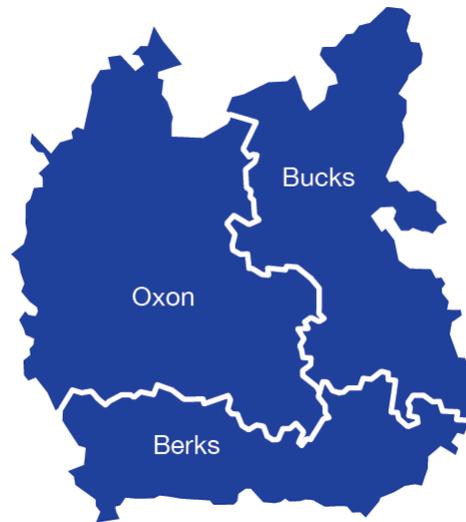


# Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel Agenda

**Date:** Friday 7 September 2018

**Time:** 11.00 am

**Venue:** Olympic Room Aylesbury Vale  
District Council Gatehouse Road  
Aylesbury Bucks HP19 8FF



## Map and Directions

The Briefing Meeting for Members will be held at 10am. There should be sufficient space in the car park at the Council Offices.

<http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/finding-us>

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Declarations of Interest**

**3. Minutes**

To agree the Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 June 2018.

**3 - 12**

**4. Public Question Time**

Anyone who works or lives in the Thames Valley can ask a question at meetings of the Police and Crime Panel, at which a 20 minute session will be designated for hearing from the public.

If you'd like to participate, please read the Public Question Time Scheme and submit your questions by email to [contact@thamesvalleypcp.org.uk](mailto:contact@thamesvalleypcp.org.uk) at least three working days in advance of the meeting.

<http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/article/5242/Public-questions-at-Panel-meetings>

**5. Themed Item - The Governance of the South East Regional**

**13 - 22**

### **Organised Crime Unit (60 Minutes)**

The Panel is being asked to look at the governance of the South East Regional Crime Unit and to assess how the Police and Crime Commissioner holds the Unit to account.

For this item, the Panel will hear from Detective Supt. Jess Wadsworth, Head of South East Regional Crime Unit and Katy Harris, Lead Analyst, South East Regional Crime Unit.

### **6. Performance Report - Police Ethics and Reform - WITHDRAWN**

This item has been withdrawn and will be considered at the Panel's next meeting.

### **7. Chairman and PCC Update (15 Minutes)**

**23 - 32**

To note and ask questions on the topical issues report.

### **8. Work Programme (5 minutes)**

**33 - 34**

For Panel Members to put forward items for the Work Programme including ideas for themed meetings.

### **9. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

To note that the next meeting of the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel will be held at 11.00am on Friday 16 November 2018, at Aylesbury Vale District Council Offices.

## **Committee Members**

Councillor Eric Batts (Vale of White Horse), Bill Bendyshe-Brown (Buckinghamshire County Council), Councillor Robin Bradburn (Milton Keynes District Council), Councillor David Carroll (Wycombe District Council), Councillor Derek Sharp (Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead), Councillor Emily Culverhouse (Chiltern District Council), Councillor Trevor Egleton (South Bucks District Council), Julia Girling (Independent Member), Councillor Tom Hayes (Oxford City Council), Councillor Sophia James (Reading Borough Council), Councillor Norman MacRae (West Oxfordshire), Councillor Kieron Mallon (Oxfordshire County Council), Councillor Pavitar Mann (Slough Borough Council), Curtis-James Marshall (Independent Member), Councillor Iain McCracken (Bracknell Forest Council), Councillor Andrew McHugh (Cherwell District Council), Councillor Barrie Patman (Wokingham Borough Council), Councillor Alan Thompson (South Oxfordshire), Councillor Emma Webster (West Berkshire Council) and Councillor Mark Winn (Aylesbury Vale District Council)

# Minutes

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**Minutes of the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel held on Friday, 22 June 2018, in Olympic Room Aylesbury Vale District Council Gatehouse Road Aylesbury Bucks HP19 8FF, commencing at 11.10 am and concluding at 1.15 pm.**

## **Members Present**

Councillor Eric Batts (Vale of White Horse), Bill Bendyshe-Brown (Buckinghamshire County Council), Councillor Robin Bradburn (Milton Keynes District Council), Councillor Trevor Egleton (South Bucks District Council), Julia Girling (Independent Member), Cllr Tom Hayes (Oxford City Council), Councillor Sophia James (Reading Borough Council), Councillor Kieron Mallon (Oxfordshire County Council), Curtis-James Marshall (Independent Member), Councillor Andrew McHugh (Cherwell District Council), Councillor Barrie Patman (Wokingham Borough Council) and Cllr Emma Webster (West Berkshire Council).

## **Officers Present**

Khalid Ahmed (Scrutiny Officer).

## **Others Present**

Matthew Barber (Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner), Francis Habgood (Chief Constable, Thames Valley Police), Paul Hammond (Chief Executive, Office of PCC), Ian Thompson (Chief Finance Officer, Office of PCC), and Anthony Stansfeld (Police and Crime Commissioner).

## **Apologies**

Councillor David Carroll (Wycombe District Council), Councillor Derek Sharp (Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead), Councillor Emily Culverhouse (Chiltern District Council), Councillor Angela Macpherson (Aylesbury Vale District Council), Councillor Norman MacRae (West Oxfordshire), Councillor Pavitar Mann (Slough Borough Council), Councillor Iain McCracken (Bracknell Forest Council) and Councillor Alan Thompson (South Oxfordshire).

## **1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

That Cllr Egleton be elected as Chairman to the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel for the ensuing Year.

## **2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

That Cllr Mallon be appointed as the Vice-Chairman of the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel for the ensuing year.

## **3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Hayes declared a Personal Interest as a trustee of a charity that delivers independent trauma advice in Oxford.

Cllr Webster declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 7 – PCC Annual Report, as she was a Member of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority.

## **WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS**

The Chairman welcomed the following new Members who had been appointed to the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel:

Cllr Robin Bradburn from Milton Keynes Council,  
Cllr Sonia James from Reading Borough Council  
Cllr Andrew McHugh from Cherwell District Council  
Cllr Alan Thompson from South Oxfordshire District Council  
Cllr Eric Batts from Vale of White Horse District Council  
Cllr Norman MacRae from West Oxfordshire District Council  
Cllr David Carroll from Wycombe District Council.

The Chairman also wished to place on record thanks to those Members who had departed from the Panel.

## **4 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel meeting held on 20 April 2018 and the Confirmation Hearing meeting held on 20 April 2018 were agreed as correct records.

[In relation to Minute No.159 – Chairman/PCC Update, the Panel was informed that the actions requested in relation to the Panel and the PCC responding to the consultation on the Government review of Council powers for unauthorised encampments had been carried out. A copy of the Panel's response would be circulated to Members. In addition, the draft protocol on unauthorised encampments which had been considered at a meeting between the Chief Constable and Chief Executives from each local authority in Thames Valley had been circulated to Panel Members.

**Action: Scrutiny Officer**

In relation to Minute No.161 – Police and Crime Plan – Performance, the Chief Finance Officer of the PCC reported that he would update Members on the initiative whereby partner agencies could obtain grant monies from the PCC (out of a budget allocation of £400,000 for 2018/19) to help the PCC deliver against areas within the Police and Crime Plan which were currently identified as gaps.

In relation to Minute No.161 – Police and Crime Plan – Performance, the Scrutiny Officer reported that information which had been requested on Camden Council's coercive control campaign which was being utilised by the OPCC had been circulated to Panel Members.]

## **5 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

The Scrutiny Officer for the Panel reported that work on improving public participation and engagement in Panel meetings would take place for future meetings, with greater use of social media to publicise the role of the Panel and to promote public questions.

## **6 PCC ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18**

Under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Police and Crime Commissioner was required to produce and publish an Annual Report which summarised the exercise of the PCC's functions in each financial year and the progress which had been made in the financial year in meeting the objectives contained in the PCC's Police and Crime Plan.

The PCC and the Deputy PCC and the Chief Constable were in attendance for this item.

