

# Agenda

**Date:** Friday 15 March 2024  
**Time:** 11.00 am  
**Venue:** The Paralympic Room,  
 Buckinghamshire Council,  
 Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury  
 HP19 8FF



The Briefing Meeting for Members will be held at 10.30am. There should be sufficient space in the car park at the Council Offices.

Agenda Item	Time	Page No
1 Apologies for Absence		
2 Declarations of Interest		
3 Minutes To agree the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2024.		5 - 18
4 Public Question Time Anyone who works or lives in the Thames Valley can ask a question at meetings of the Police and Crime Panel, at which a 20 minute session will be designated for hearing from the public.  If you'd like to participate, please read the Public Question Time Scheme and submit your questions by email to <a href="mailto:khalid.ahmed@buckinghamshire.gov.uk">khalid.ahmed@buckinghamshire.gov.uk</a> at least three working days in advance of the meeting.		
5 Report of the Violence against Women and Girls Task and Finish Group 11.00am  REPORT TO FOLLOW		

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|-----------|--|----------------|
| <b>6</b>  | <b>Victims Services Commissioning – Office of the Police &amp; Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley</b><br><b>11.20am</b>  | <b>19 - 24</b> |
|           | To consider a report of the Head of Victims Services of the Office of the PCC updating the Panel on the commissioning of three new services to replace the current victim services.  |                |
| <b>7</b>  | <b>Partnerships Fund (Formerly Community Safety Fund)</b><br><b>11.40am</b>  | <b>25 - 28</b> |
|           | To receive a report from the PCC updating the Panel on details of the Partnerships Fund (formally known as the Community Safety Fund).   |                |
| <b>8</b>  | <b>Force Review - Crime &amp; Criminal Justice changes</b><br><b>11.55am</b>   | <b>29 - 34</b> |
|           | To be provide with a report of the PCC which updates the Panel on the Force Review progress in the Crime & Criminal Justice command. This had been previously requested at a previous Panel meeting.   |                |
| <b>9</b>  | <b>Work of the Rural Crime Task Force (to include wildlife crimes)</b><br><b>12.10pm</b><br><b>TO FOLLOW</b>   |                |
| <b>10</b> | <b>RESTART Thames Valley</b><br><b>12.25pm</b>   | <b>35 - 38</b> |
|           | This report is an update on the work of RESTART Thames Valley.   |                |
|           | An initial report was provided to the Police and Crime Panel in March 2023 focusing on 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. This update focuses on developments since then notably an extension to the original pilot, changes to funding and the revised programme focus on delivering a service primarily to male prison leavers leaving HMP Bullingdon. |                |
| <b>11</b> | <b>Operation Deter - Data</b><br><b>12.40pm</b><br><b>TO FOLLOW</b>  |                |
| <b>12</b> | <b>Professional and Ethical Standards Panel: Annual</b>  | <b>39 - 50</b> |

## **Assurance Report 2023**

### **12.50pm**

This report provides an overview of the Professional and Ethical Standards Panel's (PESP) activities and findings in 2023.

It covers monitoring complaints handling, reviewing ethical standards, and providing recommendations within Thames Valley Police (TVP).

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| <b>13</b> | <b>Topical Issues</b><br><b>12.55pm</b><br>To receive and ask questions on the topical issues report which provides media coverage of policing and crime news. Also, to receive updates from the PCC and the Chair of the Panel, if required. | <b>51 - 58</b> |
| <b>14</b> | <b>Work Programme</b><br><b>1.00pm</b><br>For Panel Members to put forward items for the Work Programme including ideas for themed meetings.  | <b>59 - 62</b> |

**Date of next meeting:** Friday 21 June 2024

## **Membership**

Councillor Robin Bradburn (Milton Keynes City Council) (Chair), Councillor Karen Rowland (Reading Borough Council) (Vice-Chair), Councillor Peter Brazier (Buckinghamshire Council - co-optee), Councillor Phil Chapman (Cherwell District Council), Councillor David Carroll (Buckinghamshire Council), Councillor Isobel Darby (Buckinghamshire Council co-optee), 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 Iskandar Jefferies (Bracknell Forest Council), Councillor Mark Lygo (Oxford City Council), Pamela Mackenzie-Reilly (Co-opted Independent Member), Councillor Keith McLean (Milton Keynes City Council - co-optee), Councillor Stephen Newton (Wokingham Borough Council), Councillor Vicky Poole (West Berkshire Council), Councillor Geoff Saul (West Oxfordshire District Council), Councillor Mabu Shaik (Slough Borough Council), Councillor Richard Webber (Oxfordshire County Council) and Councillor Simon Werner (Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead)

For further information please contact: Khalid Ahmed on , email [tvpcp@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:tvpcp@buckinghamshire.gov.uk).

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## Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel held on Friday 26 January 2024 in Thames Valley Police Training Centre, Sulhamstead (Reading RG7 4Dx), commencing at 11.10 am and concluding at 1.30 pm.

### Members present

Councillor Robin Bradburn (Milton Keynes City Council) (Chair), Councillor Karen Rowland (Reading Borough Council) (Vice-Chair), Councillor Peter Brazier (Buckinghamshire Council - co-optee), Councillor Isobel Darby (Buckinghamshire Council co-optee), Councillor Sam Casey-Rerhaye (South Oxfordshire District Council), Councillor Neil Fawcett (Vale of White Horse District Council), Peter Gammond (Co-opted Independent Member), Councillor Iskandar Jefferies (Bracknell Forest Council), Pamela Mackenzie-Reilly (Co-opted Independent Member), Councillor Keith McLean (Milton Keynes City Council - co-optee), Councillor Stephen Newton (Wokingham Borough Council), Councillor Vicky Poole (West Berkshire Council), Councillor Geoff Saul (West Oxfordshire District Council), Councillor Mabu Shaik (Slough Borough Council) and Councillor Simon Werner (Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead)

### Others in attendance

Khalid Ahmed (Scrutiny Officer) and Matthew Barber (Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner).

### Agenda Item

#### 33 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted by Cllr Carroll (Buckinghamshire Council), Cllr Culverhouse (Buckinghamshire Council – co-optee), Cllr Lygo (Oxford City Council) and Cllr Webber (Oxfordshire County Council).

#### 34 Public Question Time

Cllr Andrew Gant of Oxfordshire County Council asked the PCC the following question:

Thames Valley police action on road safety appears to be behind what we see from other forces and are hearing from other local authorities. Other police forces seem to be more willing and able to implement continuous operation and average speed camera enforcement.

Other forces are using cycle and bus patrols to detect and deter mobile phone use and illegal or fake number plates. It is generally recognised that stopping drivers for driving and vehicle offences often uncovers other serious crimes, and that third party reporting is well encouraged. This can help improve overall driver behaviour and road safety.

It is understood that resources are limited, but inaction will cost more than action in the long run. The PCC was asked for TVP to act against this increasing trend of dangerous driving before there are more tragic consequences. The specific request was for closer collaboration with local authorities, both collectively across the Thames Valley area, and individually to help achieve improvements to road safety.

The PCC was asked to acknowledge the benefits and value of lower speed limits, especially the 20-mph scheme, and to support local authorities by enforcing them. In addition to appreciate the advantages of average speed camera enforcement and to cooperate with Oxfordshire County Council, especially on sections of the A34, A40, A420, and A417.

There should also be a crackdown on anti-social driving behaviours such as driving and parking on pavements.

## **Response**

*[The PCC replied that he agreed with most of the points raised and recognised, that sadly, that there are often more road accidents at this time of year due to the weather. This year has been particularly bad, with another incident on the A420 last month.*

*There is often a gap between those factors that can lead to some of the worst casualties and some of the measures that are simple and popular today. Reference was made to not taking enough action on pavement parking, which is a problem in most places now. The PCC said that unless the pavement parking was causing obstruction, it was up to local authorities to deal with pavement parking.*

*He was meeting in the next week or so with South Oxfordshire Council and residents regarding pavement parking.*

*The PCC referred to the 13 deaths on road accidents which were tragic. Two were caused by fallen trees on the road, five cases were due to mental health issues and one driver had a heart attack.*

*Of course, there was the need to address many of the other cases related to drug and drink driving and those particular issues.*

*Reference was made to a review which was taking place to determine where road policing resources were best placed. There was access to the Road Safety Fund, which is the money generated from the speed awareness courses, funded by speeding drivers.*

*There had been no final decisions made on much of that funding, as this was being looked at in conjunction with the savings proposal from the Joint Operations Unit.*

*The PCC referred to more recruitment taking place in the Criminal Justice Team in*

*relation to roads policing and the investigation of third party reports.*

*There were benefits and challenges of using average speed cameras to enforce speed limits and reduce road accidents in Oxfordshire and other areas. Average speed cameras are more effective than fixed cameras at maintaining traffic flow and preventing drivers from speeding up after passing a camera.*

*Average speed cameras needed to be installed in locations where speed is a major cause of accidents, and not just where there are high volumes of traffic. Some local authorities have implemented 20mph zones, but there is no funding or suitable technology to enforce them with cameras.*

*The PCC said he is working with councils and other partners to develop a road safety strategy that will include the use of average speed cameras where appropriate.]*

### **35 Scrutiny of the Proposed Police Precept - Budget Papers from the Performance and Accountability meeting between the PCC and the Chief Constable**

The Panel considered 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 18 January 2024.

The PCC introduced the item and explained the reasoning behind the proposed £13 (Band D) increase to the Council Tax precept. Reference was made to the PCC's responsibility to ensure that Thames Valley Police has the resources to effectively prevent and investigate crime, support victims and protect communities from harm.

The PCC commented that he was conscious of the current cost of living pressures on households, however, alongside this, economic pressures such as high utility, fuel, and vehicle costs are also continuing to significantly impact policing budgets despite a rise in government funding.

The investment in policing would focus on the priorities that mattered to residents with strengthened neighbourhood policing and crime prevention. The budget included investment in an additional 150 police officers across the force, including neighbourhood officers, priority crime teams to tackle burglaries, theft and shoplifting; and an increase in the Rural Crime Taskforce.

Reference was made to the plans enabling continued investment in programmes to improve forensics, crime investigation, safeguarding and the training of new officers.

In relation to the capital plan, funding would be provided for long-term investment in technology and infrastructure, with sustainable funding support.

The revenue plan is balanced over the four-year timeframe and would be maintained through the ongoing Force Productivity Plan saving £20m in the first two years of the Plan, with the bulk of the savings coming through the Force Review project. There were savings of £7m in 2024/25 which have been identified in detail.

For 2025/26 there was a £13m savings target which had been largely identified at an outline level by department, and detailed plans were being worked through with external expert support.

**Members' Questions:**

- (1) The PCC was asked about the proposals to reduce the number of officers in the Roads Policing Unit which was concerning as they were a front-line service and the optics of this would not be good.

*[The PCC replied that there was no clear decision made on this. There would be a look at what savings could be made in the second year.]*

- (2) Reference was made to a later agenda item (Topical Issues) relating to HMICFRS who had sent a warning to TVP after an inspection highlighted problems with the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (Clare's Law) which included resourcing issues and long delays. Also, the report 'Tools and Strategies for Domestic Abuse', detailing that a number of bids for a centralised team, after a small successful pilot to address the issues with the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme ... have been unsuccessful.

The PCC was asked to confirm funding will therefore be made available to address this failing, as highlighted by HMICFRS, to avoid continued reliance on external bidding applications, which have so far been unsuccessful?

*[The PCC replied that there was an increase in resourcing although the bidding for funding had been unsuccessful. Regarding the HMICFRS report on safeguarding, they had come back and acknowledged that there had been improvements made.]*

*In relation to the league table which had been produced in relation to Clare's Law, the PCC said that the stalking comparisons were difficult to compare as they looked at the number of revisits which had been made.]*

- (3) The PCC was asked what residents were getting out of their increase in Police precept. There was an increase in the Police precept of funding, with a reduction in government grant and proposed savings of £2m.

