



Report to the Police and Crime Panel

Report title: Community Policing – Crimefighters Strategy

Date: 24 March 2023

Author and contact: Matthew Barber

Purpose of the report: At the request of the PCP

Recommendations: Information only

Executive Summary

This report outlines the Crimefighters Strategy being implemented in order to build confidence in policing and develop stronger local policing.

Improving Public Contact

Most people will hope to have little or no contact with the police in their lifetimes. They will generally only deal with policing when something has gone wrong, in their lives, the lives of their loved ones, or in their communities. The initial and ongoing contact with the police is crucial in delivering public confidence. This includes:

- Reducing 101 waiting times
- Automating feedback
- Enabling better digital contact

Community Policing

Now is the time to revive true Community Policing. Capitalising on the record number of police officers in Thames Valley; giving a clear focus and recognising the benefits of prioritising community policing. This will include:

- Increasing and stabilising the workforce
- Standardisation and common purpose
- Improving communication and engagement with the public

Crimefighting

Crimefighting is not just about bringing to justice those who have transgressed our laws - vitally important though that is. It is about crime prevention. A significant amount of police time is taken up with issues that are not crimes. Some of this work, often life saving, will always be inevitable. The Force needs to be more robust however in protecting its workforce from having to deal with excessive workloads that do not relate to the core purpose of fighting and preventing crime.



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Police & Crime Commissioner
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Report to the Police and Crime Panel

- Greater community intelligence
- Focus on hotspots and known offenders
- Reduce emergency and mental health demand

Enablers

This strategy encompasses a wide range of organisational activity within Thames Valley Police and is ambitious within its own terms. There are, however, a number of other areas of work vital to the success of this project and the wider organisation.

- Opportunities for training and development
- Continued recruitment of PCs and PCSOs
- Improved support for Specials and volunteers
- Improved investigation structure
- Establishing a Thames Valley CCTV Partnership

Implementation

Details of how this strategy can be implemented operationally are currently being developed. More details will be published after Easter which will be provided to Police & Crime Panel Members.

Strategic Objectives

Improving public contact

Strengthening community policing

Embedding crime prevention

Workstreams

Reducing 101 waiting times

Standardisation & common purpose

Greater community intelligence

Automating feedback

Increasing & stabilising workforce

Focus on hotspots & known offenders

Enabling better digital contact

Improved communication with the public

Reduce emergency & mental health demand

Enablers

Opportunities for training and development

Continued recruitment of PCs, PCSOs & staff

Improved support for Specials & volunteers

Improved investigation structure

Establishing a Thames Valley CCTV partnership



Report to the Police and Crime Panel

Report title: Community Policing

Date: March 2023

Author and contact: Chief Superintendent Katy Barrow-Grint

Purpose of the report: At the request of the PCP

Recommendations: Information only

Executive Summary

This is a summary of the activity that has been ongoing under the Neighbourhood Policing and Citizens in Policing portfolios in Thames Valley Police with a forward look at how Community Policing will be delivered in the future.

Neighbourhood Policing Portfolio

Neighbourhood Policing emphasises a local approach to policing that is accessible to the public and responsive to the needs and priorities of communities. Neighbourhood Policing provides communities with a visible presence. Delivered fairly and effectively, Neighbourhood Policing builds public confidence, encourages compliance with the law and secures police legitimacy. Public confidence and perceptions of legitimacy are vital to effective, efficient and fair policing. Community Engagement and proactive policing by Neighbourhood Officers and PCSO's has ensured that Thames Valley Police has had an excellent history of delivering effective Neighbourhood Policing across the 11 Local Police Areas.

Officer Uplift and Impact on Neighbourhood Policing

Over the course of the last year, there has been an impact on how Thames Valley Police have delivered Neighbourhood Policing due to our delivery of the Police Uplift Programme and the associated entry routes. Additional recruitment in line with our officer uplift target, will have seen an increase the number of Thames Valley police officers by around 700 by the end of this financial year. As a force we have placed all new officers on Incident and Crime Response (ICR) – this is absolutely the best way for them to learn their role. As part of the new entry routes, each student officer is committed to essential protected learning time for classroom and academic learning. This means time away from the front line, on top of expected abstractions for annual mandatory training for all officers, operational support, any sickness and annual leave.