The PCC introduced the report and informed the Panel that his current Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021 had been informed by a broad range of information which was reflected in five key priority areas:

- Vulnerability
- Prevention and early intervention
- Reducing re-offending
- Serious organised crime and terrorism
- Police judgment and reform

The PCC reported that budgetary constraints continued to be a big issue and this had an effect on how we policed and police numbers. There was an inadequate pool of funding nationally and funding between forces was inequitable. Reference was made to an article in last week's Sunday Times on police performance and detection rates, where Durham Constabulary excelled in terms of crime detection rates. The PCC commented that if he had the same level of funding as Durham he would be able to afford 1500 more police officers which would improve crime detection in the Thames Valley.

From the government grant money which was distributed from the Ministry of Justice, the PCC had set up a hub for victims support services, which was called Victims First, and which had been up and running from 26<sup>th</sup> March this year and would be developed further.

Reference was made to the Home Office encouragement for PCCs to seek to take overall responsibility for the governance of their local fire and rescue services. The Panel was informed that at the present time there would be no proposal from the PCC to make governance changes to the fire and rescue services in the Thames Valley. This was due to the complexities involved in having three county fire services within the Thames Valley as opposed to the one that most other force areas had. The PCC reported that he believed that rationalisation of the three services into one would happen eventually as there would be substantial operational and efficiency savings to be made by combining them into one 'Thames Valley' fire and rescue service, and integrating their operational support services and management systems with the Thames Valley Police support systems.

A major event in Thames Valley was the recent Royal Wedding. It had been a huge undertaking which was carried out impressively by the Police, with Assistant Chief Constable, James Hardcastle being the lead on this, working with many agencies to ensure a successful and secure day was had by the many visitors to Windsor on the day.

The PCC also referred to the President of the United States' visit to this country which would impact on Thames Valley Police, and another smaller Royal Wedding planned for later in the year.

The Royal Wedding cost TVP around £2-3m and under the Home Office rules, a claim could only be put in if it was equivalent to at least 1% of the annual Force budget, i.e. around £4m. However, the Force had been assured by the Home Office that it would be allowed to combine this cost with other claims this year such as the policing cost of the forthcoming presidential visit and Royal Wedding, which would both impact on the Thames Valley and the finances of the Force. It would be hoped that the

Home Office would look at this aggregated claim favourably.

The introduction of custodian helmets had been well received, by both police officers and the general public, improving the visibility and presence of the Police.

In relation to the PCC's progress in meeting his objectives contained in the Police and Crime Plan and performance in particular, the PCC reported that there had been an 8.7% increase in crime in the Thames Valley, compared to nationally of 15%. There were 44,000 less crimes than there were 10 years ago and 58,000 less offences, compared to 15 years ago.

For crimes of violence against individuals, there was a worrying increase to 12.5%, but well below the national average. Sexual offences increased by 9.7%, compared to a 25% increase nationally. The PCC reported that a cause for concern was an increase in burglary by 9% which was just below the national average. An explanation for this was the changing criteria for the classification of crimes with for example burglaries now including garages and garden sheds.

A worrying increase was serious weapon offences, which had increased by 13%, but less than the national average increase of 25%. A reason for this was the running of crime out of "county lines" and the success of "stop and search", which when used properly and fairly, and with sound judgment increased the detection of such crimes. The Deputy Chief Constable had reminded all Local Police Area Commanders of the importance of using "stop and search" correctly.

In relation to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) annual inspection, TVP received a grade of "Outstanding" in terms of efficiency, "Good" for effectiveness and "Good" for legitimacy. These were the best overall results in terms of inspections for any police force in the country, with the exception of the better funded Durham.

The PCC expressed his concerns regarding crime reporting and gave an example of an anti-social behaviour incident which involved damage to several vehicles, having to be recorded as several separate crimes. Another example referred to a woman who had been enslaved, with a number of serious offences committed against her, which included several rapes. The Police were criticised for not recording every serious offence which had occurred. The PCC commented that crime reporting needed to be more realistic.

The PCC reported that with the new Home Secretary and with a Government comprehensive spending review taking place at the end of the year, this represented an opportunity for a strong case to be put forward for better funding for policing. Extra funding was needed to get more officers on the ground.

### Panel Questions

1. In relation to Cherwell, there had been an increase in drug offences, usually along "county lines", and reference was made to drug offences only occurring when police officers were in attendance. In effect, what occurred to be bad news was actually good news. The real scourge for Cherwell was county-lines drugs, which also led to an increase in burglaries. Reference was made to gangs operating from Coventry as well as London.

*The use of "stop and search" was effective in terms of arresting individuals for drug offences. "County Lines" was a huge problem with the Police only able to pick up the junior end of this problem. The major source of the gangs was in major cities. The PCC referred to the calls for legalising cannabis, as a means of controlling drugs and gang crime and commented that he did not agree with these calls, as there would still be gangs dealing in illegal elements of the drug and cited the illegal tobacco trade which had*

*dealings in the black market.*

2. In relation to the crime figures which had recently been released and which were skewed by the crime figures which related to the Metropolitan Police, Greater Manchester Police and West Midland Police, was there a Police Force of a similar size to the Thames Valley, where a comparison could be made, to measure the performance of the Thames Valley Police against this comparable force in terms of size and funding.

*There were seven other similar forces to Thames Valley; Leicestershire, Cambridgeshire, Avon and Somerset, Hertfordshire, Essex, Sussex and Hampshire. In terms of crimes of violence for example, Thames Valley was the lowest in terms of crime. For household burglary, Thames Valley had the second lowest crime figures. Compared to Hampshire for violent crime, there were 5.8 per 1,000 residents for Thames Valley, compared to 11 per 1,000 residents for Hampshire. The PCC said he would circulate these figures to Panel Members.*

**Action: Scrutiny Officer**

3. On page 12 of the report, in relation to “ Rape Investigation”, was the PCC confident that there had been an improvement in the data collection on domestic abuse and rape cases?

*The PCC responded that he hoped so; however, there had been huge issues around disclosure. There had been some high profile cases which had collapsed because of disclosure issues. What was needed were higher convictions in court and for the Police and Crown Prosecution Services to get their acts together and enable juries to have confidence in the evidence before them.*

4. What communication was taking place with PCC colleagues in the West Midlands regarding the trafficking of young people from Birmingham to Oxford for the purpose of Modern Slavery and “drugs-running”?

*The Chief Constable reported that he had spent a day in Oxford with the Team which was dealing with this and they had been given a presentation by the Metropolitan Police who were dealing with Modern Day Slavery. The links with other forces were important and Thames Valley had links with West Midland force and the PCC who were carrying out lots of preventative work around healthy choices in schools, around knife crime and looking at behaviour at schools.*

*The Deputy PCC referred to a meeting he had attended with the Chief Inspector for the new Western Area of London, which covered Hillingdon, Hounslow and Ealing. Work was being carried out around missing persons and “County Lines” and this relationship would prove useful in terms of linking to the Thames Valley*

*The PCC reported that he had not specifically discussed this particular issue with the West Midlands PCC, but he would do so.*

5. In relation to the Government’s new Violent Crime Strategy which acknowledged that prevention and early intervention was the key, what discussions has the PCC had with the Policing Minister regarding the structuring of the £11m Early Intervention Youth Fund.

*The PCC would be commenting on the strategy but had not replied yet.*

6. What was the PCC’s view on the comments by the Chief Constable of the Metropolitan Police that a cut in police funding had led to an increase in violent crime?

*The PCC commented that police cuts had now gone too far, and if the Metropolitan Police was complaining about cuts, there must be an issue. The Chief Constable commented that it was about the Polices' ability to respond to Violent Crime and the changing nature of some of these crimes. Reference was made to "County Lines" and the work which was being carried out in relation to this. "Sexting", grooming on line, that all came under this category and preventative work was needed.*

7. In relation to "County Lines", there was a great emphasis on large towns within the Thames Valley; however "County Lines" affected little districts, such as South Bucks. South Bucks had the second lowest conviction rate in the country, so it was important that smaller districts were not ignored in these initiatives. There were issues with knife crimes and robberies, particularly in the south of the Thames Valley, which were close to the Metropolitan Police area and to Slough. In Aylesbury, for example, there had been some serious violence resulting from gangs along "County Lines".

*Crime was coming out of large towns on "County Lines" and was getting into smaller towns and rural towns. Therefore "County Lines" was also impacting on smaller towns too. It was coming out of London, Birmingham and Liverpool and infiltrating all towns. Drugs were not made locally in small towns, but were being supplied by drug's gangs coming out of major cities, and were being run to these smaller towns.*

8. Reference was made to Hate Crimes, which were not just perpetrated by extremists Islamic groups, but also by the extreme far right, particularly in London. The PCC was asked for details on what was being done to tackle this concern and what resources were being made available to tackle this problem, bearing in mind the Chief Constable's comments regarding stretched resources to tackle other crimes?