*[The PCC replied that there had been a sizeable increase in Government funding although with inflationary and other financial pressures caused by the cost-of-living crisis, this had affected budgets. Alongside the proposed £2m savings there was also unidentified growth of around £1m.]*

*The proposed £13 increase (Band D Council Tax) would generate around £30m; an increase of £10 would be around £3m less.*

*There would be 150 posts funded out of this increase as part of increased numbers in*



*neighbourhood policing. The move to 5 local command units will enable TVP to put more resource into where the policing demand was with a proactive team focusing on County Lines crimes and Serious Organised Crime.*

*Reference was made to increasing resource into cybercrime with the increasing digital/ social media crimes and increasing retail crime investigators.]*

(4) The PCC was asked about outside agency staff having training?

*[The PCC replied that this facility was not used often as it was not practical due to the technicalities.]*

(5) Reference was made to TVP's future plans which indicated a reliance and expectation of increases in the Police Precept and that the increased funding would partly pay for more neighbourhood policing. How was the PCC going to be accountable?

*[The PCC replied that this was entirely fair. The consensus from the public was that an increase in the Police Precept was welcomed. TVP had 5,000 plus police officers and people wanted visibility in community policing and more Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). There would be a drive to fill the PCSO vacancies.*

*Town centre police teams would be more visible and neighbourhood police officers would be doubled. The Rural Crime and Task Force was increasing, and the PCC said he was accountable for all these decisions.]*

#### **Written Questions submitted by the Panel's Budget Task and Finish Group**

(1) At the first meeting of the Budget Task and Finish Group on 10 November 2023, preparation for the budget was based on a £10 Police precept increase. PCCs were then given flexibility for a £13 Police precept increase. Could the PCC provide full details of what would not be in the budget if the flexible £13 proposal had not been given?

*[The PCC replied that the Chief Constable has a very detailed and in-depth process for scoring new demands and bids across the priorities of the force and my own. Each proposal has to be sponsored by the appropriate chief officer before it is considered by the wider CCMT. This process provides a priority list of all the new demands.*

*The Chief Constable then decides where the critical line is drawn and if sufficient funding is not available additional savings would have to be identified to meet these demands. If the £13 precept increase was not available some new demands would not have been met in conjunction with taking additional savings.*

*During November and December significant work was undertaken by the GSI team to scrutinise all critical and essential bids to fully justify their ranking and ensure all*

*alternative means of delivery had been explored. Also, during this time, the Finance Department was critically analysing all the items within the MTFP especially the inflationary elements to ensure they were based on the latest information and the assumptions were justified. This resulted in a reduction in the inflation provision for 2024/25 of almost £1m along with numerous other updates.*

*Due to the volume and scope of this additional work there is not a straight read across from November's additional demands to January's. However, November's notional £10 precept increase did not provide sufficient funding for the demands identified at that time.*

*If I had not approved the £13 precept increase, the shortfall would have to be met by not approving new activity, making additional savings or additional use of reserves.*

*I reviewed the prioritised list of new activity with the Chief Constable to gain assurance that the proposals are for essential growth. Given the significant savings plans underway, additional savings would be difficult to deliver without disproportionate impact on delivery, particularly in the short term. Additional use of reserves would increase financial risk for future years.]*

- (2) How can the PCC justify asking residents of Thames Valley for an increase of Council tax for the Police Precept (Band D - £269.28) during a cost-of-living crisis? Also, there are planned savings as part of the Force Review such as a reduction in Road Policing officers when residents complain about car cruising and meets which impacts on communities? The perception of residents is that they are paying more and received less. How can residents be assured that this will not be the case?

*[The PCC replied that the MTFP and the Chief Constable letter to myself (appendix 4) sets out how this budget addresses the force priorities and the benefits for our communities including: Improving Victim Services, Improving Public Contact, Strengthening Community Policing and protecting Vulnerable People. This is supported by an additional 150 officer posts, which comes on top of the doubling of neighbourhood officers I funded last year.*

*The MTFP makes realistic assumptions about future levels of funding and cost increases, along with committed growth items. These assumptions include savings identified as part of the Force Review and wider cross force savings all of which, are part of the overall financing of the MTFP. All savings are considered by the CCMT in the context of the force priorities and service delivery to determine the risks associated with taking them verses the risks attached to not delivering the overarching savings target and hence our priorities. All savings are difficult decisions but without this focus we cannot redistribute our resources to our highest priority areas.*

*Road's policing is part of the Joint Operations Unit (JOU). Like all departments, the JOU needs to find savings and identify priorities for additional investment. CCMT has*

*not yet made the decision as to how JOU savings targets are to be met. I will continue to hold the Force to account for roads policing, as I will for all force activity.]*

- (3) What environmental and sustainability initiatives, such as solar panels, wind turbines etc are being looked at in terms of a capital strategy which will provide energy savings in the long term?

*[The PCC replied that TVP has an Environmental Strategy led by an Environmental & Sustainability manager. Solar Panels are present at 5 sites with additional units coming online in 2025. TVP's strategy regarding solar panels is to review the opportunity for solar panels on new builds and when significant building work is undertaken e.g. roof replacement. Other Opportunities are identified as a need or opportunity arises.]*

A Member expressed disappointment with the answer given, as there were long term benefits with renewable energy.

*[The PCC responded that TVP were tied into long term energy contracts and there were issues with some of TVP buildings. Reference was made to TVP buildings in Oxfordshire where decisions needed to be taken on which buildings were to be retained. There was no capital available on some of the environmental initiatives.]*

- (4) Recruitment and retention within TVP remains very high on the risk registers of the force and impacts on the budget. Could the PCC outline what are the financial implications of on average 44 officers leaving every month and what is being done to reduce this, particularly with the costs involved in training officers and the gaps in the service to the public this creates?

*[The Panel was informed, as of the end of November the average TVP leavers was 39 per month, significantly higher than wanted. A high turnover of police officers affects virtually every aspect of the force for example, by increasing the need for recruitment, training initial and specialist, mentoring taking skilled officers away from the frontline, decreasing the skills and knowledge of those officers available for deployment as the average length of service decreases, decreasing the number of officers available for deployment because more are in the training process. As well as the direct additional costs of travelling, accommodation, and subsistence for those in training.]*

*The Force is tackling this problem by multiple means, for example, we have introduced face to face interviews before our new recruits join us to ensure both from our perspective and theirs, that they are right for the force and the force is right for them. This will reduce the number of new recruits resigning early in their career. The 1st tranche of 42 interviews resulted in 6 no shows and 3 not progressed. We have a retention team who are focused on "problem solving / intervening at an early stage to address issues and keep officers within their teams.]*

- (5) A particular issue amongst all Police Forces is officers can retire at a

relatively young age. Is there any opportunity to look at retaining some of the officers with inducements which will retain the experience they possess?

*[The PCC replied that the retirement age for Police officers is now 60 (increased from 50 and 55). The Force (as is true of most forces) has a 30+ scheme whereby officers can retire, take their lump sum, and then return to work on their previous grade, their annual pension is abated.*

*This local scheme is being replaced imminently with a new national NPCC scheme "Retire and Return" which provides more flexibility for the force and the officer.*

*We also employ a number of retired officers on zero hours contracts so we can call upon their skills and knowledge as and when required for specific cases. We also encourage retiring officers to apply for police staff roles.]*

(6) Reference was made to £2m of unidentified savings and the PCC was asked for more information on this.

*[The PCC referred to appendix 4 which explains how the £2m unidentified savings is matched by an equal and opposite provision for unidentified essential growth. This is to indicate that any additional growth will need to be funded by additional savings. If the savings cannot be found the growth cannot be delivered. The £2m additional growth is low compared to recent years.]*

(7) This budget relies heavily on the use of reserves to support the funding of one-off short-term growth and investment items. How sustainable is this, particularly if reserves are dipped into to cover items such as energy costs and inflation going forward?

*[The PCC explained that General Reserves are maintained at the CIPFA recommended level of 2.5% - 3% of NRE. Reserves are only used to fund one-off items or items of an exceptional nature such as the energy spike.*

*The Improvement & Performance reserves is designed to support the force in developing for the future, building the force for the future. This reserve is designed for application to benefit the force service and not a saving mechanism, i.e. the intention is not to build the reserve but to use it for the benefit of the service. This year I have agreed to support the force in the use of this reserve to support a number of long-term investment opportunities such as the Force Review which is designing the structures and delivery mechanisms to provide flexibility to address the current and future policing challenges and complexities. Other one-off investments include the Network modernisation and response to the BT transformation work.*

*The Force also has an Estates Reserve which the MTFP contribute to with the expectation of the current and potential schemes within the Estates Strategy.*

*The significant productivity savings over the next two years mean that short term use*

*of reserves is sustainable. My CFO and myself are confident that the force is making reasonable and appropriate use of the I&P reserves.]*

The decision taken on this item was made after the Panel considered the following item on the agenda:- Report of the Budget Task and Finish Group.

**RESOLVED – (1) That the Police and Crime Panel approve the Police and Commissioner’s precept for 2024/25, to increase the Council Tax precept by £13 (Band D), as set out in the OPCC budget papers.**

**(2) That, subject to final tax base notifications, the council tax requirement for 2024/25 be set at £262,294,520.**

**(3) That any variation in the final amount of council tax income be appropriated to or from the Improvement & Performance Reserve.**

**(4) That the revenue estimates for 2024/25 as set out in Appendix be noted.**

**(5) That the police element of the council tax for 2024/25 be set at £269.28 for properties in Band D (an annual increase of £13), with the charge for other bands as set out in Table 1, for comparison Appendix 2 shows the comparison band D precept across all forces.**

Property Band	Relevant Proportion	PCC Element of the Council Tax
A	6/9	£179.52
B	7/9	£209.44
C	8/9	£239.36
D	9/9	£269.28
E	11/9	£329.12
F	13/9	£388.96
G	15/9	£448.80
H	18/9	£538.56

### **36 Report of the Panel's Budget Task and Finish Group**

As in previous years, 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 2024/25.

On 10 November 2023, the Budget Task and Finish Group met with the Director of Finance of Thames Valley Police (TVP) and the Chief Finance Officer of the Office of the PCC to look at draft budget proposals. Summary of that meeting is attached as

appendix C to the report.

Members of the PCP Budget Task and Finish Group attended the Performance and Accountability meeting between the PCC and the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police (TVP) on 18 January 2024, and then held their Budget Task and Finish Group the following day on 19 January 2024 to scrutinise the budget proposals.

Councillor Bradburn, the Chair of the Budget Task and Finish Group presented the report. He thanked Martin Thornley, Chief Finance Officer, Office of PCC and Linda Waters, Director of Finance, TVP for attending the Task and Finish Group meetings and outlining the PCC's draft budget proposals and the implications of this on the Police Precept.

The recommendation of the Budget Task and Finish Group was to approve the Police and Crime Commissioner's police precept for 2024/25, to increase the Council Tax police precept by £13 (Band D), as set out in the OPCC budget report.

### **37 Thames Valley Police Contact Management update**

The Panel considered a report of the PCC which provided an update on Thames Valley Police call handling performance. It included current positioning, challenges the department are currently facing, and measures being put in place to mitigate future risk and improve performance.

Reference was made to Call handling performance being impacted by three main influencing factors:- the volume of incoming demand, the stability of IT and telephony systems used, and resourcing.

The PCC reported that in the last 12 months there have seen fluctuations in IT reliability and call demand, particularly in relation to the 'android' upgrade to mobile phones which saw a spike in 999 calls in error during the summer months (pocket calls). However, the greatest challenge has come from resourcing availability.

In response to a question regarding a recent outage, the PCC reported that 999 calls to TVP were down for 3 ½ hours. The outage was down to human error and a kit failure. Contingency was that calls were diverted to Hampshire Constabulary, and this worked very well.

**RESOLVED – That the report be noted, and it was agreed that a further update report be programmed into the Panel's work programme.**

### **38 Tools and strategies for dealing with Domestic Abuse**

The PCC submitted a report which provided a detailed overview of the tools and strategies employed by Thames Valley Police (TVP) to address Domestic Abuse (DA).

