

Agenda

Date: Friday 11 July 2014

Time: 11.00 am

Venue: Council Chamber South Oxfordshire
District Council, Benson Lane,
Crowmarsh Gifford, Wallingford OX10
8ED



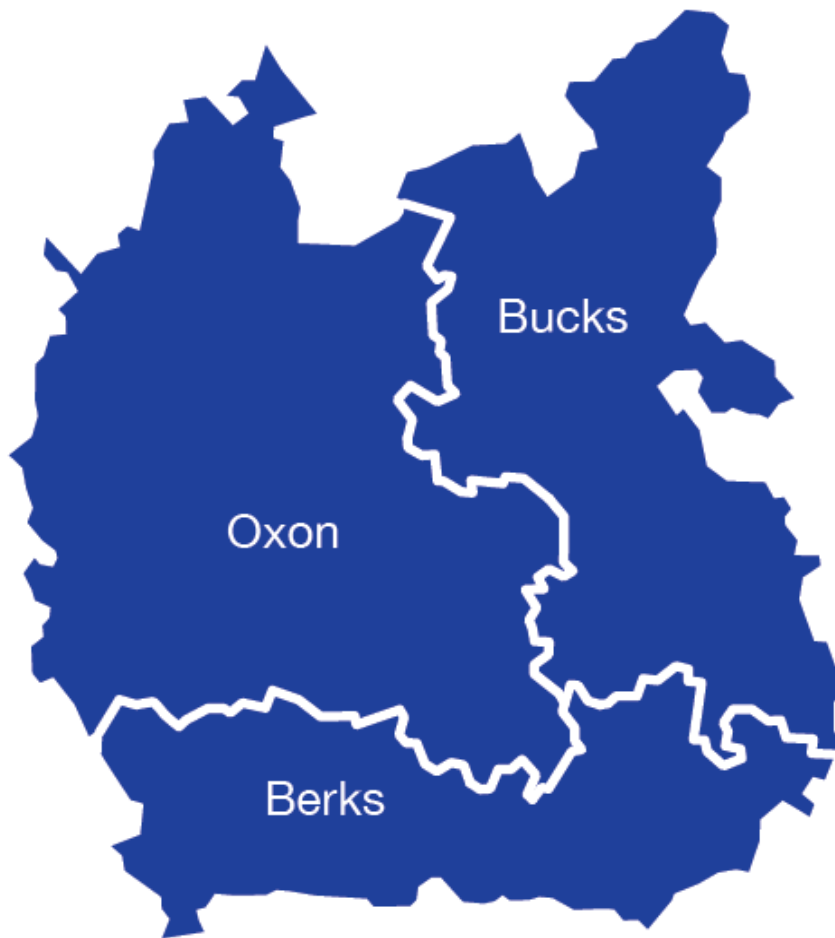
12.25 **8. Police and Crime Panel Annual Report**

3 - 14

Committee Members

Bill Bendyshe-Brown (Wycombe District Council), Councillor Mark Booty (West Oxfordshire District Council), Noel Brown (Chiltern District Council), Terry Burke (Independent Co-opted Member), Councillor Anita Cranmer (South Buckinghamshire District Council), Trevor Egleton (Buckinghamshire County Council), Councillor Jesse Grey (Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead), Councillor Bill Jones (Vale of White Horse District Council), Councillor Kieron Mallon (Oxfordshire County Council), Councillor Iain McCracken (Bracknell Forest Council), Councillor Tony Page (Reading Borough Council), Councillor Barrie Patman (Wokingham Borough Council), Pam Pearce (Aylesbury Vale District Council), Councillor George Reynolds (Cherwell District Council), Councillor Bill Service (South Oxfordshire District Council), Councillor Mohammed Sharif (Slough Borough Council), Councillor Dee Sinclair (Oxford City Council), Rajinder Sohpal (Independent Co-opted Member) and Councillor Quentin Webb (West Berkshire Council)

Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel



Annual Report 2013/14

The Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel is currently hosted by Buckinghamshire County Council on behalf of all 18 local authorities in Thames Valley.

It is a joint committee of all 18 local authorities, consisting of a representative from each and two independent co-opted members.

It can be contacted via the below:

Police & Crime Panel Secretariat

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

The Police & Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley is Anthony Stansfeld.

He can be contacted via his office:

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

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Chairman's Introduction

I am proud to introduce the second annual report of the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel. Since the Panel's inception in November 2012 I feel that we have made substantial progress in the way that the Panel works to both challenge and support the Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley. This is in a large part down to the hard work and dedication of my fellow Panel members.



