

## Report to the Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel

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**Title:** Topical issues

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Panel



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### **PEEL – Effectiveness – Good rating although investigations and reducing re-offending requires improvement**

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/peel-police-effectiveness-2017-thames-valley.pdf>

“Thames Valley Police is good at keeping people safe and reducing crime. Our findings this year are consistent with those from 2016 and the force’s overall progress is positive despite some deterioration in the quality of its investigations. The force works well to prevent crime, tackle anti-social behaviour and keep people safe. Neighbourhood policing teams work with local communities and identify what matters most to them. The force works proactively with other organisations such as local councils, using joint problem-solving techniques and evidence-based practice to address the underlying causes of crime. It could take further steps to make the whole force aware about what works well.

The force has improved retrieval of evidence from digital devices such as mobile phones and laptops. It generally provides a good service to victims of fraud and cyber-crime. However, the way that it investigates crime requires improvement: it investigates serious crimes well, but in other cases the quality of investigation, supervision and victim updates varies. Response officers also need to ensure that their initial investigations are complete. The force is committed to protecting the public from dangerous offenders and quickly arresting suspects and those who are unlawfully at large. It is developing a new IT tool that will support this. The way the force protects vulnerable people from harm and supports victims is good. Officers and staff understand how to recognise and support vulnerable people when they contact the police, and the force has increased resilience in teams responsible for investigating complex cases involving vulnerable victims. It also provides appropriate support to people with mental health conditions. The force generally works well with partner organisations such as local councils and charities to safeguard vulnerable victims, although we found some inconsistencies in risk-assessments for children in domestic abuse incidents and delays in some referrals to other organisations responsible for safeguarding victims. Thames Valley Police has effective specialist capabilities and is generally well prepared to deal with the threats identified in The Strategic Policing Requirement, such as terrorism and civil emergencies.”

## **Investigations and Reducing Re-offending – Areas for improvement**

- The force should ensure that all evidence, including body-worn video camera footage, is secured at the first opportunity to maximise the likelihood of investigations being concluded successfully.
- The force should ensure that it is fully compliant with the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime.
- The force should ensure that there is regular and active supervision of investigations to improve quality and progress.
- The force should take steps to improve the provision of management information to local police area commanders about the numbers of people who are wanted for arrest and the risk that they pose, to ensure that they are effectively managed.
- The force should ensure that checks are routinely conducted to verify the identity, nationality and overseas convictions of arrested foreign nationals.

## **HMICFRS Reports**

The Crime Data Integrity report is dealt with by another item on the agenda.

Statement from Deputy PCC

<https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/news-and-events/thamesvalley-pcc-news/2018/02/statement-from-deputy-police-and-crime-commissioner-hmicfrs-data-integrity-report/>

## **Policy Planning and Performance PCC public meeting**

The Policy Planning and Performance Meeting was held on 29 March 2018 and papers should be available from the following link:-

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

Areas that were raised by the PCC are as follows:-

- An update on discussions with Berkshire MASH
- Last week, England and Wales' policing watchdog HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMICFRS) said vulnerable victims could be put at risk by suspects who were released without bail conditions. Research that found the use of bail had fallen by 65% and in suspected domestic abuse cases by 75%. Zoe Billingham, inspector of constabulary, said a "blanket" ban on bail use had emerged, potentially putting vulnerable people, like domestic violence victims, at risk. Bail is a demonstration that someone is looking out for them, the pendulum has swung too far in one direction, we suspect," she said, adding there had been "a lack of direction" about the new arrangements (Police and Crime Act 2017). At the Level 1 meeting concern was expressed about there being less control over the numbers released under investigation. The Head of Criminal Justice, TVP was looking at this issue.  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-43589395>
- There had also been a number of articles in the press about the criminal justice system and the PCC commented that there were issues with the criminal justice system that needed to be addressed. The Justice Committee has launched an inquiry into the disclosure of evidence in criminal cases.
- The Deputy PCC had commented at the last meeting that there were problems with comparison of figures and the need to compare the actual date of the offence to the actual findings. He also referred to the level of historical cases. With domestic rape offences 48% of offences were reported after 6 months and 35% after 7 days. With non-domestic 38% were reported after 6 months and 49% after 7 days so there is more current reporting.