Reference was made to the data on repeated cases and that there was no data for Milton Keynes, Bracknell, Slough and Windsor and Maidenhead. The PCC said he would have a look at this and provide the information to the Panel. **[ACTION: PCC]**

**RESOLVED – That the report be noted, and it was agreed that Domestic Abuse be added to the Panel’s work programme and revisited at a future meeting.**

**39 Report of the Panel's Road Safety Task and Finish Group**

The Panel was provided with the final report of the Task and Finish Group on Road Safety.

The Chair of the Panel, Cllr Brazier introduced the report and thanked witnesses and the Panel’s Scrutiny Officer for the work carried out.

Reference was made to three areas of the review which had not been completed: pavement parking / obstruction, car cruising / meets and the enforcement of 20 mph. The Panel agreed that, where possible another meeting of the Task and Finish Group take place to consider these outstanding areas.

The PCC referred to pavement parking and pointed out that this was the responsibility of local authorities although it was acknowledged that the balance had to be got right in terms of responsibility as obstruction of pavements was a police issue.

A discussion took place on the enforcement of 20 mph speed limits / zones and Panel Members believed that these should be enforced by the police.

Discussion took place on the Road Safety Strategy and the Panel asked that the PCC defer the finalisation of the strategy until the Panel had completed its review. It was agreed that the outstanding issues be reported back to the Panel in June.

**RESOLVED – (1) That approval be given to final report and the following recommendations contained in the report and that the PCC be asked to take forward the relevant recommendations to his office:**

- (i) The Road Safety Strategy be shared with the Police and Crime Panel. That better coordination and communication take place on the strategy to the different local authority tiers in Thames Valley, to Highways / Road Safety Teams within local authorities and National Highways.**
- (ii) That better coordination and partnership work take place between Roads Policing and local authorities on sites chosen for Police attention.**
- (iii) That all speed data from local authorities, CSW volunteers and SIDS be fed into the Roads Policing Unit.**
- (iv) That West Berkshire Community Speedwatch Scheme should be considered as good practice by other local authorities to support local volunteer groups. As such ensuring all stakeholders are fully on board with community concerns around speeding.**
- (v) It was agreed that there was potential for more consistent monitoring and follow-up to improve the CSW system’s effectiveness and the PCC was asked to implement this with TVP.**

- (vi) That the PCC be asked to investigate linking DVLA data with CSW data and using police staff with calibrated cameras alongside the Community Speedwatch volunteers to improve the scheme.
  - (vii) That the PCC be asked to look at the use of data sharing (postcode data) between TVP and local authorities and CSW schemes.
  - (viii) That consideration be given to the creation of a forum for Community Speedwatch volunteers to enable them to give feedback, to share current good practice and to receive refresher training on the full functionality of the on-line system.
  - (ix) The PCC be asked to explore the use of funding from the Road Safety Fund for training officers to use TruCAMS and update the current equipment (3-6 devices available)
- (2) That the Task and Finish Group complete its work on the three outstanding issues and report back to the Panel.

**40 PCC Road Safety Strategy update**

The PCC submitted a report which provided an overview of the progress made regarding the PCC's Road Safety Strategy 2024-28.

The strategy aimed to outline PCC commitments contributing to the Safe System approach, making Thames Valley roads safer through partnership, evidence-led methods, and a focus on education and enforcement.

**The report was noted.**

**41 October 2023 County lines intensification week update**

The Panel was reminded that a request had been made at a previous meeting for additional information regarding the October 2023 County Lines Intensification Week, specifically seeking a detailed breakdown of the 98 arrests made by Thames Valley Police (TVP) during this period.

The PCC explained that in October 2023, TVP carried out extensive 4P (Prevent, Pursue, Protect, Prepare) activity during the Intensification Week. Collaborative efforts across the force led to numerous arrests and the disruption of various drug lines.

A summary of arrests and a brief overview of offenses per Local Policing Area was provided.

**The Panel noted the report.**

**42 Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) recruitment**

The PCC provided the Panel with an update on Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) recruitment as requested at a previous Panel meeting.

The PCC informed the Panel that PCSO recruitment this year had continued to be a



challenge despite a significant number of applications and targeted recruitment activity. There had been an increase in the number of applications, however, there was a lower conversion rate of applications to appointable candidates.

The Panel noted that 43 PCSOs had been recruited in the last 12 months, however, there had been 51 leaving, with 15 of those becoming police officers.

Details of the recruitment activities were reported, and reference was made to the possibility of offering a non-apprenticeship entry route as this had been cited as a barrier to potential candidates.

**The Panel noted the report and the efforts and initiatives which were taking place to improve recruitment and retention of PCSOs.**

**43 Serious Organised Crime - Performance Update**

The Panel received and noted a performance update on Serious Organised Crime disruptions.

**44 Report of the Complaints Sub-Committee**

The Panel received and noted a report on non-serious complaints made against the PCC considered by the Complaints Sub-Committee since the last meeting of the Panel.

**45 Topical Issues and Updates from the PCC and the Chair**

The Panel was provided with a report which provided details of policing and crime news.

**46 Work Programme**

The Panel's work programme was noted.

It was agreed that an update on the Force Review and the reduction of LPAs to five be added to the work programme for a future meeting.

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## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

**Report title:** Victims Services Commissioning – Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley

**Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024

**Author and contact:** Helen Wake, Head of Victims Services, OPCC

**Purpose of the report:** As requested by the Panel

**Recommendations:** Information only

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### **Executive Summary**

Contracts for the current victim services commissioned by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) expire on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, these services will be replaced by three new services. These specialist services have been developed after a period of extensive research, data-modelling, consultation with victims, and engagement with local victims' service providers. This report details the work undertaken by the OPCC Victims Team to commission the following three new victims services:

- Adults Victims Service
- Children and Young Peoples Victim Service
- Sexual Violence Service

### **Main Body**

#### **New Support Services in the Thames Valley**

The new specialist victim services will meet the needs of those most affected by high harm crimes such as sexual violence, domestic abuse and to provide specialist provision to children and young people. Ensuring that victims of crime in Thames Valley will be supported by high quality services that enable victims to cope with the impact of crime and build resilience to move forward with daily life. They will provide a range of holistic support in order to meet the varied needs of victims most seriously harmed by crime. Providing one to one support, group support, counselling, advocacy, peer support and psychoeducational programmes.

These services will work alongside and be supported by:

- The existing Victims First Hub
- The existing Victims First Counselling Service
- A new online support programme
- A new case management system

The Victims First Hub serves as the central point of contact for all victims in the Thames Valley, handling referrals from the police, direct victim referrals, and those from partner agencies. It ensures victims can access specialised, tailored support. In late 2024, the PCC plans to transition the referral mechanism to an automatic data transfer process, aiming to guarantee that every victim reporting to the police receives an offer of support.



## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

### Service Design and Preparations

The OPCC Victims Team engaged in various activities to inform new service design, these included:

- **Victims Services Review.** Completed in May 2022. This evaluation focused on three key objectives: assessing current commissioned and internal victim services, providing a framework for future commissioning, and incorporating the voices of victims to shape services. The review involved data analysis, discussions with providers, partners, and sector staff, resulting in the framework for the victims' transformation project. This framework included the commissioning of new services and a planned shift to an automatic referral process for all victims from TVP.
- **Victim Survey.** In 2022, a comprehensive online survey was conducted, involving 778 participants who identified as victims. The survey aimed to enhance understanding of victims' awareness of support services, assess the accessibility of these services, and gather insights into their overall support experiences. Participants were also asked about perceived gaps in support within the Thames Valley and areas where improvement is most needed. Additionally, qualitative data, including quotes from victims, was collected and integrated into the Victims Services Review.
- **Focus Groups and interviews with victims.** An expert in lived experience work conducted focus groups, interviews, and a discussion group session with victims from Diverse Communities, including Afro-Caribbean, Sudanese, and British Asian backgrounds. The sessions involved detailed discussions about the crimes experienced and the support received. The insights gained from these workshops proved invaluable in enhancing understanding of diverse experiences, and the feedback gathered was integrated into both service specifications and a broader transformation project.
- **Market Engagement.** In spring 2023, the OPCC organized three market engagement events focusing on adult support services, children and young people support, and sexual violence support. These events were well-attended by local and national service providers as well as statutory services. Valuable feedback obtained during these events informed service specifications, highlighting priorities and key design elements. Subsequent surveys were conducted to gather additional feedback, specifically identifying priority areas for the recommissioning process.
- **Commissioned Research.** The OPCC also initiated academic research to explore best practices for interventions and services aimed at children and young people affected by crime, as well as victims of sexual violence. The research aimed to identify evidence-based interventions and uncover opportunities for the development of new support services, with a focus on future evaluations.



## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

- **Literature review.** The Victims Team conducted a comprehensive review of key literature to enhance their understanding of the support services available to victims. The focus of the review encompassed victims' needs and priorities, common gaps in support services, the frequency and patterns of various crime types, different support interventions, and the overall impact of support on victims' lives.

### Commissioning Process

The individual lots for the three Victims Services were tendered, offering specialised bidders the chance to provide each service. The procurement process concluded in December 2023, and the services are currently in the mobilisation stage, preparing for the start date on April 1st.

### Services Procured

#### *Service to support Adult Victims of Crime*

**Length of Contract:** Three years (plus one, plus one extension options)

**Value:** £1,660,153.53 for the initial three-year term

**Awarded to:** Victim Support

**Provider information:** Victim Support is a leading independent national charity, currently providing services for 29 out of 40 Police and Crime Commissioners, making it the largest and most experienced victim services provider in England and Wales. Additionally, the organisation operates the National Homicide Service, with a significant workforce with over 1000 employees and more than 400 volunteers.

**To whom will the service provide support?** To victims and witnesses of any crime (excluding sexual violence) aged 18 or over. The service will provide a holistic offer of support including:

- Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) support
- Structured group support, including a domestic abuse programme and a wellbeing programme
- Case Worker support
- Modern Slavery support
- One off informational sessions e.g. navigating the criminal justice system
- Peer mentoring
- Victim awareness training function to provide training to the police, criminal justice agencies, statutory services and community organisations.



## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

### Other Service Highlights:

Service Highlight	Comment
Victim Voice App	Collects victims' feedback quickly and regularly.
24/7 Supportline and LiveChat	Ensures Victims can speak to someone even outside of traditional opening hours and/or when service's capacity is stretched
National Resilience Team	Deployable in times of high demand or low capacity ensuring provision of resilience and continuity of support
Experience of dealing with major incidents	If any major incident happened in the Thames Valley, Victim Support are well placed to support
Have national leads on domestic abuse, sexual violence and CYP services	We will be able to benefit from learning lessons from other PCC areas, not just from the Thames Valley

### *Service to support Children and Young People*

**Awarded to:** SAFE!

**Length of Contract:** Three years (plus one, plus one extension options)

**Value:** £2,423,866.32 for the initial three-year term

**Provider information:** SAFE! is the current provider of victims services for Children and Young People in the Thames Valley, holding the contract since 2015. With 15 years of experience, they specialise in supporting children and families affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence. SAFE! also operates the Building Respectful Families service, focusing on families experiencing Child and Adolescent on Parent violence.

**To whom will the service provide support?** To victims and witnesses of any crime who are aged between 5 and 18 years old. The service will provide a holistic offer of support including:

- Children and Young People Independent Domestic abuse and Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs/IDVA's)
- Structured group programmes, including for domestic abuse victims
- One to one case worker support
- Therapeutic support
- Support for parents

### Other Service Highlights:

Service Highlight	Comment
Wide variety of support options for victims	Including story-telling, play therapy, restorative approaches, therapeutic listening, grounding exercises, group activities/trips, protective behaviours.
Support for parents and guardians	Parent support coordinator runs regular peer support groups. In addition, group work, online and telephone 1-1 support will be available for parents. A digital support offer will also be developed.
Service User Consultation combined with Trips and Activities	SAFE! run regular opportunities to bring CYP together with a gentle and positive activity-based approach. Run residential, fun trips and activities, and combine these with lived experience consultation activities.
Young Champions programme	Volunteering scheme for CYP with varied opportunities to get involved, for example social media content creation, story telling through blogs and case studies, peer supporters, co-facilitating workshops and Young Champions Steering Group.
Comprehensive digital support offer	Text support service with increased hours on school holidays, online resources, self-guided activities, and video content, webinar-style groups, and weekly online drop-in. Live-chat will be developed.



## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

### *Service to support Sexual Violence Victims*

**Awarded to:** Hope After Harm (formally Thames Valley Partnership)

**Length of Contract:** Three years (plus one, plus one extension options)

**Value:** £1,803,850.77 for the initial three-year term

**Provider information:** Hope after Harm is the incumbent provider for the VFSS and VFESS (two current adult services) in Thames Valley, and has been providing services in the area for 30 years. They are committed to offering vital support for victims and witnesses of crime.

**To whom will the service provide support?** To victims of Sexual Violence offences who are aged 18 or over. The service will provide a holistic offer of support including:

- One to one ISVA and sexual violence case worker support
- Structured group support and one off informative and drop in sessions
- Psychoeducational support
- Peer mentoring

### **Other Service Highlights:**

Service Highlight	Comment
ISVA support and a range of specialist group work provision	Service Users will be able to access support from an Independent Sexual Violence Advisor and access a range of specialist group work provision.
Embedding of lived experience within the service	Peer supporters, volunteers and members of board of trustees have lived experience. Feedback on service provision will be sought through surveys, forums, and conversations with caseworkers. A lived experience policy will be in place. Encouragement of lived experience to apply at recruitment stage.
Pathways for former Service Users to move into paid roles	Paid roles, volunteering and peer mentoring roles all available for former Service Users. These roles will be supported by managerial input as well as contact from a clinical supervisor.
Support for Service Users who are waiting for court cases	Regular check-ins to be provided by volunteers and supervised by an ISVA to those awaiting court dates. Ensure victim always feels supported and held and minimise the chance they will disengage with police/the CJS process.

### *Online Support System*

The OPCC also procured an online support system for adult victims, which will be used by the Victims First Hub and the Adult and Sexual Violence services

**Awarded to:** SilverCloud

**Provider Information:** SilverCloud is an online support platform developed by medical experts with nearly two decades of clinical research support. The platform is evidence-based and emerged from research focusing on the demand for effective and clinically validated digital products. It has received numerous awards and recognition for its innovative contributions to the mental health space.

**Service Details:** SilverCloud consists of an online self-guided or case worker guided support provision made up of 11 programmes to assist victims and improve their wellbeing. The structured courses include programmes on sleep, anxiety, stress, mindfulness, alcohol use and resilience.



## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

### *Case Management System*

In addition the OPCC procured a new case management system for the Victims First Hub and commissioned Victim Services, to provide victims with a seamless journey through support.

#### **Awarded to:** Make Time Count Today

**Provider Information:** Make Time Count Today evolved from collaboration with London Probation, recognising the potential for improved outcomes through enhanced technology for offenders, victims, and others affected by crime. In partnership with a coalition of police forces, they developed Make Time Count, a case management solution. As a social enterprise, Make Time Count Today is committed to reinvesting 51% of its profits into a Chances fund, dedicated to supporting vulnerable individuals in starting their own businesses.

**Service Details:** The new system will automate repetitive administrative tasks, such as structured contact via text/email, and provide a case triage function. It features a modern, intuitive interface with versatile reporting tools. Victim Services can use the system for one-click referrals, eliminating the need for victims to repeat their stories. This allows the OPCC to track a victim's progress from initial contact to case closure, including outcome data. Additionally, the system includes scheduling and booking capabilities, along with reminders for upcoming calls and sessions.

### **Next Steps**

During the remaining mobilisation period the OPCC will work closely with the providers of new services. Weekly meetings are scheduled to ensure preparedness before the services' launch. Following the commencement, a service implementation phase will focus on learning and developing services, with ongoing close collaboration and robust contract management through regular meetings and quarterly reporting. Monitoring service effectiveness is a priority, with ongoing discussions about implementing regular service user feedback mechanisms. Feedback from service users and those with lived experience will play a crucial role in shaping and improving services. The transition to an automated referral system for all victims is expected later in 2024, allowing new services to embed and deliver interventions prior to an anticipated increase in demand.

### **Conclusion**

The ongoing mobilisation period for the new victim's services is focused on managing the transition for service users, ensuring continuity of support and a smooth shift to the new services. Moving forward, the incorporation of lived experience and service user feedback will be crucial in shaping and enhancing services. The goal is to provide high-quality support that meets the needs of all crime victims in the Thames Valley.





## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

<b>Report title:</b>	<u>Partnerships Fund - Formally known as Community Safety Fund</u>
<b>Date:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> March 2024
<b>Author and contact:</b>	Rachel Batts, Head of Partnerships and Community Safety, OPCC
<b>Purpose of the report:</b>	At the request of the PCP
<b>Recommendations:</b>	For noting only

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### 1. Executive Summary

The Partnerships Fund (formally known as the Community Safety Fund) is a direct grant from the PCC to Local Authorities to support some of the local priorities of the Community Safety Partnerships. This current round of funding totalling £7,721,256 has been administered as a three-year commitment, with Year 1 funding starting in 2022/23 and Year 3 concluding at the close of 2024/25. Grant allocation is based on an agreed formula based on population and crime statistics. Local Authorities access their respective grant allocations through their CSP's by submission of bid proposals into the OPCC.

### 2. Partnership Fund allocations

The allocation of funds to each Local Authority is a planned process that takes into account various factors, including population demographics and crime statistics. This ensures that resources are distributed equitably, reflecting the diverse needs and challenges faced by different areas within Thames Valley.

By basing the allocation on population and crime statistics, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) demonstrates a commitment to data-driven decision-making and evidence-based policymaking. This approach not only promotes transparency but also enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of resource allocation, allowing for targeted interventions where they are most needed.

Furthermore, the allocation strategy of the Partnerships Fund underscores the PCC's broader strategic objectives in promoting community safety and well-being. By providing financial support to Local Authorities, the PCC empowers them to address local priorities and implement initiatives that directly impact the safety and quality of life of residents.

The flexibility inherent in the fund's use over a three-year period is another key feature that enhances its effectiveness. This flexibility allows Local Authorities to adapt their spending plans in response to changing circumstances and emerging priorities, ensuring that the Partnerships Fund remains responsive to the evolving needs of communities across Thames Valley.



## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

The following table provides a breakdown of fund allocations to each Local Authority across the three financial years:

	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>
<b>Bracknell Forest</b>	£129,369	£124,039	£118,709
<b>Buckinghamshire</b>	£436,567	£486,132	£537,585
<b>Milton Keynes</b>	£259,015	£295,738	£333,860
<b>Oxfordshire</b>	£686,820	£699,307	£712,271
<b>Reading</b>	£373,411	£293,694	£213,977
<b>Slough</b>	£287,641	£242,784	£197,926
<b>West Berkshire</b>	£153,588	£152,908	£152,228
<b>RBWM</b>	£147,397	£150,992	£154,724
<b>Wokingham</b>	£103,138	£126,561	£150,875
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,576,946</b>	<b>£2,572,155</b>	<b>£2,572,155</b>

### 3. Governance and Administration of Partnerships Fund

Effective governance and administration are essential for the success of the Partnerships Fund. Thames Valley Police's Joint Internal Audit Committee (JIAC) plays a pivotal role in ensuring the robustness of the fund's governance and administration. The recent audit conducted by JIAC underlines the commitment to transparency and accountability, providing valuable insights into areas for improvement and enhancement.

Addressing the recommendations stemming from the JIAC audit is a priority for the Partnerships and Community Safety team, along with the Finance team at the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). By implementing these recommendations, the aim is to strengthen the governance framework surrounding the Partnerships Fund, thereby enhancing operational efficiency and mitigating risks.

Moreover, the scheduled consultation with Community Safety Partnership (CSP) representatives further exemplifies the commitment to stakeholder engagement and collaboration. This consultation presents an invaluable opportunity to solicit feedback and insights from key stakeholders, including CSPs, local authorities, and community organisations.

By actively involving stakeholders in the decision-making process, the Partnerships Fund fosters a culture of inclusivity and partnership working. This collaborative approach ensures that the fund remains responsive to the needs and priorities of local communities, thereby maximising its impact in promoting community safety and well-being.

### 4. Conclusion/Next Steps

In conclusion, the Partnerships Fund, formerly the Community Safety Fund, is vital for addressing local safety concerns in Thames Valley. With £7,721,256 allocated based on population and crime statistics, the fund reflects a strategic commitment to enhancing community safety.



## **Report of the Police and Crime Panel**

Flexibility over a three-year period enables efficient resource utilisation to address evolving priorities, demonstrating responsiveness to dynamic community needs.

Improvements following recommendations from Thames Valley Police's Joint Internal Audit Committee aim to enhance governance and administration, ensuring operational efficiency and accountability.

The scheduled consultation with Community Safety Partnership representatives in May 2024 provides an opportunity to gather stakeholder feedback, shaping the fund's future to better align with community needs.

As Thames Valley evolves, the Partnerships Fund remains dedicated to promoting safety and well-being, anticipating fresh funding commitments in 2025/26 to continue driving collaborative initiatives.

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## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

**Report title:** Force Review - Crime & Criminal Justice changes

**Date:** February 2024

**Author and contact:** C/Supt Colin Paine, Head of Force Review

**Purpose of the report:** Update on the Force Review progress in the Crime & Criminal Justice command

**Recommendations:** For information.

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### 1. Executive Summary

A previous report (August 2023) provided an overview of the progress of the Force Review to date and particularly the changes in Local Policing. This report provides more information about the changes in the Crime and Criminal Justice command.

### 2. Force Review

The Force Review began in Spring 2022 to undertake an assessment of the force structures, in Local Policing, Force Intelligence and Specialist Operations (FISO), Crime and Criminal Justice. The central aim of the Force Review was to improve service to the public through a structure that allows for increased capacity across the operational functions of the force. Shortly after work began, an £8m savings target was added to the Review's work. The scope of the Force Review was later expanded to cover the remaining departments in the force to identify a further £7.4m savings.

The Force Review is taking a phased approach to reviewing force functions, with Crime & Criminal Justice covered in Phase 3 which began in April 2023 and completed in August 2023.

### 3. Crime & Criminal Justice Review

The Force Review noted the landscape of Crime and Criminal Justice has seen significant transformation since 2010, including the following key points:

- Societal changes have led to an increase in reporting of offences such as sexual offences and domestic abuse.
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE) has emerged as a distinct crime category in the past decade.
- The internet has become the new frontier for child sexual abuse.
- The HMIC National Child Protection Inspection reviewed TVP's effectiveness at safeguarding children and found opportunities to focus on the voice of the child. They also found capacity was stretched in some areas.
- Expectations around the police investigation of rape and serious sexual assaults has grown exponentially over the past decade. Further professionalisation of



## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

policing's response is driven by the HMIC VAWG report, and the national model for the investigation of rape and sexual offences under Operation Soteria Bluestone.

- Levels of recorded domestic abuse have increased and domestic abuse is now recognised as one of the 6 national threats. In 2022 domestic abuse accounted for 17% of all recorded crime and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 signalled a shift towards comprehensive multi-agency investigations and driven a move to recognise all children as victims. Violence against Women and Girls is now in the Strategic Policing Requirement.
- Homicide levels have changed across the UK over the past 20 years. Between the 2000s and the early 2010s, the number of homicides in the UK decreased, but after 2014, the trend began to reverse. The number of homicides started to increase, with some fluctuation. In the year ending March 2022, there were 662 victims of homicide.
- Changes have also been observed in the Management of Sexual Offenders and Violent Offenders (MOSOVO) requirements in recent years with the number of offenders requiring management increasing by around 10% year on year.

