

Report to the Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel

Title: Topical issues

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Panel



National Police and Crime Panel Conference

The Conference was held on 6 November 2017 at the Warwick Conference Centre and was well attended by Panels across the Country.

The opening debate covered horizon scanning of key national issues relevant to PCPs – key speakers included Cllr Alison Lowe Chair of West Yorkshire PCP, David Lloyd Chair of the Association of PCPs and Jacqui McKinlay Chief Executive of the Centre for Public Scrutiny. Areas of discussion included the visibility of policing, collaboration, resident's engagement, and working in partnership and looking at crime as well as policing.

The National Association for Police and Crime Panels was discussed and the setting up of a Steering Group to look at developing a Special Interest Group as part of the Local Government Association.

In the afternoon there was a Regional Workshop to discuss collaboration and also themed workshops. In response to Panel Member comments on public engagement in the PCP Annual Report, the Scrutiny Officer for Thames Valley ran a workshop on this area to identify areas of good practice. It was agreed at the workshop that it would be helpful if Frontline Consulting could undertake a survey of Panels on what public engagement they carried out to share good practice. Other workshops included police and fire collaboration, complaint handling, regional collaboration, performance monitoring of Police and Crime Plans, budget scrutiny, joint working on mental health and policing, partnership working and evidence gathering, Police and Crime Plans, financial resilience and transformation. The closing plenary also included a presentation on research carried out by Grant Thornton on analysis of Police and Crime Plans across the Country.

Frontline Consulting organised the conference and will produce a report on its content which will be circulated to Members.

Four Area PCP Meeting

A meeting was held involving representatives of Hampshire, Surrey, Sussex and Thames Valley Police and Crime Panels to discuss joint working and collaboration between the four Force areas, how the PCCs are taking forward the provisions of the Policing and Crime Act regarding police

complaints and fire and rescue services and proposals for the National Representative Body. The Chairman agreed that it would be helpful to meet quarterly to discuss areas of mutual interest and collaboration.

Eastern Regional Network Meeting

Thames Valley PCP also takes part in Eastern Regional Network Meetings which are organised by Frontline Consulting. A recent meeting was held on 29 September 2017 and included Panel Chairman from Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent, Bedfordshire and Norfolk. The agenda includes a round up of work being carried out by Panels, hot topics (such as fire and police collaboration), regional collaboration and any other areas of interest e.g complaints and budget scrutiny. In terms of other work with Frontline Consulting, the Scrutiny Officer for Thames Valley also helped provide training for new Police and Crime Panel Support Officers across the Country.

Policy Planning and Performance PCC public meeting

The next Policy Planning and Performance Meeting is being held on 16 November 2017 and papers should be available from 8 November from the following link:-

<https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/information-hub/agendas-and-minutes/policy-planning-and-performance/>

Recent publications/events and media interest

Go to <https://twitter.com/thamesvalleypcp> for information on twitter activity which includes links to media articles which may be of interest.

National Issues

https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/nov/01/amber-rudd-lambasts-police-chiefs-over-extra-funding-demands?CMP=share_btn_tw

The home secretary, [Amber Rudd](#), has chastised police chiefs for demanding hundreds of millions of pounds more in funding. Rudd said police forces, which say they need more resources to stem rising crime, could still make efficiency savings and were sitting on reserves of £1.6bn. Speaking to the annual conference of police chiefs and police and crime commissioners, Rudd said: "So when crime stats go up, I don't just want to see you reaching for a pen to write a press release asking for more money from the government. "I want you to tell your local communities and the victims in your area what your plan is to make them safer." The debate about police funding has intensified before the budget later this month. Rudd said: "Of course, part of being a police and crime commissioner is about speaking to the government about resourcing. But it mustn't just be about lobbying the government for money. It needs to be about cutting crime, delivering on the priorities you were elected on and being held to account by local people in your area when you don't."

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/police-big-data-technology-predict-crime-hotspot-mapping-rusi-report-research-minority-report-a7963706.html>

Police in the UK are starting to use futuristic technology that allows them to predict where and when crime will happen, and deploy officers to prevent it, research has revealed. A report on big data's use in policing published by the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies (RUSI) said British forces already have access to huge amounts of data but lack the capability to use it.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/knife-crime-stats-uk-england-wales-prosecutions-drop-offences-rise-a8030211.html>

Knife crimes are rising across the country – but police forces are prosecuting fewer cases, according to new data. Freedom of Information responses from 30 out of 43 police forces across England and Wales, obtained by BBC News, found that the number of knife crimes that led to perpetrators being charged or taken to court has fallen by 8 per cent from 2015 to 2016.

