

CRIME & DISORDER OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY, 6 OCTOBER 2016

PRESENT: Councillors Derek Sharp (Chairman), John Bowden (Vice-Chairman), Hari Sharma, John Story and Simon Werner

Also in attendance: Chief Constable Habgood (Thames Valley Police), Superintendent Rai (Thames Valley Police), Councillor Colin Rayner and Parish Councillor Spike Humphrey (Sunninghill & Ascot Parish Council).

Officers: Tanya Leftwich and Craig Miller

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hashim Bhatti.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

The Chairman announced that the meeting was being recorded and that the audio would be available shortly on the RBWM website.

ANNUAL PRESENTATION BY THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

The Chairman welcomed the new Chief Constable, Francis Habgood, and Superintendent Bhupinder Rai to the meeting and invited the Chief Constable to address the meeting.

The meeting commenced with a presentation to the Panel by the Chief Constable Francis Habgood. The Chief Constable started by showing Members a three minute presentation on what had happened locally over the past few years.

The Chief Constable explained that over the last few months the Thames Valley Police had launched its commitment which was 'Working together to make our communities safer' by working with partners and the public to build community resilience. Members were informed that the Thames Valley Police would transform and innovate to meet policing needs now and in the future. It was noted that the four strands to the Thames Valley Police's commitment was:

- ❖ An emergency service that keeps people safe and brings offenders to justice.
- ❖ Working together to build stronger, more resilient communities.
- ❖ A modern police force that meets the needs of our communities.
- ❖ A skilled and trusted workforce.

It was noted that the Thames Valley Police's commitment could be found on their website.

The Chief Constable showed Members a graph which showed the crime levels for Violence Against the Person and Burglary Dwelling in comparison to All Other Offences from 01/10/15 to 30/03/16. It was noted that Violence Against the Person

had increased year on year as predicted due to a number of reasons. It was noted that the increase could be due to a recalibration of the lower level crimes that now get put on the Thames Valley Police system, that certain cases of violence that would have originally been disclosed and dealt with at case conferences were now being recorded on the Thames Valley Police system and because the Thames Valley Police had been encouraging people to come forward and report domestic abuse, something that was previously underreported (first time reporting). Members were informed that burglary in the Royal Borough had gone down to a very low base but that there were still cases of cross boarder offenders coming in via the M4 corridor. The Chief Constable explained that it was therefore important that the Thames Valley Police shared information.

The Chief Constable outlined the Priorities for 2016/17 - Operational which were as follows:

- ❖ To cut crimes that were of most concern
 - burglaries, violence, rural crime, serious and organised crime.
- ❖ To protect vulnerable people
 - repeat victimisation of domestic abuse, response to hate crime, CSE, FGM, HBA, FM. It was noted that it was National Hate Crime Awareness Week starting on Saturday.
- ❖ To bring offenders to justice
 - quality of files.
- ❖ To reduce repeat demand.

The Chief Constable informed Members that the Thames Valley Police needed to both support victims and also prosecute offenders. It was noted that the Thames Valley Police had just gone through an assessment process and found that drug issues (dealers) from large cities were setting up homes in local boroughs to sell drugs from. The Chief Constable stated that he believed it was likely that drugs would appear in the next Police Crime Commissioner's plan.

The Chief Constable explained that over the last six months in the Royal Borough the Thames Valley Police had concentrated on twenty DARIM (Domestic Abuse Repeat Incident Management) cases and as a result had seen a big reduction in the numbers of incidents or no incidents at all. It was noted that the high risk cases went through MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences).

Members were informed that the Fun Food Kitchen, which was a mobile kitchen used to engage with local communities, had been really effective and had been recognised with some National Awards.

It was noted that the High Demand and Chaotic Lifestyle Panel looked at what interventions the Thames Valley Police could put in place to break cycles and reduce demand.

The Chief Constable explained that a safer night-time economy was primarily aimed at Windsor with regard to dealing with night-time violence issues. Members were informed that very intoxicated people were breathalysed and refused entry into clubs if found to be too intoxicated. The Chief Constable explained that this helped change people behaviour and discouraged 'pre-loading'.

(Full copies of the Chief Constable's presentation are available on request – please contact Tanya Leftwich in Democratic Services).

The Chief Constable responded to a number of questions which had been submitted in advance of the meeting from Members:

Councillor Hari Sharma asked the Chief Constable the following question: 'Very recently in the media it's noted that financial scams (Internet, phone and at door) has increased by 50% from last year (January to June 2016). Can I ask the Chief Constable what extra action he is taking to protect residents in the borough? How many residents in the borough have been a victim of this crime?' The Chief Constable responded by answering that some activity had been done across the force and also locally. It was noted that work had been done to help people protect themselves against cyber crime and scams to help raise awareness levels. In terms some of the other types of financial scams there had also been some activity undertaken by the Thames Valley Police including numerous talks and by sending out the Thames Valley Alerts.

Superintendent Rai added that the Thames Valley Police worked well with banks in the Royal Borough to help bust scams. Superintendent Rai thanked Councillor John Bowden for being very engaged in getting the message out at local meetings about preventative measures that can be put in place.

Councillor Hari Sharma asked the Chief Constable a supplementary question which was that although the Chief Constable did not have any figures available regarding victims of crime could he explain how many arrests had been made? The Chief Constable stated that it would depend on what information they could access but that he would see what they could find and arrange for the figures to be brought back to a future meeting. The Chief Constable confirmed that vulnerable people would receive urgent responses from the Thames Valley Police as they were a top priority. The Head of Community Protection & Enforcement added that the Council worked very closely with the Thames Valley Police dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime.

Councillor Simon Werner thanked the Chief Constable for the action taken to deal with the problems with Anti-Social Behaviour in the Thicket. Members were informed that six areas had been identified and that all but one was easily seen by the public. It was noted that the peak period was at lunchtimes when children were using the area. It was requested that action be taken from next July to deal with the problem again. Superintendent Rai responded by answering that she understood the seasonal trend happened every year and explained that the Thames Valley Police had since set up an on-going seasonal calendar to ensure the area was made as safe as possible in future.

Councillor Simon Werner added a supplementary question regarding the websites that advertised the Thicket as being the place to go and asked whether it would be possible for the Thames Valley Police to remove these sites or add a message to say the Thames Valley Police were dealing with the issues already mentioned. Superintendent Rai responded by stating that the websites were not advertising the area so the Thames Valley Police were limited in what they could do but would do some work to make people aware that the Thames Valley Police would be doing seasonal work in the area which would hopefully work as a deterrent.

Councillor Colin Rayner asked the Chief Constable the following questions:

'1. How important is RBWM Council's Community Wardens in fighting crime and reducing incidents of Anti Social Behaviour in the Royal Borough?

2. How important is RBWM Council's CCTV operators and CCTV control room cameras in fighting crime and reducing incidents of Anti Social Behaviour in the Royal Borough?

3. How many arrests have been made after the use of RBWM Council's CCTV footage in the last five years?

4. Is there anything RBWM Council's could do improve our CCTV service to the Thames Valley police that would lead more arrest and fur reduction in crime?'

The Chief Constable responded by answering by explaining that the first question had already been covered earlier in the meeting by way of what was happening on a local level. The Chief Constable stated that in his opinion the RBWM Council's Community Wardens were very important in helping fight crime and in reducing incidents of Anti Social Behaviour in the Royal Borough. Superintendent Rai added that there were certain areas / actions the Community Wardens dealt with that were key to the Thames Valley Police. Councillor Colin Rayner asked whether if the RBWM Council's Community Wardens were no longer available would it result in an increase in crime in the Borough? Superintendent Rai stated that whilst she could not answer that question but that as it stood she felt the Community Wardens dealt with a lot of crime and disorder prevention work which would have to fall elsewhere if they were no longer available.

The Chief Constable responded to Councillor Colin Rayner's second, third and fourth questions by explaining that he felt there were three benefits to having CCTV in place – the environment, community safety and the benefits post the event. Members were informed that one of the challenges of CCTV was that they were set up in a time where in there was quite a lot of money invested by central government but that technology had moved on quite quickly and needed updating to a digital system. It was noted that monitoring could be done in different way by having fewer hubs, that they could be more mobile and by CCTV being made to be more intelligent. The Chief Constable stated that unfortunately the Thames Valley Police did not track the number of arrests made with the direct help of CCTV as it was very difficult to do. The Chief Constable explained that there were a lot of research projects around the country that looked at the value of CCTV. Members were informed that the Chief Constable felt it would be worthwhile looking at the review undertaken that looked at the technical standard and the location of cameras.

Councillor Colin Rayner stated that Newbury had switched off some cameras that the Royal Borough had monitored and questioned what effect that had had on the policing in Newbury? The Chief Constable stated that whilst it was still early days the Thames Valley Police had not noticed seen an increase in violent crime. Members were informed that the CCTV cameras were still in place an could therefore be acting as a deterrent. It was noted that approximately twelve CCTV cameras were to be switched back on but would be monitored going forward by a business community network. The Chief Constable stated that the Thames Valley Police and the Council would collectively to think very carefully before considering switching off all the CCTV camera in the Royal Borough as it would have a significant impact at times on crime. Councillor Colin Rayner asked whether the Thames Valley Police would be happy for the Parish Council to monitor the CCTV cameras for example in Wraysbury if the service / funding was no longer offered by the Council? The Chief Constable stated that he would not object to that type of proposal as it would be the same service being delivered at the end of the day. Councillor John Bowden asked the Chief Constable to confirm that the CCTV would not be removed from outside the Castle in Windsor as it

would have a significant effect / security issue with events such as State Visits, changing of the guard, etc. The Chief Constable answered by stating that this was a clear example of where priorities could be made by ensuring this was a camera that was retained.

Cllr Werner stated his concern about the possibility of splitting the monitoring of car parks and whilst this was more of a Council issue, wondered how Members / officers felt about it. The Head of Community Protection & Enforcement explained that some of the CCTV cameras in the RBWM were already digital, some were still analogue. It was noted that the Council was currently reviewing all options for CCTV monitoring. Members were informed that the Council was looking at how the cameras were configured as the technology had been installed twenty years ago. It was noted that the Head of Community Protection & Enforcement felt there were opportunities to utilise technology as per the needs of the Borough. The Chairman stated that he felt the CCTV cameras were an asset to the Borough but agreed that they did need to be reviewed, but not necessarily reduced.

Councillor Colin Rayner asked whether body worn cameras had seen an affect of the number of arrests made and had encouraged better behaved criminals? The Chief Constable explained that the Thames Valley Police currently had approximately 300 body cameras in use and were looking to roll out more cameras over the next few months so every officer could have access to a body worn camera. It was noted that these cameras were felt to be great in dealing with crime and very helpful in domestic abuse cases as they helped record injuries and provided powerful images. Councillor Hari Sharma questioned whether more body worn cameras would put additional pressure on officers. The Chief Constable stated that he did not believe that to be the case and re-iterated that he felt body worn cameras definitely helped in the fight against crime. Superintendent Rai added that a common complaint from officers was that there were not enough body worn cameras available to use.

Councillor John Story asked the Chief Constable to clarify whether he had heard correctly from the short video at the start of the meeting that 20% of police time was spent on crime. The Chief Constable explained that of the number of incidents reported to the Police 20% related to crime which was also consistent nationally (20-25% across the board).

Councillor John Story asked the Chief Constable whether the public would notice any differences regarding the cost savings the Thames Valley Police were required to make. The Chief Constable explained that the Thames Valley Police would provide the same services but in cheaper, more cost effective ways but that he had been really pleased with the budget settlement from the Government. It was noted that whilst changes would still need to be made he hoped savings could be made in the long-term from investments.

The Chairman read out a question Councillor MJ Saunders who had been unable to attend the meeting had submitted in writing to the Chief Constable which was as follows:

‘Please can you describe the process for assessing the mental health of those taken into custody and, without disclosing any confidential information, please can you summarise how a recent custodian with mental health challenges was most effectively accommodated and how one was least effectively accommodated?’ The Chief Constable responded by answering that when a call was received and mental health concerns were noted people could be detained for their own safety. It was noted that

if there was no place of safety available then people suffering from mental health issues could be detained by the Police. Members were informed that when it was noted that offenders were suffering from mental health issues they would be detained in custody until a place of safety was available and that this did happen not only for the safety of the person in question but also for the general public's safety. It was noted that the 'triage system' in this area was very good.

The Chairman read out a question Councillor David Hilton who had been unable to attend the meeting had submitted in writing to the Chief Constable which was as follows:

'Statistics indicate that crime is falling and I am sure that dwelling burglary for, instance is, however, crime via the internet must be growing. I understand that the National Cyber crime unit deals with these crimes but do not report crime levels by areas. Will this change and when?' The Chief Constable responded by answering that Councillor Hilton was correct that crimes were not recorded locally although he could confirm that the number of cases had increased. It was noted that the term 'cyber crime' covered a wide range of offences. The Chief Constable informed Members that offences were reported into 'action fraud' and collated to see if an originator could be targeted.

Councillor Simon Werner asked what the Thames Valley Police saw the future of NAGs. The Chief Constable responded by explaining that the Thames Valley Police had undertaken a big review of neighbourhood policing and it had come out that a key element was engagement. It was noted that there was no point in running Forums that people did no longer want to attend but that existing structures / Forums might be in place. Members were informed that social media was now used to get community views but that the Royal Borough needed something, not necessarily geographically based that would work for everyone. Superintendent Rai added that locally she felt NAG groups to be very self-sufficient and that the Thames Valley Police worked with them rather than by leading them. It was noted that it was very much about building community resilience from within. Members were informed that Superintendent Rai always encouraged neighbourhood officers to support and give advice to NAGs.

Councillor Colin Rayner explained that there were a number of complaints about motorbikes and quad bike riders using the public highways not wearing crash helmets particularly on Saturday and Sunday afternoons in Wraysbury which he had been asked to raise at this meeting. The Chief Constable responded by stating that this was something the Thames Valley Police could pick up and deal with appropriately.

Councillor Hari Sharma asked the Chief Constable a supplementary question which was whether there was any cause of concern regarding FGM, forced marriage, CSC and honour based abuse in the Royal Borough. Superintendent Rai responded by explaining that she believed there was a level of underreporting not just in the Royal Borough but on a national level. It was noted that the Thames Valley Police were embarking on a partnership plan to better understand these incidents. Superintendent Rai stated that she was satisfied that there was no massive concern around CSC locally but that we should not be complacent. It was noted that Superintendent Rai believed it all started with safeguarding initiatives and then prosecutions at a later stage.

The Chairman thanked the Chief Constable and Superintendent Rai for an excellent presentation, for attending the Panel and answering all the questions asked, which Members echoed.

DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Chairman informed Members that the dates of the next meetings were as follows (19:00 start):

- Monday 14 November 2016.
- Monday 30 January 2017.
- Thursday 20 April 2017.

The meeting, which began at 6.00 pm, finished at 7.25 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....