The Force Review assessed the existing Crime, Criminal Justice and Intel structure and found that it presented a number of strengths and benefits. These included Chief Superintendent leadership for high risk areas of business and providing head of profession functions, effective Major Crime, Serious Organised Crime, Intelligence and capabilities Integrated Offender Management (IOM) capabilities. However, the Review also identified a number of issues with the current structure, notably that it has not evolved to reflect the increase importance of public protection areas of service delivery, and that Criminal Justice is a large and complex command carrying significant risks but lacked Chief Superintendent oversight. It also found that MOSOVO capacity is falling short of national guidelines on officer/offender ratios and a disconnect between schools officers and the Youth Offending Team from separate line management arrangements.

The Force Review made a number of recommendations from its work in Crime & Criminal Justice. These were presented to the Chief Constable's Management Team (CCMT) in August 2023 and agreed in full.

### Command structure

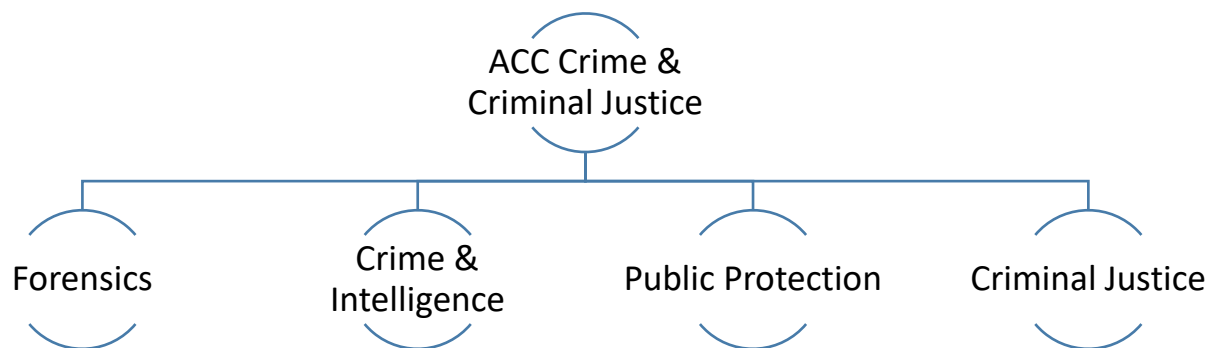
While recognising that there is no single correct structure and that every structure has potential risks and benefits, the Force Review recommended a revised structure across the command with a 4 department model; i) Crime and Intel, ii) Public Protection, iii) Criminal Justice, iv) Forensics. This model provides:

- Chief Superintendent leadership for Criminal Justice, recognising the size of the department and the array of functions provided across criminal justice activity.
- A Superintendent lead for Custody in recognition of the high risk in this area.
- Chief Superintendent leadership for Public Protection. This is proposed in response to the growing requirements and expectations in this area and the need for strategic leadership and a head of profession in this business area.

## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

- Making Forensics a stand-alone department with the current senior police staff (at Chief Superintendent level) reporting directly into the ACC Crime and Criminal Justice.
- Removing FISO as a stand-alone command, merging it with the Crime functions not moving into Public Protection. This creates a new Crime & Intelligence department with Major Crime, Specialist Operations and Intelligence.

Administrative support was also proposed to be brought together to support across the whole command.



### MASH

Multi-agency safeguarding hubs (MASH) are currently provided from 9 hubs across the force, 6 of which are in Berkshire for the separate local authorities. The Review identified that moving to 2 hubs in Berkshire would provide greater consistency of service and better supported staff, as well as aligning to the 5 Local Command Unit model in Local Policing. While this move is recommended, it is recognised that this will require significant work with partners to progress.

### Rape and sexual offences (RASO) and Domestic Abuse (DA)

The force does not have a team dedicated to the investigation of rape and sexual offences (RASO), but a small central RASO team provide support and direction. The agreed move of Domestic Abuse Investigation Units (DAIU) to a local function delivered by each of the 5 Local Command Units (LCUs) means that while the force will still require a head of Profession for Domestic Abuse, this portfolio will no longer be full time without the direct line management of the DAIU teams. Therefore, the Force Review proposed to merge the Detective Superintendent roles of Head of RASO and Head of Domestic Abuse (and Stalking) into a single Detective Superintendent post, supported by an additional Chief Inspector post as the deputy head of this function.



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### IOM and MOSOVO

The Review found that TVP has a strong and effective Integrated Offender Management capability despite some long-term vacant posts. Some of these vacant posts were recommended to move to MOSOVO to provide additional capacity, while others were recommended to be removed for savings.

### Child Abuse Investigation Unit (CAIU)

The Review commissioned Process Evolution to model the demand for CAIU, which found that an uplift in establishment is needed. Separately to the Force Review proposals, additional resources in line with the required uplift were allocated from other parts of the force in 2023.

### Justice Gateway

The Review recommended removing the Justice Gateway shift pattern as data indicates very little usage outside of core office hours. A small number of PC posts were recommended for removal as savings as ICR Sergeant capacity increased the support they can offer instead.

### Case Progression and File Quality

The Review recommended merging these teams with some minor efficiencies from alignment of supervision and roles.

Additionally, a small number of other vacant posts were recommended to be removed as savings across Criminal Justice.

## **4. Custody 2030**

While Custody 2030 is a stand-alone piece of work from the Force Review, the new command structure does grow the senior leadership in Criminal Justice and Custody to which should provide capacity to support the Custody 2030 activity.

The Force Review recommended the establishment of a PACE cadre, a dedicated group of Inspectors who are specialised to manage the detention of persons in custody. The aim of the cadre is to improve the quality of how custody is delivered, ensure that TVP is providing the maximum amount of care to detained persons and ensuring that investigations are expedited while detained persons are in custody.

## **5. Implementation**

Following the CCMT decision to proceed with the recommendations in August 2023, a project to implement the changes is now in place. This project is sponsored by ACC Crime & Criminal Justice, and is governed under the Force Review programme. The project will complete implementation during 2024/25, with a large number of the changes already underway. The new command structure will be in place in the first half of 2024,





## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

although the merge of removal of the Head of DA will not happen until all DAIU teams have moved to Local Policing as part of the LCU implementation (by March 2025).

### 6. Next Steps / recommendations

- Crime & Criminal Justice implementation will be completed under a project led by ACC Crime & Criminal Justice.
- The Force Restructure programme with the ACC Public Value and Legitimacy as the Senior Responsible Owner will continue to govern the ongoing Force Review and implementation projects, whilst ensuring progress with achieving the savings targets.

### 7. Conclusion

The Force Review's proposals for Crime and Criminal Justice will deliver efficiencies for the force, while also improving the effectiveness of service delivery in key parts of the command. In total this delivers £1.5m savings and the following effectiveness benefits:

- Introduction of a Public Protection Command, enhancing leadership above critical business areas identified as generating high demand
- Chief Superintendent leadership of Criminal Justice to recognise the scale and risk carried by the command, and dedicated Custody Superintendent to manage the threat and risk
- An increase of Chief Inspector establishment within Custody covering geographic scale, identified as best practice for larger forces
- Forensics becoming an independent command under the ACC Crime and Criminal Justice command, recognising seniority of leadership, planned growth and force-wide service delivery
- Support to the MOSOVO uplift requirement through the transfer of available posts
- Amalgamation of the File Quality and Case progression teams streamlining processes
- Joining the Admin teams for Crime and CJ to centralise delivery benefitting resilience and recruitment

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## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

<b>Report title:</b>	<u>RESTART Thames Valley</u>
<b>Date:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> March 2024
<b>Author and contact:</b>	Stephen Czajewski, Partnerships Delivery Manager Rachel Batts, Head of Partnerships and Community Safety
<b>Purpose of the report:</b>	At the request of the PCP
<b>Recommendations:</b>	For noting only

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### 1. Executive Summary

This report is an update on the work of RESTART Thames Valley. An initial report was provided to the Police and Crime Panel in March 2023 focusing on 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. This update focuses on developments since then notably an extension to the original pilot, changes to funding and the revised programme focus on delivering a service primarily to male prison leavers leaving HMP Bullingdon.

### 2. Background

The RESTART model was designed to help reduce reoffending of prisoners being released into the Thames Valley. The key element linked to breaking the cycle of reoffending was providing support to prisoners prior to and post-release from prison. The model was aimed at individuals not subject to Integrated Offender Management or MAPPA arrangements but who were nevertheless characterised by recidivism resulting in repeat prison sentences.

The initial pilot ran from May 2022 to end of April 2023 and the Executive Board (chaired by the PCC) agreed in January 2023 to extend the pilot for a further 12 months (to end of April 2024), jointly funded by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and the Director of Probation, South Central. This arrangement was further extended to enable delivery to continue until the end of October 2024 with a clear understanding that delivery will come to an end then. Plans are being developed to manage the ending of this intervention.

The delivery focus throughout has been to work 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. The initial 12-month pilot programme supported specific groups, including women and people on short-term sentences, and incorporated frontline support workers providing dedicated support to improve access to accommodation and work opportunities. This included a meet-at-gate service encompassing transport, accompaniment, advocacy, referral and smoother access to services.



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The second phase of the project focused on providing support, largely based on the above criteria, but primarily in relation to male prisoners leaving HMP Bullingdon. At this stage provision for women being released from prisons was separated from the remit of RESTART and provision for women is dealt with through a different delivery channel.

The initial pilot engaged multiple partners including the Probation Service and other experienced voluntary and community organisations covering the force area. Leading the delivery were Aspire Oxford, Browns Community Service CIC, Connection Support, Parents and Children Together (PACT) and Thames Valley Partnership. The second phase had a condensed frontline delivery service to work within a lower budget envelopment and was driven by Aspire Oxford, Connection Support and Thames Valley Partnership.

The RESTART model benefits from user-friendly engagement access by prisoners to frontline workers and the ability to form working relationships with prisoners while they are still in custody as well as the meet-at-the gate provision are considered to be strengths. Feedback from staff at HMP Bullingdon has been very positive in relation to this ease of access. Feedback from practice leads has identified that support in relation to accommodation issues is the most significant factor facing prison leavers. Substance misuse is identified as the second highest problem issue.

As of the end of February 2024 387 cases had been recommended to RESTART since the programme inception. Prisoner self-recommendations are a key component of this delivery model.

Independent evaluation to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the programme is being commissioned and this will include analysis and recommendations about how the key learning points might be applied to resettlement priorities post RESTART. Furthermore the Ministry of Justice Local Leadership and Integration Fund assigned a national evaluator (TONIC, University of Kent) who recently concluded the evaluation of the first phase of RESTART. Concurrently a University of Oxford DPhil Sociology candidate is conducting research at a regional Thames Valley level and publishing a dissertation on RESTART delivery.

The current phase of the RESTART project is funded until the end of October 2024. Planning work is being commenced to define the exit strategy and to consider how the strengths of the model can be applied to the Thames Valley criminal justice partnership landscape post October 2024.

### 3. Partnership briefing update

An Executive Board for the project consists of:

- The Police & Crime Commissioner, Thames Valley (Chair)
- The Regional Director for Probation, South Central
- The Prison Group Director, South Central



## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

- The Governor of Bullingdon Prison
- The Senior Commissioning Manager for NHSE South East
- The Programme Manager of the Local Criminal Justice Board, Thames Valley
- Representatives from the Department of Work and Pensions

This Board meets quarterly and is responsible for receiving information from the RESTART Team, individuals and groups with lived experience, partners and services who interact with the Restart team and more. This information includes barriers and escalations for the Executive Board to problem solve and identify resolutions / options.

### Key Delivery Roles

- The Probation Service and Prison Service, in particular Resettlement staff at HMP Bullingdon, provide a key role in communicating and liaising with frontline workers and people being released from prison.
- The OPCC leads on Project Management, ensuring due diligence and transparency of process. They also act as the decision maker for the allocation of demand from referring partners into the Restart Team.
- Core delivery partners (Aspire Oxford, Connection Support and Thames Valley Partnership) host Restart frontline workers, offering meet-at-gate, transport, accompaniment, advocacy, referral, smoother access to services and other issues raised through service user input.
- The Restart Service Delivery Manager monitor progress through shared Outcome Stars and are responsible for ensuring the frontline workers attend whole-system learning events, acting as one unified team.
- Meganexus extend the capability out into the community through the functionality of a case monitoring tool.