*The PCC reported that Hate Crime was a major issue, and that the far right extremist threat, came mainly out of larger cities. However, it was important not to overestimate the threat, but to be aware of it.*

*The Deputy PCC reported that the Police Force had a good grip of this, with each Local Police Area being very much aware of the issue of the far right. There was not a major problem of this in the Thames Valley but the Police took the threat seriously. The Chief Constable commented that of the significant number of hate crimes, there were a number from the far right. The reporting of Hate Crimes needed encouraging but what was being seen, was quite a number of "channel referrals" from the far right, mainly from young impressionable people who might be being influenced. All agencies were picking this up and were aware of this.*

9. There was an issue in Reading around a small Muslim community centre, and the presence of members of the English Defence League. The PCC was asked what was being done to work with the communities affected by racism and hate crimes and also what was being done on building relationships. What was the conviction rate around hate crimes?

*The Deputy PCC reported that the conviction rates of those hate crimes which had got to Court was 90.4%.*

*Regarding the incident in Reading, the Chief Constable reported that hate crimes were being looked at with the Crown Prosecution Service. Initiatives depended on the area and from intelligence from the independent advisory groups in each of the areas. A lot of work was being done through Neighbourhood Teams in terms of building those links and engaging, so confidence could be built to enable people to come forward and report incidents. The Police wanted people to report the cases*

coming forward. Reference was made to information which was available on the Police website on how to report Hate Crimes.

10. A question was asked regarding progress being made on police officer recruitment with the required degree level qualification, and a point was made that ex-servicemen and women must not be overlooked in terms of the qualities they bring, of discipline and understanding. In addition in relation to Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), who were the “eyes and ears” on the ground, there seemed to be a reduction in their numbers and an inability to recruit them.

*The PCC reported that on the recruitment issue, all Police courses for this year were full. The Thames Valley region was an expensive place to live and areas such as Devon and Cornwall were more affordable. With regard to PCSOs, Thames Valley, unlike some Forces had retained these.*

*The Chief Constable informed the Panel that there were significant numbers of people still interested in joining the Police and in the March, April, May period there were over 600 people interested in joining. There was a capacity issue in terms of how many people could be brought through that process and to be tutored and mentored properly on policing. The key issue was retention, what more could the TVP do to retain people. Sometimes there was not much which could be done as people sometimes made life choices. In terms of PCSOs, the reason why their numbers were down was because a number had become full time police officers and because there was a capacity issue of getting the numbers through the door. The only reason PCSOs had been reduced would have been if partners had reduced their 50% funding.*

*There was a misunderstanding on the degree qualification; new recruits were not being made to be degree qualified when coming into policing. What was being said was if you looked at the training which the Police were giving new recruits, in terms of law and procedure, other professions which the Police were interacting with on a daily basis, were degree qualified. If a new recruit came into the Police they would be educated to a degree level equivalent, with the type of training now required. Apprenticeship schemes were topical but there was something about accrediting the work that people in the Police were doing and then rewarding them financially and recognising that in their pay.*

11. In relation to the reporting of domestic abuse, concerns have been previously raised through the Panel and through the Child Sexual Exploitation Sub-Committee, about violence through Forced Marriage. Has there been any work undertaken on repeat domestic abuse under the cover of a marriage, of both men and women, who sometimes do not have the courage to speak out and sometimes where they do not speak the English language.

*The PCC agreed that this was a difficult crime for people to report for fear of being ostracised. It was up to the voluntary organisations who worked in this area to provide the support to enable people to come forward and report these crimes. The Chief Constable referred to Phase III of the TVP’s Hidden Harm campaign which included Forced Marriages, was being launched in a week’s time and work was taking place with partners to reach out to people and to raise awareness. Details of this were available on the TVP website.*

*The PCC informed the Panel that there was an officer within the PCC who was dealing with this who would attend the next Panel meeting.*

**Action: PCC**

12. A question was raised regarding the staffing structure at the Office for the PCC and at the lack of line management responsibilities of the Deputy PCC who had responsibility for Victims First. Should he have line management responsibilities?

*The PCC reported that the line management of the officers of the PCC was carried out by the Chief Executive as directed by legislation and as the statutory Head of Paid Service. The Deputy PCC does not line manage; he had a whole raft of responsibilities which were clearly laid out.*

**RESOLVED**

**That a letter be sent to the OPCC in accordance with Section 28(4) of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 to review, report and make recommendations regarding the PCC's Annual Report 2017/18.**

**7 UPDATE ON COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIPS**

The report submitted to the Panel provided Members with feedback from Local Community Safety Partnerships across the Thames Valley.

In response to a question from a Panel Member, the PCC commented that it was important to know what was being done with the funding given to CSPs but overall he was happy with the way the model worked.

The Panel noted the report and welcomed all the work which was being carried out across the Thames Valley.

**8 PCP ANNUAL REPORT**

The Chairman thanked the Panel's two Independent Members for their comments which were included in the report, and placed on record the Panel's appreciation for the work they had carried out as Members of the Panel.

**RESOLVED**

**That the Annual Report be adopted and published and that Panel Members submit the Annual Report to their respective Authorities for information.**

**9 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE PANEL'S RULES OF PROCEDURE, PANEL MEMBERSHIP AND BUDGET**

The Panel received the report of the Scrutiny Officer on the Panel rules of procedure, Panel membership and budget. No amendments had been submitted to the rules of procedure.

Discussion took place on the future location and possible broadcasting of meetings of the Panel. The Panel was informed that the present meeting location at Aylesbury Vale District Council had been considered the most accessible for all Members from across Thames Valley. However, the cost of webcasting meetings from "the Oculus" room at Aylesbury was prohibitive.

The Panel was informed that contact had been made with Reading Borough Council who had offered the webcasting and hiring of a room, at a more favourable cost. It was agreed that discussions take place with Aylesbury Vale District Council to negotiate a more cost effective price for Webcasting meetings from "the Oculus" meeting room.

After discussions it was agreed that as a trial, the February budget meeting of the panel be webcasted, and take place at Reading Borough Council offices.

In terms of Membership of the Panel's established Committees, the following memberships were agreed:-

**Preventing CSE Sub-Committee** – Cllr Emma Webster, Cllr Iain McCracken, Cllr Kieron Mallon, Cllr Andrew McHugh, Cllr Sophie James and Julia Girling. (1 vacancy)

Deputies – Curtis James Marshall and 1 vacancy

**Complaints Sub-Committee** – Cllr Emily Culverhouse, Cllr Kieron Mallon, Cllr Bill Bendyshe-Brown, Cllr Eric Batts and Curtis James Marshall. (1 vacancy)

**Budget Task and Finish Group** – Cllr Iain McCracken, Cllr Barrie Patman and Cllr Eric Batts. (2 vacancies)

## RESOLVED

1. That the Panel budget as outlined in the report be approved and Panel membership be agreed as detailed above.
2. That the actions outlined above in relation to the venue and webcasting of future meetings of the Panel be noted.

## 10 TOPICAL ISSUES

Consideration was given to a report by the Scrutiny Officer on Topical Issues. Particular reference was made to the decision that the PCC had agreed to fund a part-time post to be a TVP Single point of contact for taxi-licensing for a year. A Minimum Standards Framework had been produced for the post and had been approved by all Licensing Authorities and it was hoped that this document would be further developed later in the year. The PCC reported that his funding for the post would be for the first year, with the post thereafter to be funded by a financial contribution from local authorities in the Thames Valley. The Panel thanked the PCC.

Reference was made to crime reporting data and the implementation of the TVP's new Contact Management Platform (CMP) system and a request was made for the Panel to look at the impact of the new system once it had bedded in. The PCC reported that he would provide an update and some indicative information to the Panel at the November meeting but a full report would be submitted to the February meeting.

**Action: PCC**

The PCC was requested to provide a report to the November meeting of the Panel on the implications of the new Domestic Violence and Abuse legislation on TVP.

**Action: PCC**

In response to a question from a Member, the PCC reported that that he had offered to meet all MPs of the Thames Valley region and had met all but one. He said he would try again to set a meeting up with the one MP he had not met.

