

Agenda

Date: Friday 23 June 2023

Time: 11.00 am

Venue: The Paralympic Room,
Buckinghamshire Council,
Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury
HP19 8FF



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

Agenda Item	Time	Page No
1	Election of Chair for 2023/24	
2	Appointment of Vice-Chair for 2023/24	
3	Apologies for Absence	
4	Declarations of Interest	
5	Minutes 11.05am To agree the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2023.	5 - 18
6	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 tvpcp@buckinghamshire.gov.uk at least three working days in advance of the meeting.

- 7 Appointment of Independent Co-Opted Member of the Panel**
11.10am
On 28 March 2023, interviews took place for the vacant Independent Co-Opted Member of the Panel and Pamela Mackenzie – Reilly was the successful candidate.
- The Panel is asked to confirm the appointment of Pamela Mackenzie – Reilly as an Independent Co-Opted Member of the Panel.
- 8 Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report 2022/23** **19 - 46**
11.15am
The PCC will present his annual report for 2022/23 and the Panel will ask the PCC to outline progress made in meeting the five priorities outlined in his Police and Criminal Justice Plan 2021-2025.
- 9 Central Vetting Unit** **47 - 56**
12.15pm
At a previous Panel meeting, Members asked for an update on police vetting when in January 2023, the Home Office announced that all police forces must check their workforce against national databases to mitigate against the risk of important information on an individual being missed on their employment.
- The report outlined the current central vetting unit; highlighting structural change, current work streams, current risks, and horizon planning.
- 10 Review of Panel Rules of Procedure, Complaints Procedure, Panel Membership and appointment to Sub-Committee and Task Group** **57 - 92**
12.30pm
The Panel is asked to consider and agree the following:
- 1) That the Rules of Procedure and Panel Arrangements for the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel be approved (as attached in Appendix 1 and 2).**
 - 2) That, subject to the appointment of the Chair of the Panel, consideration be given to the Host Authority for the Panel for 2023/24. (See para. 2)**
 - 3) That the Panel reconfirms the decision that future meetings take place at Buckinghamshire Council's**

Gateway House in Aylesbury.

4) That the Panel makes appointments to the Panel's Complaints Sub Committee (7 Members) and Budget Task and Finish Group (5 Members).

5) That the established Complaints Sub-Committee and Budget Task and Finish Group be agreed with no changes to their terms of reference for the following year (subject to any legislative changes) (Appendix 3 Complaints Procedure).

6) That details of the Home Office Grant received by the Host Authority for 2022/23 be noted. (See para. 5).

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| 11 | Police and Crime Panel's Annual Report 2022/23
12.40pm
The Panel is asked to receive the Panel's Annual Report for 2022/23 which will be published on the Police and Crime Panel's website. | 93 - 110 |
| 12 | Report of the Complaints Sub-Committee
12.45pm
To receive a report of the Panel's Complaints Sub-Committee. | 111 - 112 |
| 13 | Updates from PCC, Chair of the Panel and topical Issues report
12.50pm
The Panel is asked to consider the Topical Issues report prepared by the Panel's Scrutiny Officer and ask questions on any of the issues raised to the PCC.

The PCC and the Chair of the Panel to provide updates if required. | 113 - 120 |
| 14 | Work Programme
13.00pm
For Panel Members to put forward items for the Work Programme including ideas for themed meetings. | 121 - 124 |

Date of next meeting: Friday 15 September 2023

Membership

Councillor Shaista Aziz (Oxford City Council), Councillor Robin Bradburn (Milton Keynes Council), Councillor Peter Brazier (Buckinghamshire Council - co-optee), Councillor Phil Chapman (Cherwell District Council), Councillor David Carroll (Buckinghamshire Council), Councillor Sam Casey-Rerhaye (South Oxfordshire District Council), Councillor Emily Culverhouse (Buckinghamshire Council - co-optee), Councillor Neil Fawcett (Vale of White Horse District Council), Peter Gammond (Co-Opted Independent Member), Councillor Kandy Jefferies (Bracknell Forest Council), Pamela Mackenzie-Reilly (Co-opted Independent Member), Councillor Keith McLean (Milton Keynes Council - co-optee) (Chairman), Councillor Stephen Newton (Wokingham Borough Council), Councillor Vicky Poole (West Berkshire Council), Councillor Simon Rouse (Buckinghamshire Council - co-optee), Councillor Karen Rowland (Reading Borough Council), Councillor Geoff Saul (West Oxfordshire District Council) and Councillor Richard Webber (Oxfordshire County Council).

NB: Vacancies for Members from Slough Borough Council and Windsor and Maidenhead Council.

For further information please contact: Khalid Ahmed on , email tvpcp@buckinghamshire.gov.uk.

Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel held on Friday 24 March 2023 in The Paralympic Room, Buckinghamshire Council, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury HP19 8FF, commencing at 10.30am and concluding at 1.05pm.

Members Present

Councillor Keith McLean (Milton Keynes Council – Co-Opted Member) (Chair), Councillor Balvinder Bains (Slough Borough Council), Councillor Robin Bradburn (Milton Keynes Council), Councillor Peter Brazier (Buckinghamshire Council - Co-Opted Member), Councillor David Cannon (Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead), Councillor Emily Culverhouse (Buckinghamshire Council - Co-Opted Member), Peter Gammond (Independent Co-Opted Member), Councillor Maria Gee (Wokingham Borough Council), Councillor John Harrison (Bracknell Forest Council), Councillor Richard Newcombe (Buckinghamshire Council – Substitute Member), Councillor Simon Rouse (Buckinghamshire Council - Co-Opted Member), Councillor Karen Rowland (Reading Borough Council) and Councillor Howard Woollaston (West Berkshire Council)

Officers Present

Khalid Ahmed (Scrutiny Officer)

Others Present

Matthew Barber (Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner) and John Campbell (Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police).

Member not in attendance

Councillor Diko Walcott (Oxford City Council)

If you have a query please contact Khalid Ahmed, Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel Scrutiny Officer (Tel: 07990 368048; Email: khalid.ahmed@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

Agenda Item

58 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillor David Carroll (Buckinghamshire Council – Councillor Richard Newcombe substituting), Councillor Sam Casey-Rerhaye (South Oxfordshire District Council), Councillor Neil Fawcett (Vale of White Horse District Council), Councillor Eddie Reeves (Cherwell District Council), Councillor Geoff Saul (West Oxfordshire District Council) and Councillor Richard Webber (Oxfordshire County Council).

59 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

60 Community Policing Strategy - Crimefighters Strategy and Community Policing

The PCC submitted a report which outlined the Crimefighters Strategy being implemented in order to build confidence in policing and develop stronger local policing and provided a summary of the activity that has been ongoing under the Neighbourhood Policing and Citizens in Policing portfolios in Thames Valley Police. Included in this report was a forward look at how Community Policing in Thames Valley would be delivered in the future.

Reference was made to the strategy improving public contact which would involve reducing 101 waiting times, the automation of feedback and enabling better digital contact.

The PCC acknowledged the frustration that residents had with the 101 service and that the £6m cost associated with increasing call handlers was not realistic and technology would improve the service. Timescales were on track and work was taking place with technology partners. There would be improvements on feedback to victims of crimes and technology to be used would include webchat, WhatsApp and social media.

The PCC referred to the need to improve Community Policing and capitalising on the record number of police officers in Thames Valley. Further information on the Crimefighters Strategy and how it would be implemented operationally would be provided to the Panel.

On neighbourhood policing, the PCC referred to the Royal Borough of Windsor Council who had invested in four additional police officers to support community safety. Neighbourhood Policing emphasised a local approach to policing that was accessible to the public and responsive to the needs and priorities of communities.

The visibility of police officers was important in terms of building public confidence and encouraging the compliance with the law.

Members' Questions

- (1) Reference was made the PCC's Crime and Justice Plan where a strategic objective was to work together with partners to improve criminal justice. The PCC was asked how was the proposal for the Police to focus on policing rather than dealing with mental health issues going to be implemented?

[The PCC replied that Thames Valley Police covered many areas and that partnerships with mental health partners were complex. There were four Integrated Care Systems which covered the Thames Valley and there were complexities with mental health trusts in Thames Valley. Reference was made to the recent directive from the Department of Health, "Right Care, Right Person", which was a model designed to ensure that when there were concerns for a person's welfare linked to mental health, medical or social care issues, the right person with the right skills,

training and experience would respond. This would enable police officers to deal with policing matters.

In Humberside, conversations had taken place with health bodies who were being encouraged to respond to incidents where mental health was a factor. There were challenges around mental health and more was needed to be done to provide the right care for people.

The PCC referred to children in care who went missing and calls being made to the 101 service for police assistance. The PCC believed, as Corporate Parents, local authorities should be dealing with this. Work needed to take place with partners on this.]

- (2) Reference was made to on-line reporting, which was a good initiative, however, not everyone had access to technology so using the 101 service was their only option. The PCC was asked whether call handlers dealt with calls from a script of prepared questions as there needed to be empathy showed to callers.

[The PCC agreed that not everyone wanted to use technology and acknowledged that there were areas of Thames Valley which were multi-cultural and callers needed assurance and sympathy from call handlers. In the use of WhatsApp there was a translation tool which would be useful as it was recognised that there was crime which went unreported from certain areas of Thames Valley and this initiative would make the police more accessible.

In response to a comment on dropped calls, the PCC reported there were plans to rectify this. Also, residents who had dropped calls and re-dialled lost their place in the queue. This needed to be looked at with the possibility of call backs and referrals.]

- (3) The PCC was asked about data which showed that Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) were down by 37% and there were an increasing number who had left to become police officers. Were there any plans to rectify this by giving PCSOs more powers and responsibilities?

[The PCC replied that PCSO numbers were down and there were many that did leave to become police officers. Recruitment of PCSOs was taking place and it was hoped that in the next 3//4 years PCSOs would be back to full establishment.

The PCC informed the Panel that PCSOs were the bedrock of neighbourhood policing and that they needed more powers. However, the more powers they were given, the less they were PCSOs, so it was important that the right balance was found. Increased responsibility and powers would mean more paperwork and less time spent out in communities. There could be an option of introducing supervisory roles within the role of PCSOs.

The Chief Constable commented that PCSOs were vital to Thames Valley and referred

to mainly younger PCSOs who left the service to become police officers. This required looking at to ensure retention.

- (4) Reference was made to Thames Valley having a low pro rata number of police officers to residents compared to other force areas which was misleading in terms of recent police numbers increasing as the population in Thames Valley had increased.

[The PCC acknowledged the point made, however, in the last 20 years, policing had changed. Frontline police officers now also dealt with cyber crimes and scams. Some Forces had increased their numbers of police officers and put them into civilian posts.

In relation to police officers and the population of the Thames Valley, there were around 10 police officers to every 100,000 residents. There would be a continuing increase in numbers of police officers and making sure they were in appropriate locations.]

- (5) The PCC was asked about the engagement with communities at Parish level which had fallen away since the Pandemic. There used to be informal forums with TVP and Parishes, in which time the number of PCSOs had been reduced.

[The PCC replied that he would have a look into this. There would be a standardisation of increasing community engagement. There were teams good at this and some that were not. There was the need to get back to good neighbourhood teams who would provide crime data for local areas.]

- (6) The PCC was asked whether he was working with other PCCs and the Home Office on looking to address the falling number of PCSOs across the UK (38% down in the last 8 years). Reference was made to the work which local authorities undertook in relation to care workers which included incentivised retention packages.

[The PCC replied that the Home Office was not to blame for the decreasing numbers of PCSOs. The main issue has been the recruitment of more police officers which has had an impact on the number of PCSOs. The retention of PCSOs was a national issue, although some forces have taken the decision to reduce numbers. In Thames Valley there was a commitment to increase the numbers and get back to full establishment.]

- (7) The PCC was asked how would he deal with the challenge of getting low levels crimes reported, particularly against the backdrop of low conviction rates for such crimes?

[The PCC acknowledged that there was a problem around conviction rates, however, it was difficult to compare conviction rates of different crimes. The reality was that historically, the communication of convictions for low level crimes was not

communicated. With the increased use of social media and technology there was more communicated to the public.

Low level crimes were heard at magistrates' courts which often did not get reported. An example was given of criminal damage to vehicles, where the compiling of evidence was difficult if there was damage to several vehicles by one perpetrator and it was difficult to identify all the victims of such incidents.]

RESOLVED -That the reports of the PCC, together with the information provided be noted.

61 Cyber and Digital Investigation & Intelligence

The PCC submitted a report which provided details on cyber and digital investigation and intelligence.

The PCC explained that there was a significant overlap in this area for TVP and regionally. Reference was made to a service plan which had been created to define and focus the priorities and strategies for Thames Valley Police and the Regional Cyber Crime Units (CCU). The plan sought to align service delivery based on the key strands of the Government's National Cyber Strategy 2022 and TVP force priorities as detailed within the Thames Valley Police Strategic Plan 2019/2020.

Members' Questions

- (1) Reference was made to a digital intelligence investigation team and the PCC was asked how was he and the Chief Constable ensuring these specialists were retained within the force and not recruited by other forces or the private sector?

[The PCC replied that this was the same for other areas of the force and it was important that risks of losing staff was mitigated against. It was relatively easier to manage through the discrete regional unit as there were opportunities for career progression.

The PCC also referred to the need to look at other specialists in cybercrime who could help the force. Using volunteers and special constables whose expertise TVP could harness to benefit policing and the Thames Valley.]

- (2) The PCC was asked whether the cyber work which was being carried out by TVP was promoted to residents to offer reassurance and confidence in the work which is being done to prevent cybercrime. Also, what was the PCC doing to advise organisations and educate the community on the cybercrime risks?

[The PCC replied that it was important to get the message out there that policing was not just about police visibility as people were more likely to be victims of cybercrime than for example, robbery. Crimes such as romance scams could be very

damaging for the victim; financially and psychologically.

It was important that messages were put out there, including the risks involved and how important it was for people to choose and change passwords which would make it more difficult for scammers.

The Cyber Resilient Centre for the southeast was engaging with businesses and going into businesses, particularly smaller businesses, to test resilience to cyber-attacks.]

- (3) A Member referred to the national alarm which would be sounding on mobile phones on 23 April, 2023 and the risks this posed for domestic abuse victims. The PCC was asked what was TVP doing to allay the fears of people who will not be able to turn off their mobile phones?

[The PCC said that this was an important point and that Victims First would be offering advice, however, it was inevitable that not everyone could be contacted.]

- (4) The PCC was asked what activities were the Dark Web Team looking at?

[The PCC replied there would be a separate team that would do the undercover on-line element, but there was an overlap between this team and the Dark Web Team. Child abuse investigations were carried out discretely, and officers who carried out these duties required psychological support which was put in place. The cyber team were looking at the drugs market and economic crime but would have links with the other teams.]

RESOLVED – That the report of the PCC and the information provided at the meeting be noted.

62 RESTART Thames Valley

The Panel was provided with a report on the work of RESTART Thames Valley, a year-long pilot programme that started in May 2022 and which focused on supporting people leaving prison, including women and those on short-term sentences.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner secured £613,800 from the second round of the Ministry of Justice Local Leadership and Integration Fund (Prison Leavers Project) to work with partners across the region to develop solutions to key challenges faced by people released from prison. The PCC referred to such challenges which included the provision of and access to support, access to accommodation and work opportunities and engagement with numerous service providers.

This pilot ran from May 2022 to end of April 2023, and this has been extended for a further 12 months, jointly funded by the PCC and the Director of Probation, South Central.

The PCC reported that the objective of the scheme was about crime prevention and stopping the cyclical pattern of people who went to prison.

Members' Questions

- (1) The PCC was asked what work was being carried out with female re-offenders?

[The PCC replied that in the first project with Bullingdon and Bronzefield Prisons, there was an initial cohort of female prisoners, there were some nuances on the support they needed, but they needed drug abuse support etc. There were contributory factors such as some previous trauma with females around domestic abuse or sexual assault with them as victims. Close work has taken place with Alana House in Reading who primarily provided support for women in that area.]

- (2) The PCC was asked why there was no operational police representation on the Executive Board. In addition, there were other pilots taking place where one of the other issues for prison leavers was the universal credit process. DWP work coaches and support officers were being placed in prisons to help with this element. Was this part of RESTART or was this a gap in the provision of the service?

[The PCC referred to the work being carried out which had found for example, that 33% of prison release took place on a Friday afternoon, which caused a particular problem for leavers and for organisations.]

The membership of the Executive Board consisted of those organisations and partners who were actively involved with the project when it was MOJ funded. Below the Board level, there were interactions with the Police, DWP and around the Integrated Offender Management. The Board was purely for governance and finance.]

- (3) Reference was made to prolific offenders who after rehabilitation, were then brought back into the criminal justice system, which was counterproductive for the individual who had been on the road to recovery. The PCC was asked for his view on this.

[The PCC said this would depend on the offences but that victims should see justice done. There was of course, an issue of what went on inside prisons, which was not within his remit.]

There were challenges around the prison system and police involvement in investigating crimes inside.]

RESOLVED – That the report and the information provided by the PCC be noted.

63 Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs - Role of TVP

The PCC submitted a report which provided an overview of the initial implementation of Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH), the current landscape, emerging risks and opportunities for the future and TVP's involvement in them.

The PCC referred to some of the benefits of robotic automation in relation to safeguarding and that Robotic Process Automation (RPA) was used to relieve demand on 101 (around 600 calls per month) and improve service delivery to partners by eliminating call waiting time. This worked very well as it sped things up and spotted things quicker, which was vital for domestic violence disclosures (Clare's Law): RPA identified current or expired high-risk DA perpetrators in new or previously unknown intimate relationships to prompt a 'Right to know' disclosure to their partner.

Members' Questions

- (1) There was concern expressed at the fragility of the MASH system in the Thames Valley, particularly with local authority's changing their financial commitments, and the PCC was asked who was responsible to ensure the provision of the service was maintained?

[The PCC replied that he had the opportunity to bring partners together and on a political level, to make sure there were the right strategic partnerships. It was important that partners held each other to account, and he would be discussing MASHs with Chief Executives and Leaders of Councils. There were statutory duties for partners which had to be met. It was important that the correct rank of officer of the organisation was at meetings to ensure that key strategic decisions could be taken.]

The Chief Constable expressed his concern at the situation and referred to the importance of partners working together and sharing information. There were differences across Thames Valley of how MASHs operated, with six MASHs in Berkshire and this was a challenge. It was important that MASHs continued because of the important work they carried out in terms of safeguarding children and adults.]

- (2) A Member referred to the national review which took place into the murders of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson which recommended that child protection practices are delivered at a local level and are multi-agency end-to-end in dedicated multi-agency child protection units in every LA area. The PCC was asked what were the implications for TVP and the local authorities that Thames Valley was at risk of not fulfilling the national recommendations or meeting partner expectations?

[The PCC replied that this was still an emerging picture, and it would be a challenge, however, he would expect TVP to meet the commitment to ensure there was maximum safeguarding but that discussions were required to address the issues. However, TVP were reliant on other partners to ensure recommendations were complied with. There was a need to know the timescales for meeting those

recommendations and look at mitigations. Those recommendations would be monitored by the Deputy Chief Constable.]

- (3) The PCC was asked what arrangements and plans were in place in relation to child refugees who were placed in the Thames Valley area?

[The PCC replied that there was a challenge on where refugees were put but communication was important with the accommodation providers and the Home Office. There were robust processes in place to safeguarding of people that were known.]

- (4) When setting up MASHs, there was an emphasis on physical space for collaboration. However, since the pandemic there have been much more digital and virtual collaboration. Was there still a requirement for physical meeting for collaboration and information sharing?

[The PCC replied that there was probably a middle ground, however, physically meeting, engendered good relationships. Standardisation was important around safeguarding to ensure that everyone was protected to the same standard.

The Chief Constable replied that he agreed that there were many benefits of remote working but it was good practise to ensure that there was good team working.]

- (5) Reference was made to Operation Compass and the comment in the report that the current Information Sharing Agreements completed with 94% of schools force-wide only approve the date, time and location of the incident and not the parties involved, risk grading or circumstance. The PCC was asked to expand on this.

[The PCC said he would come back with more information on this.]

RESOLVED – That the report of the PCC and the information reported be noted.

64 Chairman/PCC Updates/Topical Issues

- **Failure of the Panel to hold two Confirmation Hearings for the PCC's Chief of Staff and Chief Finance Officer**

The Chair of the Panel read out the following statement from the Monitoring Officer to the Panel:-

“By way of reminder in Minutes of the Meeting of 27 January 2023, under the matter of Confirmation Hearings - A Member of the Panel raised the issue of the failure of the Panel to hold Confirmation Hearings for the PCC appointed Chief of Staff and Chief Finance Officer and the advice he had received from the Home Office. The PCC replied that he had given the PCP the required three weeks' notice for each appointment as required under legislation, however, due to the failure of the PCP to appoint a Chair at its annual meeting, the PCP was unable to confirm the

appointments.

A Confirmation Hearing for the Chief of Staff was set up immediately after last June's adjourned Annual meeting on 24th June 2022. The Panel was asked to appoint a Chair just for this meeting, but the minutes record that the Panel declined this at the adjourned annual meeting.

An email from Anita Bradley, Monitoring Officer on 8 July 2022 to reconvene the Panel meeting dated 29 July 2022, stressed the importance of reconvening the annual meeting, to enable a Chair to be appointed as the Panel had statutory responsibilities (Confirmation Hearings, Annual Reports).

The legal position of both the PCC and the Panel's responsibilities is set out in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. Paragraph 10, Schedule 1 of the Act, says that once a PCC has notified the relevant PCP of the proposed senior appointment, the Panel must hold a confirmation hearing in public with the proposed candidate, and subsequently produce and publish a report and recommendation for the PCC on whether the Panel supports the proposed senior appointment. The Panel must comply with these scrutiny procedures within 3 weeks of receiving notification from the PCC of the proposed appointment.

Paragraph 12 of the legislation sets out the responsibilities of the PCC once the Panel have responded, so that the PCC does have the option to make appointments if the PCP do not agree with the proposed appointments. And the PCC is also required to notify the Panel if they disagree or agree with the PCP's recommendations.

The three-week statutory timeline for responding to the PCC expired on the day of the 24 June meeting.