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/nov/07/only-5-of-honour-crimes-reported-to-police-are-referred-to-cps>
The police are failing the victims of “honour” crimes, with just 5% of reported cases being referred to the Crown Prosecution Service, a leading charity has warned. The number of cases of “honour” based violence, forced marriage and FGM reported to the police has increased by 53% since 2014, figures obtained through the Freedom of Information Act show. However, despite the rise in reporting, the volume of cases referred to the CPS for a charging decision is the lowest it has been for five years.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/11/08/essex-police-shows-injuries-suffered-police-officers-asks-protections/>
Essex Police Federation has asked for more protections for its officers as it shares photographs of injuries they have suffered. The Federation has asked for protection for the police, as well as better equipment and is welcoming stricter punishments for those who assault emergency workers.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5037555/Police-spend-81m-year-historical-crime-probes.html>
Police are spending £81million a year on historic investigations, new figures revealed yesterday. The money is being used during inquiries into sex abuse, paedophile conspiracies, undercover policing and the Hillsborough tragedy. There are 875 officers - the equivalent of the entire Warwickshire force - plus another 500 civilian staff, dedicated to raking over the past. One police chief warned that the resources are often taken from frontline budgets, suggesting everyday policing is being stretched even further.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/11/01/many-children-criminal-court-says-senior-judge/>
Speaking at the Howard League for Penal Reform on Monday, the senior judge said the CPS should "reconsider existing prosecuting policy in relation to children". He added: "I do not, of course, go so far as to suggest that age alone should immunise children from the appropriate application of the criminal law where there has been really serious offending." However, in less serious cases it is legitimate to ask what advantage there is, either to the child, or to the child's family, or, indeed, to society at large, in invoking a criminal process in preference to a family court process, especially where the family court is already engaged in careful analysis of and planning for the child's future."

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/criminals-banned-drinking-release-prison-probation-officers-gambling-online-content-a7997126.html>

Former [prisoners](#) could be barred from drinking alcohol after their release from custody under new measures aimed at reducing reoffending rates

Local Issues

<http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/abuse-of-position-letter-thames-valley-2017.pdf>

HMICFRS assessment: Abuse of position for a sexual purpose

In December 2016, they published their national *PEEL: police legitimacy 2016* inspection report in which they referred to the problem as ‘abuse of authority for sexual gain’. In the interests of consistency and in line with the terminology used in the National Police Chiefs’ Council’s national strategy, they now refer to this as ‘abuse of position for a sexual purpose’.

The report highlighted our concerns that some police counter-corruption units did not have the capability or capacity to seek intelligence on the potential abuse of position for a sexual purpose. This meant that some forces were not able to intervene early to safeguard potential victims and tackle unacceptable and potentially corrupt behaviour. This concern led to the following recommendation:

‘To address this cause of concern, we recommend that within six months, all forces should have started to implement a plan to achieve the capability and capacity required to seek intelligence on potential abuse of authority for sexual gain. These plans should include consideration of the

technology and resources required to monitor IT systems actively and to build relationships with the individuals and organisations that support vulnerable people. ‘

They have reviewed the force's plans to address the cause of concern. Thames Valley plans reflected the national strategy agreed at the National Police Chiefs' Council in April of this year. However no information was provided that allowed HMIC to assess TV progress in reviewing the capability and capacity of their counter-corruption unit, their progress in deploying IT systems' monitoring capability or any work done to seek intelligence from those organisations that support vulnerable people. HMIC will be returning to TVP force to assess implementation of their plans during a subsequent inspection.

http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/1437101.Police_plan_for_summer_of_drink_fuelled_crime/

Oxfordshire's Chief Supt Shaun Morley said the force was having to increase the number of officers on the streets at weekends to cope with yobbery since the changes in licensing laws allowed pubs and clubs to stay open longer. Only 32 streets - mainly town and city centres - are responsible for nine per cent of criminal damage for the whole county and a similar amount of violence and anti-social behaviour.