Reference was made to the introduction of the new Police Call Handling System which had been delayed. The PCC in response to a question informed the Panel that the £5m cost for the delay would be jointly funded by TVPCC and Hampshire's PCC. The Chief Constable commented that the system interacted with lots of other systems and work was taking place on the infrastructure for the system

with no completion date until this work was completed. It was agreed that a briefing note be provided for Panel Members on this.

**Action: PCC**

The Member for Reading Borough placed on record her thanks and appreciation to the work of the Police in evacuating people safely from the Oracle Shopping Centre, Reading when a suspicious package had been found.

The PCC updated the Panel on the introduction of custodian police helmets. The cost per helmet was around £30 with a total cost of £35,000. The re-introduction of the helmets had been generally well received by the general public and increased the visibility of the Police.

The PCC referred to the announcement of the proposed merger between Devon and Cornwall and Dorset Police and the opportunities such mergers presented. For example, Forces could utilise centralised specialist capabilities.

## **11 WORK PROGRAMME**

The work programme was noted.

## **12 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was 7 September 2018 at 11.0am at Aylesbury Vale District Council offices.

**CHAIRMAN**

## Report to the Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel

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**Title:** The governance of the South East Regional Organised Crime Unit (SE ROCU)

**Date:** 7 September 2018

**Author:** Khalid Ahmed, Police and Crime Panel Scrutiny Officer, Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel




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### Objective of the item

The reason for this item is to look at the governance of the South East Regional Crime Unit (SE ROCU) and how the Police and Crime Commissioner holds the SEROCU) to account.

The Panel will receive presentations which will provide the following:

- An overview of SEROCU to find out what services the Unit provides, how it is funded and key issues facing the Unit.
- Performance Monitoring - How the PCC scrutinise operational and financial performance of the Unit.
- A County Lines 'case study' – how this is being managed from the National (National Crime Agency) through the regional (SEROCU) to the local (force and partners)

### Background

Regional organised crime units (ROCU) form a critical part of the national policing network, and their importance is emphasised in the cross-government Serious and Organised Crime Strategy. They provide a range of specialist policing capabilities to forces which help them to tackle serious and organised crime effectively.

These capabilities include undercover policing, specialist surveillance, and cyber-crime investigation. ROCUs investigate and disrupt organised crime groups operating across police force boundaries, and some provide support to investigations into other types of crime such as homicide and kidnap. ROCUs also act as an important point of connection between police forces and the National Crime Agency (NCA). By their nature, many ROCU activities are not carried out in the public eye; they conduct sensitive and sometimes covert operations. Yet their work plays a vital part in protecting the public from serious and organised crime.

## ROCU structures and capability <sup>1</sup>

ROCUs are a vital part of the national response to serious and organised crime. The number of capabilities made available to forces by ROCUs has grown in recent years, and most ROCUs are vastly bigger and better organisations than they were just a few years ago. This process has been led by a small group of chief officers and support staff. The ROCU development programme is now overseen by an executive board.

Most ROCUs have evolved in a piecemeal way since they were created and they continue to develop inconsistently. ROCUs are structured in a variety of different ways, ranging from highly ambitious and effective cross-force collaborative units to smaller scale and less effective arrangements for sharing police force capabilities.

This variation in ROCU structures creates a risk that, in some places, local and regional capabilities are collectively insufficient to counter serious and organised criminal threats effectively, and ensure that forces are meeting their obligations under The Strategic Policing Requirement. It also means that capabilities may be duplicated unnecessarily within forces.

From the HMIC report of November 2015, some ROCUs had yet to implement all of the 13 specialist capabilities which should be considered a minimum expectation. A lack of operational teams in some cases means that ROCUs are instead reliant on forces to provide staff to conduct investigations or surveillance.

HMIC found that some ROCUs lack a clear purpose or vision, and their evolution has been disjointed and inconsistent. Although it is relatively clear what the end result should look like, not all regions have sought or managed to realise this. There are a number of reasons for this – more local collaboration between forces (outside the ROCU network) has been pursued in some areas, while in others progress has been hampered by other factors such as personalities, or other local decisions which have acted against the central vision for ROCUs.

Some forces have been slow or unwilling to commit fully to the regional provision of specialist capabilities. HMIC found that this is especially the case with undercover policing and specialist surveillance as well as operational investigative teams. This has limited the ability of some ROCUs to provide these functions more effectively at a regional level, and means that their full potential is not being harnessed.

ROCUs should be more fully integrated with both the National Crime Agency (NCA) and the national counter-terrorist policing network. Their co-location is an explicit ambition of the Serious and Organised Crime Strategy. Some capabilities, for example specialist surveillance, are used by ROCUs, the NCA and the counter-terrorism network, which creates opportunities for sharing.

Progress has been made, particularly with the NCA, and some alignment of structures and processes has been achieved. Joint management arrangements have been introduced in three regions which assign responsibility for serious and organised crime and counter-terrorism to one chief officer. This joint leadership model would enable fuller exploitation of opportunities for collaboration between those focused on tackling serious and organised crime and those responsible for preventing terrorism.

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<sup>1</sup> HMIC – A review of capability and effectiveness of Regional Organised Crime Units

## **Preventing serious and organised crime**

The main focus of ROCUs is the pursuit and prosecution of organised criminals. However, there is a clear opportunity for them to assume a more active role alongside police forces in preventing serious and organised crime - for example by monitoring organised criminals more closely while they are in prison to reduce re-offending.

ROCUs communicate with the public about serious and organised crime, including through social media. But there is scope for ROCUs to communicate with the public more extensively, either directly or through their constituent forces. This would help to publicise successful operations and provide advice to individuals and businesses about how to protect themselves from serious and organised crime.

## **Serious and organised crime**

Serious and organised crime includes human trafficking, drug trafficking, organised illegal immigration, high value fraud and other serious financial crimes, counterfeiting, organised theft, burglary or robbery and cyber-crime. It is perpetrated by groups of people operating collaboratively on a continuing basis, typically in order to realise substantial financial gain and sometimes with the use of serious violence. These are known as organised crime groups.

Serious and organised crime is the subject of a cross-government strategy, which in addition to the crime types listed above also covers the serious – though not necessarily organised – offences of child sexual exploitation and certain other kinds of fraud. Serious and organised crime is one of several forms of crime which present a serious risk to the UK's national security. In particular, the government has identified organised crime and large-scale cyber-crime as "priority risks" in its National Security Strategy.

Serious and organised crime is also one of six national threats included in The Strategic Policing Requirement, which places a legal obligation upon police forces to have regard to certain national responsibilities in addition to their local priorities. Serious and organised crime poses a threat to the public across the whole of the UK and beyond. Its impact can be felt by individuals, communities and businesses. Tackling serious and organised crime effectively requires the most advanced capabilities within police forces, other law enforcement agencies and wider partner organisations. Increasingly, serious and organised crime is perpetrated online and has an international dimension. It demands a carefully planned and nationally co-ordinated response which includes police forces and the National Crime Agency (NCA) as well as ROCUs and wider partner organisations.

## **Regional organised crime units**

There are ten ROCUs in England and Wales, each of which serves a number of 'constituent' forces ranging from three to six. ROCUs provide police forces with access to a standardised range of 'capabilities' to help them tackle serious and organised crime. These capabilities encompass specialist abilities such as undercover policing, specialist surveillance and cyber-crime investigation. The regional provision of these capabilities can reduce or remove the need for forces to maintain specialist capabilities of their own, many of which are expensive to maintain and only required on relatively rare occasions.

ROCUs are also designed to provide the National Crime Agency (NCA) with a consistent point of connection to police forces. This connection is essential because together police forces, ROCUs

and the NCA form a national policing network. These organisations have been designed to work alongside one another in a co-ordinated way to maximise their collective ability to fight serious and organised crime across the UK and beyond.

Although they are designed to provide the same range of capabilities to police forces, not all ROCUs are the same. They differ not just in terms of their size and structure, but also their purpose and identity. Some ROCUs are large regional entities which are clearly distinct from their constituent forces. Elsewhere, ROCU capabilities are hosted within constituent forces and made accessible to others.

Each ROCU has its own unique characteristics, and community needs may differ across the country. But for ROCUs to be effective, they all need to have developed the full range of capabilities to a consistent standard set by the College of Policing, and to make these accessible to their constituent forces through robust, standardised processes. They need to be structured, organised and led in a way which allows all forces fully to exploit these specialist capabilities. And there needs to be a clear expectation that forces will make active and appropriate use of the regional capabilities that ROCUs provide.