These abstractions from our ICR teams meant without additional support our ICR response would have been regularly under-resourced and so we have had to adjust how we organise ourselves through this period. It's critical that when someone calls 999, we can respond.



Report to the Police and Crime Panel

It's essential that we resource to meet our grade one commitment, to protect life first and foremost, of all in our communities in their moment of need, and of our own officers when they need support. To do this, we drew on resources across the force to support this critical function throughout these exceptional periods, and our neighbourhood PCs were essential in this support at various points throughout this period, meaning we did not have capacity in neighbourhood policing as we did in previous years, as we navigated these additional pressures.

However, throughout this period our PCSOs have remained available and out on patrol in order for us to still be able to provide coverage for our local communities, and key areas such as violence against women and girls and knife crime remained the focus of our work.

As we reach the end of Uplift, the Government has now changed the police officer entry routes and we seeing a significant reduction in the abstraction of Neighbourhood officers who are now able to be more focussed on tier community policing work.

Despite these challenges, Thames Valley Police has continued to seek to improve Neighbourhood Policing activity and support the staff engaged in this work through the following:

Training

We have developed a one day training input focussed on community engagement, partnership work and safeguarding, supplemented by an online package for Problem Solving training. This has been piloted and will be delivered shortly for all NHP officers and staff. This is the forerunner to a 5 day course which will be designed once resourcing allows for abstractions, mirroring national steer to professionalise and accredit training of NH officers.

Problem Solving

We continue to focus on consistency of problem solving and embedding it within other policing functions. We have seconded a police inspector to be the dedicated lead for Problem Solving which is having a very positive impact. We are meeting with HMICFRS in late February to review our outstanding Area For Improvement around Problem Solving and anticipate that TVP will demonstrate it has achieved aims. We have introduced a new professionally recognised Problem Solving award this year named after, and with the support of, Professor Gloria Laycock.

Tactical Plans



Report to the Police and Crime Panel

All LPAs have created localised tactical plans to cover engagement and problem solving with an emphasis on those communities who are harder to reach, especially Black communities in line with Race Action Plan.

Outcome and Performance Criteria

We will be introducing new criteria around outcomes and performance once they are signed off by the College of Policing. This will allow NHP to quantify outcomes relevant to the force strategy and also qualify the work linked to engagement and problem solving that can be difficult to measure. These criteria will inform local health checks that will ensure work is prioritised in line with tactical plans.

Prevention and Problem Solving Analysts

We have introduced 11 new Problem Solving Analysts who are now embedded within each LPA and are providing targeted and preventative advice to LPAs, working with partners across all Community Safety Partnerships. This has already seen some fantastic results with clear evidence of partnership working/problem solving.

TVP external website

The introduction of the '**Your Area**' element of our website went live in late July 2022 and provides every resident the same route of access into their local NH team. All Teams have been briefed and understand the expectations in terms of managing the demand from the contacts.

Local policing savings

We realised £200K of savings from a number of anomalous roles, some of which had shared partnership funding. All partners are aware as are affected staff (this does not affect the use of TV Alerts and other key processes which have been maintained and handed over to other staff).

PCSOs

We have set up a working group to look at the PCSO role from recruitment all the way through to Advanced Practitioner/PCSO Supervisor role. We currently sit at over 25% below FTE and the recruitment market is extremely challenging at this time.

It was the 20th anniversary of PCSOs in policing this year so we have celebrated that with a number of press releases and also an individual award that was given to all PCSOs toward the end of last year by the Chief Constable.

NH Policing conference

We introduced a NH Policing Conference. This was fantastically well received in October 2022 and delivered to nearly 200 operational officers and staff, both in persona and online, as well as partners via the OPCC. Planning has started for 2023 conference which will focus on community engagement, a joint day between TVP and the OPCC.