- With HMIC crime data integrity report the PCC had expressed concern about press releases which had been issued which he felt did not present a true picture. He also expressed concern about the national police grant funding allocation across the Country e.g Durham was a similar city to Oxford but if Thames Valley were to receive the same level of funding per head of population as Durham Constabulary, the additional funding receivable could provide an extra 1,000 police officers in the Thames Valley.
- Revenue Budget Monitoring 2017/18 – TVP were still 98 officers below strength which had left an underspend in that budget but an overspend in overtime payments. There had been a delay in the roll out of tasers but the new tasers would be more effective and were more overt as they were on the body armour. There was an overspend by the Chiltern Transport Consortium due to higher maintenance costs but this did not impact on TVP.
- Capital Budget Monitoring 2017/18 – The PCC had expressed concern about funding for new phones but was reassured by the Force’s Director of Finance that most phones had a 2 year lifespan. Officers had previously been issued with Windows phones but TVP were now signing up to a Vodaphone contract and had a good deal on android phones. The Windows phones could still be utilised for specific areas.
- The PCC referred to the **HMIC report** relating to crime data integrity and commented that the Force had been rated as ‘good’ under PEEL Effectiveness but ‘inadequate’ in this area and he felt that the process needed to be revisited perhaps with more linkages between each HMICFRS report. In order to keep up to date with the action plan relating to this report the PCC suggested that one of their Policy Officers should attend the HMIC TVP Board to be kept updated with the progress being made on this area and to hold the Chief Constable to account where progress was slow. Hopefully the new Contact Management Programme, once it had gone live, should help with the recording of crime.
- The DCC reported on the **TVP new Delivery Plan for 2018/19**. He reported that the new Plan should have a range of qualitative and quantitative measures and there would be more context with what was happening regionally and nationally. In particular he referred to the move away from the term child sexual exploitation to child exploitation in light of the ‘county lines’ issues being faced in the Thames Valley. The PCC raised the issue of FGM which was a priority in his Police and Crime Plan – he was unclear whether there was low reporting on this issue or whether it was not really taking place in the quantities originally thought. The evidence of criminality was limited and there had not been a successful prosecution. He also referred to 101 calls where the response rate still needed to be improved. One of the issues was the turnover of staff in the contact centre and they were looking at recruitment and retention in this area such as giving a better notice period of future shifts. They were improving online facilities with better signposting and online reporting e.g recently the reporting of online traffic incidents had gone live.
- Income charging rates – there was a low charge for the use of the dog unit etc because of statutory charges set by Government.

Other points in the papers which were not specifically raised by the PCC are as follows:-

Complaints Integrity and Ethics Panel minutes

- The Assistant Chief Constable had attended the CIE Panel and had reported that in the last year there were more murders in the Thames Valley area which can be broken down into issues of knife crime, mental health and drug dealing which brought an increased rate of violence. The Force have had to deal with issues such as disclosure which included areas where the police were at fault and not believing the victims’ account to the police believing everything. Further work was being undertaken on this area including training.

- Thames Valley Police have a very good record on Stop and Search and very few complaints relating to this. However, concerns have been raised by the Home Office on how TVP use stop and search and whether they are justified and proportionate.
- The possession of knives has increased in the Thames Valley.
- The **Joint Corporate Governance Framework** had been updated which include minor changes to the scheme of delegation and financial regulations.

## Recent publications/events and media interest

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

### National Issues

New Serious Violence Strategy

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-secretary-to-launch-serious-violence-strategy>

Amber Rudd says enough police to tackle violence rise

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-43686595>

Amber Rudd says drugs biggest driver of violence

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-43694062>

999 calls – HMIC report

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-43497047>

Update on fire governance

<http://www.policeprofessional.com/news.aspx?id=31832>

Amber Rudd not met with PCCs on a one to one basis

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-berkshire-42910086>

Police should need warrant to download phone information

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-43507661>

Paedophile hunter evidence used to charge suspects

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-43634585>

Linked local issue on concerns over paedophile hunters

[http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/yourtown/oxford/16145856.Judge\\_39\\_s\\_concerns\\_over\\_39\\_paedophile\\_hunters\\_39\\_who\\_snared\\_perv\\_ert/](http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/yourtown/oxford/16145856.Judge_39_s_concerns_over_39_paedophile_hunters_39_who_snared_perv_ert/)

### Child Sexual Exploitation

Articles on child grooming gangs in Telford

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/03/14/telford-child-abuse-figures-sensationalised-police-officer-says/>

Hard copy telegraph article available on ‘Why didn’t we believe these girls and break the silence’

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/mar/15/telford-get-serious-child-grooming-sexual-abuse>

BBC Article CSE - How the system failed (refers to Oxford)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-43400336>