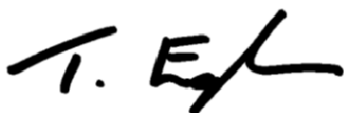
The second year of the Panel's operation has built on the firm footing of our first year of operation. The hard work put in by all members of the Panel in the first year establishing robust procedures and processes has provided the spring board for the Panel to begin to do what the Government intended when drafting the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

I feel that we have achieved a lot in this past year. I would like to highlight the scrutiny of the Police and Crime Commissioner's proposed budget and Council Tax precept as an area of particular success. The Panel utilised their scrutiny skills to ensure that the Commissioner's proposed council tax precept increase of 1.99% was required to deliver a balanced budget and maintain frontline services. Members spent a large amount of time going through detailed budget papers to develop robust questions to challenge the proposed budget and precept. This was especially important at a time when cuts are having to be made across the public sector and when residents are feeling the pinch financially. This year also saw our first ever meeting webcast.

As with any body of this nature we are not without our challenges and there is always room for improvement. There are challenges for the Panel in relation to complaints, resourcing and also access to timely information, all of which we are keen to make headway on over 2014/15. The Panel should not standstill over this forthcoming year and that all Panel members play a full and active part in meetings and Task and Finish group work.

This second annual report highlights the work and achievements of the past year and draws out some of the key areas of work that the Panel will be examining over the forthcoming year.

Cllr. Trevor Egleton



Chairman, Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel

Introduction

The Role of the Police & Crime Commissioner

The Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley, Anthony Stansfeld, has formally been in post since 22 November 2012. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 set out a number of roles and responsibilities that the Commissioner must deliver on behalf of his electorate, these include:

- Secure an efficient and effective police force for their area;
- Appoint the Chief Constable, hold them to account for running the force, and if necessary dismiss them;
- Set the police and crime objectives for their area through a police and crime plan;
- Set the force budget and determine the Council Tax precept;
- Contribute to the national and international policing capabilities set out by the Home Secretary;
- Bring together community safety and criminal justice partners, to make sure local priorities are joined up.

Legislation protects the operational independence of the police, making it clear that the Chief Constable, Sara Thornton, retains command and control of police officers and staff.

From October 2014, local Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) will be responsible for commissioning new emotional and practical support services for victims of crime in their area. Across the country, local commissioning is replacing the old system of grant-funding by the Ministry of Justice, although some services will still be commissioned nationally, including the witness service, homicide service, trafficking ser-



Anthony Stansfeld, Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley

vice, rape support and some victims' helplines.

Police and Crime Commissioners will be responsible for commissioning both a 'non-specialist' overarching victim referral mechanism including onward support and more 'specialist' services for victims of crime in the Thames Valley, including Restorative Justice services.

The Police and Crime Commissioner is supported in his role by his office, including his appointed deputy David Carroll.

The Role of the Police & Crime Panel

The Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel examines and reviews how the Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley carries out his responsibilities of ensuring that Thames Valley Police runs efficiently and effectively. In addition to this the Panel has a role to play in supporting the Commissioner in his work.

The Panel also has a duty to:

- Conduct confirmation hearings for certain key positions, including Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, Chief Constable and others.
- Handle non-criminal complaints against the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- Review the Police and Crime Commissioner's proposed Council Tax precept for each financial year - this is the amount which the Commissioner hopes to raise each year through council tax to fund policing.
- Scrutinise and comment on the Police and Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan and Annual Report.

The Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel (pictured) fulfils all of these duties in relation to the Police & Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley.



Members of the Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel

In Thames Valley, there is one councillor from each of the councils in the area, meaning that there are eighteen on the Panel. They are joined by two independent co-opted members, recruited through a competitive process, that raise the Panel membership to 20.

The independent co-opted members have the same status and rights as the other Panel members. The Police & Crime Panel must be politically balanced, reflecting the political make-up of the councils in Thames Valley. Each of the 18 councils has its own process for appointing its representative on the Police & Crime Panel. Each also has its own arrangements for Panel member expenses.

