

MINUTES OF CHILTERN & SOUTH BUCKS POLICING ISSUES FORUM

Wednesday 26th June 2024, via MS Teams

In attendance:

Chiltern & S Bucks Policing Issues Forum: Andy Garnett (in the Chair), Robert Gibson
Thames Valley Police (TVP): Inspector James Ellis
Resident participants.

Video playback of meeting at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8lleNRBXSDU>

Thames Valley Police presentation - Community Inspector James Ellis

PDF of TVP presentation at
<https://www.csb-forum.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Policing-Issues-Forum-June-2024.pdf>

Inspector Ellis began by explaining that community and neighborhood policing are now synonymous. Community policing is one very small part of the policing whole. This includes response policing, investigatory teams, roads policing, armed police and various other forms of policing.

Inspector Ellis started with the good news that certain recent trends in Chiltern and South Bucks were looking promising. Against a Force target to reduce neighborhood crime by 5%, our area it is currently performing better. Very recent trends for burglary, robbery, and vehicle crime are downwards.

To give a flavour of policing operations, in particular in relation to burglary, Inspector Ellis went through various operations, and these are listed in his presentation.

In particular he singled out Operation Habitual. There had been 9 overnight car key burglaries in Wycombe and South Bucks involving 1-3 males entering premises overnight, via insecure points of entry: car keys, bank cards and laptops stolen. There have been no related offences since mid April; coinciding with the charge and remand of a Slough resident, for some of these and like offences.

As regards rural (business) burglary, there is a current spate at farms and business premises. Work relating to antisocial behaviour should be helped by a new local policing app. This will document patrols within hotspot zones and help police provide a visible presence.

Pony and traps activity on the A413 remain a problem, and community policing has been told by the most senior officers within TVP that it cannot continue to pour resources into proactive policing to anticipate and head off this problem - but can respond. There is a need to insist on partners doing their work, and among other things the resurfacing of the roads with tarmac which inhibits use by horses is being considered.

Operation Pandilla will come in the coming month, with a focus on vehicle crime.

Drugs are continuing to be taken very seriously, and of course are one of the existing resident-setFocus areas for community policing.

Whereas it had originally been thought that the Chiltern and South Bucks area would be reduced to two sergeants, an additional Sergeantpost has been agreed, with PCC funding. This should mean one sergeant in Chesham, Amersham and the Missendens; one in Chalfonts, Gerrards Cross, Wexham and Ivers; and one covering Cheping Wye, Beaconsfield and Beeches.

As for reporting to the public TVP is looking at the possibility of video reports. In the meantime, our neighborhood reports (all available on the Forum website) give a wealth of detail on recent policing in neighborhoods.

Q&A:

Q: There are ASB issues in the Ivers. Ball bearing slingshots are a particular example. We don't have any phone numbers or contact details for local police, and the loss of Sergeant Dan Ryder is being felt. How can we have direct content contact with local cops? Perhaps via WhatsApp or a messaging system?

A: We want to improve this, but right now have availability issues. Hopeful that the arrival of a new Sergeant will help. Also use of app and looking to instil expectation of visibility, foot patrolling in new additions to team. Want to have officers more 'embedded' in Ivers community.

Q: (Representing Community of British Asians of Amersham, Chesham and Chalfonts). The community is seeing quite a lot of WhatsApp hacks - trying to extract personal information, for example from the elderly. What is TVP doing about awareness, and about this activity itself? Also, excluding burglary, what other crime types are showing up?

A: TVP has its own investigative unit. National Crime Agency is the lead agency on these matters, and within it, CEOP works to keep children and young people safe from sexual exploitation and abuse. Also National Cyber Security Centre, National Cyber Helpline: <https://www.thecyberhelpline.com/> TVP runs local events, and I would like to create a roadshow-type prevention event that can be recorded and permanently available.

Q: We have a number of issues around Holmer Green - for example, riding motor bikes in a dangerous and antisocial manner, abandoned vehicles, untaxed vehicles, lack of police presence around schools, heavy lorries using HG as a rat run etc. Even accepting that not all these are police matters, there is an issue of communication and visibility. Echo earlier question about having easier direct contact with community Police. Could a TVP officer attend a Village Society meeting for example?

A: TVP community policing teams want to be out in communities and dealing with problems. Police aren't always the natural lead agency, and more collaborative approach, involving more agencies, may help. Concept of 'community resilience'. Would like to harness Community

Boards to lead community forums to look at long-term solutions to issues, and would commit officers to sit within such working groups

Q: Concern that TVP not getting the support from Neighbourhood Watch that it should?

A: Yes, see great opportunities for collaboration. Insp Jodie Duggan holding NHW portfolio now - a 'bigger plan in the offing', for now work in progress.

Q: For the purposes of lobbying, which are the other agencies that could get involved re pony and trap racing?

A: Highways Bucks, Community Safety Partnership, and your Community Board. Changing nature/configuration of road could provide a lasting solution.

Presentation of Survey Results by Robert Gibson

PDF of presentation available at

https://www.csb-forum.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/June24_presentation_PDF.pdf

Key points:

- Burglary the dominant concern, top in 5 of 6 Community Board areas, and nominated by 76% of respondents, against 53% last time. Police.UK figures show that all neighbourhoods have experienced at least one spike in the past 9 months, and the overall trend is upwards.
- Increase in share of Vehicle Crime
- Drugs #2 overall, Speeding #3, and top concern in Missendens for 8th consecutive survey

Robert also highlighted recent work on Forum website. In addition to original purpose of engagement with TVP, sections on Neighbourhood Watch and Community Speedwatch, areas in which residents can contribute to personal; and community resilience. Section on Frauds and Scams to give information on crime type to which residents are most likely to fall victim. Also pointed out comprehensive collection of TVP Neighbourhood Policing newsletters.

Q: have the sanctions under Community Speedwatch become more effective?

A: Insp Ellis explained 'tiered response' depending on number of instances of offending; they are much more efficiently delivered, and with more joined-up thinking (eg across regions).

Q: relating to fly tipping

A: in relation to 'industrial scale' flytipping, have had some recent major successes working with partner agencies eg Environment Agency, Buckinghamshire Council. Some significant arrests made. 'Project Angola'.

Q: could some of the seasonality trends be useful to overall police strategy?

A: TVP does use analysts to help direct policing effectively.

Priority/focus areas setting

Decision to RETAIN Burglary - Drugs - Speeding as focus areas.