solving work and how to shift the focus to reducing risk, harm, vulnerability and threat.

- Forces are using different ways to maintain neighbourhood policing in the face of budget cuts, including ring fencing one officer or PCSO for each neighbourhood; extending the responsibilities of neighbourhood policing teams to include investigative and response functions; giving more responsibility to PCSO's; combining command functions; and integrating response, neighbourhood policing and CID. Most forces now expect neighbourhood police officers to investigate serious crime.
- Despite a few examples of good practice (eg Herts) most forces were finding it difficult to design and deliver cost-effective community engagement strategies. Public meetings were viewed as unrepresentative and engagement efforts as insufficiently targeted according to need/vulnerability, although some forces (Thames Valley) were using neighbourhood profiling tools to help tailor their community engagement methods. Some forces were also exploring ways of involving local citizens more directly in policing activity (Lancashire).
- Current performance frameworks do not adequately capture the impact or outcomes of neighbourhood policing.
- Partnership working through co-location and sharing resources was a key dimension of neighbourhood policing
- Neighbourhood policing teams needed to do more to manage high risk offenders and support vulnerable people in line with a force strategy.
- Officers needed better training in the Force's vision for neighbourhood policing.

21 The findings of the National Policing Improvement Agency review refers to the importance of partnership working and a key driver for the initial Crime and Disorder Act legislation was that addressing crime effectively should not be the sole responsibility of the police. Slough was given as an example where collaborative problem solving is used as a central premise of the Violence Multi-Agency Panel process, which has been set up to address the problem of recurrent violence. Alongside co-ordinating this the police provide core enforcement responses – such as the arrest and charging of perpetrators – but resolutions to recurrent violence may also necessitate additional or alternative partnership interventions, including mental health, drugs and alcohol, domestic abuse teams. This research which also looked at public perceptions of the police and research suggests that it is not contact per se which leads to lower confidence in the police but rather the quality of the encounter.

22 The Police Foundation Review concludes that ways to improve neighbourhood policing include:-

- Better training in interpersonal skills to improve officers handling of street/public encounters
- Greater more imaginative use should be made of technology and social media
- Better data sharing with local partners
- Problem solving with good analysis, joining up data sets and informing proactive tasking
- More inclusive and more relevant ways of community engagement
- Better ways to measure problem solving performance
- Neighbourhood police need to develop new skills and generate better intelligence on emerging and hidden crimes such as CSE and cyber crime
- Doing less but doing it better

23 The latest available open report on the Thames Valley Neighbourhood Policing is set out below. The PCC concluded in this report to the Planning Policy and Performance meeting in July 2015 the following statement:-

The Neighbourhood Review seeks to retain, but refocus, the concept of Neighbourhood policing. It is underpinned by the assertion that policing is best delivered locally and that only by trying new approaches will policing break free of the trap of seeking to do more with less but in effect doing the same only worse. Austerity will continue. The approaches of the past; pumping in more money, driving up performance through complex, costly processes and reducing 'supply' side costs through increased efficiency will no longer be sufficient and will not deliver necessary savings and service standards. "Supply side' cost management will only achieve finite savings. The Neighbourhood Strategy therefore focuses on addressing risk, harm and threat by promoting the principles of visibility, engagement, problem-solving and building community resilience and thereby reduce demand for "crisis" policing.

<https://democracy.buckscc.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=59930>

Milton Keynes will be initially used to pilot the problem solving approach. In other areas, LPA Commanders have now designated problem solving champions who have received training and are now expected to roll the training out within their area.

24 The Peel Report (HMIC) looks at police effectiveness for the Thames Valley (which received a Good rating) and refers to the neighbourhood policing review saying that the force is implementing the review findings and intends that its recommendations, along with the findings from its ongoing priority based budgeting process (PBB), will shape how in the future it prioritises the prevention of crime, anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe. Other reference to neighbourhood policing include talking to neighbourhood policing staff. Most of the neighbourhood policing staff HMIC spoke to felt valued by the force and suitably trained and equipped for their role. However some officers expressed frustration about the number of occasions they were taken away from their neighbourhoods to supplement response officer numbers. This means that, on occasions, the necessity to perform other duties prevents neighbourhood officers fully engaging with problem solving and partnership work. The force is aware of this and intends to address it through its implementation of the neighbourhood policing review. An annual review of resource allocation takes into account emerging crime risks as well as the volume of crimes and incidents reported. Through its neighbourhood policing review, the force is refining this approach and working to develop a deeper understanding of the risk to each community to inform resourcing decisions.

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/peel-2015/thames-valley/>

<http://goo.gl/IuEkU4>

Safer Neighbourhood Policing in London (Parliament) – whilst it focuses on London there is mention of the good work in the Thames Valley and relates to the general debate about neighbourhood policing

Thames Valley Police – Responding to austerity (HMIC)

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/thames-valley-responding-to-austerity.pdf>

Neighbourhood Policing Articles

http://www.bucksfreepress.co.uk/news/crime/14286747.Thames_Valley_Police_receive_Good_report_rating/

<http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/faq/newsevents-pressreleases-item.htm?id=329341>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/crime/12083545/Social-media-is-the-new-neighbourhood-policing-says-prize-winning-tweeting-officer.html>

<http://www.polfed.org/newsroom/3191.aspx>

Recent article on increase in recorded crime

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-36158899>

Proposed Recommendations

- 1 To keep Panel Members updated with the work being carried out by Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committees across the Thames Valley and that each Panel Member feeds in any information from Scrutiny Committees to enable the Police and Crime Panel to review and scrutinise the decisions and actions of the PCC where necessary and appropriate.
- 2 That the Panel consider whether they wish to adopt any means of formal engagement as set out in paragraph 12 of the report in order to work closer with CSP's to better understand the impact of the PCC on crime reduction and community safety within the Thames Valley and to enable it to prioritise key areas to scrutinise and monitor.
- 3 To monitor the performance of the PCC on the impact of the Neighbourhood Policing Review.

Diagram from LGA Document – Community Safety Partnerships – A guide for PCC's

How will CSPs and PCCs interact?

There are five key ways in which a PCC and the CSPs in the force area will work together, and these can be seen on the diagram below:

