



## OFFICE OF THE POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR THAMES VALLEY

### PCC PROGRESS REPORT TO THE THAMES VALLEY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021

#### **Police and Crime Plan Strategic Priority 4: Serious Organised Crime and Terrorism**

I ensure delivery of my Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021 objectives by holding to account Thames Valley Police (TVP) and other PCC-funded and commissioned service providers for their delivery of specific operational policing, crime reduction and community safety objectives.

The Chief Constable produces an Annual Force Delivery Plan which complements and supports my Police and Crime Plan. I attend monthly Service Improvement Reviews across Local Policing Areas in Thames Valley and Force Performance Group meetings whereby I can witness the Chief Constable and Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) holding relevant operational personnel to account for their performance in delivering their respective specific aims, objectives and targets. Furthermore, at my quarterly 'Level 1' public meetings I hold the Chief Constable to account for overall delivery of operational policing against the Force's Annual Delivery Plan.

In respect of Strategic Priority 4 ('Serious Organised Crime and Terrorism') my objective is to increase the pace of change, with particular focus on:

- Improving community resilience
- Improving information sharing

#### **My Police and Crime Plan sets out the following 'Key Aims' for addressing Serious Organised Crime and Terrorism:**

1. Coordinated public awareness messages, campaigns and approaches by police and local authorities tackling terrorism and serious organised crime at a local level.
2. A 'dare to share' culture across all agencies, public or private, voluntary or community, who deal with vulnerable young people and adults.
3. Greater oversight across Thames Valley of activities to prevent violent extremism, share lessons learned and promote good practice.
4. Better engagement and information sharing between police and organisations supporting vulnerable migrants and rough sleepers, with the aim of preventing exploitation by organised criminals.

I have summarised below the progress to date (Year 4, 2020/21, Qtr. 3) on the delivery of the above, four-year, Police and Crime Plan 'Key Aims'.

## **2020/21 PROGRESS ON DELIVERY OF STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4 'KEY AIMS'**

(Year 4, 2020/21, Qtr. 3)

### **1) Coordinated public awareness messages, campaigns and approaches by police and local authorities tackling terrorism and serious organised crime at a local level.**

#### **TVP Delivery Plan actions & progress:**

2020/21:

- A number of Webinars have been conducted, or are planned, to raise awareness and upskill LPA Commanders, Deputies and Crime Managers on the Minimum Standards and Expectations around the management of Organised Crime Gangs (OCGs) and Drugs Lines. This has also been complimented by a number of 1:1 workshops with staff members by the OCG Manager. The Force Knowzone page has been updated with relevant supporting material and examples of 'best practice' shared with Crime Managers and Lead Responsible Officers (LROs).
- Since launching the TVP Economic Crimes Units Criminal Finance Team at the start of 2020 following the publication of the Force's Criminal Finance Strategy, TVP has embraced the new civil powers within the law to target offenders where criminal investigations would not be viable and have developed new tactics to disrupt serious criminality. Working at all levels within the organisation, TVP is educating staff, highlighting the benefits of Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) to investigators and specifically promoting Money Laundering legislation for inquisitive criminal cases. This has led to over £2.3million of suspected criminal assets being restrained or frozen using new POCA legislation, denying criminals of their gains.

2019/20:

- As part of Operation Stronghold, TVP and partners engaged in a national county lines week of action in May 2020. Nearly 250,000 people were reached on Facebook. More than 40 education visits in schools and over 100 to taxi firms, landlords and hotels were carried out. TVP safeguarded 96 people, arrested 79 suspects and seized £87,652 in cash.
- Cooperation with our communities remains a key factor in preventing rural crime. The new initiative "rural spotters", launched during Volunteers' Week in June 2019, involved horse riders reporting any suspicious activity to the rural crime reporting line.
- A review took place which identified a number of areas where the Force could improve in the management of OCGs and county drugs lines. Whilst there was evidence of some excellent work across the local policing areas, the review led to a robust strategic plan owned by the Force Intelligence and Specialist Operations Unit, ensuring consistency in tackling OCGs.
- All of the Counter Terrorism Policing South East, Counter Terrorism Local Profiles documents were finalised and made available for partnership viewing via Resilience Direct.
- TVP is committed to tackling rural crime and serious organised acquisitive crime – it undertook some work on a Rural Crime Plan to provide a more joined up approach to dealing with rural crime, both internally and externally. This plan covered the whole TVP area, offering clarity and guidance regarding expectations within Force.