Report to the Police and Crime Panel

Citizens in Policing (CiP) portfolio

The national Citizens in Policing vision states that policing should provide opportunities to all citizens with the enthusiasm and skills to support the Police Service in making communities safe. Officers and staff should routinely consider involving volunteers when planning and delivering services. Volunteer support should become a key method to address local police priorities, improve services and links to the community.

In Thames Valley Police the CiP Portfolio covers our Special Constabulary, our Cadets and our Volunteers.

The CiP Governance structure has, since January 2022, been evolving the delivery of CiP within TVP, resolving issues, identifying opportunities and developing a strong platform from which to significantly expand the CiP portfolio in both size and capability with a principal aim to provide support to frontline Policing whilst engaging with our communities.

What we have achieved over the last year;

Special Constabulary:

- CiP business vision, aims and objectives established.
- Digital Equipment Enhancements; radios, Body Worn Video, mobile devices, laptops.
- Training and Accreditation processes streamlined and greater operational support provided.
- Leadership training plans including revised role profiles for Special Sergeant and Special Inspector ranks with implementation of PDR process for supervisors.
- Reward and recognition processes.
- Peoplesoft/Dutysheet data cleansing and updates.
- Social media presence increased, raising profile of TVP Special Constabulary.
- Public Order training increasing capacity for Force and mutual aid events.

Police Support Volunteers:

- Reward and recognition, communications sent to all PSV's from Force leads.
- Data cleanse and update of in excess of 800 personnel records.
- Force wide role profiles established and streamlined, role commissioning and advertising process under review, reducing bureaucracy and valuing volunteers.
- Vetting requirements reviewed and refreshed guidance being drafted.
- PSV handbook and Role Supervisor briefings reviewed/created.
- Scoping for communications system to ensure improved communications with PSV's



Report to the Police and Crime Panel

Volunteer Police Cadets (VPC):

- Restarting of VPC units across TVP following the relaxing of Covid-19 restrictions.
- ICT provision for all units
- Creation of unit bank accounts and provision of funding for local activities.
- Safeguarding focus including full training refresh, vetting review and DBS process

Plans for the CiP portfolio – 2023 onwards:

- Implementation of a full management and co-ordination team with enabler resources to deliver a new CiP project to improve and enhance our CiP provision over the next 5 years.
- Recruitment of Special Constables with a target establishment of C500 officers over the next 5 years.
- Through improved training, accreditation, integration and reward and recognition our Specials will be better equipped and better engaged, providing a significant contribution to TVP's frontline Policing capacity (75 FTE equivalent delivering 13,000 operational hours per month)
- A diverse group of volunteers, representative of our communities, will feel more valued and supported by the organisation, improving engagement and public trust and confidence.
- Specialist roles, through focussed recruitment of both Special Constables and PSV's, filling skills gaps and improving retention.

The Future of Community Policing

As we move into 2023-2024 the focus of the organisation will be on Community Policing which will incorporate both Neighbourhood Policing and Citizens in Policing portfolio's.

This will see a central Community Policing team providing senior leadership and tactical support for both areas, as well as the Rural Crime Team and Unauthorised Encampments.

Under the NH policing portfolio, thanks to support from the PCC, we will increase by 80, the number of Neighbourhood Police officers across the force.

We will continue to recruit PCSO's (a number of forces have removed PCSO's due to funding cuts recently).

We will introduce NH Tactical Advisors who will provide expert advice for problem solving, targeted activity, schools engagement and bespoke training for example with ASB legislation.



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We will increase the number of dedicated Schools Officers to ensure better engagement and preventative work with young people,

We will introduce 10 dedicated Mental Health Officers to reduce demand on our response officers, and ensure excellent partnership relationships to solve long term issues around the policing of mental health incidents.

We will standardise processes, particularly in relation to problem solving, in the community policing portfolio.

We will deliver the new Citizens in Policing project to increase the numbers in our Special Constabulary to 500 in the next 5 years, and ensure our Volunteers and Cadets are appropriately supported and developed.