The 18 local authorities in Thames Valley and their representatives on the Panel in 2013/14:

- Aylesbury Vale District Council— Pam Pearce
- Bracknell Forest Council—Iain McCracken
- Buckinghamshire County Council— Trevor Eggleton
- Cherwell District Council— George Reynolds
- Chiltern District Council—Noel Brown
- Milton Keynes Council— Cec Tallack
- Oxford City Council— Pat Kennedy
- Oxfordshire County Council—Kieron Mallon
- Reading Borough Council—Tony Page
- Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead Council - Jesse Grey
- Slough Borough Council—Mohammed Sharif
- South Bucks District Council—Anita Cranmer
- South Oxfordshire District Council—Bill Service
- Vale of White Horse District Council—Bill Jones
- West Berkshire Council— Quentin Webb
- West Oxfordshire District Council—Mark Booty
- Wokingham Borough Council—Barrie Patman
- Wycombe District Council— Bill Bendyshe-Brown

The independent co-opted members are:

- Terry Burke
- Rajinder Sophal

Reflections of our Panel Members

Each Panel member was asked about what they felt the biggest successes and challenges were over the course of the past year for the Police and Crime Panel. Their reflections on the year can be viewed over the coming pages:



Successes- The Panel is an excellent forum for all members to represent their constituents views to the Commissioner as well as being able to learn about policing issues across the Thames Valley.

Challenges- I think challenges are what the Police and Crime Panel is about.



Successes- A notable success has been getting the Police and Crime Plan and the local safety community partnership priorities aligned. This has demonstrated that the Panel & the Commissioner work well together.

Challenges- To get ever decreasing budgets to maintain an acceptable service level to the community, and 2013/2014 was no different in that regard.



Successes- Members are better aware of wider issues and successful responses across the area that encourages a more informed approach to and from the Commissioner.

Challenges- Finances, with the problem of different priorities across the area of large town and rural based local authorities.



Successes- Establishing the Complaints Sub-Committee who have dealt with a large number of historical complaints.

Challenges- The lack of formal procedures and the limitations imposed by statute to deal with complaints. This coupled with the lack of understanding by the public on what the panel responsibilities are in relation to complaints have caused significant administrative issues.



Successes- The quality of the relationship established with the Commissioner which has been mutually beneficial and informative in local information sharing and decision making.

Challenges- To find and carry out more proactive work which is in line with the statutory guidelines for their role.



Successes- Maintaining the support for the Community Safety Partnership.

Challenges- Formally appointing key officers to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner in a timely manner.



Successes-

Challenges-

Reflections of our Panel Members



Successes- The visit of the Panel to Oxford as members of the Panel found out that Oxford has serious social and crime problems as well as being a beautiful city.

Challenges- The maintenance of effective work in areas like domestic abuse, drug and alcohol problems and preventative work with youth at a time of severe budget cuts by central government.



Successes- The collaborative work by Oxfordshire Community Safety Partnership with Oxfordshire County Council to support the work of the Oxfordshire Local Safeguarding Board to prevent Child Sexual Exploitation. This model is now an exemplar across the Thames Valley.

Challenges- Continuing to deliver excellent community safety services across Oxfordshire with diminishing resources.



Successes- Maintaining the zero increase in the precept and introducing the "local issues" agenda which in turn has served to highlight common themes across the Thames Valley authorities.

Challenges- Accepting that the funding available to the Commissioner for commissioning is reducing this will in turn continue to place financial pressure on the local authorities to maintain local initiatives and the same service levels.



Challenges- The Panels were never properly resourced and were not intended by the Government to offer effective scrutiny of the Police and Crime Commissioners.

Successes- In the circumstances the Thames Valley Panel has done well to probe a number of areas of the Police and Crime Commissioner's activities.



Successes- Maintaining a good working relationship with the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Challenges- Understanding the true role and responsibilities of the Police and Crime Panel.



Successes- Recognising 'local issues' across Thames Valley which also helps us to share 'best practice'. Maintaining the precept.

Challenges- Ensuring the Panel is relevant to the public and seen as delivering good scrutiny whilst also supporting the Police and Crime Commissioner.



Successes-

Challenges-

Reflections of our Panel Members



Successes-

Challenges-



Successes- We were able to collectively identify different types of crimes in Thames Valley, prioritise them and inventively thinking to tackle them, particularly Female Genital Mutilation and organised crime.

Challenges- The Community Safety Funding allocations to various organisations, particularly when some of the organisations with highest crime rates were the most affected.



Successes- I think the Complaints Sub-Committee has very actively worked to do what is possible, given its remit

Challenges- It is clear to me that most people still do not know the limitations on the Panel's remit, and that the main line of accountability for the Police and Crime Commissioner is the election.



Successes- The Panel has put in place a process that allows it to challenge and evaluate the Commissioner's budget to help ensure that the public are getting the best value for money from the Police. The moves to spotlight ethics and integrity are very important to maintain public confidence.

Challenges- The biggest challenge is to hold the Commissioner to account to ensure the delivery of his plan.