### **Structures and capability**

Although ROCUs were introduced to provide the same services across the country, significant variation exists in their size, structure and capability.

There are several regions consisting of similarly-sized forces, and these tend to include those where regional collaboration arrangements are among the most advanced. ROCUs in these areas, are mature and growing entities – these include the South East ROCU (SEROCU).

ROCUs form part of a national policing network which includes both the National Crime Agency (NCA) and a national network of counter-terrorist policing units. From the HMIC report it was found that opportunities for improved integration between these national networks could be better exploited. From a regional perspective there appeared to be scope for the NCA – along with forces – to play a more active part in supporting the development of ROCUs.

There is a need for the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and the national policing lead to work with the NCA and other partner agencies to co-ordinate the introduction of new capabilities for tackling regional threats so as to minimise duplication, for example. Some work is already underway which aims to identify which police capabilities are best provided nationally, regionally and locally. This is being led by the NPCC, with the support of the Home Office, the NCA and other agencies.

The relationship between local NCA offices and ROCUs is improving, but the exchange of information is not always reliable. This occasionally results in NCA operations taking place in regions of which the relevant ROCU is unaware. Increased co-location of ROCUs, counter-terrorism policing units and NCA offices is an explicit ambition within the Serious and Organised Crime Strategy.

### **Funding**

Approximately 22 percent of ROCU funding comes from an annual grant provided by the Home Office, and around 78 percent is contributed by their constituent forces, although a number of

smaller, temporary funding sources exist for specific projects, such as cyber-crime and asset confiscation enforcement.

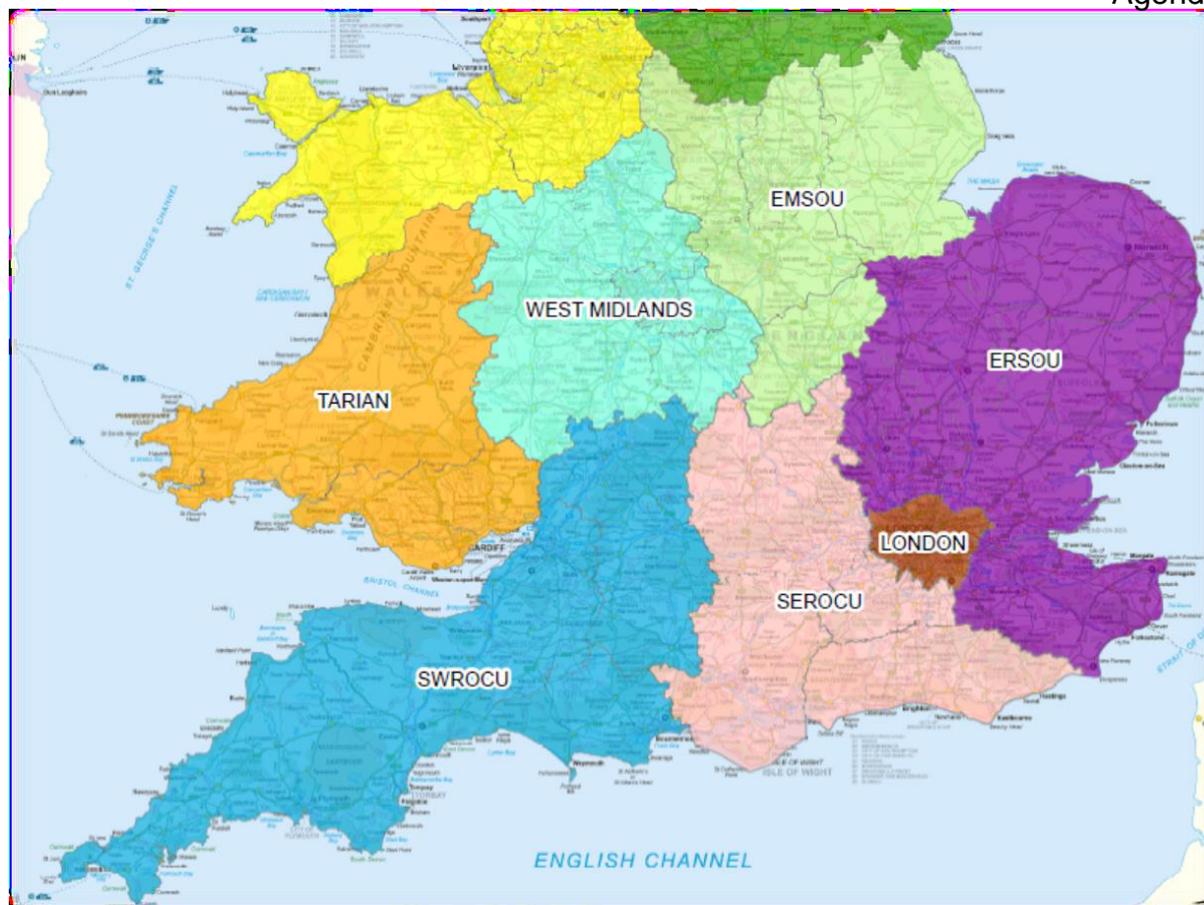
Investment into serious and organised crime is only a small part of the total investment of forces and police and crime commissioners, as most policing activity under the 'pursue' strand of the government's Serious and Organised Crime Strategy is carried out at local force level. All ROCUs reported to HMIC inspectors that the current ROCU funding model makes it difficult for them to make long-term plans. This is primarily because the Home Office grant for ROCUs is an annual settlement, so ROCUs are not certain how much they will receive beyond the financial year.

ROCU leaders believe that the annual funding settlement creates uncertainty and inhibits essential long-term projects including estate planning, recruitment and retention of staff and IT development. In order to tackle serious and organised crime effectively, there is a clear need for ROCUs to anticipate future threats and continually develop new, innovative capabilities which are aligned to those of the NCA, police forces and partner organisations. In order to support this long-term development, the Home Office should assess the benefits and viability of a longer-term funding settlement for ROCUs. This type of settlement could give greater certainty and help ROCUs to plan more effectively for the longer term.

### **South East Regional Organised Crime Unit (SE ROCU)**

SEROCU is a force which currently delivers all 13 ROCU capabilities, and is under the command of a dedicated chief officer. Four of the forces in the South East region effectively commission ROCU capabilities from the fifth (Thames Valley Police). All officers and staff working within SEROCU are employed by (and thus under the Direction and Control of the chief constable of) Thames Valley Police.

In addition, although the Thames Valley PCC has responsibility for holding the TVP Chief Constable to account for policing services provided by TVP including the SEROCU which the force hosts, the four other PCCs also provide formal oversight and scrutiny through regular regional governance board meetings.



SEROCU has responsibility to protect communities in the South East from serious organised crime. The aim of the unit is to create a cohesive regional response to serious organised crime aligned to the current Counter Terrorism Policing, South East.

Delivering enhanced interoperability and resilience across the regions supporting police forces in Hampshire, Surrey, Sussex and Thames Valley, as well as national agencies and capabilities.

The South East Regional Organised Crime Unit (SEROCU) brings together the current regional organised crime units under the one structure:

- Regional Investigation Unit
- Regional Asset Recovery Unit
- Regional Intelligence Unit
- Regional Protected Persons Unit
- ACPO Regional Cyber Crime Unit

There are a number of other specialist units within SEROCU dealing with specialist functions. SEROCU is enhanced through a joint management of assets and flexibility in tasking. In particular enhancements to capability from new growth areas would be maximised.

### Structure

From April 1 2014, the South East Regional Organised Crime Unit was aligned to Counter Terrorism Policing South East with Thames Valley Police as the host Force for both functions

## **Government Agency Intelligence Network (GAIN)**

One vehicle for exchanging intelligence with partner organisations is the Government Agency Intelligence Network (GAIN), a group of approximately 20 national bodies including the police, law enforcement agencies and bodies such as Trading Standards and the Environment Agency, as well as other organisations with whom SE ROCU has built a local relationship.

GAIN enables ROCUs and police forces to access valuable information about organised criminals, and helps partner agencies to understand the threat that they face from serious and organised crime. It also gives them the ability to draw on powers belonging to partner organisations – for example HMRC – in order to disrupt organised crime groups (OCGs).

The GAIN network relies upon local information sharing and problem solving but it is also dependant on national relationships.