## **OPCC general activities:**

2020/21:

- The OPCC were closely involved in the communications response to the Forbury Gardens attack in Reading in June 2020 in the following ways:
  - Social media:
    - We used OPCC Victims First social media channels (Twitter and Facebook) to put out messages on the weekend of the attack about the support available through Victims First for people affected, and continued to do this in the days/weeks following.
  - Website:
    - An alert was put on the Victims First website which appears at the top of every page to alert those affected that we could offer support.
    - A new 'Terrorism' page was created to improve the search optimisation of the website from google searches about support following the attack. This was also put on the Home page carousel to increase prominence.
  - Partnership:
    - We worked with Reading Borough Council to include a Victims First advert on screens outside Reading Station at the time of the live vigil as well on smaller screens around the town.
    - Alongside Thames Valley Police, Victims First Officers attended the vigil and carried out public engagement in the town to raise awareness of support.
    - Leaflets and posters were provided to Reading Borough Council for key areas in the town including at Forbury Gardens when it reopened to the public.
    - We used social media and the website to raise awareness of support available through SupportU, a Reading based organisation which specialises in supporting members of the LGBTQ community
    - We provided emergency funds to SupportU, who received many of the early calls for support, to allow them to quickly bring key members of staff out of furlough to provide support.
    - We continue to be involved in the Council's Forbury Gardens Health and Welfare Group and to engage in a calendar of events to help manage community wellbeing through key dates/trigger points such as the 6 month/12 month anniversary, trial period, etc.

2019/20:

- Shared Counter Terrorism Policing's public awareness campaign materials on social media, and used social media to raise awareness of the problem of County Lines and how to spot the signs of exploitation of young people and where to signpost victims to support.

## **OPCC Community Safety Fund initiatives:**

2019/20:

- Across the Thames Valley, a number of local areas' Youth Offending provision is now incorporating support to divert young people away from exploitation and links into organised crime, to steer them away from being involved later in serious organised crime.
- Additionally, many community safety partnerships (CSPs) are using their funding to focus work on 'county lines', an area of organised crime that exploits vulnerable children and adults. This funding was used either to enhance our understanding of local profiles of organised crime groups and victim or to bring in direct service provision for those impacted by county lines, often in conjunction with existing Youth and Youth Offending provision.

- For example, in one area, a charity is working with young women, supporting them to develop healthy relationships, and to have the knowledge and strength to identify and keep themselves safe from grooming (into radicalisation or other criminal activity). In another area, mentoring schemes for young people have been funded and staff given training around grooming into criminal exploitation.
- Lastly, CSPs are able to promote uptake of Prevent and Channel training alongside promotional work tackling Hate Crime and Radicalisation

### **Police Property Act Fund initiatives**

(inc. funds allocated through Community Foundation and High Sheriff awards):

2019/20:

- The Chief Constable and I ran two public bidding rounds for grants from the Police Property Act Fund.
- In August 2019, £106,733 was awarded to 27 charities and community groups across the Thames Valley who each made a significant contribution to support my strategic priorities in relation to 'reducing reoffending' and/or 'improve the local response to serious organised crime and terrorism'.
- Successful recipients of that year's Police Property Act Fund were invited to attend a presentation ceremony held on the afternoon of Friday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2019? at Sulhamstead in Reading.
- In January 2020, a further £166,800 was awarded to 42 separate charities and/or community groups regarding their work on supporting my strategic priorities concerning 'vulnerability' and 'prevention and early intervention'.
- In addition, the three county High Sheriffs identified a further 11 organisations worthy of support who have received £75,000, in total, from the Police Property Act Fund.

[\(Further detail of these grants are available on my website\)](#)

## **2) A 'dare to share' culture across all agencies, public or private, voluntary or community, who deal with vulnerable young people and adults.**

### **TVP Delivery Plan actions & progress:**

2020/21:

- Following PVP Effectiveness and Efficiency (E&E) 3 and Exploitation Service Improvement Review (SIR) findings, an ACC led Gold Group and a CCMT paper presented on 10th December 2020 recommended 'Missing' and 'Exploitation' to be separated. Missing to be led by D/Supt Policing Strategy Unit (PSU) and Exploitation led by D/Supt Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) as of the same date. PVP completed mapping of existing processes and shared all material with VRU. VRU will identify the gaps and establish accountability within intelligence, response, investigation, and safeguarding with partners for those who are exploited. Using the national definition, this will then enable operational guidance and training as necessary but will also require further CCMT papers.

2019/20:

- The Vulnerability Demand Reduction Strategy covers a wide range of areas, such as Modern Slavery (and Stalking and Harassment).

- Expertise in modern slavery was further developed, with training delivered both within TVP and to outside partners such as health trusts. Following a successful pilot with Modern Slavery First Responders, specially trained officers will be deployed first in these instances; this role will be rolled out across the force.
- TVP continued to evolve the way it identifies children at risk of exploitation, and work was underway to develop geographically based teams which cooperate with our partners to identify children at risk of all forms of exploitation. Due to the strong link between missing people and exploitation, these teams will work in both of these areas.
- TVP continued to work on internal processes to record fraud incidents correctly so that appropriate responses can be taken with regard to supporting fraud victims. As part of this work, it is looking at the forms used and information gathered when working on fraud cases so we can safeguard the vulnerable.
- In January 2020, TVP worked on a national courier fraud initiative which involved fast time triage and actions to support vulnerable victims. TVP continues to triage these offences and has a media campaign warning of the signs of courier fraud (currently working with local taxi firms). Moving forward, the Force will be working on a project to protect vulnerable victims of romance scams.