Successes- The continued commitment to partnership working to address community safety with the outcome that at the end of 2013/14 reported crime in West Berkshire was at its lowest level for 15 years.

Challenges- Sustaining effective partnership working when a wide range of agencies involved have had to respond to significant reductions in resources and being able to be responsive to new and emerging crimes.

Achievements 2013/14

Scrutiny of the Proposed Budget and Precept

The Panel undertook its annual review of the Police and Crime Commissioner's proposed budget and Council Tax precept on 31 January 2014. In the build up to this meeting a small group of members of the Panel met on two occasions to discuss the budget papers in detail and to develop questions to ask the Commissioner on behalf of the Panel as a whole.



This preparation work allowed the Panel to have detailed questions to hand on all aspects of the proposed budget and precept during the meeting in public. Members through challenging questions were able to ascertain that the proposed 1.99% rise in the Council Tax precept was required for the Commissioner to deliver a balanced budget and maintain frontline services.

The meeting was filmed and a short video posted on YouTube to allow greater accessibility to proceedings. The video can be found [here](#).

First Webcast Meeting of the Panel

The Panel webcast its first meeting on 21 March 2014 at Cherwell District Council. Dependent upon the

availability of webcasting facilities, the Panel hope to webcast a greater number of it's meeting in the future. The webcast can be viewed [here](#).

Increasing the Visibility of the Panel

The past year has seen an increase in the visibility of the Panel across the Thames Valley and nationally. The Chairman of the Panel, Trevor Egleton, spoke at the **10th annual Centre for Public Scrutiny Conference** in June 2013. At the Centre for Public Scrutiny Conference in 2014 the Panel's Policy Officer jointly led a workshop on Police and Crime Panels with a colleague from Hampshire.

Police and Crime Panel Conference

The Panel also held its first **conference** at the Oculus in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire in July 2013. This conference was attended by people representing a range of organisations from across the Thames Valley such as Councillors, Community Safety Partnership leads, scrutiny officers, and the voluntary and community sector.

Social Media

The Panel is also utilising **social media** in an attempt to connect with a greater number of people. You will see from the infographic at the back of this annual



Thames Valley PCP
@ThamesValleyPCP

Our Police and Crime Panel is currently in session; members have just endorsed the @TV_PCC refreshed police and crime plan.

report that the Panel has sent 44 tweets in the past year and received 38. At the time of writing the Panel's Twitter account has 272 followers.

Looking to the Future 2014/15

Planned Work

The Panel has agreed to do a Task and Finish Group on ***'How the Police and Crime Commissioner can be supported to work in partnership with key stakeholders to deliver the Police and Crime Plan for the Thames Valley'***.

The Panel will also be undertaking two **themed meetings** over the course of 2014/15. The first themed meeting will examine how the Police and Crime Commissioner carries out youth engagement activities. The topic of the second themed meeting has yet to be determined.

Members will also carry out the **annual review of the Police and Crime Commissioner's proposed budget and Council Tax precept**. A Task and Finish Group made up of a select group of members of the Panel will undertake a detailed review of the draft budget papers prior to the main Panel meeting in January 2015 where members will scrutinise the Police and Crime Commissioner's proposals for the forthcoming year.

Challenges

As a Panel we are very aware that there is always room for improvement. There are a number of challenges facing the Panel, these include:

- **Engaging with residents and key stakeholders-** The Thames Valley is the 2nd largest non-metropolitan police force area in England, with a population of over two million. This provides difficulties in terms of the public accessing Panel meetings on a regular basis.
- **Complaints-** The Panel, through its complaints sub-committee is responsible for all non-criminal complaints directed against the Police and Crime Commissioner, including conduct



matters. At present a number of the complaints the sub-committee receives are historical and the system is being perceived as a new opportunity by some residents with long-standing complaints to get them reopened. Such complaints are resource intensive and can be a drain on the limited resources available to the Panel. The Panel will be working with the Police and Crime Commissioners office to lobby the Home Office to make changes to the system as it currently stands.

- **Access to timely performance information-** Like many Panels we have a challenge in accessing timely performance information to allow us to develop an outcomes focused work programme. Access to such information would allow the Panel to examine areas of poor performance and also identify areas of high performance.

The Year in Numbers



Number of meetings held **6**



Average Panel attendance **76%**



Tweets sent **44**

Tweets received **38**



Number of press releases **5**

Recorded media coverage **9**

Room for Improvement?



**Number of meetings
webcast** **1**



**Number of Task & Finish
Groups** **1**