### Local Issues

Cuts

TVP have adopted a no interview policy for cases where there is overwhelming evidence to save money

[http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/15918908.Thames\\_Valley\\_Police\\_39\\_stop\\_questioning\\_suspected\\_shoplifters\\_to\\_save\\_time\\_and\\_money\\_39\\_/?ref=twtrrec](http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/15918908.Thames_Valley_Police_39_stop_questioning_suspected_shoplifters_to_save_time_and_money_39_/?ref=twtrrec)

Cuts to roads policing put public at risk

[http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/yourtown/oxford/16082612.Cuts\\_to\\_roads\\_policing\\_will\\_put\\_public\\_at\\_risk/](http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/yourtown/oxford/16082612.Cuts_to_roads_policing_will_put_public_at_risk/)

Cuts to Police Dog Unit

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-43499514?ns\\_mchannel=social&ns\\_campaign=bbc\\_oxford&ns\\_source=twitter&ns\\_linkname=english\\_regions](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-43499514?ns_mchannel=social&ns_campaign=bbc_oxford&ns_source=twitter&ns_linkname=english_regions)

## Article featuring Reading LPA Commander

[http://www.readingchronicle.co.uk/news/16103447.Rising\\_strain\\_on\\_police\\_resources\\_does\\_not\\_mean\\_public\\_need\\_to\\_be\\_fearful/?ref=twtr](http://www.readingchronicle.co.uk/news/16103447.Rising_strain_on_police_resources_does_not_mean_public_need_to_be_fearful/?ref=twtr)

## Criminal Justice

Chief Crown Prosecutor for Thames and Chiltern says that the CPS and the police are up to the task of maintaining law and order in the face of a rapidly changing world.

[http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/16114019.We\\_need\\_to\\_change\\_to\\_stay\\_ahead\\_of\\_criminals\\_warns\\_Chief\\_Crown\\_Prosecutor/?ref=twtr](http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/16114019.We_need_to_change_to_stay_ahead_of_criminals_warns_Chief_Crown_Prosecutor/?ref=twtr)

## Drug dealing and multi agency response

[http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/16088770.Shocking\\_use\\_of\\_hard\\_drugs\\_in\\_broad\\_daylight\\_needs\\_to\\_be\\_tackled\\_in\\_city\\_centre/?ref=twtr](http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/16088770.Shocking_use_of_hard_drugs_in_broad_daylight_needs_to_be_tackled_in_city_centre/?ref=twtr)

[http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/16116568.New\\_drugs\\_task\\_force\\_set\\_up\\_to\\_reclaim\\_Oxford\\_s\\_streets/](http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/16116568.New_drugs_task_force_set_up_to_reclaim_Oxford_s_streets/)

[http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/16154231.POLICE\\_RAIDS\\_39\\_Enforcement\\_is\\_just\\_one\\_part\\_of\\_the\\_battle\\_against\\_drug\\_crime\\_39\\_/?ref=twtr](http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/16154231.POLICE_RAIDS_39_Enforcement_is_just_one_part_of_the_battle_against_drug_crime_39_/?ref=twtr)

## Oxford men guilty of CSE

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-oxfordshire-41608602>

## Police sorry after breaching court order on CSE case

[http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/16121085.Police\\_sorry\\_after\\_breaching\\_court\\_order\\_on\\_child\\_sex\\_exploitation\\_case/?ref=twtr](http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/16121085.Police_sorry_after_breaching_court_order_on_child_sex_exploitation_case/?ref=twtr)

## Bail article referred to above

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-43589395>

## Article on the return of police helmets

[http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/15986749.Police\\_helmets\\_could\\_return\\_but\\_is\\_it\\_a\\_waste\\_of\\_cash/](http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/15986749.Police_helmets_could_return_but_is_it_a_waste_of_cash/)

<https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/news-and-events/thamesvalley-pcc-news/2018/03/thames-valley-police-to-bring-back-custodian-helmets/>

## Article on taser roll out

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-berkshire-43161805>

## Contact Management System delayed and over budget

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-berkshire-43223285>

## Review of council powers for unauthorised encampments

<https://www.lgcplus.com/services/community-cohesion/review-of-council-powers-over-unauthorised-traveller-sites/7023962.article>

[http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/16141639.TRAVELLERS\\_New\\_powers\\_not\\_the\\_answer\\_says\\_council\\_chief/?ref=twtr](http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/16141639.TRAVELLERS_New_powers_not_the_answer_says_council_chief/?ref=twtr)