### **Next Steps / recommendations**

The project runs until the end of October 2024 and although there has been positive feedback relating to the impact of RESTART on prison leavers the use of a full evaluation will be enabling in terms of establishing particular strengths and opportunities moving forward.

As indicated a full plan outlining requirements in relation to Exit considerations is being developed. This will require engagement by all partner deliverers.

The Panel is asked to note the content of this submission.

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## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

**Report title:** Professional and Ethical Standards Panel: Annual Assurance Report 2023

**Date:** 15th March 2024

**Author and contact:** Vicki Waskett, Head of Governance & Compliance, OPCC

**Purpose of the report:** As requested by the Panel

**Recommendations:** Information only

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### Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of the Professional and Ethical Standards Panel's (PESP) activities and findings in 2023. It covers monitoring complaints handling, reviewing ethical standards, and providing recommendations within Thames Valley Police (TVP). Noteworthy achievements and challenges are highlighted, showcasing the Panel's commitment to transparency, integrity, and public trust in policing.

### Key Findings:

The PESP's scrutiny revealed several key findings regarding TVP's complaints handling and ethical standards:

- A comprehensive review of closed complaint and misconduct files highlighted areas of improvement in procedural consistency and transparency.
- Thematic reviews underscored the importance of addressing issues such as violence against women, police misconduct, and mental health support for suspects.
- Positive feedback was received on notable improvements in complaint resolution times and enhanced clarity in reports, indicating progress in service delivery.
- Challenges persist, including resource constraints and operational complexities, which necessitate ongoing collaboration between TVP, the PCC, and the PESP to address effectively.

### Next Steps/Conclusion:

Looking ahead, the report underlines the importance of implementing recommendations to address identified challenges and enhance TVP's complaints handling mechanisms. In conclusion, the PESP's diligent oversight and constructive engagement have strengthened public trust in TVP's operations. Continued collaboration and implementation of recommendations are vital to further improving professional standards and ethical policing.



## Report of the Police and Crime Panel



### Professional and Ethical Standards Panel

## ANNUAL ASSURANCE REPORT 2023

### Introduction and Background

1. The Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley (PCC) is responsible for securing the maintenance of an efficient and effective police Force. The Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police (TVP) is responsible for maintaining the King's peace and has direction and control over TVP officers and staff.
2. The PCC, on behalf of the public, is responsible for holding the Chief Constable to account for the exercise of his functions, including those of persons under his direction and control, and for the overall performance of the Force. However, in law, the PCC must not fetter the operational independence of the Force or the Chief Constable who leads it.
3. Under the Police Reform Act 2002, the Chief Constable is the 'Appropriate Authority' responsible for dealing with complaints and misconduct matters raised against TVP police officers and staff below the rank of Chief Constable and/or complaints about the quality of service members of the public have received from the Force. The Chief Constable, therefore, has a duty to ensure adequate and effective systems and procedures are in place for managing and monitoring complaints against the Force. In practice, the Chief Constable delegates this statutory responsibility to his Professional Standards Department (PSD).
4. One of the PCC's 'holding to account' duties is to monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of the Force's handling of all complaints made against police officers, staff and the quality of service provided by the Force. To enable the PCC to discharge his statutory 'holding to account' obligations in relation to complaints made against the Force, the Chief Constable has a duty to ensure the PCC is kept informed of matters relating to the handling of complaints against TVP and any material issues arising from them. In addition to this duty, since the Policing and Crime Act 2017, which duly amended the Police Reform Act 2002, PCCs, have a duty to conduct reviews (formerly known as appeals). The Thames Valley PCC has opted for the minimum level of statutory responsibility, which is 'complaints model 1'. What this means is that the





## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

appropriate authority (PSD) retain control of making recording decisions and severity assessments on all complaints but where the relevant review body would have been PSD, it is now the OPCC. This provides for greater independence and transparency. Consideration is however currently being given to a potential move to 'model 2' or 'model 3', with research being undertaken by the OPCC with regards to the benefits and drawbacks of each approach. It is expected that a decision report to upgrade to Model 2 or 3 is to be signed off shortly but at the time of writing, the decision paper is yet to be finalised. See Appendix B.

5. To help discharge their respective responsibilities, the PCC and Chief Constable have jointly established the Professional and Ethical Standards Panel (PESP). As of December 2023, the Panel comprised of 6 independent members of the public who were appointed following an open recruitment and selection process having had one member leave during the year.
6. As well as helping the Chief Constable to obtain independent assurance that he is discharging his respective complaints duties and responsibilities effectively, other functions of the Panel include monitoring the proportionality and consistency of decision making by the Force, as well as constructively challenging the way that the Chief Constable and the PCC handle professional and ethical issues. Full details of the remit of the Panel can be found in the Terms of Reference, which are attached at Appendix A.

### **Purpose of Report**

7. The purpose of this Annual Assurance Report is to provide the PCC and Chief Constable with independent assurance as to the adequacy and effectiveness of the Force's arrangements for handling and dealing with complaints made against the Force and the appropriateness of the reviews being conducted by the OPCC. This report brings to the attention of the Chief Constable and the PCC whether the Panel has any collective views, concerns or recommendations, based on its independent assessment of the type and volume of complaints made against the Force. The report also details how any complaints concerning issues relating to policing integrity, ethics and professional standards were dealt with by the Force.
8. The report covers the period of PESP Meetings from January to December 2023. Meetings are held bi-monthly and in 2023 were held both remotely and in person on the following dates:
  - 1 February 2023
  - 5 April 2023
  - 7 June 2023
  - 9 August 2023
  - 11 October 2023
  - 15 December 2023



## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

### Panel Focus – Complaints and Reviews Handling

9. During every other meeting, the Panel review a random selection of closed complaint/misconduct files from PSD, usually based on a mutually agreed theme. The case files are made available before meetings for the Panel to scrutinise in readiness to feedback comments at the Panel meeting and to address issues arising. Panel members also attend confidential PSD Tasking meetings where live cases are discussed.
10. Further to complaint files being scrutinised, the Panel also complete a dip-check of complaints in order to consider the proportionality of severity assessments undertaken by PSD. These files are selected by PSD based on themes requested by PESP. PESP have sight of these files in advance of the main meeting.
11. On a bi-annual basis the Panel also review a random selection of completed reviews from the OPCC. These files are selected by the OPCC. As with complaints files, the documentation is made available to Panel members prior to the meeting at which they are being discussed, so that they consider any elements of the review that they wish to challenge.
12. During the period January to December 2023, some of the Force-wide themes and cases reviewed at the Panel meetings were as follows:
- Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).
  - Police Perpetrated Domestic Abuse (PPDA).
  - Sexual Misconduct.
  - Abuse of power/position or inappropriate comments amongst colleagues.
  - Occupational Health involvement where officers have drink/drug issues and how TVP deal with these issues.
  - Stop and Search.
  - Right care, right person.
  - MARLENE- a system that populates complaint data automatically.
  - Vetting requirements for all staff.
  - Gross misconduct sanctions.
  - The Casey Review- police culture and standards of behaviour.
  - Op Vigilant- patrols during the night time economy to proactively prevent VAWG.
  - Op Reassure- to encourage an open and transparent attitude within TVP.
  - Analysing Key PSD Performance Data.
  - Victim Satisfaction.
- Facial recognition.  
BWV policy.



## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

### **Panel Focus - PSD Complaints & Misconduct Performance Reporting and Monitoring System**

13. At each meeting, the Panel receive a copy of the PSD performance monitoring report presenting data covering complaints and misconduct matters. The data is divided into two sections, namely 'Complaint Information' and 'Conduct Information'. Previously the Panel changed the frequency of data presented to make it more pertinent. Members of the panel also continue to offer advice and guidance to the PSD analytical team in their best use of available technology to improve performance reporting and data visualisation.

#### **Matters of concern**

14. Matters of concern and issues raised or noted by members during the year included:

- Concern for public confidence if there are a large volume of complaints about a single officer.
- How TVP deal with suspects who have mental health issues.
- Impartiality of PSD dealing with PPDA matters.
- Code of Ethics and culture within TVP.
- Gender of Federation Representatives in sensitive cases.
- Victim contact and requirements being fulfilled.
- How TVP deal with collisions between emergency services, when both are responding to incidents on blue lights.
- The backlog of digital forensic jobs and whether certain matters can be prioritised, noting the impact this has to both case progression and returning valuable items like mobile phones to victims.
- Caseloads being given to larger geographical areas when the Force changes from having 11 Local Policing Areas (LPAs) to 5 Local Command Units (LCUs), and the necessity to ensure standards are maintained.
- Officers not being encouraged to attend all burglaries.
- Data collection/storage within business intelligence and evidential/intelligence requirements.
- Staff wellbeing.
- Risk identified is the frequent disruption of staff turnover and general retention. This leads to backlogs and training demands / lack of specialist experience in PSD creating an ongoing risk to efficiency and effectiveness.

All of these concerns and issues were satisfactorily considered and explained either at the relevant meetings or 'action items' were tabled to address the concerns at future meetings, which are referenced below.



## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

### **Panel Focus - Special Measures/Actions**

15. As part of the meetings, all attendees are able to raise actions and the panel may make recommendations. Examples of actions that have been raised in 2023 are as follows.

- TVP to confirm whose portfolio DBS checks sits under and report back to the Panel.
- For consideration to be given on the use of MS Teams for meetings outside of the main PESP Meetings.
- OPCC to discuss with TVP the potential of publishing PESP minutes with appropriate redactions for public interest and transparency.
- For the Panel to discuss what, how and why the notes from meetings should be published, with this being fed back to the OPCC.
- For TVP to establish whether links can be made between recruitment and Op Reassure. For example, whether there were links between young, inexperienced officers from the uplift programme that were leading to less than completely professional responses to delivery of Op Reassure and potentially to a lack of public confidence.
- For TVP to discover whether there is a plan for tracking actions identified at Force Performance and Service Improvement Review (SIR) meetings.
- For the Panel to make a recommendation to TVP that the governance around facial recognition needs to be considered, agreed and embedded at the earliest opportunity.
- For TVP to look at the impact on mental health statistics during Covid and lockdown and check whether online training relating to mental health is mandatory.
- For consideration to be given on good news stories being circulated to members of the public to assist in securing trust and confidence.

### **Panel Focus – policies and practices concerning professional standards, integrity and ethics issues**

16. During the year the Panel requested presentations, reports and ‘question and answer’ sessions in the form of ‘deep dive’ exercises that provided the opportunity for members to hold to account the force on its performance, and reflect on professional standards, integrity and ethical issues and how well they are reflected in operational policing policies and practices.

17. Presentations received covered the following topics:

- PSD Performance.
- VAWG.
- Op Reassure.
- Digital Forensic Services.
- Facial Recognition.
- Impact of Mental Health incidents on Resourcing.
- Response to Casey Review.



## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

18. As part of their scrutiny of the Force, Panel members have also attended the below meetings and written reports to be passed to the rest of the Panel for potential discussion and any necessary follow up actions / recommendations for TVP / PSD, aligned to the terms of reference for the PESP:

- 9 January - VAWG board.
- 18 January - Tasking Meeting.
- 8 February - Operational Force Performance.
- 8 February - Organisational Force Performance.
- 8 February - VAWG Silver.
- 23 February - SIR- Repeat Demand.
- 28 February - VAWG Silver.
- 1 March – Tasking.
- 7 March - VAWG Board.
- 7 March - Ethics and Integrity Board.
- 25 April - PSD Tasking.
- 27 April – Operational Force Performance.
- 27 April – Organisational Force Performance.
- 2 May – VAWG Conference.
- 24 May – SIR.
- 24 May – PSD Tasking.
- 13 June – Ethics and Integrity Board.
- 19 June – VAWG Governance Board.
- 5 July – PSD Performance and Tasking Meeting.
- 13 July – SIR- Front line supervision.
- 20 July – Force Briefing on Misconduct Process and Upcoming Cases of Local/National Significance.
- 26 July – Operational Force Performance.
- 26 July – Organisational Force Performance.
- 15 August – Force Performance Group- Operational.
- 16 August – PSD Tasking.
- 22 August – SIR- Neighbourhood Crime.
- 5 September – VAWG Strategic Board.
- 5 September – Ethics and Integrity Board.
- 18 September – Force Performance Group.
- 19 October – Operational Force Performance.
- 19 October – Force Performance Group.
- 8 November – Tasking Meeting.
- 8 November – Governance Meeting.
- 17 November – Force Performance- Operational.
- 30 November – SIR- Child Exploitation.
- 5 December – VAWG Strategic Board.