As the PCC has appointed a Chief of Staff and the Chief Finance Officer to ensure PCC business could be conducted, then I am advised by the Monitoring Officer that there are no further options available to the Panel or further legal responsibilities of the Panel.

There are lessons that can be learned from by both the Panel and the PCC regarding appointments and confirmation hearings and a working relationship between ourselves on these matters.

So based on the advice of the Monitoring Officer, and this learning, my recommendation is that a line is now drawn under this matter. In the meantime, I will be recommending to the Home Office that the legislation does need to be reviewed and amended and we are happy to act as a consultee."

- **Casey Report into the Metropolitan Police**

The PCC was asked how Thames Valley would respond to the Casey Report into the

Metropolitan Police (The Met).

The PCC reported that this was a very disturbing report for the Metropolitan Police. There were things in this report which other PCCs would use to scrutinise their Chief Constables. TVP would be looking at areas of challenge in the report.

TVP had a very different culture to the Met and has a number of safeguards in place and proactively worked in response to allegations against officers. There were questions raised regarding the future and size of the Metropolitan Police and the possible influences on the neighbouring force areas.

The Met had significant national responsibilities and there was an argument that it should be slimmed down to make it more manageable to control. An Option could be stripping some of the Met's responsibilities, some of which were commercial roles and there were PCC companies that could take over these roles. There were roles that could be taken over by the National Crime Agency who were accountable to the Home Office, whereas Police Forces were accountable to Mayors and PCCs.

In relation to TVP, policing at Windsor Castle was managed by the Met Police which was an anomaly in relation to operational policing in Thames Valley.

Reference was made to officers who had remained in post when they had been accused of domestic abuse and violence and women and girls. The PCC was asked if he would advocate suspending officers who have had such allegations made against them or would prefer them to be moved into an area of policing where they would not come into contact with the public, or even with other officers if appropriate.

The PCC pointed out that the disciplinary response was the responsibility of the Chief Constable, but his personal opinion was that he would be against moving officers away as the perception was that you were just moving the problem away. If there was a risk, the officer should be suspended. TVP has a good record around suspending officers where allegations of significant concern have been made

- **Proposal of Reducing Local Policing Areas (LPA) in Thames Valley**

The PCC was asked about the proposal to reduce LPAs from 11 to 5.

Reference was also made to what impact would a reduction of LPAs have on Community Safety Partnership (CSP), in terms of local neighbourhood policing.

In response, the PCC reported that the last time this was changed was around 10 years ago, and he believed it was the right time to review this. There was no comparison in size between TVP and the Met so any proposed changes would not greatly impact on residents. Community Safety was a local authority responsibility and that would be maintained as it was a building block.

The PCC reminded the Panel that the Force Review was an operational area which the Chief Constable was responsible for and which he would then scrutinise the implementation. There was a Panel work programme item for a future meeting which would provide more information.

Local authorities had raised different views during the Force Review consultation, ranging from impact on the Community Safety Partnerships and local policing on the ground.

CSPs were recognised as important by TVP. Reference was made to currently all crime figures being aggregated (e.g Bracknell and Wokingham); these should be able to be separated.

Neighbouring policing would be planned around CSPs but with a wider command.

- **Firearms**

A Member referred to some of the officers being investigated within the Metropolitan Police that had emanated from firearms backgrounds. The PCC was asked whether TVP had undertaken an analysis of their tactical units and undertaken background checks.

The PCC replied that there was a difference between TVP and the Met, as firearms support in TVP and Hampshire was very much around supporting local policing. The Chief Constable commented on the positive culture within TVP and the specialist units.

- **CCTV Partnership in Thames Valley**

A Member referred to concerns regarding using CCTV for the general monitoring and surveillance of the public, rather than for its original purpose for public safety and traffic monitoring. The PCC was asked, how were these concerns to be addressed in the CCTV partnership in Thames Valley.

The PCC replied that there was no intention of surveillance of the public. CCTV would be used for public safety and the partnership's objective for example in Oxfordshire, was to join up CCTV, controlled in one control room. The local authority would have the final say on what CCTV they wanted to hand over to TVP.

The Panel noted the topical issues report and the information provided by the PCC.

65 Work Programme

The Chair asked that an update on RESTART be added to the work programme for March 2024.

The PCC asked that a future meeting of the Panel be convened at a TVP

establishment such as the Training college. Also, reference was made to a possible Panel site visit to the Contact Management Centres. It was agreed that the Panel at its annual meeting on 23 June 2023 make a decision on this.

Race and BAME representation in TVP work programme item be combined with Race Action Plan work programme item for 13 November 2023.

Violence against Women and Girls, partnership working, education programme could be added as a future work programme item. It was agreed that this would be added to 13 November 2023 meeting.

The Work Programme was noted.

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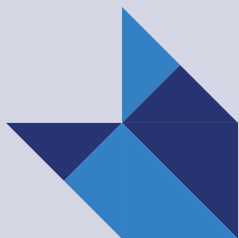


**POLICE
& CRIME
COMMISSIONER**

THAMES VALLEY

**ANNUAL REPORT
2022-23**

Berkshire, Buckinghamshire,
Milton Keynes and Oxfordshire



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Introduction

This is my second annual report, which highlights achievements against my 4-year Police and Criminal Justice Plan (2021 – 2025). This year marks ten years since PCCs were first elected and their role in policing our communities has greatly evolved.

The past 12 months have seen many notable events in policing, both nationally and locally. Policing has undoubtedly come under the spotlight and I am very aware of the national headlines that surround police legitimacy, and public trust and confidence. Policing's unique position means that officers and staff are under greater pressure to go further and I am confident that the service will reflect and respond to these issues to enable it to provide the law enforcement needs of modern society.

Celebrations of the Platinum Jubilee were sadly tempered by the Queen's death in September. Locally, this period saw the force undertake one of its largest and most significant operations in its history, with more than 2,500 police officers



Introduction

and staff policing Her Majesty's committal service in Windsor. Her Majesty the Queen provided a sense of unity, stability and continuity to the nation and through her extensive community and charity work has touched countless lives.

I have worked in conjunction with the force and our partners to make our communities safer by focusing on several key initiatives. The National 'Knife Angel' Monument has travelled across our force – it is a poignant symbol that reminds us of the devastating impact of violence and aggression. The Force's focus on knife crime has seen a decrease in murder cases from 24 in 2021/22 to 14 in 2022/23. Operation Deter has begun rolling out across the Force bringing a zero-tolerance approach to knife carrying, rapidly putting offenders before the courts.

Alongside this, the work of Project Vigilant and the Violence Reduction Unit have been key drivers in tackling crime in Thames Valley. An extensive force focus on domestic abuse, sexual offences and stalking and harassment has led to significant increases in the volume of formal action, demonstrated by a 27% increase in formal action for domestic abuse cases.

Since 2022, the Force's Rural Crime Taskforce have recovered over £1.5m worth of items and we had a positive impact in tackling Neighbourhood Crime through my funding of the Safer Streets initiative.

I welcome confirmation that Thames Valley Police has exceeded its national Uplift Programme target by 175 police officers. This brings the total number of police officers to 5,034 by the end of March 2023, and provides an additional 784 police officers since 2019. These additional officers will help to cut crime across Thames Valley, reassuring our communities that it is a safe place to live.

Thames Valley Police now has more officers than ever before and the Force will continue to recruit police officers and PCSOs as part of my plans to strengthen community policing. I recently announced details of my Crimefighters Strategy (further details are set out on page 22), which will see the number of neighbourhood policing officers, double over the coming year across Thames Valley.

The addition of new police officers and the refocus on neighbourhood policing will be pivotal for

Introduction

my new Chief Constable, Jason Hogg. I am delighted with Jason's appointment and I know his continuing commitment to working with our people, and our partners to ensure Thames Valley Police continues to protect all of our communities.

As well as welcoming a new Chief Constable, I have also recruited a new Chief of Staff and Chief Finance Officer for the OPCC. They will be joined by a new Head of Violence Reduction as the VRU transitions into a new business as usual model within my Office. For my part, I will continue to work towards my Police and Criminal Justice Plan priorities, ensuring communities remain safe across the Thames Valley:

- ▼ **Strong local policing** – Preventing crime & protecting communities
- ▼ **Fighting serious organised crime** – Protecting vulnerable people
- ▼ **Fighting fraud & cybercrime** – Fighting modern crimes
- ▼ **Improving the criminal justice system** – Reducing reoffending
- ▼ **Tackling illegal encampments** – Enforcing with partners



Matthew Barber

Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley

Progress in meeting the Police and Criminal Justice Plan 2021-2025

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: APRIL 2022 – MARCH 2023

My Police & Criminal Justice Plan sets out the five priorities I intend to focus on over the next four years. This Plan has victims at its heart. Bringing criminals to justice is vital, but preventing people from becoming victims of crime in the first place is even more important, both through proactive crime prevention and through reducing reoffending.

Aligned with my local priorities are National Priorities for Policing. The Home Secretary has developed some key measures to support the strategic priority for cutting crime

The six priority areas are:

- Reduce murder and other homicides
- Reduce serious violence
- Disrupt drugs supply and county lines
- Reduce neighbourhood crime
- Tackle cybercrime
- Improve satisfaction among victims – with a particular focus on victims of crime

A high-level performance summary of the national measures is set out in the table below; the context of which is reflected across each of the priorities (excluding 'Tackling illegal encampments') in the next section of this report. A more detailed breakdown of year-end performance figures linked to my plan was scrutinised at my Performance and Accountability Meeting (PAM), and is available on my [website](#).

National Crime and Policing Measures

Measured at a national level using national metrics such as CSEW minimises any administrative burden on forces and respects forces' operational autonomy.

Priority Measure	National Metrics	Baseline (Jul-18 to Jun-19)	Latest 12 months (Apr-22 to Mar-23)	% Change compared to baseline
Reduce Murder and other Homicides	Homicides	13	14	+8%
Reduce Serious Violence	Hospital admissions of u25s for assault with a sharp object	TVP has the 10 th lowest rate of Hospital admissions of u25s for assault with a sharp object across all forces (46 admissions per million pop in 12 months to December 2022)		
	Offences involving a discharge of a firearm	39	10	-74%
Disrupt drugs supply and county lines	Drug-related homicides	1	3	+200%
	Police referrals into drug treatment	UK Health Security Agency date (formerly PHE)		
Reduce Neighbourhood Crime	Burglary (residential), robbery (personal), theft of and from a vehicle, theft from a person	27,735	23,149	-11%
Improve satisfaction among victims, with a particular focus of domestic abuse	Satisfaction with the police among victims of domestic abuse	CSEW		
	Victim satisfaction with the police	CSEW		
Tackle cyber crime	Confidence in the law enforcement response to cyber crime	Cyber Aware Tracker		
	Percentage of businesses experiencing a cyber breach or attack	Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport survey		

The following section contains highlights of progress towards delivering my Police and Criminal Justice Plan in 2022/23. There are many examples of where grants and funding have supported projects within my priorities.

A full breakdown of all commissioned activities that have utilised Community Safety or Ministry of Justice funding is available on my website through the [Annual Statement of Accounts](#). A full list of allocations to the Community Fund (formerly the Police Property Act) is also published on my [website](#).





Strategic Policing Requirement National

- ▶ The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) sets out those threats which, in the Home Secretary's view, are the biggest threat to public safety and must be given due regard by PCCs when issuing or varying Police and Crime Plans. It supports PCCs as well as Chief Constables to plan, prepare and respond to these threats by clearly linking the local response to the national, highlighting the capabilities and partnerships that policing needs to ensure it can fulfil its national responsibilities.
- ▶ A revised version of the SPR was published in February 2023 which provided strengthened detail around the action required from policing at the local and regional level to the critical national threats. The 2023 SPR sets out seven identified national threats. These are as follows: Serious and Organised Crime (SOC); Terrorism; Cyber; Child Sexual Abuse; Public Disorder and Civil Emergencies. These remain from the 2015 version with the addition in 2023 of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).
- ▶ Given this annual report is for the year April 2022 to March 2023, it will not respond in detail to the revised SPR due to the timing of its publication. However, as Police and Crime Commissioner, I am confident I have given due regard to the six threat areas identified in the previous SPR in my Police and Criminal Justice Plan and in my role of holding my Chief Constable to account. Violence against women and girls, while not previously contained in the SPR, nonetheless is a key issue that is reflected in my Police & Criminal Justice Plan and which is included in this report.



Strategic Priority One Strong local policing

Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ In July, Thames Valley was successful in all of its four submitted bids to receive a portion of the Safer Street Fund funding, with over £1.67 million secured for activity across six local authority areas. Both VAWG and anti-social behaviour can have a significant impact on the extent to which residents feel safe in their communities. Many of the initiatives have funded a preventative approach to these crimes, which will help to deliver positive, longer-term outcomes and reduce the number of victims of crime.
- ▶ My Safer Street Funding has also helped to provide Milton Keynes with additional CCTV cameras to operate 24/7 in areas that have seen a disproportionate number of crimes. I am confident these additional cameras will provide residents and visitors to Milton Keynes with additional reassurance, as well as enhancing Thames Valley Police's view of the city to help keep our communities safe.
- ▶ The Community Fund provides biannual funding to voluntary and community groups that help to achieve the objectives of the PCC's Police and Criminal Justice Plan. The money for the scheme comes from the sale of stolen property that cannot be returned to its rightful owners. In October, both the Chief Constable Police and I were pleased to have awarded over £100,000 to 25 voluntary and community groups across the Thames Valley, while in February, the same process saw 39 groups being awarded £105,520. The successful recipients attended presentation ceremonies in October and March respectively.



Strategic Priority One Strong local policing

Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ Thames Valley Police's Rural Crime Taskforce have recovered stolen goods worth more than £1.5m and their proactive approach has seen a significant impact in reducing hare coursing offences. In March, the Home Secretary's visit was an opportunity to showcase some of the force's work to protect our rural communities, and to highlight the challenges that theft of machinery and tools present to those farming in Thames Valley. Aligned with this, Local MPs in Thames Valley have been instrumental in supporting The Equipment Theft (prevention) Bill, which is currently working its way through Parliament.
- ▶ I have held two Road Safety Summits in May and November, which brought together highways authorities, roads policing and road users to help set a new strategy to cut road deaths. Thames Valley has a vast network of roads, from smart motorways to the smallest of country lanes, and the purpose of the Summit was to begin to set a new strategy for cutting road deaths across

Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Milton Keynes and Oxfordshire. This Summit was the start of that conversation, generating clear recommendations and helping to make our roads safer for all. Work continues on developing a draft strategy for consultation.

- ▶ To help improve road safety in the Thames Valley, I have actively encouraged people to sign up for Community Speedwatch. The 'new style' Community Speedwatch scheme enables effective communication between groups and the police. As a result, the police are better able to target persistent offenders and hotspot locations, ultimately reducing the number of people speeding on our roads and potentially saving lives. I am pleased to see there is a growing number of groups joining the scheme. We currently have 238 groups operating to date with over 1,400 volunteers. Work continues to seek to improve the system further.



Strategic Priority One Strong local policing

Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ I am pleased to have supported A Better Place to Live to help increase the number of Neighbourhood Watch volunteers and groups across the Thames Valley. This national-led campaign resulted in £7,000 of funding being awarded to provide local resources for new volunteers, and to help coordinators increase their membership to start their own groups. The funding forms part of my £25,000 grant awarded to Thames Valley Neighbourhood Watch in April 2022. This has been established as an annual partnership arrangement.
- ▶ An online survey was launched on my website allowing Thames Valley residents the opportunity to share their views and experiences of policing and crime. I want to gain a real understanding of how crime is affecting communities and hear feedback on what the police are doing well or what could be improved. The community's views are helping shape the future of policing in Thames Valley and the results of the survey, which has been open all year round, are regularly published on my website, and through social media and other communication channels. This forms part of my consultation on the policing precept.
- ▶ £48,992 of funding has been provided to enhance the first aid response of all dog section officers across Thames Valley and Hampshire. This funding will provide dog handlers with a variety of lifesaving first aid equipment including defibrillators, airway management equipment and the ability to deal with catastrophic bleeds. Our Dog Handlers are routinely first on the scene at incidents involving serious trauma and medical episodes, and I am in no doubt that, this new equipment will help save lives.



Strategic Priority One Strong local policing

Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ I was delighted to provide £30,000 of core funding to help support the vital role of Search and Rescue Teams who keep our communities safe across Thames Valley. The support that Thames Valley's five search and rescue organisations provide to the police is invaluable. Their assistance in searching for vulnerable and missing people can help to save lives and bring closure to families in the worst of circumstances.
- ▶ The scale of the recruitment as part of the national Uplift programme has presented challenges for policing. This has been particularly stark in terms of neighbourhood policing which has been under significant pressure over the last twelve months. Having continued to challenge the Chief Constable on the need to focus on neighbourhood policing, the 23/24 Crimefighters strategy will seek to improve Force performance in this key area.



Strategic Priority Two Fighting serious organised crime

Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ This year I welcomed an additional £7m over three years from the Home Office Serious Violence Fund to support efforts to prevent and tackle serious violence and knife. The funding is awarded to the Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) to continue its work coordinating the partnership response to serious violence across the Thames Valley. There are two separate allocations; the first is £5m over three years for the VRU's programme of work to prevent young people from being drawn into crime, while more than £2m of funding - over three years - comes from the "Grip" fund. This supports Thames Valley Police to deliver additional proactive policing operations, which target those areas with the highest levels of serious violence and those people who are committing violent crime and carrying weapons. This additional money gives us confidence for the next three years - it will allow us to plan and invest for the longer term, which will lead to more effective and sustainable work.
- ▶ Supported by Thames Valley Police, my drive to tackle knife crime through the introduction of Op Deter has seen positive results across the force. After its initial launch in Milton Keynes in July last year, Op Deter is rolling out across the Force with the objective of obtaining swift charge and remand decisions for offences involving knives. This comprehensive approach to tackling not just knife crime but the wider culture of knife carrying will be an exemplar, not just for the whole of the Thames Valley, but a model for other forces to follow. Our communities want an end to knife crime and Operation Deter is making positive progress to divert those who carry knives away from serious offending, which will affect not only the lives of their victims but also their own lives.



Strategic Priority Two Fighting serious organised crime

Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ An important part of the Op Deter model is the early intervention for child-offenders. I have funded a pilot with the Milton Keynes YOT and secured Home Office funding through the Homicide Prevention Fund for a further pilot in Slough, with the expectation that local authorities will continue to fund this work through Youth Offending Teams in the future.
- ▶ The month of action for January was marked with the arrival of the National Monument Against Violence and Aggression at Arbour Park Stadium in Slough. Also known as the 'Knife Angel', this month brought together my Office (OPCC), Thames Valley Police and Slough Borough Council to help drive community knife-crime reduction projects, such as the early intervention knife crime prevention session to 1,950 primary school pupils across Slough.
- ▶ Last June I welcomed more than £400,000 of funding that was awarded through the NPCC's STAR (Science, Technology, Analysis and Research) Fund. My office received £109,145 towards the trialling of a predictive mapping approach to partnership problem-solving and multimedia resources to support behavioural change outcomes across youth justice (Project 180). Furthermore, the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) received £255,266 towards data quality improvements (DaQIOA) and Prediction of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), which is a tool for investigation, harm reduction, and violence prevention. I look forward to seeing the outcomes of this funding, and the impacts they will have on our communities



Strategic Priority Three Fighting cybercrime and fraud

Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ Thames Valley Police have continued to use innovative fraud and cyber protection campaigns over the last year reaching large audiences. Of note, following the success of the romance fraud booklet, a bespoke fraud protection toolkit has been launched in digital and hard copy form and has been reproduced by forces, and other agencies, across the country. The toolkit takes a fresh approach by providing members of the public with ways in which they can take positive action, empowering them to take steps to feel back in control, as well as practical ways in which they can keep their financial and emotional wellbeing safe.
- ▶ The new Thames Valley Police Central Fraud Unit (CFU) is now operational following the growth of 36 officers in this area of business. The unit is divided into five separate teams; a triage and safeguarding team alongside four investigation teams focussing on high harm and volume fraud cases. The CFU works closely with the City Of London Police (CoLP) and Action Fraud to ensure the timely recording of fraud offences and subsequent outcomes.
- ▶ Thames Valley Police Central Fraud Unit led a newly formed Multi Agency Against Fraud (MAAF) network. This consists of a strategic MAAF group chaired by the Central Fraud Unit Detective Inspector with strategic leads from Trading Standards, Fire and Rescue, Council investigations and Local Authority safeguarding in attendance. Two thematic sub-groups that feed into the strategic group centred on multi-agency fraud pursue activity and safeguarding and prevention activity and there is also now a two-way formal tasking process for fraud cases between Thames Valley Police and partner agencies.



Strategic Priority Three Fighting cybercrime and fraud

Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ The CFU has also benefitted from Thames Valley Police's significant investments in technology by fully automating the fraud recording processes. Phase 1 is now live and all fraud victims' details received from Action Fraud are now recorded on Thames Valley Police systems via a robotics process (prior to this only the most vulnerable were recorded). For the first time, all fraud data is now recorded providing greater opportunities for local safeguarding, intervention and proactive protect activity. Phase 2 will be for all investigation disseminations from Action Fraud to be automated onto Thames Valley Police systems. This process will provide cost savings and increase the speed and accuracy of investigations being passed to the Central Fraud Unit for progression.
 - ▶ National structures are also embedded within the National Economic Crime Centre (NECC), CoLP and Cyber networks. This has enabled consistency of approach across National and regional responses to threats and investigations.
- Coordination of national campaigns is business as usual, as Thames Valley work closely with regional forces on specific threats for example; Romance and Courier Fraud, Ransomware and Distributed Denial-of-Service attacks (DDOS). There remains a national year-on-year increase across reporting for cyber and economic crime and the new Action Fraud system will be launched in 2024 providing enhanced analysis and allocation.
- ▶ The South East Regional Organised Crime Unit (SEROCU) supported by national funding continues to develop capabilities in Cyber and Fraud. The creation of a Dark Web, Crypto, Cyber and the Priority Economic Crime Team (PECT) enhances expertise in both prevention and investigation methods, providing an enhanced capability in a changing and challenging cyber environment.