### **“County Lines”**

The National Crime Agency (NCA) has found that the use of ‘county lines’ by gangs, is a growing issue, and is exploiting ever-younger victims. County lines exploitation describes how gangs from large urban areas supply drugs to suburban and rural locations; using vulnerable children and young people to courier drugs and money.

The definition of County lines was first identified in 2014, and in 2016 it was updated and highlighted how county lines exploitation remains a widespread issue and a key driver of criminality and violence.

Typically, gangs use mobile phone lines to facilitate drug orders and supply to users. They also use local property as a base; these often belong to a vulnerable adult and are obtained through force or coercion (known as ‘cuckooing’). It is also found that the age of those involved is getting younger, with children as young as 12 being targeted. Gangs ‘recruit’ through deception, intimidation, violence, debt bondage and/or grooming into drug use and/or child sexual exploitation.

### **Examples of what other PCCs are doing in relation to the war on drugs**

#### **West Midlands:**

Drugs related issues facing the West Midlands:

- 22,500 heroin and crack cocaine users in West Midlands are estimated to be costing the area £1.4bn per year.
- The average user not in treatment commits crime costing £26,074 per year. The annual cost of each problematic drug user is estimated at £62,320.
- Half of all burglary, theft shoplifting and robbery is committed by people who use heroin, crack cocaine or powder cocaine regularly. This represents 1 in 5 crimes reported to West Midlands Police.
- 701 discarded needles were recorded by local councils in the West Midlands in 2016.
- 1 in 5 prisoners who report using heroin tried it for the first time in prison.
- Every three days someone in the West Midlands dies from drug poisoning.

- An estimated 22,500 children in the West Midlands have a parent or parents with serious drug problems.
- Most organised crime groups in the West Midlands are heavily involved in the drugs trade worth approximately £188m. Organised Crime Groups involved in drugs trade are likely to have international links, also likely to be involved with firearms, theft, sexual offences, money laundering, etc.

Evidence shows that there is no link between levels of enforcement and levels of drug use. Police will keep responding to crimes, but also recognise that preventing crime is the best way to protect people.

West Midlands PCC hosted a Drugs Policy Summit in December 2017, which included representatives from the Police, Public Health England, Prison Service, Councils, Parliament and other organisations. This included presentations, Q&A sessions and roundtable discussions focusing on new solutions for reducing the harm caused by drugs in the West Midlands.

Following the Summit, the PCC Proposals Report was published in February 2018. Proposals included in the Report included:

- A scheme to divert those suffering from addiction into treatment and away from courts.
- To join up police, community safety and public health funding to increase efficiency and improve outcomes for those suffering from addiction.
- To prescribe heroin in a medical setting to take the market away from organised criminals and stop stealing to fund addiction.
- To equip and train officers to use naloxone which can help stop overdosing.
- To establish a Drug Early Warning Programme to make the public, outreach workers and medical professionals aware of emerging drugs.
- To introduce on-site testing in night time economy areas.
- To consider benefits of Drug Consumption Rooms to allow people suffering from addiction to access clean equipment, medical support and treatment services.
- To ensure more money is seized from organised criminal gangs profiting from drugs, and invest money in drug treatment programmes.

## **Durham**

The PCC hosted an international symposium about the future of drug policy in the UK in July 2017, featuring speakers from a range of sectors including policing, health, prisons, courts, politics, academia and the third sector.

A document “Towards a Safer Drug Policy” was published in July 2017 including the following suggestions for reforming drug policy:

- Review the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and UK Drug Policy – promote a policy which is evidence-based and achieves better outcomes.
- Ensure the approach is based on evidence – ensure decisions are based on facts to create cost-effective policies.

- Support fully funded effective education and prevention – prevention measures with a strong evidence base need to be promoted in schools and in the community.
- Develop effective responses to reduce harm – current policy has not been effective in reducing harm. Policies should minimise the social, psychological and physical harm to users of drugs and society.
- Promote cost-effective specialist drug treatment and recovery as a proven way to reduce crime and make communities safer – encourage and support people to receive treatment and recover from their addiction.
- Protect vulnerable people by supporting alternatives to the criminalisation of people who use drugs and focus efforts on tackling organised crime groups – find alternatives to punishment and protect vulnerable drug addicts and their families. Must intervene at the earliest opportunity to improve life chances whilst focusing resources on tackling organised crime groups.

## **Derbyshire**

The PCC for Derbyshire hosted a multi-agency drugs conference on 25 June 2015 including academics, health leads, and practitioners working in drugs and substance abuse. 91% of the 100 delegates attending agreed that the current UK drugs policy was not working.

PCC believes that the best way forward is to concentrate on harm reduction and helping people gripped by addiction to rebuild their lives. The PCC called for a two fold focus- helping people contribute to society as well as keeping the streets free of crime and drugs, which cannot be achieved through enforcement alone.

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## Report to the Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel

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**Title:** Topical Issues

**Date:** 7 September 2018

**Author:** Khalid Ahmed, Scrutiny Officer,  
Thames Valley Police & Crime  
Panel



### **Anti-knife crime lessons ahead of summer holidays**

Almost 50,000 personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) and KS3 to KS4 teachers have received lesson plans which challenge the myths and communicate the consequences of carrying a knife.

The bespoke hour-long lessons, created in partnership with the PSHE Association, will support teachers and organisations working with 11 to 16 year olds, educating them about the dangers of social media, the impact carrying a knife could have on their future, and how they can develop strategies to resist peer influence.

This action forms the latest part of the Home Office's #knifefree campaign and contributes to the government's £40 million serious violence strategy to tackle the rise in serious violence and the start of an ongoing plan to engage with schools and youth organisations on knife crime.

### **Early Intervention Youth Fund will now receive £22m to support community projects**

The Home Secretary has announced increased funding for a scheme to steer young people away from crime following a sharp rise in murders, stabbings and robberies. Sajid Javid said the cash available to the Early Intervention Youth Fund – part of the government's serious violence strategy – would be doubled from £11m to £22m.

The additional cash comes as police-recorded crime in England and Wales hit the highest level in more than a decade. In the 12 months to March, forces logged 5.5 million crimes – a rise of 11 per cent compared with the previous year, and the highest tally for an equivalent period since 2005-06. The number of recorded homicides increased by 12 per cent in 2017-18 from the previous year, from 627 to 701. Police registered 40,147 offences involving a knife or sharp instrument – a 16 per cent rise and the highest number since the start of the decade.

Data released by the Office for National Statistics on 19 July also found that the proportion of recorded crimes that result in a charge or summons has fallen below one in 10, while officer numbers are the lowest in at least 22 years.

### **Home Office awards over £100 million to police transformation projects**

The Police Transformation Fund was launched in 2016 to prepare police to respond to changing crime threats and invest in digital technology. The government is investing more than £100 million of the Police Transformation Fund (PTF) in projects designed to prepare police forces to adapt to the challenges of the future.

The Home Secretary has approved up to £70 million for investment in 2018/19 in four national major police-led programmes covering forces in England and Wales and to manage the portfolio of projects to ensure maximum benefits are shared among forces.

The programmes will transform how police use technology, make it easier for the public to engage with police online, and boost capacity to deal with major threats.

Altogether this will help support the police in preventing and combating existing serious crime and being better equipped to deal with new types of crime.

The Home Office also announced 15 successful bids to the fund, totaling £42.7 million across 2018/19 and 2019/20. Thames Valley Police received £362k towards the Pay and Reward Framework.

The four police-led national programmes, which are already underway, include:

- The National Enabling Programme: this will deliver a unified IT system across policing and deliver more joined-up working within and between forces. In Cumbria, for example, cloud-based note-taking technology allows officers preparing to question suspects in custody to view real-time information from victim interviews being conducted by other officers elsewhere, improving the response offered to those affected by crime.
- Specialist Capabilities Programme: this will improve force-to-force resource sharing in key crime areas like roads policing and armed policing. In cyber-crime, for example, the programme seeks to ensure forces can tackle digitally-dependent crime, with oversight provided through regional organised crime units (ROCs).
- The Digital Policing Portfolio: this aims to improve police's use of technology, including by creating a single online hub. The hub allows members of the public to report low-level incidents – such as minor road collisions – online rather than having an officer manually record the information at their local station, providing a better service to the public and improving efficiency for the force.
- Transforming Forensics: this will improve how biometric services and digital forensics are used, including the development of a 24/7, faster, fingerprint identification service.