## **Report of the Police and Crime Panel**

- 5 December – Ethics and Integrity Board.
- 14 December – SIR- Welfare and Wellbeing.
- 18 December – Force Performance Group- Operational.
- 20 December – Tasking Meeting.

It was highlighted that Panel members are only in attendance at these meetings to observe and not contribute to the meeting. It was to be clarified what Panel members can and cannot receive in terms of police documentation. However, members of PESP may make informal contributions if they deem it of assistance and appropriate.

### **Positive Feedback**

19. Whilst the PESP challenge the Chief Constable and PCC by providing constructive feedback and scrutiny, they also provide positive feedback where they believe that the Force are doing something in an exemplary fashion. Some positive feedback that the Panel provided during 2023 meetings is as follows.

- The Panel applauded the 40% decrease in time taken to deal with complaints.
- PSD reports now contain more clarity so that Panel members can see the decisions made.
- It was noted that PSD timelines are good, considering the volume and complexity of complaints being received.
- The Panel highlighted that they recognise the sterling work being done by PSD.
- After the digital forensics presentation, the Panel said that TVP should feel confident in how the project was being progressed.

### **Other Panel Business – General**

20. The OPCC confirmed that they would be conducting a scrutiny review, which would involve discussion with the Panel and other scrutiny groups, with recommendations being made by an independent facilitator.

21. The OPCC also advised that they would be recruiting a Trust and Confidence Support Officer to support all the joint Panels within Thames Valley. This role has been recruited and is due to commence on 1 March 2024.

22. TVP confirmed that 3 members of staff have been recruited by PSD at a DS and DC level to provide PSD with the support required in dealing with DA matters. Training will also be provided to staff as appropriate.

23. It was confirmed that DCC Ben Snuggs would be joining TVP on 6 April 2023 as Deputy Chief Constable who is the Force representative along with D/Chief/Supt Ailsa Kent from PSD.



## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

24. PSD confirmed that DCI John Batty would be transferring to another department within TVP and that his replacement would be DCI Aiden Donohoe.

25. Former Panel member John Barlow's last meeting was on 9 August 2023 and both TVP and the OPCC would like to thank him for his many years of service.

### **Conclusions**

- i) The Panel's purpose is to monitor and, where necessary, challenge the way complaints against TVP police officers and staff are handled by the Force, and how the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements and outcomes are overseen by the Chief Constable and PCC. In addition, the work of the Panel includes the review and challenge of associated ethics and professional standards issues.
- ii) Constructive challenges over the past twelve months on a wide range of topics have given the Panel a greater insight to the types of complaints and conduct issues faced by the Force and how they are addressed and responded to. It remains of the utmost importance that the public can have complete trust and confidence in the integrity, professionalism and service of their local police.
- iii) In receiving this insight, however, the Panel continues to appreciate the various external challenges faced by the Force, and the instrumental role played by the PSD. The role of PSD entails ensuring complaints are handled and investigated in a consistent, transparent and fair manner, and identifying police officers and staff who do not reflect the values, ethics and professional standards expected by Thames Valley Police and the communities it serves. Where appropriate, they are held to account for their shortcomings in accordance with law and disciplinary regulations. The Panel also recognised the importance of 'best practice' and the way PSD seeks this out and implements it across the Force.
- iv) The Panel continues to feel that the positive relationship and degree of trust that has developed with the Chief Constable, the PCC and senior staff has enabled the members to contribute constructively and objectively to Force performance in two main ways. Firstly, the ongoing monitoring of the adequacy and effectiveness of the arrangements for handling complaints, together with the testing of operational policies and practices and from an external, independent, professional standards, integrity and ethics viewpoint.

### **Positive Impact Statement**

The panel has struggled with decreasing numbers, resulting in an additional workload for the remaining members. Despite this, they have attended all requested meetings and have delivered as per their terms of reference. Whilst sometimes critical of TVP, that criticism has been well received and has often resulted in beneficial changes being made. Further



## **Report of the Police and Crime Panel**

to this, the panel have not been shy in praising TVP where praise is due. Panel members have a broad belief that they are doing a good job of representing the public and holding TVP to account.

### **Assurance Statement**

In summary, based on the information and knowledge that the Panel have gathered collectively or know about individually, the Panel can provide an assurance to the PCC and Chief Constable that the complaints handling and management arrangements in place within Thames Valley Police are operating satisfactorily with an improved efficiency, and effectively within the limits of the resources at their disposal.

#### **Panel members:**

Mark Harris (Chair)

Michael O'Connell (Vice Chair)

Umar Butt

Joanna Patil

Verity Murrricane

Steve Buckeridge

#### **Professional and Ethical Standards Panel**

Date 23.02.24

Signed by Mark Harris

Chair





## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

### Appendix A

#### **PROFESSIONAL & ETHICAL STANDARDS PANEL TERMS OF REFERENCE**

##### **Purpose**

Policing in this country is by consent of the public. Police integrity is critical if the public are to trust the police to use their powers wisely and fairly.

The Professional & Ethical Standards Panel (the Panel) has been jointly commissioned by the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). The purpose of the panel is to provide a transparent forum that encourages constructive challenge over the way complaints against police officers and staff and professional and ethical standards issues are handled by Thames Valley Police and overseen by the Chief Constable and the PCC.

This will help to ensure that Thames Valley Police has clear ethical standards and achieves the highest levels of integrity and service delivery.

##### **Terms of Reference**

1. To regularly review a selection of complaints files so that the panel can satisfy itself that the Force's working policies and procedures for handling and resolving complaints made against police officers and staff comply with current legislation, regulation and statutory guidance.
2. To use performance data regarding complaints to ensure that the Force has an effective complaints reporting and monitoring system in place and is identifying and learning from any recurring patterns or themes.
3. To review the progress of live complaint cases or misconduct investigations, including appeals, which cause or are likely to cause particular community concern.
4. In undertaking terms (1) to (3), to continually monitor the proportionality and consistency of decision making, and raise any concern with respect to the occurrence of, or potential for, apparent bias or discrimination against minority groups as appropriate.
5. To review areas relating to professional and ethical standards and to make appropriate recommendations.
6. To consider specific matters referred to the Panel by either the Chief Constable or the PCC and to make recommendations.
7. To report, on an annual basis, the summary findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Panel to the Chief Constable and the PCC.
8. To consider within one month any allegation of misconduct or proposal for dismissal made against the Chief Executive and/or the Chief Finance Officer of the Office of the PCC, and recommend to the PCC whether it should be further investigated or progressed.
9. At all times, to maintain confidentiality with respect to the matters and information to which the panel have access.



## Report of the Police and Crime Panel

August 2020

PCC options			
	Model 1*	Model 2*	Model 3*
Receiving & making initial contact with complainant	POLICE	PCC	PCC
Handling complaints outside of Schedule 3 and recording complaints	POLICE	PCC	PCC
Keeping complainants and interested parties update and informed of outcome.	POLICE	POLICE	PCC
Investigating complaints	POLICE	POLICE	POLICE
Complaint Reviews	PCC	PCC	PCC

*\*LPB never becomes AA for the complaint under any of these models*

## Report to the Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel

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**Title:** Topical Issues

**Date:** 15 March 2024

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



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### **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.

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### **Thames Valley PCC commits £900k funding to tackle youth knife crime**

<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/uknews/thames-valley-pcc-commits-900k-funding-to-tackle-youth-knife-crime/ar-BB1jr dyr>

Thames Valley police and crime commissioner (PCC) has committed £900,000 worth of funding to tackle youth knife offending.

The PCC has used the investment to extend the Operation Deter Youth Programme, which has already seen successful trials in Milton Keynes and Slough.

The programme is a subsection of Operation Deter, a campaign by Thames Valley Police that concentrates on exerting zero tolerance towards knife crime. Particular emphasis is placed on utilising charging and remanding options for adults found possessing a knife.

A significant feature of Operation Deter Youth is the swift response time by the Youth Offending Teams.

They aim to make contact with under-18s who have been arrested for knife-aided offences within 90 minutes, thereby increasing engagement from the young individuals and improving future safeguarding opportunities.

The PCC asserts that Operation Deter Youth provides a comprehensive support system for under 18s carrying knives by offering tailored interventions within 90 minutes of a Youth Offending Team being notified of an arrest.

The PCC has supported pilot schemes of the initiative in Milton Keynes and Slough, which have shown very positive results.

For these promising outcomes to be amplified across the entire Thames Valley, Mr Barber has committed significant funding for the upcoming two years.

He has informed upper tier local authorities in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, and Oxfordshire about the funding commitment.

The Operation Deter Youth Programme consists of multiple elements, including Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) assessments, mental health support, training, education, and employment assistance.

It also provides support for conflict resolution without violence and aggression, catering to parents and carers.

### **Police officers mock footage of victim's seizure**

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/police-officers-mock-footage-of-victim-s-seizure/ar-BB1hvGag>

Police officers made "sickening" comments about an assault victim while watching body-worn video showing her groin, the BBC has learned. The woman's body was exposed when she was filmed suffering from a seizure. Three Thames Valley Police PCs later watched the footage without reason.

The policing regulator says Thames Valley Police should have reported the case for independent scrutiny. The force has now done so, following our investigation.

Last year the BBC revealed that police forces have misused body-worn video, with officers switching off cameras, deleting footage and sharing videos on WhatsApp.

The vulnerable woman was arrested and placed in leg restraints before being recorded on body-worn video while vomiting and losing consciousness. Officers watching the footage insulted her looks, used derogatory language about her genitals and discussed what they would need to be paid to sleep with her.

The student officer who reported his colleagues says the force covered up the incident, failing to inform the woman or the policing regulator about what happened

The BBC's previous findings about camera misuse were "truly shocking" and have already led to forces tightening up systems to prevent the deletion of footage, the chair of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, Donna Jones said.

### **How many more women will die as UK police forces ignore sex offenders in their ranks?**

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2024/mar/03/how-many-more-woman-will-die-as-police-forces-continue-to-ignore-red-flags-in-their-ranks>

Dame Elish Angiolini was tasked by Priti Patel, the then home secretary, to conduct an inquiry into the horrendous March 2021 abduction, rape and murder of Sarah Everard by Metropolitan police officer Wayne Couzens. Last Thursday, two years later, her 347-page report was published. Angiolini, a former lord advocate of Scotland, praised Everard's family for "grace in their suffering", and then she issued the bluntest of warnings.

"Without a significant overhaul there is nothing to stop another Wayne Couzens operating in plain sight," she said. The rhetoric of transformation, apology and change falls easily from the lips of senior police officers. Last Thursday, for instance, Sir Mark Rowley, Met police commissioner, issued "an urgent call to action", having earlier launched Operation Onyx, "the strongest doubling down of standards for 50 years". It has reinvestigated 689 officers and revealed that 161 Met officers have criminal convictions. Yet the extent of the crisis that the Met and other police forces face is that for decades, while the outer skin is shed as a result of half-hearted reforms, the rotten flesh remains, threatening to contaminate even those who serve with the highest levels of integrity.

How many more women and girls must be abused, their requests for help ignored? (A second part of the Angiolini inquiry investigates Met police officer David Carrick, who committed 85 offences, including 48 rapes, over 17 years). How many more crimes will go undetected because of what Angiolini calls police "apathy and disinterest" overseeing "lethargic investigations" that are of "poor quality and inadequate" in a "deep-rooted culture".