Strategic Priority Three Fighting cybercrime and fraud

Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ The South East PECT are one of nine nationally networked across England and Wales created to tackle Fraud and associated money laundering with coordination and workflow either self-generated, referred from Forces or provided by the CoLP. Their purpose is to disrupt fraud and money laundering by taking a proactive approach with a focus on pursue and disruption as well as looking to identify and recover assets for victims.
- ▶ Project Configured has recently been launched which, using open source intelligence, tries to identify businesses in the South East with vulnerabilities in how they connect to the internet (and therefore could be a target for criminals) and informs them. Early indications have shown a high percentage of businesses have acted on this information and mitigated their vulnerabilities - the next stage is for this system to become fully automated to notify (and protect) more businesses across the Thames Valley and wider South East area.
- ▶ There remain significant challenges in meeting the needs of victims of cyber crime and fraud. Despite the work of the Force, too many cases result in NFA due to the complexity and geographic reach of this type of criminality. Prevention is a much more effective tool, but the Force will need to be more focused in proactive prevention activity.



Strategic Priority Four Improving the criminal justice system

Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ Ahead of White Ribbon Day in November, I announced a Thames Valley-wide strategy aimed at improving the lives of women and girls. The risks to both women and girls in our communities can take many different forms, from domestic abuse to public place harassment, stalking to sexual violence. Therefore, a variety of responses must be in place to ensure the Thames Valley is a safer place for all women and girls. I am pleased to be supporting a range of initiatives to make our streets safer. This includes the development of school-based programmes to focus on the safety of women and girls, and additional activity focused on street harassment, stalking, sexual assault, rape and predatory behaviour.
- ▶ My Office secured a significant investment from the Ministry of Justice Local Leadership and Integration Fund (Prison Leavers Project). The funding is delivering a pilot programme, Restart Thames Valley, which is working with partners across the region to develop solutions to key challenges faced

by people released from prison. Such challenges include the provision of and access to support, access to accommodation and work opportunities and engagement with numerous service providers. Over half of the people released from prison in the Thames Valley reoffend within 12 months which is why this funding is so important in helping us address the challenges that they, and the services supporting them, face. Such challenges begin at the prison gates as many face difficulties in accessing support, especially out of hours. Geographical and organisational barriers can also make effective engagement with services very difficult. Many, unfortunately, fall back into a cycle of offending. Reducing reoffending will prevent more people from becoming victims of crime in the future and keep all of us safer.



Strategic Priority Four Improving the criminal justice system

Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ Following successful applications to the Ministry of Justice, I was delighted that my Office (OPCC) secured over £1.4 million per annum (£4.4m in total) of funding over the next three years to support victims across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. This funding is providing essential support to many organisations supporting victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence. It is also being used to fund dedicated posts to supporting particular groups who can be less likely to access support such as men, older people and victims within LGBTQ+ and BAMER communities. Not only will this funding make a difference to these organisations, but it also ensures victims and survivors are supported for the long term. Additionally, we will be able to increase the level of specialist service provision to provide victims with better access to much-needed support to help them recover from the harm they have experienced. 19 organisations across the Thames Valley will benefit from this additional funding.
- ▶ I am pleased we can offer specialist provision to help those affected by stalking in the Thames Valley and to be working with Aurora New Dawn who have proven expertise in this area. The service forms a key part of my strategy launched last year to improve the safety of women and girls in the Thames Valley. Stalking can affect every area of a victim's life with stalking behaviours potentially experienced over long periods, leading to emotional and psychological distress and fear. It is important that victims get the support they need to cope with the impact on their lives and move forward. This may include helping them cope emotionally, practical safeguarding advice as well as advocacy and guidance to empower them and help them feel safe as they navigate the criminal justice process. Aurora New Dawn has been awarded £120,000 a year until March 2025 to deliver the service across the Thames Valley. Victims First, part of my own office, is working with the Thames Valley Stalking Service to manage referrals into the service.



Strategic Priority Four Improving the criminal justice system

Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ I was delighted that the plans for a new state-of-the-art-forensics centre in Bicester was given the go-ahead in February. The programme is the result of a review of Thames Valley Police's forensics services as a whole, which identified the need to modernise facilities and increase capacity. In a world of rapidly advancing technology, ensuring the police stay on the cutting edge of forensics is crucial to keeping the public safe. Construction is expected to begin in the summer 2023 and be completed in winter 2024/25.
- ▶ Last August I announced a series of psychologically-informed and trauma-informed training sessions that will be delivered as part of the RESTART Thames Valley pilot project. RESTART Thames Valley is a year-long pilot programme supporting people leaving prison, including women and those on short-term sentences - the highest risk of reoffending is within the first few weeks after being released from prison. A trauma-informed approach is nationally evidenced and recommended and the training sessions are an important step in improving our response to reoffending. RESTART not only helps to get people's lives back on track once they leave prison, but by reducing reoffending we will also be protecting the public and ensuring there are fewer victims of crime in the future.
- ▶ Earlier this year I published findings of my internal review into the provision of victim's services across Thames Valley. The review, which was compiled by the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC), was conducted to evaluate existing OPCC-funded victims' services to ensure they continue to meet victims' needs. Outcomes from the review will help to provide a framework for the future commissioning of victim services, with new contracts due to begin in April 2024.



Strategic Priority Four

Improving the criminal justice system

Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ The creation of a central team to manage and oversee RASO (Rape and Sexual Offences) investigations, along with a similar team to manage Domestic Abuse has led to a clearer focus on supporting victims. Maintaining the support of victims is key to securing successful prosecutions and the advent of Sexual Offence Liaison Officers (SOLOs) has significantly improved this aspect of support.
- ▶ Although well documented the delays in the courts continue to cause concern, but for delivering justice for individual victims and for the efficiency of the system more broadly. I continue to have concerns about the challenges of data sharing between criminal justice agencies and the delays caused by redaction.



Strategic Priority Five Tackling illegal encampments

Progress in 2022/23

- ▶ New legislation relating to Unauthorised Encampments came into force on 28 June, as part of the Police Crime Sentencing Courts Act 2022. A recent learning event was held by Local Policing to brief operational Inspectors on their use of relevant guidance.
- ▶ The first 6 months of data show that TVP and local authority partners have used the legislation to apply a consistent and improved response to unauthorised encampments. There is a drive to keep police training relevant, a focus on the performance response to Unauthorised Encampments, and maintaining vital relationships with local authorities.
- ▶ Data also indicates that the force uses its Section 60C and 61 powers in a proportionate and effective way. Whilst numbers are thankfully relatively low across the Thames Valley, the figures are consistent with Regional and National responses by other Police Forces.
- ▶ Thames Valley Police has consulted all Local Authorities on a revised joint working protocol for managing Unauthorised Encampments. I fully support such a protocol and I look forward to its full adoption during 2023, which will see further consistency of approach between police and local authorities. TVP now has a new Force Tactical Lead (Chief Inspector) to manage the operational demands of Unauthorised Encampments.
- ▶ The focus on this area has brought about changes in processes by Thames Valley Police, which has seen better, more consistent training for Inspectors, the reporting of new encampments to Daily Management Meetings (DMMs) and the early involvement of Public Order Commanders.

Looking ahead to 2023/24

2023/24 provides an opportunity to build on the successes already achieved and to challenge harder in those areas that still need improvement. I will closely scrutinise the work relating to the Force Review, seeking to ensure that neighbourhood policing and local responsiveness is not just maintained, but enhanced through any new model.

I will seek innovative use of funds, exploring how to invest the Road Safety Fund, and exploring investment opportunities to further reduce neighbourhood crime. I am reviewing the various scrutiny arrangements that are in place to ensure they give me a clear line of sight into policing in order to best hold the Chief Constable to account. I will continue to speak up nationally to lobby for change where necessary, such as establishing a data sharing arrangement between the police and CPS, pushing for better fraud structures nationally (with some positive signs in the Government's new Fraud Strategy) and emphasising the need for sentencing to get the right balance between public protection and rehabilitation.

In my introduction, I referred to the number of neighbourhood police officers in the Thames Valley is expected to double over the coming year, marking the beginning of a shift in emphasis for the force. This commitment forms part of my Crimefighters strategy; a shared vision with Thames Valley Police to strengthen local policing and help build the trust of all our communities. Crimes such as thefts, burglaries, shoplifting and crimes associated with anti-social behaviour can blight the lives of those affected, as well as have a significant social and economic impact on communities as a whole.

I know from listening to the public that there can be frustrations with the policing response to neighbourhood crime. These crimes are not and never will be tolerated.

In the delivery of Crimefighters, Thames Valley Police and I are taking a long-term look at the improvements to community policing to build trust and confidence and increase peoples' feelings of safety. This includes increasing the number of officers which will benefit communities across the force area but also the refocus of community policing as a whole to enable officers to deliver a more proactive and responsive service that is better placed to effectively prevent and disrupt crime.

Key elements of the Crimefighters strategy include:

- ▼ **Strengthening local policing** - In addition to more officers, the recruitment of PCSOs will remain a priority. Officers will be more visible with increased local engagement to help build relationships and instil confidence in communities. A greater depth of knowledge and understanding of local areas will enhance the prevention and disruption of crime.
- ▼ **Embedding crime prevention** - Neighbourhood officers will focus their efforts where there is the most likely impact to reduce crime. Policing will be intelligence-led, focusing on known hotspots and known offenders to prevent crime, with visible patrols on foot and in vehicles.
- ▼ **Improved communication between the public and the police** - Reducing the 101 wait times as well as investing in technology to improve and expand channels for reporting will encourage the public to report crime and incidents. Automated systems will also improve the way that victims can get feedback from the police on the crimes they have reported.

150 additional officers will be allocated to neighbourhood policing roles over 2023/24 as the start of a shift which will continue to demonstrate the growing role of community policing within the force.

A full copy of the strategy can be found on my Crimefighters webpage

[Crimefighters - Thames Valley PCC \(thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk)

Crimefighters

Strong local policing



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Report of the Police and Crime Panel

Report title: Central Vetting Unit

Date: 23rd June 2023

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Purpose of the report: Briefing to members

Recommendations: (Briefing only)

Introduction

This report outlines the current central vetting unit; highlighting structural change, current work streams, current risks, and horizon planning. A Glossary is included to help clarify a number of policing acronyms used throughout the report.

Staffing

Recruitment of new starters

Following the review of resourcing within vetting, we have made a number of temporary roles within the department permanent (5 vetting advisors and 1 vetting administrator) and experienced additional growth (8 vetting advisors, 1 force security advisor and 1 vetting administrator).¹ These additional staff have now been in post since 01/04/2023.

Whilst the addition of new vetting staff has been extremely beneficial to support the demand, it should be highlighted that it takes approximately 6-weeks to become competent in understanding the vetting systems and processes when carrying out vetting checks, we are therefore only starting to fully realise these benefits from w/c 22/05/2023.

New structure

This growth has enabled the unit to follow a 4 strand structure; Courses, Compliancy, Counter Terrorism and Trays, managed by 4 senior vetting advisors. This structure has enabled force critical work to be maintained. It also allows flexibility between work strands to better support surge demand.

Demand vs Capacity

There is currently a mechanism in place that ensures all new employees (who are booked onto initial training courses) are prioritised. This includes: Police Officers, PCSO's, Specials, Contact Management, Detention Officers, Police Contact Enquiry Centre Officers and Firearms Officers. As we can forecast our demand in these areas, we can allocate

¹ There are currently 3 vetting advisor vacancies.



Report of the Police and Crime Panel

appropriate resources throughout the year. This mechanism ensures that there are no delays and vetting are compliant with the SLA's in all these areas.

There are also dedicated resources ensuring that CTPSE based roles, ICT, Assessment Investigation Unit and Forensic staff are vetted as priority files. We are compliant with SLA's in all these areas.

Vetting Success

Courses

The courses team (of 9 vetting advisors) are responsible for the following areas of work;

- Police recruits (IPLDP, DHEP, PCDA, Police Now, Transferee's, Re-joiners and DC DHEP)
- PCSO recruits
- Specials recruits
- Detention Officers
- Contact Management
- Police Contact Enquiry Officers
- Firearms Officers

This work stream has been considered as the highest priority within the vetting team and where courses have been identified as low in numbers, resources have been pulled from other areas of the vetting team to support and facilitate (where possible) filling the courses with successful candidates.

Since the commencement of the Police Uplift Programme, there has been consistent communication between SPOC's and any early identification of issues has been communicated effectively. This relationship between stakeholders is working well.

CTPSE/SEROCU

The South East team experienced a 2 post growth in September 2022. This has enabled them to reduce their backlogs and are now functioning within SLA targets. The team are able to monitor any incoming vetting requirements and are currently able to focus on the requirements around annual reviews. The team are also ensuring there is compliancy around legacy vetting records and are in the process of piloting new automation within their aftercare projects.

Whilst this is all being maintained, the team have been fortunate to support the TVP workloads in supporting any tray backloads or supporting in periods of low resilience (recent sickness and annual leave).

Project work *Assessment Investigation Unit, Forensics and ICT*

Dedicated resources have ensured that we have consistently provided an exceptional service with no delays in relation to force critical changes to departments and support functions. This includes the initiation of the assessment and investigation unit (AIU), consistent delivery for all new ICT roles, and the current development of the forensics department.



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Fixed Term and Temporary Contracts

There is a reduced 10 day service level agreement (SLA) for all fixed term and temporary contracts to be picked up within vetting. We are currently maintaining these SLA's, where vetting checks allow², This supports short terms business critical roles being brought into the organisation.

Compliance

The compliance team have recently grown in size and therefore have been able to work in line with HMIC and APP requirements in not only bringing applications in line with outlined requirements, but renew expiring clearances. There is a monthly roll out that captures all expiring staff and officer roles and this is currently up to date in capturing all changes in circumstances, role changes whilst providing new clearances.

Owing to the success of the compliance team, they have begun to take on additional work streams including the Historical Data Wash support (outlined below), supporting internal recruitment with retrospective vetting, and are due to implement a new project of managing the responsibility of all change in circumstance notifications and conditional clearance management.

Current Backlog

Traditionally the area there are the most delays are general recruitment and contractors. This is because resources have been reallocated elsewhere to force critical roles. At the end of the financial year 2022/23 there was a 19-week delay.

Currently, we are working to a clear by date of 06/03/2023, a 13-week delay on service level agreements for these areas of vetting. Now that the new starters have completed their initial training, this delay is expected to reduce.

The current backlog is 163 files. The backlog by file type is illustrated below, highlighting the area of greatest backlog still falls with Non-Police Personnel Vetting (Contractor) applications with 71% of the applications.

File Type	Total in backlog	Percent
Contractors	116	71%
Staff	24	15%
Police	16	10%
Volunteers	6	4%
Specials	1	1%
Grand Total	163	

² ie subject to the information being available within that time frame.



Report of the Police and Crime Panel

Targeted approach

Whilst the clear-by date is still daunting for the organisation, there has been a targeted approach with regards to the types of file that are being actioned; this includes a focus on Non-Police Personnel Level 1 (NPPV1) clearances, a total of 266 files have been processed since March with the backlog reducing from over 200 to 80.

The number of files per month in the backlog is shown below. A significant portion of the backlog in April and May are likely to be a direct result from the awarding of new contracts of contractors by procurement. There are now 10 vetting advisors focused on reducing this backlog and using the vetting profiler, we could assume that the March applications would be cleared within the next 2-weeks.

	March	April	May	June	Total
Total Applications	21	56	72	14	163

Risk Management

Where risks defined by the College of Policing APP on Vetting have been identified through the police vetting process within the central vetting unit, risk mitigations will be considered to determine whether police vetting clearance can still be granted, but with management activities in place. This is reviewed intermittently during the course of the individual's clearance.

Applications meeting the above criteria are referred to as conditional clearances, and have been monitored since 14/10/2021.

The most common risks being managed in the force are in relation to an individual's finances and associations (32% and 28% of all conditional clearances respectively). These are often managed by means of a collaborative approach with the applicant, counter corruption and Head of Department. In addition to this, risk mitigations such as periodic system auditing, proportionately restricting systems access, facilitating geographical or departmental restrictions, providing specific risk management and welfare advice or exploring options openly with the vetting applicant may be imposed.

The management of conditional clearances is an ongoing requirement that must be factored into vetting advisor responsibilities; this is only set to increase with the current global climate and number of additional roles being filled.

Unsuccessful Vetting Applications

Rejections

Where risks defined by the College of Policing APP on Vetting have been identified through the police vetting process as too high and risk mitigation cannot be put in place, clearance will be refused.

When evaluating the completed applications during the financial year 2022/23, for Police, Specials and PCSO's, there was a total of an 11% failure rate for new applicants.

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	Pass		Fail	
	# Passed	%	# Failures	%
Police	876	90%	100	10%
Specials	45	78%	13	22%
PCSO's	38	84%	7	16%
Total	959	89%	120	11%

The type of vetting failure has been monitored since 14/10/2021 therefore identifying common rejection failures can be considered. Looking at the failures identified above, the most common [Disclosable] reason for refusals were:

Risk Refusal Reason	Sum	% of total
Convictions etc.	14	11%
Integrity	6	5%
TAINT	6	5%

Withdrawals

Applicants that are unsuccessful during another part of the application process are withdrawn from the vetting process; this could be before, during or after checks have been completed. As per the below, 14% of all applicants were withdrawn from vetting in the financial year 2022/23.

	Fail	Pass	Withdrawn
Grand Total	120	959	174
%	10%	77%	14%

The rejections and withdrawals ultimately take time to process, therefore it is important to consider ways that efficiency savings can be made. In order to create capacity, work is underway for a collaborative approach with people services for support at the front end of the recruitment process. Education to prospective applicants will support in managing expectations whilst deterring those that are unlikely to pass the vetting process.

Vetting Code of Practice

Following instruction from the Home Secretary, the Vetting Code of Practice was reviewed and updated in February 2023. The revised Vetting Code of Practice was submitted to public consultation in March 2023, has been passed through the College of Policing governance boards and is now sat with the Home Office for approval and sign off by the Secretary of State. There are no timescales as to when this will implemented and published.

HMIC recommendation progress

Following the [HMICFRS An inspection of vetting, misconduct, and misogyny in the police service](#) report dictates a number of recommendations that should be implemented within vetting units nationally.

Report of the Police and Crime Panel

There were a total of 43 recommendations made and 5 areas for improvement delivered to both vetting units, professional standards and counter corruption units. Thames Valley Police RAG Status has been defined as green on 8 of the vetting recommendations, and amber on 2 (recommendation 7 and recommendation 41). In respect of the AFI's it must be noted that there are 1 RAG as amber (AFI 1) and 1 RAG as red (AFI 2).

Recommendation 7 RAG Status *Amber*

By 31 October 2023, chief constables should introduce an effective quality assurance process to review vetting decisions, including routine dip sampling of:

- rejections; and
- clearances where the vetting process revealed concerning adverse information.

Four additional staff have been recruited in to the Compliancy and Aftercare Team and will add this to the requirement of their role thus enabling the dip check process.

Recommendation 41 RAG Status *Amber*

By 30 April 2023, chief constables should strengthen their business interest monitoring procedures to make sure that:

- records are managed in accordance with policy and include cases where authorisation has been refused;
- the force actively monitors compliance with conditions that are attached to the approval, or where the application is refused;
- regular reviews of each approval are carried out; and
- all supervisors are properly briefed about business interests held by members of their teams.

Following the introduction of an additional force security advisor, plans were put in place for more proactive monitoring, however we have now had a resignation in this area so will be temporarily back down to one staff member. Priority will be keeping on top of current applications, but once we have recruited again the plan will be put back in place.

Area for Improvement 1 RAG Status *Amber*

Forces' use of vetting interviews is an area for improvement. In more cases, forces should interview applicants to explore adverse information of relevance to the case. This should help with assessing risk. When they carry out such interviews, forces should maintain accurate records and give copies of these to interviewees.

With the increase in permanent vetting staff, vetting interviews are now conducted on a more regular basis and can be conducted via phone, teams or face to face.

Area for Improvement 2 RAG Status *Red*

Automated links between force vetting and HR IT systems are an area for improvement. When specifying and procuring new IT systems for these purposes, or developing existing ones, forces should seek to establish automated links between them.



Report of the Police and Crime Panel

Currently there is no capability for HR and PSD or Vetting systems to share information. A new version of our existing HR database is being scoped and vetting will be a key player in this to further consider automation and identification of roles and vetting levels. This is a long term project and will not deliver a solution imminently.

Anticipated APP on Vetting updates

In addition to the chief constable recommendations within the [HMICFRS An inspection of vetting, misconduct, and misogyny in the police service](#) report, there were a number of recommendations to the College of Policing and NPCC in regards to changes within the [APP on Vetting](#).

Expected changes, associated with the HMICFRS recommendations are:

- (For recruitment) As a minimum, pre-employment checks should obtain and verify previous employment history for at least the previous five years (including dates of employment, roles carried out and reason for leaving); and verify the qualifications the applicant claims to have.
- APP on Vetting will encourage a greater focus when assessing the threats and risks for vetting decisions, on: protecting the public, risk mitigation factors that could be employed locally and applying more weight to adverse information found on social media.
- Guidance will be provided on the composition of vetting appeal panels.
- It will be expected that TVP undertake a vetting review on any serving personnel who have been declined vetting clearance on a transfer to another force, as well as reciprocate a notification to a force TVP decline clearance for a transferee, passing all information obtained through the vetting process.
- TVP will need to ensure personnel, role and vetting details are monitored through a central system, where designated posts and position holders are easily identifiable and their vetting status is easily reportable and maintained.

We have recently been asked to provide data to the College of Policing in regards to the volume of applications at each vetting level we are maintaining, the processing times and cost of vetting staff, as they will present evidence of the resource and cost impact changes in vetting clearance periods will have across England and Wales, for an evidence informed decision to take place.

Additional proactive personnel security measures may be mitigation factors in regards to the length of clearance periods, such as the use of PND to identify any new traces on personnel and annual integrity reviews (both under the CCU strand).

Historic Data Wash (HDW)

On 18th January 2023, the Home Office announced that all police forces must check their workforce against national databases to identify if anyone had 'slipped through the net.' A threat was identified through a high profile case that significant police information has been

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missed during an individual's employment. This can lead to a reduction in confidence by the public in the police service and the purpose of the vetting process.