The national programmes are expected to deliver cash savings, as well as improving efficiency by, for example, freeing up officers for frontline policing roles. Funding will be released in stages to the programmes subject to progress in delivery to provide ongoing assurance of this major investment.

### **The UK's modern slavery legislation is to be reviewed as criminal gangs find new ways to exploit victims**

Laws introduced in 2015 included tougher sentences and more help for people forced into labouring, domestic servitude, sex work and other tasks. Ministers say about 600 investigations

are now taking place into offences. The government also wants businesses to do more to tackle modern slavery in their supply chains.

The Home Office says research has found modern slavery costs the UK up to £4.3bn a year - made up of victim support, victims' lost earnings and law enforcement. It said officials were seeing new forms of exploitation that fell under the definition of modern slavery such as children being forced to commit crimes for gangs and the recruitment of rough sleepers.

A spokesperson said: "The criminal networks that recruit and control victims are constantly adapting and finding new ways to exploit victims, and the commissioning of this independent review is an opportunity to enhance the UK's legislation to effectively tackle this issue.

"Key areas of focus for the review will be developing an understanding on the nature of modern slavery offences, the provisions around legal access and compensation to victims and improving the support given to child victims."

Victoria Atkins, Minister for Crime Safeguarding and Vulnerability, said: "It is our responsibility as citizens, businesses and governments to do all we can to stop exploitation. This independent review will help us identify what more we can do to tackle this terrible, global injustice by enhancing the Modern Slavery Act where necessary."

While the majority of regulations in the **Modern Slavery Act 2015** only cover England and Wales, certain areas - including protections for overseas domestic workers and rules relating to business transparency - do extend to Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The transparency provision requires companies with an annual turnover of more than £36m to publish a statement on their website outlining what they are doing to prevent and tackle modern slavery.

The Home Office said the review will look at what can be done to strengthen the legislation to "minimise the risk that the goods and services available in the UK are produced through forced labour and slavery". It also said there will be further funding of £2m for a scheme that works with trafficked child victims of modern slavery, in partnership with the charity Barnardo's.

The scheme will begin in the West Midlands in the autumn, joining existing projects in Greater Manchester, Hampshire and Wales.

### **Crime Figures**

Only 9% of crimes end with suspects being charged or summonsed in England and Wales, Home Office figures suggest. In the 12 months to March, 443,000 crimes resulted in a charge or summons out of 4.6 million offences - the lowest detection rate since 2015.

Data also shows police closed nearly half (48%) of all cases because no suspect could be identified.

The Home Office statistics on crime outcomes are published at the same time as quarterly crime figures and the Crime Survey for England and Wales, which is based on people's experiences of crime.

Overall, crimes recorded by police went up 11% in the year to March according to figures published by the Office for National Statistics. The Home Office said that along with a growing caseload, there was evidence to suggest that more recorded crimes were in the most challenging offence types to investigate.

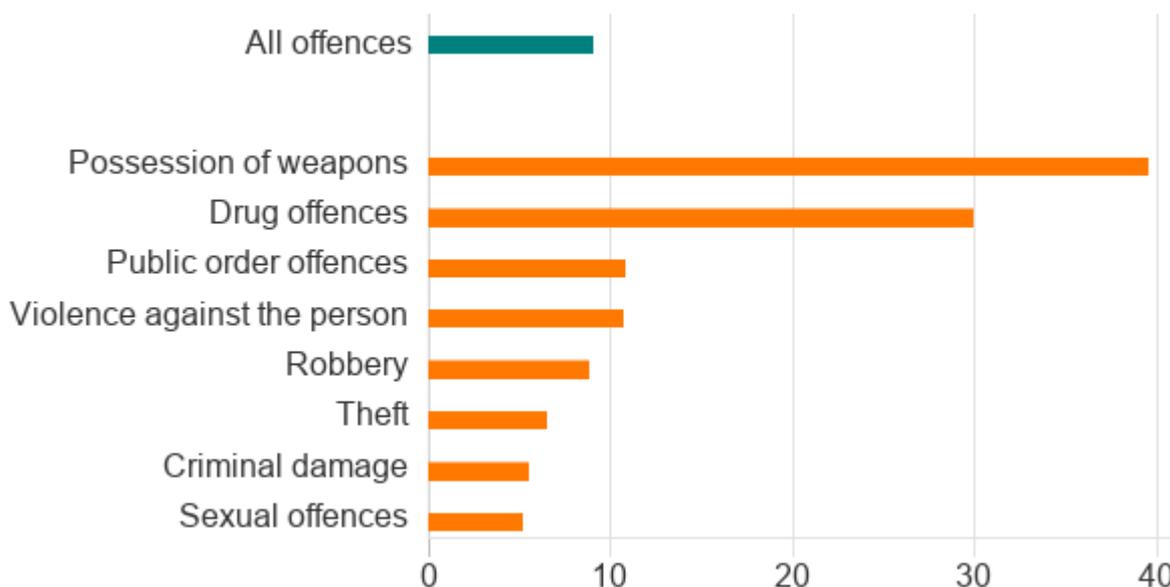
It gives the example of sexual offences - up 24% on last year - giving officers a bigger workload and becoming more complex. Rape cases take an average of 129 days to solve compared with, for example, two days for theft or criminal damage.

The Home Office figures show a continuing downward trend since 2015 in the proportion of cases police have resolved, falling from 15 to 9%.

They also showed a fall in the number of cautions and penalty notices served to adults and young people - from about 112,000 in the 12 months to March 2017 down to 88,000 a year later.

## Proportion of offences resulting in charges (%)

Year ending March 2018 in England and Wales



Source: Home Office, Crime outcomes in England and Wales



Other notable findings from the Home Office include:

- In **sexual offence** cases, only 5% resulted in someone being charged or summonsed
- That figure falls to 3% for **rape** cases. In about a third (34%) of rape cases, the victim did not want to take the case to its conclusion
- In all, one in five cases went unresolved because the victim did not support action, usually meaning they did not want to go through the courts
- Three quarters of **theft** cases were closed with no suspect identified
- This was also the case in more than half (57%) of **robberies**, including **muggings**

### **Thames Valley courts custody staff 'too stretched'**

HM Inspectorate of Prisons said services provided by private contractor GEOAmev suffered from "insufficient staffing" and "inadequate training". A report from an unannounced inspection in March said many detainees were held in "unacceptable conditions". But inspectors added they also found "positive features" during the visit.

GEOAmev, which provides court custody and escort facilities in the region, is contracted by the Prison Escort and Custody Services arm of the prison service, on behalf of HM Courts.

Despite managers' ambitions to improve outcomes for detainees and willingness among staff, their ambitions were not always achieved, inspectors said.

Among the main areas for concern were inadequate staffing of court docks and supervision of legal visits. The report said risk assessments for those sharing cells were not always carried out and there was not enough focus on whether vulnerable detainees could get home safely after being released. It said detainees, including children, were routinely handcuffed and cells were dirty and covered in graffiti.

The Thames Valley "cluster", which covers Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire, includes 10 courts with custody facilities - four crown and six magistrates' courts.

### **Police and Recording of Crime in Lincolnshire**

Nearly 10,000 crimes, including violent crimes, sexual offences and domestic abuse, have gone unrecorded by a UK police force over the course of a year, the police watchdog has said. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) found that nearly one in five crimes reported to Lincolnshire police were undocumented, potentially leaving some victims shut out from support services.

The issue was "of very great concern", the inspector of constabulary, Zoë Billingham, said. "Although safeguarding measures were in place for many of the victims of crimes, there was little evidence of investigations being undertaken where the crime had not made it on to the books. This is particularly true for cases of domestic abuse. "The importance of correctly recording crime cannot be overlooked, or simply passed off as a bureaucratic measure. If a force does not correctly record crime, it cannot properly understand the demand on its services, nor provide support to those who need it most."

Victims can only access certain support services when a crime is recorded and a lack of accurate statistics can leave senior officers with insufficient information when allocating resources.

The watchdog examined records from the period 1 June to 30 November 2017 and estimated that about 9,400 reported crimes were not recorded per year – more than 18% of the total reported to Lincolnshire police.

The report said a "large proportion of common assaults and malicious communication offences and a small number of more serious crimes, including sexual offences, grievous bodily harm and rape", were not recorded.

