

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Neighbourhoods & Community Services Scrutiny Panel **DATE:** 10 January 2013

CONTACT OFFICER: Sarah Forsyth (Scrutiny Officer)
(For all enquiries) (01753) 875657

WARD(S): All

PORTFOLIO: Councillor Munawar – Commissioner for Community & Leisure

PART I

TO NOTE

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

1 Purpose of Report

To provide the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel with information on the newly elected Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley in order to inform future discussions on crime and disorder.

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

That the Panel note the information in this report.

3 Community Strategy Priorities

Priorities:

Safer Communities – Slough Borough Council works collaboratively with partners to address the underlying causes of crime so communities feel safe and able to play an active part in making Slough a better place to live, work and visit. In dealing with crime, the creation of the Police and Crime Commissioner aims to bring greater public transparency and accountability to the Policing process.

4 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

One of the JSNA's priorities for 2012 is to reduce violent crime, domestic abuse and sexual abuse and Slough Borough Council will be working with the Police and Crime Commissioner so that these priorities are reflected in the priorities of the new Commissioner.

5 Other Implications

(a) Financial

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

(b) Risk Management

Risk	Mitigating action	Opportunities
Legal	None	None
Property	None	None
Human Rights	None	None
Health and Safety	None	None
Employment Issues	None	None
Equalities Issues	None	None
Community Support	None	None
Communications	None	None
Community Safety	None	None
Financial	None	None
Timetable for delivery	None	None
Project Capacity	None	None
Other	None	None

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act Implications associated with this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There is no identified need for the completion of an EIA associated with this report.

6 Supporting Information

Background

One of the primary changes to policing brought in by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 was the abolition of Police Authorities, to be replaced by directly-elected Police and Crime Commissioners.

The Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), who will oversee the largest non-metropolitan police force in the country, will be responsible for:

- holding the Chief Constable to account (this includes ensuring the force across the Thames Valley is efficient and effective at meeting local policing priorities);
- setting and updating a Police and Crime Plan;
- regularly engaging with the public and communities; and
- appointing, and where necessary dismissing, the Chief Constable.

The PCC will be expected to work in partnership across a range of agencies, local and national, to ensure a unified approach to preventing and reducing crime. Overall, the role of the PCC is strategic and must not interfere with the operational independence of police officers.

Thames Valley PCC Election

The elections for the first PCCs were held nationally (except in London) on Thursday 15 November 2012, with those elected officially taking office on Thursday 22 November 2012. In the Thames Valley, Anthony Stansfeld (Conservative) was

elected with 57.24% of the vote (after second preferences had been counted). The turnout across the Thames Valley was 13.3%.

Anthony Stansfeld is from West Berkshire, where he is currently an executive member for West Berkshire Council. He has been a member of the recently abolished Thames Valley Police Authority, sitting as Chair of the Performance Committee in 2011, and previously Vice Chair of the Audit, Governance and Risk Committee.

Council Tax Precept

The PCC, in consultation with the Police and Crime Panel, is responsible for setting the Police's annual council tax precept.

On 19 November 2012, Anthony Stansfeld was interviewed by BBC News (reported online) stating that he would be supporting a 2% council tax rise for the coming year, and 2.5% the following year. The aim of this would be increase the force budget by £9.4m in 2013/14 following recent cuts.

At the time of writing, the exact precept had not been agreed.

Police and Crime Plan

The PCC must produce a Police and Crime Plan by 31 March 2013. The Plan, which covers the PCC's term of office (four years, maximum of two terms) must set out the strategic police and crime objectives for the Thames Valley with regard to:

- the policing of the area;
- crime and disorder reduction; and
- the discharge of national or international functions.

In order to ensure it reflects the issues affecting the Thames Valley, the Plan is expected to bring together the priorities of all agencies and authorities responsible for tackling crime and improving community safety. To assist with this, the Plan must be developed in consultation with the Chief Constable, the Police and Crime Panel, communities and victims of crime.

The Thames Valley Police Authority (TVPA), at its final meeting on 16 November 2012 reviewed the work that had been undertaken, to that date, on a Police and Crime Plan. The document was a draft and would be subject to amendment by the incoming PCC to reflect any individual priorities or manifesto commitments. However, it was seen to reflect the likely priorities and strategic direction for the Thames Valley Police over the next four years.

The draft strategic objectives considered by the TVPA on 16 November were:

- 1) To cut crimes that are of most concern to the community.
- 2) To increase the visible presence of the police and partners to cut crime and the fear of crime, and reassure communities.
- 3) To protect our communities from the most serious harm.
- 4) To communicate and engage with the public in order to cut crime and the fear of crime, and build trust and confidence with our communities.

- 5) Work with Criminal Justice Partners to reduce crime and support victims and witnesses.
- 6) To ensure policing, community safety and criminal justice services are delivered efficiently and effectively.

Although we don't yet have the final version of the Plan the strategic objectives appear to target the major concerns of Slough. For example, the top three themes highlighted under objective 1 are violent crime, anti-social behaviour and acquisitive crime, all of which match the top three priorities of the Safer Slough Partnership for 2011-14.

All of the strategic objectives would require the collaboration of partners to be achieved. As the PCC is the recipient of all funding related to policing and crime reduction, including the government grant and precept, the allocation of money to services will be made in accordance with the objectives set out in the Plan.

7 **Conclusion**

This report provides a summary of the new Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley, and work that will be going on in terms of the precept and Police and Crime Plan over the coming months.

8 **Background Papers**

- 1 - Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 report (Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 13 February 2012)
- 2 - Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (The Stationary Office)
- 3 - Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill report (Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel, 15 September 2011)
- 4 - Police and Social Responsibility Bill (Policy Briefing 8, Centre for Public Scrutiny, February 2011)
- 5 - Policing White Paper (Policy Briefing 5, Centre for Public Scrutiny, July 2010)