This led to the immediate HDW process; carried out by TVP counter corruption unit, with support from TVP vetting. There are currently 65 referred cases to vetting; the compliancy team have an action week (w/c 05/06/2023) to decipher the information and identify and manage additional risks that have been identified.

Horizon Scanning

When reviewing the current demands on the vetting unit, the table below highlights a number of areas that have, and will continue to increase demand over the next 12 months.

HMIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Renewals process ➤ Detailed accurate statistics ➤ Measuring disproportionality in Vetting ➤ Decision making and rationale recording
Vetting Code of Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This is identified above in its own entity
Authorised Professional Practise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This is identified above in its own entity
Uplift	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increase in course intakes; number of courses and number of applicants ➤ Facilitating support staff ➤ Backfill of internal moves (i.e. PCSO's/Staff to Officers) ➤ Ongoing aftercare for risk managed clearances – conditional clearances being made to help speed up processes ➤ Renewals in the future
National Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Changes within UKSV (the national security vetting provider) and new IT systems.
Statistical requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Scrutiny requires more transparency, requiring more statistical and analytical information
Complexity of cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ With further checks needed as defined by APP, results are becoming more complex, social media, and no one case is the same and treated on its own merit.
Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ With an increase in workforce comes an increase in the number of clearances to be managed, in particular, those with conditional clearances requiring additional support / mitigation strategies.
Violence Against Women and Girls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Decrease in risk appetite ➤ Facilitating decision making and more collaborative working and sharing case studies ➤ Greater scrutiny around decision making
Core-Vet Version 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This is the migration to a cloud based server and will affect delivery. ➤ The migration will involve a period of time in which Core-Vet will be unavailable. The duration of this period is currently



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	undefined. Contingency planning is currently underway as for vetting services there will be a delay and may necessitate back record conversion of files and decisions made during the period Core-Vet is offline.
CTPSE	➤ The future of CTPSE Vetting and where this sits within the organisation is still under review.



Report of the Police and Crime Panel

Glossary

AFI – Areas for Improvement (HMICFRS)

AIU – Assessment and Investigation Unit (TVP)

APP – Applied Policing Practice (College of Policing)

CCU – Counter-Corruption Unit

CTPSE – Counter Terrorism Policing South East

DCDHEP – Detective Constable Degree Holder Entry Programme

DHEP – Degree Holder Entry Programme

HDW – Historical Data Wash

HMICFRS – His Majesty’s Inspector of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services

IPLDP – Initial Police Learning and Development Programme

NPCC – National Police Chiefs Council

PCDA – Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship

PCSO – Police and Community Support Officer

PND – Police National Database

PSD – Professional Standards Department

SLA – Service Level Agreement

SPOC – Single Point of Contact

TAINT – ‘Tainted’ Procedure (Force Operational Guidance)

TVP – Thames Valley Police

Report to the Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel

Title: Review of Panel Rules of Procedure, Complaints Procedure, Panel Membership and appointment to Sub-Committee and Task Group

Date: 23 June 2023

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



BACKGROUND

For the first meeting of the Municipal Year, the Police and Crime Panel reviews its Rules of Procedure and Panel Arrangements. Consideration of the Rules of Procedure and Panel Arrangements also reminds Panel Members, particularly new Members of the role and functions of the Panel.

Appointments are required to the Panel's Complaints Sub-Committee, its Budget Task and Finish Group and other Task and Finish Groups if established.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) That the Rules of Procedure and Panel Arrangements for the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel be approved (as attached in Appendix 1 and 2).
- 2) That, subject to the appointment of the Chair of the Panel, consideration be given to the Host Authority for the Panel 2023/24. (See para. 2).
- 3) That the Panel reconfirms the decision that future meetings take place at Buckinghamshire Council's Gateway House in Aylesbury (See para. 3) .
- 4) That the Panel makes appointments to the Panel's Complaints Sub Committee (7 Members) and Budget Task and Finish Group (5 Members) (para. 4 previous memberships).
- 5) That the established Complaints Sub-Committee and Budget Task and Finish Group be agreed with no changes to their terms of reference for the following year (subject to any legislative changes) (Appendix 3 Complaints Procedure).
- 6) That details of the Home Office Grant received by the Host Authority for 2022/23 be noted. (See para. 5).

1. Rules of Procedure and Panel Arrangements

The Panel operates in accordance with specifications outlined in Rules of Procedure and Panel Arrangements documents (Appendices 1 and 2). The Rules of Procedure and Panel Arrangements are agreed on an annual basis, at the Panel's Annual meeting.

2. Host Authority for the Panel

Subject to the appointment of a new Chair for the Panel, a decision has to be taken on the Hosting arrangements for the Panel. From the Panel Arrangements:

"4.0 Host Authority

4.1 The Panel shall agree a Host Authority for the Secretariat for the Panel, which shall provide such scrutiny, legal, financial, administrative and other support as is reasonably required to enable the Panel to undertake its functions within the resources agreed by the Panel.

4.2 In accordance with the Panel's agreement made at the meeting held on 22 November 2022, Buckinghamshire Council shall act as the Host Authority from 1 April 2023. Approval was given to Buckinghamshire Council's request that the hosting arrangements be for a 3-year period from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2026 however, it was acknowledged that this could be reviewed should the Chairmanship of the Panel change, and his/her local authority should wish to take on the responsibility of being the Host Authority for the Panel.

This arrangement be in place until such time as either:

a) The Panel resolves at its annual meeting (held in June of each year) that another Authority should carry out this function, provided that such other Authority agrees. In which case, the function will be transferred six months after the Panel decision unless a shorter period is agreed between the existing Host Authority and the new Host Authority; or

b) The existing Host Authority serves notice that it no longer wishes to be the Host Authority and this function is transferred to another Authority in which case, a six month notice period will apply, unless a shorter period is agreed between the existing Host Authority and the new Host Authority; or

c) In the event that no Authority comes forward to act as Host Authority the home Council of the current Chairman of the Panel shall be expected to be the Host Authority.

4.3 The staff employed to support the Panel will be employed by the Host Authority. Should the Host Authority change the TUPE legislation which is in force at the time shall apply as necessary."

3 Venue for meetings of the Panel

An area of discussion in previous years has been the location for meetings of the Police and Crime Panel. The Panel when it was first set up held meetings around the Thames Valley, based on a rota. This Panel has previously agreed, that to ensure the maximum attendance of the membership of the Panel, meetings of the Panel be held in Aylesbury, which is the best suited location in terms of accessibility for the Members of the Thames Valley Region. This decision was reaffirmed at the meeting in November 2022.

Members need to make a decision on whether they want to continue to meet at Buckinghamshire Council's Gateway House, Aylesbury.

4. Appointments to Complaints Sub-Committee and Budget Task and Finish Group

Consideration is needed to the appointments to the Panel's Sub-Committee and Task and Finish Group

Membership 2022/23

Complaints Sub-Committee – (Councillor Balvinder Bains (Slough Borough Council) *, Councillor Peter Brazier (Co-Opted Member – Buckinghamshire Council), Councillor David Cannon (Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead)*, Councillor David Carroll (Buckinghamshire Council), Councillor Emily Culverhouse (Co-Opted Member – Buckinghamshire Council), Councillor Karen Rowland (Reading Borough Council) and Councillor Richard Webber (Oxfordshire County Council)).

Budget Task and Finish Group – (Councillor John Harrison (Bracknell Forest Council) *, Councillor Geoff Saul (West Oxfordshire District Council), Councillor Keith McLean (Milton Keynes Council), Councillor Eddie Reeves (Cherwell District Council)* and Councillor Simon Rouse (Co-Opted Members, Buckinghamshire Council).

*** Denotes no longer a Member of the Police and Crime Panel**

5. Home Office Grant for the Panel 2022/23

The Home Office Grant allocation for the Panel in 2022/23 was £71,700, of which Oxfordshire County Council as Host Authority claimed £62,433 (outturn forecast submitted 3 March 2023) for 2022/23.

There is a transparency requirement that the Panel (via the Host Authority website) must publish as a minimum, details of all the expenditure including panel administration costs, translation costs and individual Panel Member claims for expenses. The Panel agreed that any allowances or expenses which may be made to elected Members arising out of the Panel Membership shall be determined and borne by the appointing Authorities for each Panel Member individually. Therefore, the only expenses that have been reimbursed are for the Co-opted Members. There have been no translation costs.

The Host Authority decides how to allocate the budget accordingly covering the following costs:-

- Scrutiny, policy, management, communications, legal and democratic services support for the Panel, its Sub-Committees and Task and Finish Groups,
- Administrative costs such as venue hire, catering and webcasting
- General expenses for travel and subsistence and training

The £62,433 comprises of the following:

Panel Administration, support overheads and costs arising during the year e.g scrutiny officer salary costs and management time, Independent Member expenses, Monitoring Officer role for PCP, ICT costs, office accommodation, venue hire and webcasting for Panel meetings, refreshment costs for Panel meetings, mileage and public transport costs, supplies and services (includes fees for Frontline Consultants, attendance at Annual PCP Conference, membership of PCP Regional bodies).

Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel Rules of Procedure

Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel

Title: Thames Valley Police and
Crime Panel Rules of
Procedure

Date: 23 June 2023



These rules of procedure were originally agreed by the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel at its meeting on 19 July 2012 and subsequently updated and agreed by the Panel meeting held on 18 November 2022.

1.0 General

1.1 In this document:

the “Panel” is the Police and Crime Panel for the Thames Valley Police Force;

the “Secretariat” is the financial, administrative, scrutiny and other officer support to the Panel;

the “Host Authority” is the council which is host to the Secretariat at the relevant time;

the “Act” is the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011;

the “Panel Arrangements Document” is the document which sets out the agreement of all principle Authorities on the overarching framework for how the Panel will operate;

the “Rules” are the rules as set out in this Rules of Procedure Document.

1.2 These Rules of Procedure (“the Rules”) are made by the Panel pursuant to Schedule 6, paragraph 25, of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (the ‘Act’). The Police and Crime Panel (‘the Panel’) will be conducted in accordance with the Rules. The Rules should be read and considered in conjunction with the Panel Arrangements.

1.3 The Rules shall be reviewed annually at the Panel’s Annual meeting. In the first year of operation amendments may be made mid-year to take into account the Memorandum of Understanding between the Panel and the newly elected Police and Crime Commissioner; and at any time may be updated should regulations require.

1.4 The Rules shall not be amended unless written notification of the amendment/s required are received by the Panel Secretariat not less than fifteen working days prior to

the Panel meeting. No amendment may be considered by the Panel which does not comply with the Act, relevant Regulations or statutory guidance.

1.5 If there is any conflict in interpretation between these Rules and the Act or Regulations made under the Act, the Act and Regulations will prevail. The Monitoring Officer of the Host Authority will have the final ruling as to the interpretation of legal requirements, these Rules and the Panel Arrangements Document.

1.6 Where the Rules do not explicitly address an issue the Standing Orders from the Host Authority will apply.

1.7 All Panel members will be subject to a Member Code of Conduct which for elected members will be those of their own Council; co-opted members will be subject to the Code of Conduct of the Host Authority provided that the Panel may agree to adopt such additional protocols as it thinks fit.

2.0 Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

2.1 The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Panel shall be elected from amongst the members of the Panel. The election will take place annually at the Annual meeting of the Panel, which will normally be held in June of each year.

2.2 Save for the requirement for re-election; there is no maximum term length for the Chairman or Vice-Chairman positions.

2.3 The positions will be elected by those members present at the June/July Annual Meeting by a simple majority vote.

2.4 If, the Panel cannot elect a Chairman at its Annual Meeting, the members present shall choose one of their number to preside over the meeting to enable the business on the agenda to be considered.

2.5 The Vice-Chairman will preside in the absence of the Chairman and if neither is present the Panel will appoint a chairman from among the remaining Members for the purposes of that meeting.

3.0 Resignation and removal of the Chairman and Vice- Chairman

3.1 The Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman may be removed by a vote of no confidence by a simple majority vote at a formal meeting of the Panel.

3.2 In the event of the resignation or removal of the Chairman or Vice-Chairman an election for the position will be held at the next meeting of the Panel.

4.0 Panel Meetings

4.1 The Panel will hold at least six ordinary meetings per year to carry out its functions. The calendar of meetings will normally be agreed by the Panel at its Annual Meeting.

4.2 Extraordinary meetings may also be called by the Chairman or by any four Members of the Panel by giving notice in writing to the Secretariat.

4.3 At least 10 working days notice will be given before an Extraordinary meeting (unless the Chairman agrees that there are special reasons for an urgent meeting) and the meeting must then be held within 20 working days of the notice.

4.4 Any request for an Extraordinary Meeting must specify the particular item of business for which the Extraordinary Meeting of the Panel is to be called.

4.5 The panel will meet at Buckinghamshire Council Offices, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury, Bucks HP19 8FF, **unless the Panel make a decision otherwise.**

4.6 Ordinary meetings will take place in accordance with a work programme agreed by the Panel and will start at the time decided by the Panel. The maximum length of a meeting shall normally be three hours.

4.7 The agenda to be followed at ordinary meetings will be as follows:

- a) to receive apologies for absence;
- b) to receive any declarations of interest from members;
- c) to approve the minutes of the last meeting;
- d) to receive the minutes of sub-committees and task groups and any reports submitted to the Panel by those Sub-committees and task groups; and
- e) to consider written and verbal reports from officers and Panel members; and
- f) items requested by members of the Panel in accordance with 4.10

4.8 The only business to be conducted at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Panel will be to choose a person to preside if the Chairman and Vice-Chairman are absent or otherwise unable to preside and to consider the matter specified in the request to call an Extraordinary Meeting. No other business may be conducted at the meeting unless the Panel otherwise resolve.

4.9 The Panel Agenda, and accompanying papers, will normally be issued to Panel Members at least 5 clear working days before the meeting. It will also be published on the Panel's website and publicised by any other means the Panel considers appropriate. Papers will normally be sent by Email.

4.10 The Secretariat will endeavour to co-ordinate the circulation of papers as early as possible to enable members to have as much time as possible to consider the issues before the meeting.

The scheduling of ad-hoc agenda items

4.11 Any Member of the Panel shall be entitled to give notice to the Secretariat that he or she wishes an item relevant to the functions of the Panel to be included on the agenda following the existing scheduled items of business. Items will normally be considered at the next ordinary meeting of the Panel, providing that the following conditions apply:

At least 15 working days written notice is given to the Secretariat (The PCC is required to be given 10 working days notice therefore this timing allows for discussions prior to this).

The item must be relevant to the remit of the Panel, as set out in the Panel Arrangements Document.

The item must not have been already considered within the last six months by the Panel.

4.12 In the event of a dispute on whether the conditions listed above apply, the Monitoring Officer of the Host Authority will advise the Chairman and Panel. The Panel's decision shall be final.

4.13 Where the conditions above apply and the agenda item is discussed, the Panel may consider at this point whether any further action is needed in terms of further agenda time; investigation outside of the meeting; or a written response or information from the PCC.

5.0 Quorum

5.1 A meeting of the Panel cannot take place unless at least one third (7) of the membership of the Panel is present.

6.0 Voting

6.1 A decision is taken by a majority of those present and voting.

6.2 Voting is generally by a show of hands unless a named vote is called for by a member of the Panel.

6.3 If a Panel Member arrives at the meeting before the casting of votes on any item has been commenced he/she is entitled to vote on that item.

6.4 Immediately after a vote is taken any Panel Member may ask for it to be recorded in the minutes that he/she voted for or against the question, or that he/she abstained.

6.5 The Chairman of the Panel, or other person presiding, shall have a second and/or casting vote where votes for and against a proposal are equal. There shall be no restriction on the manner in which the casting vote is exercised.

Membership

Elected Members

6.6 The Panel comprises:

- a) 14 elected members (one from each of the Oxfordshire district councils (4), one for each of the Unitary Authorities in Berkshire (6), and one each for Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council and Milton Keynes Council. Buckinghamshire Council will have one member plus three further local authority co-opted Members and Milton Keynes Council will have one further local authority co-opted Member to meet the balanced panel objective (see 6.6 c) and d).
- b) Two co-opted members who may not be members of the local authorities in the Thames Valley Police area;
- c) Three co-opted members from Buckinghamshire Council to meet the balanced appointment objective (in addition to 6.6 a)
- d) One co-opted member from Milton Keynes Council to meet the balanced appointment objective (in addition to 6.6 a)
- e) The elected members and the local authority co-opted members can have named substitute members appointed by their respective local authorities, who can attend Panel meetings in their absence.

6.6.1 Appointments of elected Members to the Panel shall be made by each of the Authorities in accordance with their own procedures and in making their appointments to the Panel each individual authority shall have regard to the requirement in the Act that appointments shall be made with a view to ensuring that the 'balanced appointment objective' is met so far as is reasonably practicable. It is recognised that each Authority may choose to appoint from within the membership of the majority group.

6.6.2 The balanced appointment objective requires that the Panel should (when taken together), and as far as is reasonably practicable:

- a) represent all parts of the police area;
- b) represent the political make-up of the Authorities (when taken together);
- c) have the skills, knowledge and experience necessary for the Panel to discharge its functions effectively.

6.9 In the event that an Authority does not appoint a Member in accordance with these requirements, the Secretary of State will appoint a Member from the Authority to the Panel in accordance with the provisions in the Act.

7.0 Public Participation

The Panel will allow up to 20 minutes at each full meeting held in public for public questions. Public questions will be subject to strict criteria that will be set out and made publicly available in the Panel's Public Question Time Scheme. The scheme will be reviewed on an annual basis.

8.0 Work Programme

8.1 The Panel will be responsible for setting its work programme. In doing so it shall have regard to:

- a) the requirement to undertake the functions and responsibilities of the Panel as set out in the Act including consideration of the necessary timings to meet its legal responsibilities;
- b) the priorities defined by the PCC;
- c) the ascertainable views of the public on Police and Crime matters;
- d) the views of key partners, including Probation, Health, Community Safety Partnerships;
- e) the views of its members and advisers; and
- f) the resources available to support the delivery of the work programme.

9.0 Sub-Committees

9.1 The Panel may set up sub-committees to undertake specified functions of the Panel. The role of sub-committees is to carry out delegated Panel functions, excluding those functions that are not able to be delegated under the Act. Sub-committees may formally take decisions as delegated to them by the Panel.

9.2 The work to be undertaken by a sub-committee will be agreed by the Panel. In commissioning the work the Panel will agree as part of the scoping document the following:

terms of reference and delegations

purpose/objectives

resources

timescales for completing the work and reporting back

membership

9.3 The Panel shall appoint sub-committees. The Chairman of the Panel may make a recommendation to the Panel on Membership.

9.4 The maximum size of a sub-committee shall be seven members. The minimum size is three members. Size shall be determined on a case-by-case basis at the point that the review is commissioned.

9.5 The membership of sub-committees shall be confined to members of the Panel.

9.6 In determining the membership of a sub-committee the Panel shall give so far as practicable, consideration to the duties in the Act to consider political balance; geographical balance; and the skills and expertise of members.

9.7 Sub-Committees shall report back to the Panel, and the minutes of the Sub-committee shall be received by the Panel.

10 Task Groups

10.1 The role of Task Groups is to undertake time-limited investigations into particular issues, such as a scrutiny topic review. They are informal working groups, and as such have no decision-making power. Task Groups will report back upon the completion of their work with a report and recommendations to the Panel.

10.2 The work to be undertaken by a Task Group will be agreed by the Panel. In commissioning the work the Panel will agree as part of the scoping document the following:

- terms of reference;
- purpose/objectives;
- approach to gathering evidence;
- resources to support the review;
- timescales for completing the work and reporting back; and
- membership.

10.3 Task Groups can only make reports or recommendations to the Panel. The Panel will consider reports it receives, and if agreed, such reports may be adopted as the Panel's report.

10.4 The Panel will appoint Task Groups. The Chairman of the Panel may make a recommendation to the Panel on the membership.

10.5 The maximum size of a Task Group shall be agreed by the Panel at the point that the review is commissioned. The minimum size is three members.

10.6 The Panel shall appoint a Chairman of the Task Group from within the membership of the Panel. The Chairman of the Panel may make a recommendation on whom to appoint.

10.7 The composition of a Task Group will be determined by the role it is to perform. Whilst issues of political and geographical balance may be taken into account, to help the effectiveness of the group consideration may also be given to:

- skills and expertise
- availability of members to undertake the work
- interest and commitment

10.8 The Panel may choose to co-opt non-Panel members onto a Task Group if it is considered that they possess skills, expertise, or a perspective which will assist the Group in its work. Co-opted members on a Task Group are non-voting members of the Group.

10.9 The following eligibility rules will apply to non-voting co-opted members of Task Groups:

must live and/or work in the Thames Valley Police Force area; and

must be able to provide expertise/layperson's perspective to assist the group in carrying out its scrutiny function.

11.0 Panel Reports and Recommendations—General

11.1 Where the Panel makes a report to the PCC it will publish the report or recommendations on its website, except where the information is exempt or confidential as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

11.2 The Panel may require the PCC within 20 working days (or within such other period as is indicated in these Rules) of the date on which s/he receives the Panel's report or recommendations to:

- a) consider the report or recommendations;
- b) respond to the Panel indicating what (if any) action the PCC proposes to take;
- c) where the Panel has published the report or recommendations, publish the response from the PCC.

11.3 The Panel will formally make requests to the PCC or issue other statements by way of reports and recommendations. As the Panel is a scrutiny body, rather than an executive decision-making committee, motions or resolutions will not be considered by the Panel.

Procedure for Agreeing Reports and Recommendations

11.4 Recommendations to the PCC from the Panel will be made as an outcome of a scrutiny review or as a result of an agenda item discussion.

11.5 As a cross-party scrutiny committee reports and recommendations to the PCC should normally be agreed by consensus rather than a formal vote. Where this is not possible a vote may be taken, under the voting procedure outlined above. This includes the option of a Panel member requesting a named vote is taken at the meeting to ensure that views are recorded.

Minority Reporting

11.6 In exceptional circumstances, one minority report in relation to reports prepared by Task Groups may be prepared and submitted for consideration with the majority report to the PCC. Where a member or members wish to submit a minority report the Chairman of the Panel and Secretariat should be notified as soon as possible in advance of the Panel meeting, normally 10 working days notice should be given depending on the timing of the Task Group's consideration of its majority report.