#### **OPCC general activities:**

2020/21:

- Victims First instigated case conferences with other professionals to seek joint solutions for repeat and complex victims. A conference was held to help address a case involving a victim who has been referred to Victims First 10 times and had numerous contacts with many different services, including the mental health team, police and probation services.
- In partnership with SAFE, the OPCC implemented a solution to help achieve earlier help for young victims throughout the Covid-19 lockdown through information sharing.
- In response to the Forbury Gardens attack in Reading in June 2020, the OPCC Victims First service provided the initial support offer to all victims, witnesses and other people in the community affected by the event. In addition, the Victims First Hub and Counselling Service, together with NHS England, have agreed to deliver the Forbury Gardens Trauma Service using a combination of 'track and trace' by the Victims First Hub to identify those in need of support. Victims First counsellors and a jointly funded (NHS/OPCC) clinical psychologist are to provide the different levels of support required to family members of the deceased, injured parties, other witnesses and first responders.

2019/20:

- A report looking into Violence with Injury in the Thames Valley Area was completed. This was used to support the new Violence Reduction Unit as well as providing information to CSP's and partner agencies to highlight what 'violence with injury' looks like in the Thames Valley. This analysis involved five years' worth of data and in-depth analysis.
- Early Intervention Youth Fund programme – over a dozen providers delivered services across the force area and were required to share the same outcomes, including referring to each other and sharing of information to improve life chances for the young people worked with in the cohorts.

- Violence Reduction Unit – this Unit worked with local authorities to share data to allow earlier intervention, including working with NHS England to look at opportunities to share data and better understand the opportunities for Health to take a more proactive role in addressing risky behaviour around serious violence and exploitation.
- See update under ‘Key Aim’ (1) above, detail of which runs across this strategic aim.

**OPCC Community Safety Fund initiatives:**

See update under Key Aim (1) above, detail of which runs across this key aim.

**Police Property Act Fund initiatives**

(inc. funds allocated through Community Foundation and High Sheriff awards):

See update under Key Aim (1) above, detail of which runs across this key aim.

**3) Greater oversight across Thames Valley of activities to prevent violent extremism, share lessons learned and promote good practice.**

**TVP Delivery Plan actions & progress:**

2020/21:

- Counter Terrorism Policing South East (CTPSE) continued to support all Prevent delivery boards that continue to be run, albeit remotely. Planning for the next phase of Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP) deliveries began, including the design of a questionnaire to share with partnership agencies for completion. Efforts to increase data collection time periods were made to ensure all opportunities were given to partnership agencies to actively contribute to the CTLP production this period. The design and creation of Prevent dashboards to be shared with local authorities and police forces has also been under development.

2019/20:

- The ‘Safeguarding Young People and Adults from Ideological Extremism’ document was produced to inform those in regular, direct contact with students, staff, managers, and safeguarding leads at all levels of the education system. The document focused on key extremist groups, and key ideologies / campaigns that have been observed as a gateway into extremism. It guides the reader through what they could see and what they could hear that could give cause for a ‘Prevent Referral’ to be considered.

**OPCC general activities:**

2019/20:

- A member of my OPCC staff delivered Prevent training to relevant organisations and also produces a Prevent newsletter to share latest information and news.

**OPCC Community Safety Fund initiatives:**

See update under Key Aim (1) above, detail of which runs across this key aim.

**Police Property Act Fund initiatives**

(inc. funds allocated through Community Foundation and High Sheriff awards):

See update under Key Aim (1) above, detail of which runs across this strategic aim.

**4) Better engagement and information sharing between police and organisations supporting vulnerable migrants and rough sleepers, with the aim of preventing exploitation by organised criminals.**

**TVP Delivery Plan actions & progress:**

2020/21:

- *TVP update on Exploitation is covered under section 2 above.*

2019/20:

- The Vulnerability Demand Reduction Strategy covers a wide range of areas, such as Modern Slavery (and Stalking and Harassment).

**OPCC general activities:**

2019/20:

- A single Information Sharing Protocol template was developed for every Thames Valley CSP to use to improve the speed of information sharing across all work strands.
- See update under Key Aim (1) above, detail of which runs across this strategic aim.

2020/21 (Q1):

- Working with Reading Refugee Resource, the OPCC provided support and information to the Reading Refugee and Asylum Seeking community after the Forbury Gardens attack to ensure they were supported, and knew how they could report incidents of hate crime, if required.

**OPCC Community Safety Fund initiatives:**

See update under Key Aim (1) above, detail of which runs across this key aim.

**Police Property Act Fund initiatives**

(inc. funds allocated through Community Foundation and High Sheriff awards):

See update under Key Aim (1) above, detail of which runs across this key aim.

**Anthony Stansfeld**

Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley

17 March 2021