Since the 1950s, the police have moved in the public eye, fairly or unfairly, from "PC Plod" to "pigs", to bent as a boomerang ("I do have a minority of officers who are corrupt, dishonest, unethical..." said Sir Paul Condon, Met police commissioner in 1997), to institutionally racist, following the killing of Stephen Lawrence, to dangerously misogynistic, adversely marking the lives of women including Bibaa Henry, Nicole Smallman and Sabina Nessa. Only last year, Dame Louise Casey, in her review of standards at the Met, said it had thrown protection of women, "out of the window" and called the force "institutionally sexist, racist and homophobic".

New broom after new broom has allegedly swept away "the rotten apples" among the boys (and far fewer girls) in blue only for the toxicity to bubble up again because, as the Women's Equality party told Priti Patel in a note in 2021: "It's not one bad apple. It's the whole fucking orchard." It may not be the whole orchard but what is clear is that the reformers need better tools to restore public faith and find a convincing response to the question, "Who guards the guards?"

Couzens wasn't 'just' a flasher, he was a killer in training on a trajectory that could and should have been halted

Angiolini has made 16 recommendations. They could make a difference (but who will be in charge of monitoring progress?). Her report charts Couzens's almost 20-year history of sexual offending, working in three police forces. She describes his "unmanaged indebtedness, predilection for extreme pornography and a vile sexualised expression of his sense of humour"; a cornucopia of red flags, almost all ignored.

Her recommendations include improved recruitment and vetting, better police training on violence against women and girls (again), and taking the sexual offence of indecent exposure far more seriously. Couzens had exposed himself masturbating only days before killing Sarah Everard.

Women's organisations have been calling for many of the proposals for years, especially the need for police to better understand risk. Currently, risk is too often interpreted as imminent physical danger and even then women are disregarded. Only last week, Marcus Osborne was jailed for life for killing his former partner Katie Higton and her boyfriend, Steven Harnett. Higton, 27, had repeatedly warned West Yorkshire Police that Osborne had threatened to slit her throat.

If prevention of injury and loss of life is the aim, "low" risk is the red flag that should trigger action and rarely does. Couzens wasn't "just" a flasher, he was a killer in training on a trajectory that could and should have been halted.

In 2020, the Bureau of Investigative Journalism and the Centre for Women's Justice, a tiny charity that has been a major catalyst in exposing police conduct, brought a super-complaint against the police. The Independent Office for Police Conduct and others investigated and agreed there were "systemic deficiencies in the police response to cases of police- perpetrated domestic abuse... misconduct hearings are not always being carried out when they should be, or conducted appropriately."

Here is the crunch. The police themselves. As a result of Operation Onyx, 51 Met officers were dismissed "or would have been if they hadn't resigned or retired" (on full pension). How is that accountability? Why aren't there prosecutions? The Casey review found one officer responsible for 24 instances of behaviour linked to sexual misconduct, each considered separately, the pattern missed and he remained in post.

Accountability is absent; there are few real consequences. At the top, senior officers should be prosecuted and punished with loss of pension and jail terms if change fails to happen; while, for other ranks, there should be a statutory responsibility to report the kind of behaviour that earned Couzens the nickname "the Rapist".

In 1968 American psychologists, Bibb Latané and John Darley, researched what they eventually called, "the bystander effect". They described why numbers of people stand by rather than help an individual in crisis. Now, bystanding includes those who fail to speak out against bullying, racism and misogyny. As long as our police forces fail to root out perpetrators, bystanders and the apathetic, they don't deserve the public's trust or its taxes.

### **The Angiolini Inquiry**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e06493b8da630f42c862e5/HC\\_530 - The Angiolini Inquiry Part 1 Report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e06493b8da630f42c862e5/HC_530_-_The_Angiolini_Inquiry_Part_1_Report.pdf)

### **Not enough progress after Casey review**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-68487514>

London's deputy mayor for policing and crime said "not enough" progress had been made to change the Metropolitan Police's culture and standards.

The London Assembly's police and crime committee has met to discuss changes made since Baroness Casey's review. Her 2023 report condemned the force as institutionally racist.

The meeting comes just days after Lady Angiolini's review of how the Met handled the case of Sarah Everard, who was murdered by serving officer Wayne Couzens. Her review found that Couzens, who has been jailed for life, "should never have been a police officer".

The review's 16 recommendations included for a new team to reform how the Met dealt with misconduct cases and an immediate overhaul of vetting. It recommended independent progress reviews after two and five years.

### **Police force faces 'challenge' after trust survey**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c9w9ngv1z4ro>

The PCC has said officers face a "challenge" after a survey suggested only 60% of people feel they can trust the force. Thames Valley PCC Matthew Barber said the force needed to "rapidly improve" people's perception of it by increasing police visibility in the community, bringing up charge rates, and holding officers to "the highest account".

Thames Valley Police's (TVP) Trust & Confidence Snapshot Survey also showed just 53% of respondents felt TVP treated everyone fairly, and only half thought police listened to the concerns of local people.

The survey also showed 87% of people were willing to contact police if they were a victim of crime or were worried about something, and that 78% of respondents felt safe in their area.

But Mr Barber said he wanted to see "all of these numbers" higher. TVP and the PCC have announced plans to increase engagement with communities to try and build trust and confidence in policing, as well as committing to an annual survey to help understand public attitudes.

A number of high-profile cases in recent years have "inevitably damaged people's confidence" in the police, Mr Barber said.

But he said trust can be rebuilt by officers "getting the basics right" as well as by making sure "we have the right people in policing".

"It's about knowing the police will respond to urgent calls for help, its about knowing the police are... investigating crimes and reducing crimes being prevented," he said.

"Having the police more visible in the community, really knowing those issues that are going on, really makes a big difference."

### **Thames Valley PCC criticises force over gender description of defendant**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-oxfordshire-68268552>

### **No action in over 9 in 10 complaints against Thames Valley officers**

<https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/24095227.no-action-9-10-complaints-thames-valley-officers/?ref=eb&nid=2328&u=ce369a0801e44b5ba58c479b91df97b5&date=050224>

More than nine in 10 allegations made against Thames Valley Police officers last year resulted in no misconduct action, new figures show.

Across England and Wales, the proportion of allegations not seeing further action remained unchanged from the year before at 89 per cent, which experts said shows a lack of police accountability.

Home Office figures show 3,783 misconduct allegations were made against Thames Valley Police officers and handled under the formal complaints process in the year to March 2023 – slightly up from 3,757 the year before.

Of these, 3,753 were either not investigated, or investigated not subject to special procedures, with 3,459 (92 per cent) resulting in no further action.

There were just 10 allegations leading to misconduct proceedings, while 110 were withdrawn.

The figures cover the total number of allegations rather than the number of complaints – one complaint could contain several allegations of misconduct.

They do not cover any complaints handled outside the formal process, where it was felt a detailed enquiry was not needed.

There were 86,160 complaint allegations involving police officers in the country last year – fewer than 87,768 the year before.

Nationally, there was a 33 per cent rise in the number of “recordable conduct matter” allegations, from 1,802 in 2021-22 to 2,402 last year.

These are complaints where it is alleged a police officer's conduct resulted in a death or serious injury.

The figures show 76 “recordable conduct matter” allegations were made against Thames Valley Police officers, with 43 referred to misconduct proceedings, while no action was required in 12 of them.

There were 5,363 allegations of “conduct matter” made against police forces nationally, 113 of which were in Thames Valley. These are allegations indicating an officer may have committed a criminal offence or behaved in a way that would justify disciplinary proceedings.

The Independent Office for Police Conduct, which investigates the most serious police misconduct allegations, said not all complaints relate to alleged misconduct, but could simply be an expression of dissatisfaction, with no further action required.

## **Thames Valley Police tackling rural crime in South East**



<https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/24144848.thames-valley-police-tackling-rural-crime-south-east/?ref=eb&nid=2328&u=ce369a0801e44b5ba58c479b91df97b5&date=270224>

Thames Valley Police is teaming up with other forces in South East England to clamp down on rural crime. The forces from Hampshire and Isle of Wight, Kent, Surrey, Sussex, and Thames Valley have formed the South East Partnership Against Rural Crime (SEPARC) to combat criminals who prey on isolated countryside locations.

To kick off the initiative, a range of operations have been organised running from today, February 26, until Friday, March 1. These operations are aimed at disrupting and deterring individuals involved in wildlife, environmental, heritage and agricultural criminal activities.

This week's operations include disrupting offenders in tandem with the National Rural Crime Team, providing security guidance at service stations, and stopping suspicious cars on the strategic road network.

Matthew Barber, Thames Valley police and crime commissioner, said: "Rural crime has a significant impact and can leave our most isolated communities feeling particularly vulnerable.

"The launch of SEPARC will establish cross-border collaboration between police forces across the South East in tackling the most serious and organised rural crime.

"The creation of SEPARC reinforces Thames Valley Police's commitment to protecting our rural communities and will further strengthen the impact of our Rural Crime Taskforce in pursuing offenders."

Assistant chief constable and lead for rural crime Howard Hodges, of Sussex Police, said: "We will continue to work together with our neighbouring forces to share information and intelligence, to ensure we can prevent, detect and respond to rural crime wherever possible.

"We will also engage with residents, businesses and visitors in our rural areas to offer crime prevention advice.

"We cannot be everywhere all the time, and that's why we need the public to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity to us. In an emergency, always dial 999."

Superintendent Pete Steenhuis from Kent Police, shared his forces commitment to tackle rural crime and support victims, while inspector Darren Bengue from Surrey Police highlighted the national relevance of the issue.

### **Thames Valley burglaries only solved in 1/4 of cases**

<https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/24125889.thames-valley-burglaries-solved-1-4-cases/>

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**Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel Work Programme 2023/24 and 24/25**

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"> <li>• Scrutiny of the Proposed Police Precept – Questions to the Police and Crime Commissioner</li> <li>• Tools and strategies for dealing with Domestic Abuse</li> <li>• October 2023 County lines intensification week update</li> <li>• Report of the Road Safety Task and Finish Group</li> <li>• Progress on Contact Management</li> <li>• Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) recruitment</li> <li>• Serious Organised Crime Disruptions update</li> <li>• Road Safety Strategy – to be provided with an update</li> <li>• Chairman/PCC Updates /Topical Issues</li> <li>• Work Programme</li> </ul>
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"> <li>• Update on RESTART</li> <li>• Update on Partnerships Fund</li> <li>• Report of the Strategy for Violence against Women and Children Task and Finish Group</li> <li>• Operation Deter – Detailed Report on Statistics on outcome of arrests</li> <li>• Chairman/PCC Updates /Topical Issues</li> <li>• TVPs Crime and CJ structure</li> <li>• Work Programme</li> <li>• Professional &amp; Ethical Standards Panel Annual Assurance Report 2023</li> <li>• Work of the Rural Crime Task Force (to include wildlife crimes)</li> </ul>

21 June 2024	<p>Police and Crime Commissioner’s Annual Report – Monitoring of Priorities of Police and Criminal Justice Plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Strong local policing</li> <li>2. Fighting serious organised crime</li> <li>3. Fighting cyber-crime and fraud</li> <li>4. Improving the criminal justice system</li> <li>5. Tackling illegal encampments</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public questions</li> <li>• PCP Annual Report</li> <li>• Annual Review of Panel’s Terms of Reference, Panel Arrangements, Appointment to Sub-Committees and Task and Finish Groups</li> <li>• Protocol between the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Police and Crime Panel</li> <li>• Update on Thames Valley partnership of CCTV</li> <li>• Road Safety Strategy Task and Finish Group – Completed review</li> <li>• Complaints Sub-Committee</li> <li>• TVP Vetting - Update</li> <li>• Chairman/PCC Updates and Topical Issues Report</li> <li>• Work Programme</li> </ul>
13 September 2024	Domestic Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Crime and Criminal Justice structure, linking it in with the wider custody 2025 strategy</li> <li>• Operation Deter – a zero tolerance approach to knife crime – Update on successes.</li> <li>• Race and BAME representation in TVP – Progress being made</li> <li>• Violence against Women and Girls</li> <li>• Chairman/PCC Updates and Topical Issues Report</li> <li>• Work Programme</li> </ul>

**Future meetings:  
8 November 2024**

**24 January 2025**

**14 March 2025**

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