11.7 The PCC's responsibilities and remit relate to the Committee as a whole, therefore the PCC will respond to the Committee as a whole and not to individual members of the Panel. This means that for the purposes of communication to the public, stakeholders and the PCC the majority report represents the viewpoint of the Panel and the PCC will be required only to respond to the majority report.

12.0 PCC and others giving account

12.1 The presumption will be that the PCC will be required to attend all formal Police and Crime Panel meetings (ordinary and extraordinary) to answer questions which may be necessary to assist the Panel in discharging its functions, unless the Panel decides that this is not necessary and informs the PCC that they will not be required.

12.2 The PCC shall be notified on the Annual Work Programme of the Panel including meeting dates.

12.3 In setting the Annual Work Programme the Panel should identify and consider where possible what papers will be required, and if any supporting staff from the Secretariat, Police or otherwise are likely to be needed in addition to the PCC, in order to give as much notice as possible.

12.4 Where a new agenda item is scheduled for a meeting that is not included within the work programme and the PCC (and staff/or Chief Constable) is required to attend, the Secretariat will inform the relevant persons of the nature of the agenda item and any written information that is required as soon as possible.

12.5 At least 15 working days notice will be given of the new agenda time to the PCC and any requirement to provide written information (owing to the access of information requirements this equates to 10 working days notice for the provision of written information).

12.6 In exceptional circumstances, and where there is agreement between the PCC and Chairman of the Panel, shorter notice may be required for either attendance or papers.

12.7 If the Panel requires the PCC to attend before the Panel, the Panel may also request the Chief Constable to attend on the same occasion to answer any questions which appear to the Panel to be necessary in order for it to carry out its functions.

12.8 In undertaking its functions, the Panel may invite persons other than those referred to above to attend Panel meetings, to address the meeting, discuss issues of local concern and/or answer questions. This may, for example and not exclusively, include residents, stakeholders, Council Members who are not members of the Panel and officers from other parts of the public sector.

13.0 Special Functions

- 13.1 The Special Functions of the Panel, as set out in the Panel Arrangements, are those functions which are conferred on the Panel in relation to:
- a) the review of the Police and Crime Plan as required by Section 28(3) of the Act;
 - b) the review of the Annual Report as required by Section 28 (4) of the Act;
 - c) the review of senior appointments in accordance with Paragraphs 10 and 11 of Schedule 1 of the Act;
 - d) the review and potential veto of the proposed precept in accordance with Schedule 5 of the Act;
 - e) the review and potential veto of appointment of the Chief Constable in accordance with Part 1 the Act.

14.0 Police and Crime Plan

14.1 The Panel is a statutory consultee on the development of the PCC's Police and Crime Plan and will receive a copy of the draft Police and Crime Plan, or a draft of any variation to it, from the PCC.

14.2 The Panel will:

- a) hold a meeting to review the draft Police and Crime Plan (or a variation to it); and
- b) report or make recommendations on the draft Plan which the PCC must take into account.

15.0 Annual Report

15.1 The PCC must publish an Annual Report about the exercise of his/her functions in the financial year and progress in meeting police and crime objectives in the year. The report must be sent to the Panel for consideration.

15.2 The Panel must comment upon the Annual Report of the PCC, and for that purpose must:

- a) arrange for a meeting of the Panel to be held as soon as practicable after the Panel receives the Annual Report;
- b) require the PCC to attend the meeting to present the Annual Report and answer such questions about the Annual Report as the Panel think appropriate;
- c) make a report and/or recommendations on the Annual Report to the PCC.

16.0 Proposed precept

16.1 The Panel will receive notification from the PCC of the precept that they are proposing to issue for the coming financial year. The Panel will arrange for a meeting of the Panel to be held as soon as practicable after the Panel receives the proposed precept and make a report including recommendations.

16.2 Having considered the precept, the Panel will:

- a) support the precept without qualification or comment; or
- b) support the precept and make recommendations; or

The Panel would need to indicate whether it considered the proposed precept to be too high or too low.

- c) veto the proposed precept (by the required majority of at least two thirds of the persons who are members of the Panel and present at the time when the decision is made).

16.3 If the Panel vetoes the proposed precept, the report to the PCC must include a statement that the panel has vetoed the proposed precept and give reasons for that decision. The Panel will require a response from the PCC to the report and any such recommendations.

17.0 Senior Appointments

17.1 The Panel must review the proposed appointment by the PCC of the Chief Constable, Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer and Deputy Police and Crime PCC.

17.2 The Panel will receive notification of the proposed appointment from the PCC, which will include:

- a) the name of the candidate;
- b) the criteria used to assess suitability of the candidate;
- c) why the candidate satisfies the criteria; and
- d) the terms and conditions proposed for the appointment.

17.3 The Panel must hold a confirmation hearing for all proposed senior appointments within 15 working days of receipt of notification by the PCC. It must also report to the PCC at the same time with its recommendations. The 15 working days will not include the post-election period.

17.4 The confirmation hearings will be held in public and the candidates will be questioned in relation to their appointment. Candidates must attend, either in person or by video link.

17.5 Following the hearing, the Panel will make a report and/or recommendations to the PCC on the proposed appointment. The PCC must respond in writing within the usual 20 working days confirming whether the recommendation has been accepted or not.

17.6 In relation to the proposed appointment of the Chief Constable, the Panel is required to make recommendations to the PCC and has the power to veto the appointment. Following the hearing, the Panel will be asked to:

- a) support the appointment without qualification or comment;
- b) support the appointment with associated recommendations, or
- c) veto the appointment of the Chief Constable (a two thirds majority is required of those members present at the time when the decision is made).¹

17.7 If the Panel vetoes an appointment, it must set out its reasons for doing so in a report to the PCC and the PCC must not then appoint that candidate as Chief Constable.

18.0 Suspension of the Police and Crime Commissioner

18.1 The Panel may suspend the PCC if it appears to the Panel that:

- a) the PCC is charged in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man with an offence; and
- b) the offence is one which carries a maximum term of imprisonment exceeding two years.

18.2 This decision will be taken at a formal Panel meeting via a vote.

¹ Subject to change following HO regulations

18.3 The suspension of the PCC ceases to have effect upon the occurrence of the earliest of these events:

- a) the charge being dropped;
- b) the PCC being acquitted of the offence;
- c) the PCC being convicted of the offence but not being disqualified under Section 66 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 by virtue of the conviction; or
- d) the termination of the suspension by the Police and Crime Panel.

18.4 In this section references to an offence which carries a maximum term of imprisonment exceeding two years are references to:

- a) an offence which carries such a maximum term in the case of a person who has attained the age of 18 years, or
- b) an offence for which, in the case of such a person, the sentence is fixed by law as life imprisonment.

19.0 Suspension and Removal of the Chief Constable

19.1 The Panel will receive notification if the PCC suspends the Chief Constable.

19.2 The PCC must also notify the Panel in writing of his/her proposal to call upon the Chief Constable to retire or resign together with a copy of the reasons given to the Chief Constable in relation to that proposal.

19.3 The PCC must provide the Panel with a copy of any representations from the Chief Constable about the proposal to call for his/her resignation or retirement.

19.4 If the PCC is still proposing to call upon the Chief Constable to resign, she/he must notify the Panel accordingly (the 'further notification').

19.5 Within 30 days from the date of receiving the further notification the Panel must make a recommendation in writing to the PCC as to whether or not s/he should call for the retirement or resignation. Before making any recommendation the Panel may consult the chief inspector of constabulary, and must hold a meeting.

19.6 The scrutiny hearing which must be held by the Panel is a Panel meeting in private to which the PCC and Chief Constable are entitled to attend to make representations in relation to the proposal to call upon the Chief Constable to retire or resign. Appearance at the scrutiny hearing can be by attending in person or video link.

19.7 The PCC may not call upon the Chief Constable to retire or resign until the end of the scrutiny process which will occur:

- (a) at the end of 30 days from the Panel having received notification if the Panel has not by then given the PCC a recommendation as to whether or not she/he should call for the retirement or resignation; or
- (b) the PCC notifies the Panel of a decision about whether she/he accepts the Panel's recommendations in relation to resignation or retirement.

19.8 The PCC must consider the Panel's recommendation and may accept or reject it, notifying the Panel accordingly.

20.0 Appointment of an Acting Police and Crime Commissioner

20.1 The Panel must meet to appoint a person to be acting PCC if:

- a) no person holds the office of PCC;
- b) the PCC is incapacitated (i.e. unable to fulfil the functions of PCC) which is a matter for the Panel to determine; or
- c) the PCC is suspended.

20.2 In the event that the Panel has to appoint an acting PCC it will meet to determine the process for appointment which will comply with these Rules of Procedure and any legal requirements.

20.3 The Panel may appoint a person as acting PCC only if the person is a member of the PCC's staff at the time of the appointment.

20.4 In appointing a person as acting PCC in a case where the PCC is incapacitated, the Panel must have regard to any representations made by the PCC in relation to the appointment.

20.5 The appointment of an acting PCC will cease to have effect upon the earliest of the following:

- a) the election of a person as PCC;
- b) the termination by the Panel, or by the acting PCC, of the appointment of the acting PCC;
- c) in a case where the acting PCC is appointed because the PCC is incapacitated, the PCC ceasing to be incapacitated; or
- d) in a case where the acting PCC is appointed because the PCC is suspended, the PCC ceasing to be suspended.

20.6 Where the acting PCC is appointed because the PCC is incapacitated or suspended, the acting PCC's appointment does not terminate because a vacancy occurs in the office of PCC.

21.0 Complaints

21.1 Serious complaints which involve allegations which may amount to a criminal offence by the PCC or senior office holders are dealt with by the Independent Police Complaints Commission (the 'IPCC').

21.2 The Panel may however be involved in the informal resolution of certain other complaints against the PCC and Deputy PCC, where they are not being investigated by the IPCC or cease to be investigated by the IPCC.

21.3 The Panel shall have a Complaints Procedure for complaint handling that shall be set out in a protocol.

22 Further Guidelines/Protocols

22.1 The Panel may agree further guidelines/protocols to assist it in carrying out its business so long as these are in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, Panel Arrangements and legal requirements.

ANNEX A: ACCESS TO INFORMATION STANDING ORDERS

1.0 SCOPE

1.1 These standing orders apply to all formal meetings of the Police and Crime Panel.

1.2 These rules do not affect any additional rights to information contained elsewhere in this Constitution or granted by law.

2.0 RIGHTS TO ATTEND MEETINGS

2.1 Members of the public may attend all meetings subject only to the exceptions in these standing orders.

3.0 NOTICES OF MEETING

3.1 The Secretariat will give at least **five** clear days notice of any meeting by posting details of the meeting at the principal offices of the Host Authority and on the Internet.

4.0 ACCESS TO AGENDA AND REPORTS BEFORE THE MEETING

4.1 The Secretariat will make copies of the agenda and reports open to the public available for inspection at the designated offices at least five clear days before the meeting. If an item is added to the agenda later, the Monitoring Officer of the Host Authority shall make each report available to the public as soon as the report is completed and sent to members, and will ensure that it will be open to inspection from the time the item was added to the supplementary agenda.

5.0 SUPPLY OF COPIES

5.1 The Secretariat will supply copies of:

- a) any agenda and reports which are open to public inspection;
- b) any further statements or particulars necessary to indicate the nature of the items in the agenda; and
- c) if the Monitoring Officer of the Host Authority thinks fit, copies of any other documents supplied to members in connection with an item to any person on payment of a charge for postage and any other costs under the Host Authority's Charging Policy. Under the Freedom of Information Act, information would be supplied free until these costs go over the threshold of £450, when a charge would be levied.

6.0 ACCESS TO MINUTES ETC AFTER THE MEETING

6.1 The Secretariat will make available copies of the following for six years after a meeting:

- a) the minutes of the meeting, or, where appropriate, records of decisions taken, together with reasons, for all meetings of the Panel excluding any part of the minutes of proceedings when the meeting was not open to the public or which disclose exempt or confidential information;
- b) a summary of any proceedings not open to the public where the minutes open to inspection would not provide a reasonably fair and coherent record;
- c) the agenda for the meeting; and
- d) reports relating to items when the meeting was open to the public.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 *List of background papers:* Reports will include a list (prepared by the Secretariat) of those documents (called background papers) relating to the subject matter of the report which in their opinion disclose any facts or matters on which the report or an important part

of the report is based; and which have been relied on to a material extent in preparing the report but does not include published works or those which disclose exempt or confidential information.

7.2 Public inspection of background papers: The Council will make available for public inspection for six years after the date of the meeting one copy of each of the documents on the list of background papers.

7.3 Use of media technology at Panel Meetings: At the discretion of the Chairman of the Panel recording of meetings and use of media technology will be permitted provided that it does not release information that the Secretariat has identified as being confidential under the Access to Information Regulations.

7.4 The Secretariat supports the use of networking sites to disseminate information during their meetings, provided that confidential information as outlined above is not deliberately or inadvertently disclosed.

8.0 SUMMARY OF THE PUBLIC'S RIGHTS

8.1 A written summary of the public's rights to attend meetings and to inspect and copy documents is available for inspection at the Principal offices of the Host Authority.

9.0 EXCLUSION OF ACCESS BY THE PUBLIC TO MEETINGS

Confidential information – requirement to exclude public

9.1 The public must be excluded from an item at a meeting whenever it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be

9.2 Meaning of confidential information: Confidential information means information given to the Panel by a Government Department on terms which forbid its public disclosure or information which cannot be publicly disclosed by reason of a Court Order or any enactment.

9.3 Exempt information – discretion to exclude public: The public may be excluded from an item at a meeting whenever it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that exempt information would be disclosed.

9.4 Meaning of exempt information: Subject to, and to the test of the Public Interest set out in paragraph below, information is exempt information where it falls within any of the following categories:

- 1 Information relating to an individual.
- 2 Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
- 3 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the public authority holding the information), except where the information is required to be registered under certain prescribed statutes including the Companies Act 1985 and the Charities Act 1993. "Financial or business affairs" includes contemplated, as well as past or current activities.
- 4 Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the Authority. "Labour relations matter" means any matter which may be the subject of a trade dispute, or any dispute about any such

matter (ie a matter specified in paragraphs (a) to (g) of section 218(1) of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

- 5 Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
- 6 Information which reveals that the Authority proposes:
 - a) to give under any enactment a notice, under or by virtue of which requirements are to be imposed on a person; or
 - b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
- 7 Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

9.5 *Public interest test*: Information falling within any of categories 1-7 set out above, which is not prevented from being exempt because it falls within category 3, and is required to be registered under the prescribed enactments is exempt information if, and so long as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

10.0 EXCLUSION OF ACCESS BY THE PUBLIC TO REPORTS

10.1 The Monitoring Officer of the Host Authority may exclude access by the public to a report which, in his or her opinion, relates to an item during which, in accordance with this Access to Information Standing Order, the meeting is likely not to be open to the public; or, as the case may be, was not open to the public. Such reports will be marked "Not for publication", together with the category of information likely to be disclosed.

11.0 RECORD OF DECISIONS

11.1 After any formal meeting of the Panel, the Secretariat will produce a record of every decision taken at that meeting as soon as practicable. The record will include a statement of the reasons for each decision and, where appropriate, any alternative options considered and rejected at that meeting.

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APPENDIX 2

THAMES VALLEY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL ARRANGEMENTS

Originally published: 26 April 2012

Amended: 2 September 2022

This document was agreed by a Joint Committee on 19 April 2012 on behalf of the following Authorities and updated on 9 September 2022 to reflect a recommendation from the Panel's Task and Finish Group on Panel Membership.

- Bracknell Forest Council
- Buckinghamshire Council
- Cherwell District Council
- Milton Keynes Council
- Oxford City Council
- Oxfordshire County Council
- Reading Borough Council
- Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council
- Slough Borough Council
- South Oxfordshire District Council
- Vale of White Horse District Council
- West Berkshire Council
- West Oxfordshire District Council
- Wokingham Borough Council

In this agreement:

- the above Authorities are referred to singularly as 'Authority' and together as 'the Authorities';
- the "Panel" is the Police and Crime Panel for the Thames Valley Police Force;
- the "Secretariat" is the financial, administrative, scrutiny and other officer support to the Panel;
- the "Host Authority" is the council which hosts the Secretariat at the relevant time;
- the "Act" is the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011;
- the "Thames Valley Local Authority Chief Executives" are the chief executive officers of the "Authorities";
- the "Panel Arrangements Document" is this document, as amended from time-to-time; and
- the "Rules of Procedure" are the Rules of Procedure as agreed by the Panel from time to time.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 This Panel Arrangements Document will normally be reviewed every four years by all Authorities, alongside a review of the Rules of Procedure. Proposed changes to the Panel Arrangements Document will be referred to the Thames Valley Local Authority Chief Executive Officers (or to other such arrangement as may be agreed by all Authorities) for comment prior to the decision by the Panel.
- 1.2 The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 ('the Act') introduces new structural arrangements for national policing, strategic police decision making, neighbourhood policing and police accountability.

- 1.2 The Act provides for the election of a Police and Crime Commissioner ('PCC') for a police area, responsible for securing an efficient and effective police force for their area, producing a Police and Crime Plan, recruiting the Chief Constable for an area, and holding him/her to account, publishing certain information including an annual report, setting the force budget and police precept and requiring the Chief Constable to prepare reports on police matters. The PCC must co-operate with local community safety partners and criminal justice bodies.
- 1.3 The Act requires the Authorities to establish and maintain a Police and Crime Panel ('the Panel'). It is the responsibility of the Authorities for the police area to make arrangements for the Panel ('Panel Arrangements').
- 1.4 The Thames Valley is a multi-authority police area ('the police area') as defined in Schedule 1 of the Police Act 1996. All the Authorities, as the relevant local authorities within the police area must agree to the making and modification of the Panel Arrangements. If the Authorities are not able to agree the Panel Arrangements the Secretary of State is able to establish a Police and Crime Panel for the Police Area.
- 1.5 Each Authority and each Member of the Panel must comply with the Panel Arrangements.
- 1.6 The functions of the Panel—to be known as the "Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel"—are to be exercised with a view to supporting the effective exercise of the functions of the PCC for that police area.
- 1.7 The Panel must have regard to the Policing Protocol issued by the Home Secretary, which sets out the ways in which the Home Secretary, the PCC, the Chief Constable and the Panel should exercise, or refrain from exercising, functions so as to encourage, maintain or improve working relationships (including co-operative working); and limit or prevent the overlapping or conflicting exercise of functions.
- 1.8 The Panel is a scrutiny body with responsibility for scrutinising the PCC and promoting openness in the transaction of police business in the police area.
- 1.9 The Panel is a Joint Committee of the Authorities and as such is subject to the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972 and subsequent legislation
- 1.10 The Authorities by being parties to this Agreement signify their agreement to the Panel Arrangements.

2.0 Terms of Reference and Functions

- 2.1 The overarching role of the Panel is to scrutinise the work of the PCC in the discharge of the PCC's functions in order to support the effective exercise of those functions.
- 2.2 To undertake this scrutiny role the Panel will carry out the functions set out in the Act. These functions relate to the scrutiny of the Police and Crime Plan, PCC's Annual Report; confirmation hearings of appointments; issuing of precepts; and the

appointment of the Chief Constable. These functions may not be discharged by a sub-committee of the Panel.

2.3 The Panel is a statutory consultee on the development of the **PCC's Police and Crime Plan** and must:

- a) review the draft Police and Crime Plan (or a variation to it); and
- b) report and/or make recommendations on the draft Plan which the PCC must take into account.

2.4 The Panel must comment upon the **Annual Report** of the PCC, and for that purpose will:

- a) question the PCC on the Annual Report at a public meeting;
- b) make a report and/or recommendations on the Annual Report to the PCC.

2.5 The Panel must hold **confirmation hearings in respect of proposed senior appointments** made by the PCC. This includes the posts of the PCC Chief Executive; Chief Finance Officer and Deputy Police and Crime PCC in accordance with the requirements set out in Schedule 1 of the Act. The Panel will review the appointments and make a report and/or recommendations to the PCC.

2.6 The Panel must hold a **confirmation hearing in respect of the appointment of the Chief Constable** by the PCC. The Panel has the right of veto for the appointment of this post in accordance with the Act and regulations.¹

2.7 The Panel must review the **precept** proposed by the PCC in accordance with the requirements set out in Schedule 5 of the Act, and will have a right of veto in respect of the precept in accordance with the Act and Regulations made thereafter.

2.8 The right of veto will require that at least two-thirds of the persons who are Members of the Panel at the time when the decision is made vote in favour of making that decision.²

2.10 The Panel may appoint an Acting PCC if necessary.

2.11 The Panel may suspend the PCC if he/she is charged with an offence carrying a maximum term of imprisonment exceeding two years.

2.12 The Panel will have any other powers and duties set out in the Act or Regulations made in accordance with the Act.

2.13 The Panel may carry out in-depth reviews into the work of the PCC. This work may be delegated to a Sub-Committee or Task Group.

3.0 Membership

Elected Members

3.1 The Panel comprises:

¹ Subject to Home Office regulations

² Ibid.

- a) 14 elected members (one from each of the Oxfordshire district councils (4), one for each of the Unitary Authorities in Berkshire (6), and one each for Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council and Milton Keynes Council. Buckinghamshire Council will have one member plus three further local authority co-opted Members and Milton Keynes Council will have one further local authority co-opted Member to meet the balanced panel objective (see 3.1 c) and d)).
- b) Two co-opted members who may not be members of the local authorities in the Thames Valley Police area;
- c) Three co-opted members from Buckinghamshire Council to meet the balanced appointment objective (in addition to 3.1 a)
- d) One co-opted member from Milton Keynes Council to meet the balanced appointment objective (in addition to 3.1 a)

3.2 Appointments of elected Members to the Panel shall be made by each of the Authorities in accordance with their own procedures and in making their appointments to the Panel each individual authority shall have regard to the requirement in the Act that appointments shall be made with a view to ensuring that the 'balanced appointment objective' is met so far as is reasonably practicable. It is recognised that each Authority may choose to appoint from within the membership of the majority group.

3.3 The balanced appointment objective requires that the Panel should (when taken together), and as far as is reasonably practicable:

- a) represent all parts of the police area;
- b) represent the political make-up of the Authorities (when taken together);
- c) have the skills, knowledge and experience necessary for the Panel to discharge its functions effectively.