Of particular concern was violent crime, where only 72.7% of reported incidents were recorded, with some crimes of grievous bodily harm and wounding where victims were badly injured not being properly documented.

Lincolnshire police's deputy chief constable, Craig Naylor, said measures had been put in place to improve recording and insisted the force's "service has not slipped".

### **New legislation could help tackle surge in officer assaults**

Police officers across the Thames Valley faced nearly 800 assaults last year. Data from the Home Office shows that between April 2017 and March 2018, there were 794 assaults against officers of Thames Valley Police, of which 116 caused injuries.

This year is the first time that assaults causing injury to police officers have been recorded separately from those against members of the public.

A new law is to be introduced in the coming months that is likely to see harsher sentences handed down to people who assault emergency workers. **The Assaults on Emergency Workers (Offences) Bill**, which will be passed into law this autumn, will allow judges to take into account that the assault was committed against an emergency worker when sentencing offenders.

There are currently 260 frontline officers trained to use the protective weapons, but a surge in brutality towards staff will see a 50 per cent rise from Thames Valley Police.

Thames Valley Police is set to Taser-train 130 response officers to tackle the surge in the assaults, a measure which has been welcomed by the federation.

### **Significant increase in knife crime**

The number of people Thames Valley Police have arrested for carrying a knife or blade has doubled over the course of five years. A Freedom of Information request sent to the force by the Oxford Mail revealed that officers arrested 651 people for carrying a knife or 'bladed article' in 2017, up from 328 in 2013.

Out of a total of 2,746 arrests from 2013 to June 30 of this year, 664 were in Oxfordshire. Of those, 313 were in Oxford - the second highest figure for an area in the region after Milton Keynes.

The figures have sparked concerns around rising levels of violent crime but the force has put at least some of it down to its own proactivity.

Police spokesman Jack Abell said: "Arrests for these offences are often driven by police proactivity.

"These statistics also represent cases where the reason for arrest was recorded as either possession of a knife blade/sharp pointed article in a public place or on school premises.

"Ultimately they may not have ended up as a recorded crime following investigation - for example, if the person arrested had a reasonable excuse for carrying the item in question.

"Nationally there has been an increase in knife related crime, and this is reflected in the Thames Valley."

The rising number of arrests is being linked to a general rise in crime - particularly violent crime - both across the country and in the region.

### **Police and Crime Panel Workshop – LGA**

This event was held on 11 July 2018 at Westminster and delegates were provided with the following

- An update from the Home Office
- The new complaints framework
- Learning from Essex on their experience as a new Police, Fire and Crime Panel
- An introduction to the new National Association of Police (Fire) and Crime Panels
- News from the APCC
- Learning from other sectors on successful scrutiny

### **Victims First service launched to support victims of crime in the Thames Valley**

On 26 June 2018, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley launched “Victims First” as a new service for victims of crime in the Thames Valley.

Victims First is available across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire and provides free emotional and therapeutic support to all victims and witnesses of crime, as well as family members of victims if they require it. The service provides support and is available to all victims in the Thames Valley regardless of:

- Crime type
- If the crime has been reported to the police
- Whether they were a victim of a recent or historic crime
- Wherever the crime happened.

The aim of the service is to help people cope and recover from the impact of the crime by ensuring that they have access to a range of services depending on their needs, including:

- Telephone support
- Face to face support
- Advocacy, including, help to access other services such as sexual health clinics, drug and alcohol services and legal services
- Support through the criminal justice system
- Therapeutic counselling

Victims First can provide support to any victim of crime including domestic abuse, sexual violence, stalking, harassment, cyber-crime, fraud, theft, burglary and exploitation. When a victim contacts Victims First they are allocated a Victims First Officer who will discuss, over the phone, the impact of the crime on them and their emotional or practical needs. They will then work with the victim to put in place a support plan which could involve referral to one of Victims First specialist services for face to face support.

Specialist services include help for both male and females who have been victims of sexual violence and domestic abuse, a Young Victims Service, a Restorative Justice Service and therapeutic counselling. A new service supporting victims of exploitation will also begin in July 2018.

## **FROM THE DEPUTY POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS AUGUST NEWSLETTER**

### **The Herbert Protocol -A new tool to help find missing people with dementia**

A new tool to help find missing people with dementia is being used by Thames Valley Police in partnership with search and rescue teams of Thames Valley. The Herbert Protocol is a form to record key information about a person with dementia. This should be completed by carers or family members in case they go missing. Memory problems are one of a number of symptoms that people with dementia may experience; this can lead to feelings of confusion, fear and vulnerability and consequently can result in a person going missing.

The Herbert Protocol was adopted in January and it is helping to ensure that the police and partner agencies, including the volunteer search and rescue teams, have the best possible information should someone with dementia go missing and a search needs to be conducted to find them. It helps avoid any unnecessary delays as the right information is immediately available. This may include if the person is on medication, favourite places they like to visit or key people they know.

### **New Rural Crime Reporting Line**

The NFU in partnership with Crimestoppers has launched 'The Rural Crime Reporting Line' for farmers and the public to give information anonymously about rural crime. If you have any information about rural crime you can call 0800 783 0137 or by visit [www.ruralcrimereportingline.uk](http://www.ruralcrimereportingline.uk)

Rural crime is on the rise and it is a serious issue for farmers, businesses and those who live in the countryside. Whether it is large-scale, industrial fly-tipping, hare coursing, livestock theft or machinery theft, rural crime has a devastating effect on farms and other rural businesses. Those responsible for this blight on the countryside are suspected of having links to organised crime. It is vital that they are brought to justice.

### **Educating Children about Healthy Relationships**

Thousands of children in Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire will learn from the performance of a special play highlighting what does and doesn't constitute healthy online relationships with people.

The 40-minute play is being staged across the Thames Valley thanks to a £51,000 grant provided by the Police and Crime Commissioner. Pupils will go away from the play with a better understanding of:

- What constitutes a healthy relationship
- Pressure to conform with peer group online
- Risks when sharing inappropriate images online, including online sexual exploitation,

cyber-bullying and other online abusive behaviour

- The impact of online abusive behaviour with a view to developing empathy.
- Coercion and control within online relationships and strategies for managing this.
- Where to go for information and support.

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Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel Work Programme 2018/19

Date	Main Agenda Focus	Other agenda items
2/2	PCC Draft Budget – To review and make recommendations on the proposed precept for 2017/18 and to receive a report from the Budget Task and Finish Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public questions</li> <li>• Annual Assurance Report – Joint Independent Audit Committee</li> <li>• Performance – Prevention and Early intervention</li> <li>• Topical Issues</li> <li>• Complaints Sub</li> <li>• Work Programme</li> </ul>
20/4	PEEL –HMIC Crime Data Integrity report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public questions</li> <li>• Complaints Integrity and Ethics Annual Assurance Report</li> <li>• Performance Report - Reducing Reoffending (link with knife crime?)</li> <li>• Topical Issues</li> <li>• Complaints/Child Sexual Exploitation Sub</li> <li>• Work Programme</li> </ul>
22/6	PCC Annual Report Community Safety Partnerships update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Election of Chairman/ Appt of Vice Chairman</li> <li>• Public questions</li> <li>• Report of the CSE/Complaints Sub Committee</li> <li>• PCP Annual Report</li> <li>• Annual Review of PCP Rules of Procedure and Budget</li> <li>• Topical Issues</li> <li>• Work Programme</li> </ul>

Date	Main Agenda Focus	Other agenda items
7/9	Themed item - Governance of the South East Regional Crime Unit (SEROUCU) to ensure/demonstrate effective scrutiny & accountability of the SEROUCU activities and performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public questions</li> <li>• Performance Report – Police Ethics and Reform (could include review of Contact Management Programme)</li> <li>• Topical Issues</li> <li>• Work Programme</li> </ul>
16/11	Themed item – Review of local policing model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public questions</li> <li>• Performance report – Vulnerability</li> <li>• Update on progress made on Implementation of the TVP’s new Contact Management Platform (CMP)</li> <li>• Topical issues</li> <li>• Work Programme</li> </ul>
1/2	<p>PCC Draft Budget – To review and make recommendations on the proposed precept for 2018/19 and to receive a report from the Budget Task and Finish Group</p> <p>Possible Themed Item – Victims First Scheme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public questions</li> <li>• Report on the implementation of the TVP’s new Contact Management Platform (CMP)</li> <li>• Topical issues</li> <li>• Work Programme</li> </ul>