

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel
DATE: 1st March 2018
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PART I **FOR COMMENT & CONSIDERATION**

THAMES VALLEY POLICE OVERVIEW

1. **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of Thames Valley Police locally and to respond specifically to:

- Questions specified by members of the Panel prior to the meeting

2. **Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

The Committee is requested to note the report.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

The work of Thames Valley Police ensures that local communities remain safe and protected. This has a particular link to the following strategic priorities:

- Protecting vulnerable children

3b. **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

Thames Valley Police's co-operation with Slough Borough Council also supports the following Five Year Plan outcomes:

- Our children and young people will have the best start in life and opportunities to give them positive lives.
- Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and visit.

4. **Other Implications**

As the report relates to the functions of a separate organisation, there are no direct wider implications for SBC.

5. **Supporting Information**

- 5.1 Policing in Slough is the responsibility of the local Area Commander who has direct responsibility for response, investigation and neighbourhood functions. This is supplemented by Force resources and teams which cover a number of specialist functions such as Force CID (investigations into more serious offences), Roads Policing, Armed Response Teams and Protecting Vulnerable People Department (which covers domestic abuse and child offences).
- 5.2 In June 2017, TVP introduced a new operating model, to target its resources in order to provide a more effective and efficient service to its communities. As a result of the model and some sophisticated demand modelling, Slough Local Police Area (LPA) was given an additional 5 officers on top of its establishment. This is in context with some LPAs losing officers and reflects the complexities of a modern and diverse borough.
- 5.3 The new model maintained response teams to provide 24/7 coverage, and are the first response to calls to service. This demand consists of both crime and non-crime incidents. Non-crime incidents cover a multitude of occurrences but include fear for welfare and missing person incidents. This team no longer routinely carry an investigative capability and therefore has been streamlined to provide more specialist support.
- 5.4 The reduction in the size of the response teams resulted in an increase in the investigative team. This team deals with all investigations, including the more complex crimes and those that are subject of higher threat, harm and risk. Typically, offences include burglary, robbery, fraud, serious assaults and some sexual offences. They also provide support to the response team during surge demand periods.
- 5.5 The neighbourhood teams remain although there is now better distinction between problem solving and engagement functions. The historically good relationship with Slough Borough Council prevails, particularly through the SSP and Community Safety teams.
- 5.6 An issue facing the whole Force is around recruitment. The Force is under-established and is currently committed to a proactive recruitment campaign, including recruiting temporary civilian investigators. The impact on Slough is that there is a high proportion of student officers who require training before they are fully effective. With many Force also recruiting at the same time, this is a significant challenge.
- 5.7 The Commander has kept the following local police priorities for this year:
- Protecting children and vulnerable adults
 - Reducing the harm caused by domestic abuse
 - Investing in staff
 - Disrupt organised and problem crime groups, including residential burglary
 - Engage with and understand our communities

Overall Performance

- 5.8 Subject to final audits, performance in Slough has been very positive. While overall crime in TVP has increased by 10%, the increase in Slough is only 4%.

Slough has experienced the largest reduction in residential burglaries than any other LPA in TVP with a current reduction of 8%, compared to a Force increase of 19%. Victim based crime has increased by 3% in Slough (TVP 10%) and crimes against society have increased by 12% (TVP 8%). The reason for the larger increase in crimes against society is largely due to the focus on organised crime and youth violence, and therefore possession of offensive weapons, public order offences and drug trafficking have increased. Over the year there have been some significant spikes in vehicle related crimes, reflected in increases in theft from motor vehicles, and theft of motor vehicles. A local focus on hotels (theft of tools from vans) and cross border intelligence sharing has managed to reduce this impact. There is a significant increase in theft of motor vehicles largely due to an increase in the theft of motor bikes.

HMICFRS Inspection

- 5.9 A recent inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services found TVP to be inadequate in terms of how it recorded crimes. It found that the Force under recorded crimes particularly in relation to violent crimes, rape and domestic abuse, but acknowledged that the Force was taking steps to ensure it corrected the accuracy of recording. The issue relates to how matters are recorded and there was no suggestion that there was any impact on safeguarding. In effect, some matters were recorded as incidents as opposed to crimes. It is difficult to identify the local impact because the audit did not break down the results of the inspection by LPA. However, this is obviously a Force priority and the LPA are fully supportive of that. It is unlikely however that this would have a disproportionate impact on the success of Slough LPA compared to the rest of the Force and therefore the current performance can still be viewed positively.

6. Conclusion

The priorities of the Local Commander focus on threat, harm and risk. The introduction of the new operating model was a significant change programme for the Force. However, the performance within Slough has remained consistent and compares favourably with other TVP LPAs. The reduction in residential burglaries is a particular success story. Adherence to crime recording standards needs to improve for the LPA and Force as highlighted by HMICFRS. Recruitment for the Force is challenging and an aggressive recruitment campaign is under way.

7. Background Papers

None