3.4 In the event that an Authority does not appoint a Member in accordance with these requirements, the Secretary of State will appoint a Member from the Authority to the Panel in accordance with the provisions in the Act.

Term of Office

3.5 A member shall be appointed annually to the Panel to hold office for the following municipal year, and all such appointments shall be notified to the Secretariat no later than 31 May in each year, subject to the following proviso that he or she:

- a) shall cease to be a member of the Panel if he or she ceases to be a member of the Authority (and does not on the same day again become a member of the Authority).

3.6 Each Authority will give consideration to the 'balanced objective requirement' in its annual appointment process. Where possible, an Authority will give consideration to continuity of membership to enable the Panel's expertise and skills to be developed for the effective scrutiny of the PCC.

Resignation and removal of elected members on the Panel

- 3.7 An Authority may decide in accordance with its procedures to remove its Member from the Panel at any time and upon doing so shall give written notice to the Secretariat of the change in its Member.
- 3.8 A Member may resign from the Panel at any time by giving notice to the appointing Council who will inform the Secretariat.
- 3.9 In the event that any Member resigns from the Panel, or is removed from the Panel by his or her Authority, the Authority shall immediately take steps to nominate and appoint an alternative Member to the Panel, applying the considerations given in paragraph 3.2-3.3 above.
- 3.10 Where a Panel Member fails to attend meetings of the Panel over a six month period then the Secretariat shall recommend to the relevant Authority that due consideration is given to removing the member from the appointment to the Panel and the appointment of a replacement member from that Authority.

Non-local authority co-opted members

3.11 Two co-optees shall be appointed by the Panel who may not be members of the local authorities in the Thames Valley police area.

3.12 those co-optees shall:

a) be disqualified from being appointed if:-

i) he or she has not yet attained the age of eighteen years, or

ii) neither his or her principal or only place of work, nor his or her principal or only place of residence, has been in the police area during the whole of the period of twelve months ending with the day of appointment.

b) be disqualified from being a member so appointed if, at any time, neither his or her principal or only place of work, nor his or her principal or only place of residence, is within the police area.

3.13 The following shall be disqualified from being appointed, and from being a co-opted Member if so appointed:

a) the PCC for the police area;

b) a member of staff of the Police and Crime PCC for the area;

c) a member of the civilian staff of the Police Force for the area;

d) a Member of Parliament;

e) a Member of the National Assembly for Wales;

f) a Member of the Scottish Parliament;

g) a Member of the European Parliament;

h) a member of the uniformed Police Force for the area;

i) a member of a principal council within the Thames Valley Police Authority area.

- 3.14 A co-opted Member shall be a Member of the Panel for four years. The maximum time length that a co-opted member may serve for is two terms.
- 3.15 The appointments of co-opted Members are undertaken in accordance with the following principles:
- a) The appointment will be made on merit of candidates whose skills, experience and qualities are considered best to ensure the effective functioning of the Panel.
 - b) The selection process must be fair, objective, impartial and consistently applied to all candidates who will be assessed against the same pre-determined criteria.
 - c) The selection process will be conducted transparently with information about the requirements for the appointment and the process being publicly advertised.
 - d) The selection process will endeavour to encourage applications from candidates which reflect the breadth of communities in the Thames Valley and will welcome applications from all eligible people irrespective of gender, ethnic origin, religious belief, sexual orientation, disability, age or other factor.
- 3.16 Costs of the recruitment process shall be met from within the existing budget approved by the Panel as set out in section 5. Costs will be minimised by utilising existing networks and advertising online through the national public appointments website, rather than by paid advertisement in newspapers.
- 3.17 A co-opted Member of the Panel may resign from the Panel by, giving at least three months written notice to the Secretariat. In exceptional circumstances the Panel may agree to a shorter notice period.
- 3.18 The Panel may at any time terminate the appointment of a co-opted Member of the Panel by notice in writing with immediate effect if:
- a) he or she has been convicted of a criminal offence but not disqualified in accordance with 3.21(c); or
 - b) reasonably satisfied that the member is otherwise unable or unfit to discharge his functions as a member; or
- 3.19 In the event that a co-opted member fails to attend the meetings of the Panel over a six month period the Panel shall give due consideration to the termination of the appointment of the co-opted member.
- 3.20 Where, in accordance with Paragraphs 3.17 and 3.18 a co-opted Member resigns from the Panel or is removed from the Panel following a decision of the Panel, the Panel shall ensure that a replacement is sought as soon as possible in accordance with the principles set out in paragraph 3.15.
- 3.21 Subject to the exemptions set out in paragraphs 3.21 and 3.22, a person shall be disqualified from being appointed as or being a member of a Panel if:

- a) a bankruptcy order has been made against him or her or his or her estate has been sequestrated or he or she has made a composition or arrangement with, or granted a trust deed for, his creditors;
- b) he or she is subject to a disqualification order or disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986, to a disqualification order under Part II of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1989, to a disqualification undertaking accepted under the Company Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 or to an order made under section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986(failure to pay under county court administration order); or
- c) he or she has within five years before the date of appointment or since appointment been convicted in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man of an offence, and has had passed on him or her a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of not less than three months.

3.22 Where a person is disqualified under paragraph 3.20(a) by reason that a bankruptcy order has been made against him or her or his or her estate has been sequestrated, the disqualification shall cease:

- a) unless the bankruptcy order is previously annulled or the sequestration of his estate is recalled or reduced, on his obtaining a discharge; and
- b) if the bankruptcy order is annulled or the sequestration of his estate is recalled or reduced, on the date of that event.

3.23 Where a person is disqualified under paragraph 3.20(a) by reason of having made a composition or arrangement with, or granted a trust deed for, creditors and pays debts in full, the disqualification shall cease on the date on which the payment is completed, and in any other case it shall cease at the end of the period of five years beginning with the date on which the terms of the deed of composition or arrangement or trust deed are fulfilled.

3.24 For the purposes of paragraph 3.20(c) the date of a conviction shall be taken to be the ordinary date on which the period allowed for making an appeal or application expires or, if an appeal or application is made, the date on which the appeal or application is finally disposed of or abandoned or fails by reason of its non-prosecution.

3.25 **Balanced appointment objective**

3.26 The balanced appointment objective is the objective that local authority members of the Panel (when taken together) represent all parts of the police area as well as the political make-up of the local authorities in the police area (when taken together); and have the skills, knowledge and experience necessary for the Panel to discharge its functions

3.27 The Panel resolved on 22 November 2019 that subject to the Secretary of State's agreement to appoint up to four additional co-opted members, who are members of Buckinghamshire Council to the Panel to meet the balanced appointment objective. Appointments and resignation and removal of elected members on the Panel will be the same as Rules 3.5 to 3.10.

4.0 Host Authority

4.1 The Panel shall agree a Host Authority for the Secretariat for the Panel, which shall provide such scrutiny, legal, financial, administrative and other support as is reasonably required to enable the Panel to undertake its functions within the resources agreed by the Panel.

4.2 In accordance with the Panel's agreement made at the meeting held on 22 November 2022, Buckinghamshire Council shall act as the Host Authority from 1 April 2023. Approval was given to Buckinghamshire Council's request that the hosting arrangements be for a 3-year period from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2026 however, it was acknowledged that this could be reviewed should the Chairmanship of the Panel change, and his/her local authority should wish to take on the responsibility of being the Host Authority for the Panel.

This arrangement be in place until such time as either:

- a) The Panel resolves at its annual meeting (held in June of each year) that another Authority should carry out this function, provided that such other Authority agrees. In which case, the function will be transferred six months after the Panel decision unless a shorter period is agreed between the existing Host Authority and the new Host Authority; or
- b) The existing Host Authority serves notice that it no longer wishes to be the Host Authority and this function is transferred to another Authority in which case, a six month notice period will apply, unless a shorter period is agreed between the existing Host Authority and the new Host Authority; or
- c) In the event that no Authority comes forward to act as Host Authority the home Council of the current Chairman of the Panel shall be expected to be the Host Authority.

4.3 The staff employed to support the Panel will be employed by the Host Authority. Should the Host Authority change the TUPE legislation which is in force at the time shall apply as necessary.

5.0 Budget and Costs of the Panel

5.1 An annual draft budget for the operation of the Panel shall be drawn up each year by the Host Authority. All monies (which are not ring-fenced) provided by the Home Office to support the operation of the Panel shall be taken into account in preparing the Budget.

- 5.2 For the first year of operation (until April 2013), the Host Authority will provide a level of service to the Panel within the resources granted by the Home Office, excluding some of the on-costs which will be covered by the Host Authority.
- 5.3 If in subsequent years, the Panel considers that the Budget is insufficient to support the functions of the Panel, the Panel may make a funding request to all Authorities, which request shall be made via the Thames Valley Local Authority Chief Executives.
- 5.4 Any additional costs arising under paragraph 5.3 shall be borne between the Authorities in equal shares.

6.0 Allowances and Expenses

- 6.1 Each Authority has the discretion to pay its representatives on the Panel Special Responsibility Allowances, and to reimburse reasonable expenses incurred. No allowance or expenses payments will be made by the Panel itself to elected members. Any allowances or expenses which may be made to elected members arising out of Panel Membership shall be determined and borne by the appointing Authorities for each Panel Member individually.
- 6.2 The Host Authority, on behalf of the Panel will reimburse reasonable expenses to co-optees provided that this is agreed as part of the annual budget approved by the Panel.

7.0 Promotion of the Panel

- 7.1 The Panel shall be promoted and supported by the Host Authority and the Secretariat through:
- a) The inclusion of dedicated webpages on the work of the Panel, with the publication of meeting agendas; minutes; and papers where those papers are public, in line with the rules of procedure and legal obligations under the Local Government Act 1972. All reports and recommendations made, with responses from the PCC will be published. Information on member attendance and other publications will be included.
 - b) Media and communications support provided by the corporate communications team, this includes the issuing of press release where required.
 - c) Clerking support to be provided for all public Panel meetings. This includes sending out agendas; minutes; procedural advice.
 - d) Legal advice where required for the Panel to carry out its duties effectively.
 - e) Independent policy advice to the Panel through a dedicated scrutiny officer, this includes written and oral briefings to Panel members.

7.2 The costs of the promotion work identified above will be identified as part of the annual budget approved by the Panel. Costs will be met as set out in section 5 above.

7.3 The Panel shall be promoted and supported by each Authority through:

- a) Ensuring that briefings take place for local stakeholders on the work of the Panel. This includes officer briefings to respective members in each authority to support the work of the Panel (executive/non-executive members including Panel member) on a regular basis to ensure that members are fully informed about local relevant matters.
- b) Information on each respective website about the work of the Panel and links to the main web-pages.
- c) Sharing of information on the work of the designated statutory Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee in order to ensure that the work programme of the Panel complements local scrutiny work and vice-versa.

8.0 Validity of Proceedings

8.1 The validity of the proceedings of the Panel shall not be affected by a vacancy in the Membership of the Panel or a defect in appointment.

8.2 All Panel members (including co-opted members) must observe the Members Code of Conduct and any related Protocols as agreed by the Panel *[further regulations may follow on this issue]*.

9.0 Rules of Procedure

9.1 The Panel shall determine its Rules of Procedure (in accordance with the statutory requirements and regulations).

9.2 The Rules of Procedure shall include arrangements in relation to:

- a) the appointment, resignation and removal of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman;
- b) the appointment of sub-committees;
- c) the appointment of Task Groups;
- c) the making of decisions;
- e) the circulation of information;
- f) the frequency, timing and place of meetings;
- g) public participation; and
- h) minority reporting.



Protocol for the Informal Resolution Procedure Regarding Complaints made against the Police and Crime Commissioner

The Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012 mandated the statutory responsibility for Police and Crime Panels (PCP) to handle non-criminal complaints about the conduct of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and, where appointed, the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC).

Conduct in this regard may include but is not limited to actions and omissions, statements or procedures of, or undertaken by the PCC/DPCC, including the way decisions are taken. The PCP does not have the power to review the merits of any decisions taken by the PCC/DPCC, only whether the decision was taken properly in accordance with relevant procedures and any statutory requirements.

All complaints made to the PCP should clearly identify where the conduct of the PCC/DPCC has not met the complainant's expectations. The published [Code of Conduct](#) for the PCC can be accessed on the PCC's website <https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/information-hub/opcc-policies/>

Police complaint review process

Under the Police (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2020 the PCC has responsibility for carrying out reviews, where they are the relevant review body for complaints against Thames Valley Police that are initiated and undertaken pursuant to the Police Reform Act 2002.

The PCP does not have the power to review individual decisions reached by the PCC and/or his office in respect of applications made to review the outcome of complaints undertaken as stated above under the Police Reform Act 2002 and is not the correct body of recourse to challenge such decisions made by the PCC and/or their office.

Complaints which are identified to be expressing dissatisfaction about the outcome of the complaint review process will not be recorded. In accordance with regulation 10(2) of the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations, the complainant will be notified of the decision to take no action and the grounds on which the decision was made.

Initial recording of complaints received

The Chief Executive of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) will, within 10 clear working days, consider whether:

- the complaint relates to the conduct of the Police and Crime Commissioner;
- it is a complaint for which the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel is the relevant Police and Crime Panel;

- the complaint indicates the commission of a criminal offence by the PCC, in which case the complaint would be referred to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC), by the Chief Executive of the OPCC, as a potential serious complaint;
- the complaint is a relevant complaint at all; or is a complaint relating to an operational matter of the Constabulary to be resolved in accordance with the complaint's procedures of the Constabulary.

When, in accordance with the delegation to the Chief Executive of the OPCC, the decision has been made to record a complaint that will not subsequently be referred to the IOPC, the Chief Executive of the OPCC will:

- record the date of receipt;
- send a record of the complaint, to the complainant and to the person complained about (in the latter case, subject to any decision taken not to supply a copy of the complaint or to supply the complaint in a form which keeps anonymous the identity of the complainant or of any other person) and will include the contact details of the PCP's Complaints Sub-Committee (the sub-committee); and
- refer the record, and copies of all the associated paperwork, to the sub-committee This will be no later than two working days after the complaint has been recorded.

Non-Recording of Complaints

If, in consideration of the points above, the Chief Executive of the OPCC reaches the view that action should not be taken under regulation 9 of the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations for notifying or recording the whole or any part of the complaint received, they will notify the PCP's scrutiny officer.

In such circumstances the PCP's scrutiny officer will, in consultation with the Chairman of the sub-committee, review the complaint and, in accordance with regulation 10(2) of the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations, if they are in agreement that the complaint, or part thereof, does not properly fall within the responsibility of the PCP and should not be recorded, either in whole or in part, shall notify the complainant in writing, of the following:

- the decision to take no action and, if that decision relates to only part of what was received, the part in question; and
- the grounds on which the decision was made.

Acknowledgment of Complaints

On receipt of the recorded complaint, the PCP's scrutiny officer will:

- assess the complaint to ensure that it is complete, and that it clearly identifies the alleged conduct matter;

- refer incomplete or unclear complaints back to the Chief Executive of the OPCC seeking further information;
- consider whether the complaint has been satisfactorily dealt with and if so, with the written signed agreement of the complainant, treat the complaint as withdrawn;
- write to the complainant, setting out timescales and providing details about the informal resolution procedure and give the complainant an opportunity to make further comments in support of their complaint (allowing them 14 clear calendar days to respond). Where the PCP's scrutiny officer believes that the circumstances of the case are such that the sub-committee may decide to treat the complaint as having been resolved, the complainant will be asked to provide their representations in this regard for the sub-committee to take into account; and
- write to the PCC/DPCC, setting out timescales and providing details about the informal resolution procedure; and giving them an opportunity to make comments in response to the complaint (allowing 14 clear calendar days to respond).

Serious Complaints

If, at any stage, the IOPC informs the PCP that they require the complaint to be referred to them, or if the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the sub-committee, determines that the complaint should be referred to the IOPC, the informal resolution process must be discontinued. The Monitoring Officer should only determine that the complaint should be so referred if matters come to light during the informal resolution process which indicates the commission of a criminal offence.

Meetings of the Sub-Committee

The PCP's Scrutiny Officer will convene a meeting of the Complaints sub-committee, normally to be held within 21 clear calendar days after the deadline for receipt of all comments to the complaint. The PCP's scrutiny officer will compile a brief report for the sub-committee, setting out the pertinent details of complaint, recording any failure by the person complained about to comment on the complaint and making suggestions for the next steps.

The sub-committee will first consider whether the complaint has already been satisfactorily dealt with and, subject to any representations by the complainant, may decide to treat the complaint as having been resolved. In such a case, the sub-committee's reasons will be recorded and notified to the parties.

While the sub-committee is prohibited from conducting an open investigation of the complaint, it does have the power to ask the PCC/DPCC for documents relating to the matters referred to in the complaint and may require the PCC/DPCC or an officer of the OPCC to attend a meeting of the sub-committee to answer questions. The sub-committee may also invite the complainant to provide further information for the purpose of clarity. In exercising these powers, the sub-committee will seek to ensure

fairness and transparency within its proceedings and, following legal advice, will focus on matters which substantiate or clarify a point relating to the complaint, or response to the complaint.

The sub-committee shall have regard to:

- The Code of Conduct of the PCC;
- Whether the complaint discloses a specific conduct failure on the part of the PCC, identifiable within the Code of Conduct of the PCC, or whether it relates to operational matters of the constabulary or operational policing matters within which the PCP has no authority;
- The remedies available to it;
- Any other relevant considerations.

If, on considering the report, the sub-committee feels that the matter may be determined under the informal resolution procedure, it will decide its course of action. In considering this action it shall have regard to the limits on investigation, referred to above.

The sub-committee will consider whether to devise an action plan (to be drawn up by the PCP's scrutiny officer) and in so doing will take into account any applicable guidance issued by the Secretary of State and may also consider any guidance issued by the IOPC pursuant to section 22 of the Police Reform Act 2002 .

Any such action plan will include an indicative timeframe and any such action plan may include (for example):

- An explanatory letter being written by an officer of the PCP (or on behalf of the sub-committee),
- An explanatory letter being written by an officer of the OPCC,
- A suggested change to OPCC policy; or
- A request that an apology is tendered (no apology may be tendered on behalf of the person complained against unless that person has admitted the alleged conduct and agreed to the apology).

The sub-committee will also decide whether it wishes to:

- reconvene to take any steps identified in the action plan,
- authorise any named individual (who may not be a PCC, a DPCC or the Chief Executive of the OPCC) to take any steps in accordance with the action plan; or
- refer the matter to the PCP with recommendations regarding the action plan.

Once the actions from the plan have been completed, the matter may be referred back to the sub-committee or an authorised individual may determine that the matter has been resolved. The PCP's scrutiny officer must make a record of the outcome of the informal resolution as soon as practicable after the process is completed, normally within three clear working days, and provide copies to the complainant and the PCC/DPCC. The matter will then be closed.

Disapplication of the Regulations

If the Sub-Committee considers the previously recorded complaint(s) have been satisfactorily dealt with, and if they are satisfied with the PCC's responses to the complaints, Members can treat the complaints as having been resolved and disapply the Regulations and take no further action.

This can only be done if the complaint falls into any one of various specified categories – regulation 15(2) and (3).

The categories are:

- Where the Sub-Committee considers that it should handle the complaint otherwise than it being subjected to informal resolution (per Part 4 of the Regulations) or should take no action in relation to it.
- A complaint by a member of the relevant office holder's staff, arising from the staff member's work as such (see regulation 15(3)(a)).
- A complaint that is more than 12 months old, where there is no good reason for the delay, or the delay would be likely to cause injustice (see regulation 15(3)(b)).
- A complaint about conduct that is already the subject of another complaint (see regulation 15(3)(c)).
- An anonymous complaint (see regulation 15(3)(d)).
- A complaint which is vexatious, oppressive or otherwise an abuse of process for dealing with complaints (see regulation 15(3)(e)).
- A repetitious complaint (see regulation 15(3)(f), and also regulation 15(4) for the particular circumstances in which a complaint is repetitious).

No part of the record may be published by the Complaints Sub-Committee, other than that required under the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, unless, having given the parties an opportunity to make representations about the proposed publication and having considered any such representations, the Complaints Sub-Committee considers that publication is in the public interest.

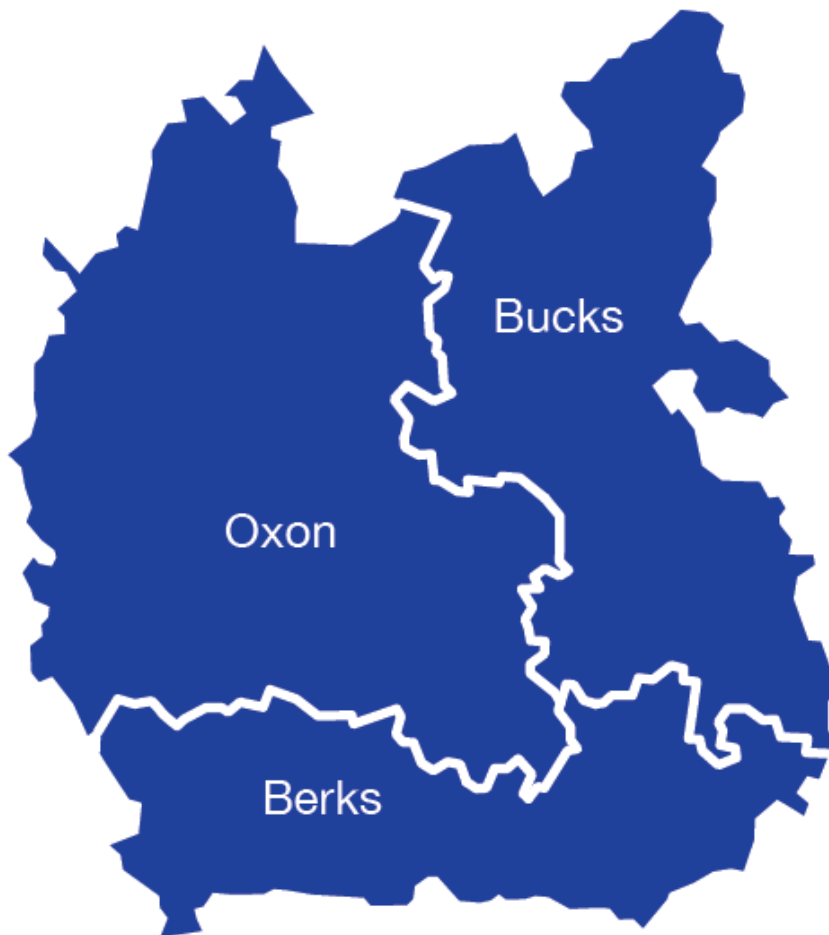
A record of all complaints received by the PCP will be kept until 12 months after the PCC or deputy PCC, to whose conduct the complaint related, leaves the post.

The PCP's scrutiny officer will prepare a quarterly update report to the Panel about all complaints considered by the Complaints Sub-Committee, the action taken (including any obligations to act, or refrain from acting, that have arisen under the regulations, but have not yet been complied with or have been contravened) and the outcome of the process.

At any stage, the PCP's scrutiny officer may seek legal advice from the PCP's Monitoring Officer.

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Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel



Annual Report 2022/23

MEMBERS OF THE THAMES VALLEY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

2022-23

Councillor Balvinder Bains - (Slough Borough Council)
Councillor Robin Bradburn - (Milton Keynes Council)
Councillor Peter Brazier - (Buckinghamshire Council - Co-opted Member)
Councillor David Carroll - (Buckinghamshire Council)
Councillor David Cannon - (Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead)
Councillor Sam Casey-Rerhaye - (South Oxfordshire District Council)
Councillor Emily Culverhouse – (Buckinghamshire Council - Co-opted Member)
Councillor Neil Fawcett – (Vale of White Horse District Council)
Peter Gammond - (Co-Opted Independent Member)
Councillor Maria Gee – (Wokingham Borough Council)
Councillor John Harrison – (Bracknell Forest Council)
Councillor Keith McLean – (Milton Keynes Council – Co-opted Member)
Councillor Eddie Reeves – (Cherwell District Council)
Councillor Simon Rouse – (Buckinghamshire Council - Co-opted Member)
Councillor Karen Rowland – (Reading Borough Council)
Councillor Geoff Saul – (West Oxfordshire District Council)
Councillor Diko Walcott – (Oxford City Council)
Councillor Richard Webber – (Oxfordshire County Council)
Councillor Howard Woollaston (from 1 December 2022) (Councillor Claire Rowles until 1 December 2022) – (West Berkshire Council)

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Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel (PCP) is a joint committee comprising of 18 elected members from each of the 14 first tier local authorities (three co-opted councillors from Buckinghamshire Council and one co-opted councillor from Milton Keynes Council and two independent co-opted members,

It can be contacted via the address below:

**Deputy Chief Executive Directorate
Buckingham Council
The Gateway offices, Gatehouse
Road, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire
HP19 8FF**

Telephone: 01494 732730

Email:

tvpcp@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Website:

<https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/community-and-safety/thames-valley-police-and-crime-panel/>

Twitter: [@ThamesValleyPCP](https://twitter.com/ThamesValleyPCP)



For 2022/23, the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Thames Valley is Matthew Barber who was elected on 6 May 2021.

He can be contacted here:

**Office of the Police and Crime
Commissioner
The Farmhouse
Thames Valley Police Headquarters
Oxford Road
Kidlington
Oxon
OX5 2NX**

Telephone: (01865) 541957

Email:

pcc@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

Website:

<https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk>

Twitter: [@TV_PCC](https://twitter.com/TV_PCC)



Chair's Foreword

This is the tenth annual report of the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel (PCP), which covers its activities during the 2022/23 calendar year.

The objective of the Panel is to maintain a 'check and balance' on the performance of the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) regarding his strategic objectives contained in his [Police and Criminal Justice Plan](#)

The Panel plays a vital role in holding the PCC to account and supporting him in the effective exercise of his duties, in particular the way he holds the Chief Constable to account.

The Panel is dependent on the dedication and commitment of its Members, both Members of Constituent Authorities in the Thames Valley and its two Independent Members.

The Panel Members ensure that the Panel carries out its statutory functions which, help to deliver an effective and efficient policing service for the people of the Thames Valley.

The Panel has appreciated the work of Matthew Barber, the PCC and his officers, in helping the Panel in its work throughout the year and producing excellent, informative reports for the Panel to scrutinise.

This is particularly appreciated in the support which is given to the Budget Task and Finish Group in the scrutiny of the Police precept for Council Tax.

Panel Members in carrying out its scrutiny work throughout the year acknowledges that Thames Valley police officers and support staff are very much in the front line and continue to carry out their duties to the best of their abilities for residents of Thames Valley.

For 2022/23, the Panel would also like to thank the work of its Complaints Sub-Committee, which deals with non-criminal complaints against the PCC and his office. Councillor Emily Culverhouse is the Chair of the Complaints Sub-Committee.

The Panel has been ably assisted in its work by Khalid Ahmed, in his role as Scrutiny Officer, now working for Buckinghamshire Council.

Councillor Keith McLean (Chair of the Panel)

The Role of the Panel

Police and Crime Panels were established in each Police Force area under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

The key functions of the Panel are:

- ❖ To review the PCC's Police and Criminal Justice Plan;
- ❖ To hold the PCC to account for the delivery of the Police and Criminal Justice Plan – the panel has powers to request any necessary information from the PCC on his decisions;
- ❖ To review and report on the appointment of the Chief Constable and other senior appointments – the Panel has powers to veto the appointment of the Chief Constable;
- ❖ To review the PCC's proposed police precept – the Panel has powers to veto the precept;
- ❖ To scrutinise the PCC's annual report;
- ❖ To consider complaints against the PCC.

The Panel, through its work programme, has carried out its main statutory duties which is to scrutinise and support the PCC in his role in helping tackle crime and disorder in the Thames Valley. The PCC was elected to hold the Chief Constable to account to ensure an efficient and effective police force for the Thames Valley.

The Panel cannot directly scrutinise operational policing matters but can question the PCC on how he is holding the Chief Constable to account for policing in the Thames Valley.

The Budget Task and Finish Group

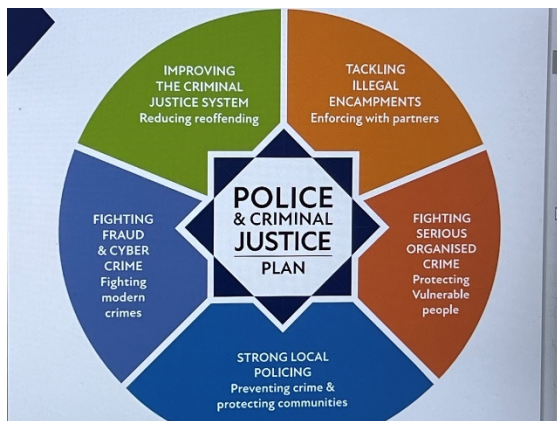
Members of the Panel worked with both the PCC and Thames Valley Police Chief Financial Officers on reviewing the PCC's draft police precept before the proposed precept was submitted to the Police and Crime Panel.

The Panel agreed with the PCC's recommendation and approved the Police and Crime Commissioner's precept for 2023/24, to increase the Council Tax precept by £15 (Band D), as set out in the OPCC report 'Four-Year Medium-Term Capital Plan 2022/23 to 2026/27'.

The Work of the Panel in 2022-23

Throughout the 2022/23 Municipal Year, the Panel held scrutiny sessions on several policing and crime matters and questioned the PCC on these areas.

Progress in meeting PCC'S Police and Criminal Justice Plan



The PCC presented his Annual Report to the Panel which provided details of progress which had been made in the financial year in meeting the objectives contained in the PCC's Police and Criminal Plan.

The objectives were: -

- **Strong local policing**
Preventing crime & protecting communities
- **Fighting serious organised crime**
Protecting vulnerable people
- **Fighting fraud & cybercrime**
Fighting modern crimes
- **Improving the criminal justice system**
Reducing reoffending
- **Tackling illegal encampments**

Enforcing with partners

The PCC reported that the Plan had victims at its heart. Bringing criminals to justice is vital, but preventing people from becoming victims of crime in the first place is even more important, both through proactive crime prevention and through reducing reoffending.

The PCC reported that aligned to his local priorities are National Priorities for Policing. The Home Secretary has developed some key measures to support the strategic priority for a 'relentless focus on cutting crime'.

The six priority areas are:

- Reduce murder and other homicides
- Reduce serious violence
- Disrupt drugs supply and county lines
- Reduce neighbourhood crime
- Tackle cybercrime
- Improve satisfaction among victims – with a particular focus on victims of crime

The scrutiny session covered areas which included: -

- There was a reduction in neighbourhood policing resources when strong local policing was a priority
- How was the PCC to ensure that the public would get strong local policing, which was paid for through the police precept
- Response to the Metropolitan Police recruitment drive to attract officers from other forces
- Performance of response to 101 calls
- Knife Crime and Operation Deter
- The importance of TVP attendance at Community Forums
- The importance of Police Community Support Officers to local policing and the need to bring them up to full establishment.

- The fear of crime and the increase in anti-social behaviour and the need for better Police performance
- Violence Against Women and Girls was not one of the six priorities, although there were elements throughout the Plan which covered this area. TVP carried out lots of work around Domestic Abuse, the Night-Time economy and there was soon to be a Safety of Women and Girls in Public Places scheme, which would come to the Panel for comment.
- The implementation of a Thames Valley partnership for CCTV
- The effectiveness of Schools given talks on organised crime
- On Improving the Criminal Justice System, a deterrent to crime should be an appropriate sentence.

Prevent - Was It Fit for Purpose?



The PREVENT Duty is part of CONTEST, the United Kingdom's counter-terrorism strategy. The Prevent Strategy has specific strategic objectives:

- respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it
- prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they

are given appropriate advice and support

- work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation that we need to address.

Section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on certain bodies ("specified authorities" listed in Schedule 6 to the Act), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".

Guidance is issued under section 29 of the Act. The Act states that the authorities subject to the provisions must have regard to this guidance when carrying out the duty.

The Home Office oversees Prevent activity through the Prevent Oversight Board, chaired by the Minister for Immigration and Security.

Counterterrorism is a Strategic Policing Requirement and in extremes, the Home Secretary can direct a PCC to take specific actions to address a specific failure.

The PCC provided the Panel with details on how he holds the Chief Constable to account in complying with the duty that police should engage and where appropriate disrupt extremist activity, in partnership with other agencies.

The police were expected to prioritise projects to disrupt terrorist and extremist material on the internet and extremists working in this country.

During the scrutiny section, the Panel noted that this was a national scheme.

The PCC informed the Panel that from a TVP perspective, he was confident that data was shared across police force boundaries and with other public agencies. There were challenges with general data sharing across boundaries, not just relating to counter terrorism.

In the Thames Valley, relationships on the ground were good with Community Faith Groups, although these could be improved. Reference was made to the community tensions and unrest which had occurred in Leicestershire and that contact had been made with community groups in Milton Keynes and Reading to alleviate the threat of this being replicated. Local neighbourhood groups had contact and good relationships with Faith Groups.

The Panel noted that there was an increase in Extreme Right-wing radicalisation which was higher than those for Islamist radicalisation. Was the PCC happy that this was working with the Channel programme and what engagement was taking place with Extreme Right-Wing groups?

COMMUNITY SPEED UPDATE



The Panel was given with an update on the successful Community Speedwatch scheme in Thames Valley. Members

were reminded that the new Community Speedwatch scheme was launched by the PCC in October 2021 in conjunction with Community Speedwatch Online and was managed by Roads Policing.

The Panel noted that there were 217 groups across the TVP footprint, comprising of over 1200 residents/volunteers, and the system has been set up so that Councils can access information on all schemes in their LPA/jurisdiction areas.

A Panel Member referred to the frustration of some Speedwatch volunteers who saw a disconnection between the collection of speeding data and enforcement.

The PCC said that he agreed with this, however, Community Speedwatch was about educating motorists. Previously, the data which was used to be collected on paper on a voluntary basis, which did not enable a proper analysis of the data.

The Panel was informed that a motorist could receive 3 letters over a rolling 6-month period with any further transgressions leading to a visit by a Roads Policing Officer to discuss driving behaviour. There could be further escalations should the behaviour continue and ultimately could lead to enforcement. Local Neighbourhood Policing Teams could be tasked to carry out an enforcement package.

Reference was made to sites where there were persistent offenders. This could be an issue caused by the roads design which may need redesigning the road to mitigate the speed.

The PCC reported that the resources used were primarily based on crash records and the need to look where the danger and speeding was on roads.

The whole point was to build up the data and work on solutions for problem sites.

The PCC reported that interactions took place with local authorities on sites where it was determined that roads required speed being designed out. There was a network of TVP officers and Council Highways and Road Safety officers who met regularly at a Thames Valley Road Safety Working Group to discuss road safety issues.

The PCC said there needed to be a new structure with a strategic team overseeing the work of the working group to enable the work to be carried out.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF POLICE OFFICERS



The PCC provided the Panel with an update on the recruitment and retention of police officers within Thames Valley Police Force.

Reference was made to there now being more police officers in Thames

Valley than ever before, mainly due to the Uplift programme with the headcount of warranted officers standing at 4,772.

The Panel was informed there was still an issue of officers who were leaving the Force due to retirement, resignation, or dismissal.

At the end of March 2023, the Initial Police Learning and Development Programme would be coming to an end. This was the strongest officer recruitment, and the latest news was that a degree was to be no longer compulsory for new recruits.

The PCC reminded the Panel that newly recruited Police Officers had to previously obtain a degree qualification within 2 years as a recruited Police Officer. Apprenticeships for a period of three years, also had to obtain a degree qualification within this period.

The report provided for the Panel included updates on retention measures and how to increase application levels from BAME and female applicants. There were encouraging progression in this respect.

The PCC informed the Panel that an engagement team had been established to improve engagement with BAME and female applicants. There were a variety of reasons for BAME applicants dropping off during the recruitment process (22% applications, to only 14% joining).

The PCC said that the engagement team would talk to the individual to find out the reason for their dropping out of the process.

In relation to recruitment and retention problems with Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), the PCC referred to PCSOs who had progressed to Police Officers and who had become PCSOs to assess the attractiveness of a career in policing. Work was taking place on recruiting to the PCSOs vacancies.

Reference was made to the recent convictions of Metropolitan Police officers and the problems with police vetting. The PCC was concerned at those Police Officers who transferred between Forces, who had slipped through the vetting procedures.

The Panel was assured that there was a strong culture within TVP where concerns regarding officers would be highlighted by their colleagues.

The Association of Police and Crime Commissioners would be discussing vetting to ensure that there was consistency across forces, however, vetting is not always the issue, as any officer may fall foul of disciplinary or criminal issues in a few years. The culture of the Force was very important in terms of identifying problem officers.

BUDGET TASK AND FINISH GROUP – SCRUTINISING THE PCC FOR THAMES VALLEY PROPOSED COUNCIL TAX PRECEPT FOR 2023-24

The Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel formed a Budget Task & Finish Group to assist in discharging its statutory duty to scrutinise the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Thames Valley’s proposed Council Tax precept for 2023/24.

The Budget Task and Finish Group submitted their report and findings to the Panel meeting on 27 January 2023, and recommended the proposed increase to the police element of the Council Tax by £15 (Band D), as set out in the OPCC report ‘Four-Year Medium-Term Capital Plan 2022/23 to 2026/27’). This was agreed by the Panel.

The Panel was provided with the budget papers which were presented to and agreed at the Performance and Accountability meeting between the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable on 19th January 2023.

The PCC introduced the item and explained the reasoning behind the proposed £15 (Band D) increase to the Council Tax precept. There were significant pressures on budgets with inflationary pressure, rising energy and fuel costs. The increase would enable 80 additional police officers to be recruited by the end of this financial year.

PROGRESS ON CONTACT MANAGEMENT PLATFORM



The Panel was provided with a report which provided details of progress made in relation to improvements to the Contact Management platform.

Reference was made to the CM101 programme in collaboration with Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Constabulary which had been

approved to improve working practices and performance.

The Panel was informed that to meet current 999 and 101 targets, an extra 195 staff on top of the agreed establishment for the department was required at an additional £6.8 million which was not a viable option. The programme had identified a range of process improvements and new technologies, such as Robotic Process Automation, which alongside a significantly smaller staff uplift, could improve demand management and help achieve 101 average speed to answer times of less than 4 minutes. These improvements over the next 21 months would be at a cost of £1.5 million.

COMMUNITY POLICING STRATEGY - CRIMEFIGHTERS STRATEGY AND COMMUNITY POLICING



The Panel was provided with a report which outlined the Crimefighters Strategy being implemented in order to build confidence in policing and develop stronger local policing.

Included in the report was a forward look at how Community Policing in Thames Valley would be delivered in the future.

Reference was made to the strategy improving public contact which would involve reducing 101 waiting times, the automation of feedback and enabling better digital contact.

The PCC acknowledged the frustration that residents had with the 101 service and commented that the £6m cost associated with increasing call handlers was not realistic. Technology would improve the service. Timescales were on track and work was taking place with technology partners. There would be improvements on feedback to victims of crimes and technology to be used would include webchat, WhatsApp and social media.

The PCC referred to the need to improve Community Policing and to capitalise on the record number of police officers in Thames Valley.

With regard to neighbourhood policing, the PCC referred to the Royal Borough of Windsor Council who had invested in four additional police officers to support community safety. Neighbourhood Policing emphasised a local approach to policing that was accessible to the public and responsive to the needs and priorities of communities.

The visibility of police officers was important in terms of building public confidence and encouraging the compliance with the law.

The Panel raised the issue of TVP officers dealing with incidents which involved people with mental health issues which took up police time. The PCC reported that TVP covered many areas and that partnerships with mental health partners were complex.

There were four Integrated Care Systems which covered the Thames Valley and there were complexities with mental health trusts in Thames Valley.

Reference was made to the recent directive from the Department of

Health, “Right Care, Right Person”, which was a model designed to ensure that when there were concerns for a person's welfare linked to mental health, medical or social care issues, the right person with the right skills, training and experience would respond.

This would enable police officers to deal with policing matters.

There were challenges around mental health and more was needed to be done to provide the right care for people.

In response to a point raised that the PCC's commitment to neighbourhood policing was contrary to the reduction of Police Community Support Officers (PCSO), the PCC acknowledged PCSO numbers were down. Recruitment of PCSOs was taking place and it was hoped that in the next 3-4 years, PCSOs would be back to full establishment.

The PCC stated that PCSOs were the bedrock of neighbourhood policing and that they needed more powers. However, the more powers they were given, the less they were PCSOs, so it was important that the right balance was found. Increased responsibility and powers would mean more paperwork and less time spent out in communities.

There had been an impact of the retention of PCSO's, with many being appointed as police officers. This was not just a Thames Valley issue. The retention of PCSOs was a national issue, although some forces have taken the decision to reduce numbers.

In Thames Valley there was a commitment to increase the numbers and get back to full establishment.

ARREST DATA BY ETHNICITY, INCLUDING STOP AND SEARCH AND THE POLICE RACE ACTION PLAN



The Panel was provided with a report which showed TVP's arrest data by ethnicity. The report also included information on stop and search, and progress made on the Police Race Action Plan.

The report presented local data in the context of race disproportionality in the use of police powers, and looks at the developing governance structure and HMICFRS

The headline information was that current disproportionality rates indicated that a Black person is 3.3 times more likely to be arrested than a White person, per head of population.

By contrast, the likelihood of an Asian person being arrested is exactly equal to that of a White person.

The PCC reported that the report sets out a complex picture with a changing landscape. There were many scrutiny bodies which included community groups that looked at this data.

UNAUTHORISED ENCAMPMENTS



The Panel asked that the PCC provide information on one his objectives contained in his Police and Criminal Justice Plan, Tackling illegal encampments.

The PCC provided a report which contained a briefing on Force and LPA Unauthorised Encampment Performance data, training, and the response to Unauthorised Encampments (UE) in Thames Valley Police. The report also contained an overview of how TVP were working with Local Authorities in the Thames Valley to provide a consistent response to Unauthorised Encampments.

The Panel was reminded that in 2018, a joint working protocol in relation to unauthorised encampments was established between TVP and local authorities. The protocol sets out the aim and general principles for police and local authorities when responding to and dealing with unauthorised encampments.

The protocol also included the actions required to be taken and describes how

the police and partners will communicate with each other in relation to unauthorised encampments.

In response to a point raised of why only 16 Section 61s were used in 2022, out of a reported 386 unauthorised encampments, the PCC informed Members that the data did not show when local authorities and landowners took their own action, or the travellers moved on their own accord.

Section 61 was only used when proportionate action was required.

CYBER AND DIGITAL INVESTIGATION & INTELLIGENCE



The PCC explained that there was a significant overlap in this area for TVP and regionally. Reference was made to a service plan which had been created to define and focus the priorities and strategies for Thames Valley Police and the Regional Cyber Crime Units (CCU).

The plan sought to align service delivery based on the key strands of the Government's National Cyber Strategy 2022 and TVP force priorities as detailed within the Thames Valley Police Strategic Plan 2019/2020.

RESTART THAMES VALLEY



RESTART Thames Valley was a year-long pilot programme that started in May 2022, and which focused on supporting people leaving prison, including women and those on short-term sentences.

Over half of people released from prison in the Thames Valley re-offend within 12 months. This project, delivered in partnership with Aspire Oxfordshire, Browns Community Services, Parents and Children Together (PACT) and Thames Valley Partnership, aims to break the cycle by offering support prior to and post-release from prison.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner had secured £613,800 from the second round of the Ministry of Justice Local Leadership and Integration Fund (Prison Leavers Project) to work with partners across the region to develop solutions to key challenges faced by people released from prison.

The PCC referred to such challenges which included the provision of and access to support, access to accommodation and work opportunities and engagement with numerous service providers.

This pilot ran from May 2022 to end of April 2023, and this has been extended for a further 12 months, jointly funded

by the PCC and the Director of Probation, South Central.

The PCC reported that the objective of the scheme was about crime prevention and stopping the cyclical pattern of people who went to prison.

MULTI AGENCY SAFEGUARDING HUBS- ROLE OF TVP



The PCC provided a report which gave an overview of the initial implementation of Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH), the current landscape, emerging risks and opportunities for the future and TVP's involvement in them.

MASHs are made up of a range of organisations including TVP in Thames Valley who are responsible for safeguarding adults and children.

Thames Valley have MASHs in Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Milton Keynes and in Reading, Slough, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Wokingham, Bracknell and West Berkshire.

The main advantage of the MASH is that officers now share the information their agency may have on a child or adult immediately. This is to ensure that decisions made consider all available information.

An information sharing agreement has been established between the agencies involved with the MASH to ensure that information is shared confidentially, proportionately and securely.

The PCC referred to some of the benefits of robotic automation in relation to safeguarding and that Robotic Process Automation (RPA) was used to relieve demand on 101 (around 600 calls per month) and improve service delivery to partners by eliminating call waiting time.

This would speed things up and spotted things quicker, which was vital for domestic violence disclosures (Clare's Law): RPA identified current or expired high-risk domestic abuse (DA) perpetrators in new or previously unknown intimate relationships to prompt a 'right to know' disclosure to their partner.

The Panel was informed of the proposals to explore the benefits of withdrawing from the six-hub model in Berkshire and to deliver statutory services remotely despite the previously held belief that co-location was key, adopted by most forces nationally.

During the scrutiny session, concern was expressed at the fragility of the MASH system in the Thames Valley, particularly with local authorities changing their financial commitments, and the PCC was asked for his view, on who was responsible to ensure the provision of the service was maintained.

The PCC replied that he had the opportunity to bring partners together and on a political level, to make sure there were the right strategic

partnerships. It was important that partners held each other to account, and he would be discussing MASHs with Chief Executives and Leaders of Councils. There were statutory duties for partners which had to be met. It was important that the correct rank of officer of the organisation was at meetings to ensure that key strategic decisions could be taken.

The Chief Constable of TVP expressed his concern at the situation and referred to the importance of partners working together and sharing information. There were differences across Thames Valley of how MASHs operated, with six MASHs in Berkshire and this was a challenge. It was important that MASHs continued because of the important work they carried out in terms of safeguarding children and adults.

CONFIRMATION HEARING FOR CHIEF CONSTABLE

On 18 November 2022, the Panel held a Confirmation Hearing to consider the PCC's intention to appoint his preferred candidate to the role of Chief Constable for TVP.

After asking the preferred candidate a number of questions on his suitability to be the next Chief Constable and after having received assurance that a full open and fair selection and recruitment process had taken place, with the preferred candidate fulfilling the eligibility criteria, the Panel endorsed the appointment of Mr. Jason Hogg to the position of Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police.

Both the PCC and the Panel placed on record their appreciation to the soon to be retired John Campbell for his service

to the people of Thames Valley as Chief
Constable.

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Report to the Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel

Title: Report of the Thames Valley
Police & Crime Panel
Complaints Sub-Committee

Date: 23 June 2023

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



Background

1. As set out in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility (PRSR) Act 2011, and further explained in the Policing Protocol Order 2011, Police and Crime Panels (PCPs) perform a scrutiny function for PCCs, providing challenge and support, and acting as a critical friend. PCPs are currently responsible for handling non-serious complaints made about a PCC and a Deputy PCC and resolving these through the process for “informal resolution”, as set out in the PRSR Act 2011 and the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012.
2. A Sub-Committee of the Panel discharges this duty on its behalf. The Chair of the Sub-Committee for 2022/23 was Councillor Emily Culverhouse.
3. It was agreed that the Sub-Committee should submit its report to the Panel on a quarterly basis, when complaints had been considered.
4. It should be noted that the proceedings of Complaints Sub-Committees are confidential, and no details can be discussed in the public domain of a Panel meeting.

Complaint Received

5. One complaint against the conduct of the Police and Crime Commissioner and officers of the PCC was considered at a meeting of the Complaints Sub-Committee on 18 April 2023. The proceedings of the Complaints Sub-Committee are confidential and cannot be discussed in the Panel meeting.
6. After careful consideration of the complaint, based on the submissions of the complainant and the PCC, the Sub-Committee resolved:-
 - “1) That this complaint made against the PCC, does not have any merit and the Sub-Committee agreed to dis-apply the requirements of the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012 (Part 4).

(2) That the complaint should not be subject to resolution under Part 4 of the Regulations and that no action should be taken in relation to it at all, as the complaint is 'vexatious' and an abuse of procedures, in accordance with Regulation 15(2) of the 2012 Regulations.

(3) That the complainant be advised to submit his complaint to the Independent Office for Police Conduct if he remains dissatisfied."

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel note the report.

Report to the Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel

Title: Topical Issues

Date: 23 June 2023

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



BACKGROUND

The Panel is provided with policing and crime news which the Scrutiny Officer of the Panel has horizon scanned to provide Panel Members with up-to-date information on topical issues.

Members of the Panel can ask questions of the Police and Crime Commissioner based on the information contained in these media articles.

Thames Valley Police received nearly 1 million contacts from the public, attended 170,000 incidents and made 31,000 arrests, in a single year
<https://www.bucksherald.co.uk/news/people/thames-valley-police-received-nearly-1-million-contacts-from-the-public-attended-170000-incidents-and-made-31000-arrests-in-a-single-year-4149651>

New statistics show Thames Valley Police received nearly one million contacts from the public, attended 170,000 incidents, and made 31,000 arrests, in a single year – with officers driving more than 13 million miles in the process.

The statistics based on the last financial year, from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, have been released as part of an ongoing commitment to inform the public of the work of TVP.

This period saw one of the largest policing operations in TVP's history with the committal service of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in Windsor. Officers also policed Reading Festival, Royal Ascot, Henley Regatta, and are proud to have policed four of the UEFA Women's EURO 2022 matches at Stadium MK.

Last year, police officers made 30,903 arrests in relation to a range of crimes, attended over 8,000 road traffic collisions, found 5,735 missing people, and sadly attended 1,700 tragic sudden deaths, which involved supporting families at the most difficult time.

Officers are completely committed to tackling domestic violence, with 30% of all arrests made being related to domestic violence. Extensive focus on domestic abuse led to a 27% increase in formal action for domestic abuse cases (3,138 to 3,987).

The Force also saw a 52% increase in charges for sexual offences (not including rape) and a 36% increase in stalking and harassment charges. Last year also saw a slight drop in charges brought in rape cases (from 126 to 121).

However, with close monitoring, and with a new structure in place to scrutinise investigations into rape and sexual offences, TVP say they are confident of improved outcomes for victims.

In April 2022, the force launched its strategy to tackle violence against women and girls, focused on dealing with perpetrators and working with partners to identify sexual and violent offending at the earliest opportunity. We also remain fully committed to targeting those who offend and display predatory behaviour in the night-time economy.

Tackling serious violence and knife crime continues to be a priority.

Through proactive work, TVP saw a 42% decrease in homicide cases from the previous year and arrested 841 people for crimes where a knife is involved, which is a two per cent rise.

TVP launched Operation Deter in Milton Keynes, which has also now been rolled out to Aylesbury, Slough, and Reading. Under this initiative, individuals arrested over the age of 18 for a knife-related offence will, wherever possible, be charged and remanded immediately.

If the individual is under 18, they will be visited by the Youth Offending Team and a plan is drawn up for intervention and rapid commencement of the Youth Justice Process.

Additionally, TVP supported the Knife Angel being hosted in Milton Keynes and Slough, where a commitment was made by us and our partners to stand together on tackling serious violence.

In the past 12 months, officers began using a new application developed by the Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit to target violence hotspot areas.

So far, 10,000 patrols were made to reduce crime and tackle those carrying knives.

The Serious and Organised Crime Unit arrested 628 offenders involved in organised crime and seized and confiscated 34 firearms. In addition, the team secured 107 convictions amounting to more than 503 years in prison and safeguarded 149 adults and children believed to be at risk from these criminal enterprises.

On the roads, officers from our Roads Policing and response teams attended over 8,700 road traffic collisions, with 2,144 arrests for drink driving, 1,305 people arrested for driving while using a mobile phone, 1,610 people arrested for not wearing a seatbelt, and over

166,000 people were caught speeding through speed cameras and through officer detected speeding.

As these numbers show, TVP play a vital role in protecting Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. Officers and staff work with pride and professionalism and strive to do their best for our communities every day.

Action plan to crack down on anti-social behaviour

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/action-plan-to-crack-down-on-anti-social-behaviour>

Perpetrators of anti-social behaviour will face swift and visible justice, increased fines and enhanced drug testing as part of a new crackdown launched by the Prime Minister.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan will make sure this issue is treated with the urgency it deserves, establish a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of anti-social behaviour, and give the police and local authorities the tools they need to tackle the problem.

Under the plan, 16 areas in England and Wales will be funded to support either new 'hotspot' police and enforcement patrols in areas with the highest rates of anti-social behaviour, or trial a new 'Immediate Justice' scheme to deliver swift and visible punishments. A select few areas will trial both interventions, and following these initial trailblazers, both schemes will be rolled out across England and Wales from 2024.

Hotspot trailblazer areas will see an increase in police presence alongside other uniformed authority figures, such as wardens, in problem areas for anti-social behaviour, including public transport, high streets or parks. The increased presence will help deter anti-social behaviour, step up enforcement action against offenders, make sure crimes are punished more quickly and drive deterrence efforts, helping to stop anti-social behaviour spiralling into more serious criminality.

Under the new Immediate Justice scheme, those found committing anti-social behaviour will be made to repair the damage they inflicted on victims and communities, with an ambition for them to start work as soon as 48 hours after their offence so victims know anti-social behaviour is treated seriously and with urgency.

Offenders, could be made to pick up litter, remove graffiti and wash police cars as punishment for their actions, and victims of anti-social behaviour from the local community will be given a say in offenders' punishments to ensure justice is visible and fits the crime. The trailblazers will be launched as soon as possible and follow research that shows anti-social behaviour is the main reason people do not feel safe in their local area.

Under the zero-tolerance approach, Nitrous oxide or "laughing gas" will also be banned to send a clear message to intimidating gangs, that hang around high streets and children's parks and litter them with empty canisters, they will not get away with this behaviour. The drug is now the third most used among 16 to 24-year-olds in England and both the police and public have repeatedly reported links between use of the drug and nuisance or anti-social behaviour.

Police will also be given new powers to crack down on illegal drug use, often a catalyst for other crimes, including expanding powers for drug testing on arrest so more suspected criminals can be tested, and more drugs tested for, including ecstasy and methamphetamine. Currently, only suspected criminals who have committed certain offences can be tested in police detention without additional requirements, but we will

expand the range of trigger offences to include crimes linked to violence against women and girls, serious violence and anti-social behaviour.

A new reporting tool will also be developed over the next 12 months to act as a digital one-stop shop where people can quickly and easily report incidents of anti-social behaviour when these occur. The tool will help address problems people have faced when trying to report these sorts of crimes because of a lack of clarity around how to raise an issue or who to speak to, or a lack of confidence that these crimes will be dealt with seriously.

As well as being able to report any type of anti-social behaviour, people will have access through the tool to advice and guidance on what to do next in their cases and receive updates on what action is being taken by local police and councils following a report being logged. As well as giving the public confidence that action is being taken, the tool will help support local agencies to share information on perpetrators within their local area more effectively, so they can more quickly identify repeat offenders and take the necessary action to prevent future crimes from happening in the first place

Other measures include:

- Increasing the punishment for those who graffiti, litter or fly tip with fines of up to £500 and £1,000– council league tables will be published for fly tipping, and we will work with the Office for Local Government to increase transparency and improve accountability on anti-social behaviour outcomes
- Giving landlords and housing associations more powers to evict unruly tenants who ruin their neighbours' lives through persistent noise or by being drunk and disorderly
- Reopening empty shops by giving councils new powers to quickly take control and sell off the rental rights for empty buildings
- An anti-social behaviour Taskforce jointly led by the Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for Levelling Up will bring together national and local partners, with a sole focus of addressing anti-social behaviour and restoring pride in place in communities. This will bring together Police and Crime Commissioners, police and local partners and agencies
- An extra one million hours of youth services in areas with the highest rates of anti-social behaviour to put people on the right track and prevent them from offending in the first place
- Tackling the awful practice of 'cuckooing' or home invasion by engaging with stakeholders on the scope of a potential new criminal offence
- Parks and green spaces will also be restored with up to £5 million to make them safer with new CCTV and repairing equipment and playgrounds, and to plant more trees and flowers

Nobody should be criminalised simply for having nowhere to live which is why government committed to repealing the antiquated Vagrancy Act, passed in 1824. This comes alongside last year's unprecedented £2 billion commitment over three years to accelerate efforts to end rough sleeping for good.

It will be made an offence for criminal gangs to organise begging networks for extra cash, which is often used to facilitate illegal activities. To ensure police and local councils can address activity which is intimidating or causes the public distress, they will have the tools to direct people causing nuisance on the street, including obstructing shop doorways and begging by cash points, towards the support they need, such as accommodation, mental

health or substance misuse services. The debris and paraphernalia which causes blight will then be cleared.

The government has also announced that an additional 43 youth centres are to benefit from the next £90 million investment from the Youth Investment Fund, distributed by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. As a result, 45,000 more young people a year will have access to state-of-the-art facilities and regular, out-of-school activities, as part of an overall £300 million to be distributed through 2025. From Lincolnshire to Liverpool, Peterborough to Portsmouth, the government's National Youth Guarantee will support the wellbeing of young people in some of the country's most underserved areas, giving them opportunities to develop vital skills for life, and empowering them to be active members of their community.

The new cross-government action plan builds on the government's focus to deliver common sense policing, backed by an unprecedented recruitment drive of 20,000 additional officers by the end of March, which we are on track to achieve. It works in tandem with our priorities to drive down murder rates, tackle serious violence – including against women and girls – and solve and prevent more burglaries.

The government has also funded 216 projects via rounds one and two of the Levelling Up Fund, totally £3.8 billion, which is driving the regeneration of town centres and high streets, upgrading local transport and investing cultural and heritage assets.

Thames Valley Police to get more neighbourhood officers

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-oxfordshire-65267101.amp>

The number of neighbourhood police officers across Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire is set to increase. Thames Valley Police has confirmed it will allocate 150 additional officers, doubling the size of its neighbourhood policing teams, over the next year.

The force said there would be more visible patrols, with officers focusing on crime hotspots.

Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Barber said he wanted to deliver "a more proactive and responsive service".

Mr Barber said crimes such as thefts, burglaries, shoplifting and those associated with anti-social behaviour could "blight the lives of those affected".

Mr Barber said the neighbourhood officers would focus their efforts where they were most likely to reduce crime. The new strategy will also include an investment in technology to improve and expand channels for reporting crimes and incidents, he said.

Further details are yet to be revealed, but the police said the strategy marked the start of a shift towards growing the role of community policing within the force.

The news comes as in 2019 the government announced a police uplift programme to recruit new officers across the country.

Thames Valley Police said increases over the past few years would bring the overall number of officers within the force to more than 5,000.

Police Target to increase Police by 20,000 reached

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/65377091>

The government has reached its target to recruit 20,000 more police officers in England and Wales. It has employed 20,951 more officers since 2019 so the total is now 149,572.

But there are concerns that the rise hasn't kept pace with the increase in population since 2010 and that many experienced officers have left. Many of the new officers are replacing the approximately 20,000 who left between 2010 and 2019.

The new headcount of 149,572 officers in England and Wales (including part-time employees) is higher than the previous record of 146,030 in 2010.

It has been reached after a big rise in the first three months of 2023 - 4,000 extra officers - by far the biggest quarterly jump since the government's police uplift programme started.

While the number of police officers is a few thousand higher than 2010 levels, the population has grown - by about 7% - since then.

If the number of officers in England and Wales had risen in line with the population since 2010, there would need to be thousands more officers.

In the year to March 2022, the number of full-time police officers leaving the force reached a 20-year high of 8,117. Half of those leaving retired - police officers can claim their pensions in their 50s. However, an increasing proportion resigned - about 40% in 2021-22, compared with a third the year before.

About 9% of newly recruited officers leave during their two-year probation periods, a report by the Public Accounts Committee, which examines government projects, found last year.

There are now fewer senior full-time police officers than in 2010. The number of inspectors is down 14% to 6,245. The number of superintendents and sergeants has also fallen.

Currently, a third of all police officers in England and Wales have fewer than five years' experience where the length of service is known. This is more than double the number six years ago.

Rise in Private Police Forces

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-11894535/How-private-police-forces-hired-patrol-High-Streets.html>

Police strip-searched children as young as eight

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-65081765>

Children as young as eight are being strip-searched by the police, according to a report showing "deeply concerning" and "widespread" failures. It also found some children were strip-searched in the back of police vans, schools and fast-food outlets.

The report by Children's Commissioner Dame Rachel de Souza showed 2,847 children were strip-searched in England and Wales from 2018 to mid-2022. The National Police Chiefs' Council will "carefully consider" the findings.

The report found black children were up to six times more likely to be searched than the overall child population. More than half (52%) of the searches took place without an appropriate adult confirmed to be present - a legal requirement, except when there is serious risk to a child's life or welfare.

And the data shows 51% of the searches led to no further action.

Dame Rachel requested data in the wake of the Child Q scandal, which came to light in March 2022.

Some 39 of 43 forces responded. The figures cover searches under stop-and-search powers over four-and-a-half years.

It was identified that searches at 27 forces raised concerns about children's safeguarding or indicated a breach of the statutory code of practice. It has asked for these to be referred to the police watchdog.

Of the nearly 3,000 searches, almost a quarter (24%) took place on children aged 10-15. The youngest was eight years old.

The vast majority were boys (95%), and black boys accounted for more than a third (37%) of strip-searches.

Home Secretary praises the work of Thames Valley's Rural Crime Taskforce

Thames Valley Police's Rural Crime Taskforce have recovered stolen goods worth more than £1.5m and their proactive approach has seen a significant impact in reducing hare coursing offences. Inspector Hutchings, who leads the team, explained the close working relation that has been developed with farmers and organisations such as the National Farmers Union (NFU).

Matthew Barber said: "It was great to showcase some of the work being done by Thames Valley Police to protect our rural communities. The Home Secretary heard from farmers and the NFU about the challenges that theft of machinery and tools present to those farming in Thames Valley. It also provided an opportunity to explain the work being done to improve forensic marking of machinery and equipment."

Greg Smith, Member of Parliament for Buckingham, has sponsored a Private Members Bill that will make the marking and registration of such machinery a legal requirement. The Equipment Theft (Prevention) Bill is currently making its way through Parliament, and the visit provided an opportunity to demonstrate to the Home Secretary some of the measures that can be put in place to safeguard machinery.

Police delays to fore as judge queries wait in court case

<https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/23428573.police-delays-fore-judge-queries-wait-animal-porn-case/>

Delays with 'triaging' digital devices was blamed for the 16 month wait to get a case to court.

Last year, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary raised concerns about the provision of digital forensics in police forces around the country.

Inspectors found that, nationally, there were more than 25,000 devices such as phones or laptops waiting to be analysed by a digital forensics specialist.

Inspector of Constabulary commented that "Delays, lack of resources and lack of adequate training means some victims are being let down and officers are missing their chance to bring offenders to justice."

A report prepared last month for the Thames Valley's Police and Crime Panel – responsible for scrutinising the police and crime commissioner – about the force's cyber and digital priorities made no mention of backlogs in analysing digital devices.

Sexual offences in Thames Valley reach record high since 2007

<https://www.bracknellnews.co.uk/news/23491037.sexual-offences-thames-valley-reach-record-high-since-2007/>

Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel Work Programme 2023/24

<p>24 March 2023 extended meeting</p>	<p>Community Policing Strategy – including Police Community Support Officers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyber Crime • Criminal Justice System and Probationary Service - Prison Leavers • How is the PCC holding the Chief Constable to account for TVP’s role and performance in the 9 MASHs within Thames Valley (six in Berkshire, one in Oxfordshire, one in Milton Keynes and one in Buckinghamshire). • Public questions • Chairman/PCC Updates/Topical issues • Work Programme
<p>23 June 2023</p>	<p>Police and Crime Commissioner’s Annual Report – Monitoring of Priorities of Police and Criminal Justice Plan: 1. Strong local policing 2. Fighting serious organised crime 3. Fighting cyber-crime and fraud 4. Improving the criminal justice system 5. Tackling illegal encampments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public questions • PCP Annual Report • Annual Review of Panel’s Terms of Reference, Panel Arrangements, Appointment to Sub-Committees and Task and Finish Groups • Complaints Sub-Committee • TVP Vetting - Update • Chairman/PCC Updates and Topical Issues Report • Work Programme
<p>15 September 2023</p>	<p>TVP Force Review - Neighbourhood Policing Update</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional & Ethical Standards Panel Annual Assurance Report 2021 • Contact Management – Update on performance of “101” Calls and on-line reporting • Community Safety – Update on funding provided by PCC • Update on Thames Valley wide CCTV

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation Deter – a zero tolerance approach to knife crime – Update on successes. • Race and BAME representation in TVP – Progress being made • Chairman/PCC Updates and Topical Issues Report Work Programme
13 November 2023 (Date to be confirmed)	Fighting serious organised crime – County Lines and the protection of the vulnerable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Assurance Report – Joint Independent Audit Committee • Race Action Plan and the work of the Independent Scrutiny Oversight Board (ISOB) / Race and BAME representation in TVP • Violence against Women and Girls, partnership working, education programme • Update on TVP Recruitment and Retention including improving the number of officers from ethnic minority groups • Progress on draft budget • Chairman/PCC Updates /Topical Issues • Work Programme
26 January 2024	PCC Draft Budget – To review and make recommendations on the proposed precept for 2024/25 and to receive a report from the Budget Task and Finish Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny of the Proposed Police Precept – Questions to the Police and Crime Commissioner • Progress on Contact Management • Chairman/PCC Updates /Topical Issues • Work Programme

15 March 2024	Victims First – The services which the PCC commissions to support victims of crime across the Thames Valley.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on RESTART • Chairman/PCC Updates /Topical Issues • Work Programme
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At the last meeting of the Panel, the PCC asked that a future meeting of the Panel be convened at a TVP establishment such as the Training college.

There was also reference made to a possible Panel site visit to the Contact Management Centres. It was agreed that the Panel at its annual meeting on 23 June 2023 make decisions on these requests.

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