

# South and Vale IAG Meeting

## Minutes



**DATE:** 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024  
**TIME:** 5pm – 7pm  
**LOCATION:** Abingdon Police Station/MS Teams

### Attendance

David Orpwood	IAG Chairman
Supt Prescott-Mayling	New LPA Commander for TVP South and Vale
	IAG member
	IAG member
	IAG member
	IAG member
	IAG member
	IAG member
	IAG member
	IAG member
Admin Support Officer	Minute taker
<b>Apologies</b>	
	IAG member
	IAG member
	IAG member
	IAG member

### Agenda

1. Welcome and Aims of the IAG
2. Issues of Criticality (if required)
3. Community Engagement
4. Force Review
5. Performance Update
6. AOB

#### 1. Introductions

The Chair opened the meeting and introductions were made by everyone attending. The two new members were welcomed.

The minutes and actions from the last meeting were agreed.

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### 2. Issues of Criticality

The Supt brought the group's attention to two potential critical incidents on the local policing area that we have declared since the last IAG meeting. Potential critical incidents need to be kept in view to understand the circumstances of what happened. The effectiveness of the Police service provided may impact the confidence the victim, victim's family or the community have in the Police.

### 3. Community Engagement

The Chair asked the group about their involvement in the local community since the last meeting or for any feedback they had for the Police.

**Local questionnaire** - One member of the IAG had conducted a survey of approximately 50 people in her neighbourhood and their views on policing. Report below:

*I spoke to around fifty friends and neighbours about police matters / conduct. However, they come from a mainly affluent area of society and had I approached others in a poorer area e.g. South Abingdon, I might have got a slightly different result. People mainly feel that the police do a good job under difficult circumstances. They appreciate that there are a lack of funds, manpower and Government legislation. Also that there are good policemen and bad ones as there are in every industry.*

*These are the main points of feedback that I received.*

*Most were not aware that the police counters are shut at weekends and after 4.p.m. on weekdays. In principle although those I spoke to hadn't needed to visit the Police Station, they weren't happy that it was only manned for such short hours. Opening hours are not up to date on the internet!*

*They feel there should be consistency with regard to all police areas regarding their computers, way they work and so on but this would be a Government issue. Much like the NHS – not a joined up service.*

*They regretted the lack of police presence in certain areas and that you only see PCSO's in the town centre or fleeting police cars going along the road, but appreciated that the police target trouble hotspots.*

*An occasional presence e.g. a consultation perhaps outside the Long Furlong Community Centre or other such places once in a while would be appreciated for the public to ask questions.*

*They feel that younger people e.g. schoolchildren and students have little regard for the police or the law and this has led to knife crime, theft and burglaries. Indeed my husband and I were walking past the Precinct in Abingdon recently when we saw a group of schoolchildren between Poundland and the Library all huddled together. Two PCSO's walked past and down the Precinct upon which one of the schoolchildren clearly said,*

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*“they’ve gone now!” This was followed by a noisy outburst. I don’t know what followed as I was on my way to an appointment. Had those PCSO’s walked back, they might have seen more.*

*The sector of society that I spoke to, did not go to nightclubs or out so much at night, and were not subjected to attacks on women or knife crime although they were aware of such things and did have concerns.*

*There were a few complaints about the 20 mile an hour on our roads but that is a local council matter and not for the police. I don’t see the Police having the time or manpower to enforce this limit. Similarly, those I spoke to were in agreement that it would be impossible for the police to respond to every crime especially given the problem of retention of staff. The Government is being unrealistic to impose this.*

*There are concerns about cyber-crime and fraud – not least the time it takes to deal with such things.*

*The biggest complaint by all was the lawless attitude of those riding bicycles, e-bikes and scooters also those delivery cargo bikes. Bus drivers, motorists and the general public that I spoke to are horrified at the way those individuals ride on pavements often silently, weave in and out of traffic, and don’t observe traffic lights with scant concern for their own safety and it is generally the motorist who gets the blame if an accident happens.*

*They are also often without lights, reflective clothing and often with no helmets especially females who want to preserve their hairstyles. Nothing appears to be done about this by the police. Indeed it was pointed out that in places like Holland, Denmark and so on, cyclists are much more obedient with regard to traffic laws and abiding by the cycling road lanes. Personally, I feel that all bicycles should be fitted with lights and bells by the manufacturers. Indeed some years ago in Oxford, I knocked over a young male student. It was early evening, and dark and I was doing a three-point turn in a narrow road and I simply didn’t see him. He had no lights and wore dark clothing. I stopped immediately and got out of my car to find pedestrians telling him off as it was his fault trying to get by a moving vehicle in such circumstances. He very quickly moved off and was unhurt.*

**Action: The Chairman asked if the Police could give us some information around the legislation of e-scooters at the next meeting. Update – we have requested this to be presented at the next IAG.**

An IAG member asked for some advice around an elderly neighbour who is declining mentally and worried about him driving and how to report it. Another member suggested that concerns of this nature should be reported to Adult Social Care.

Another concern that was raised was around the Hindu community and their concerns around the theft of their gold and how can they safeguard their jewellery. The Chief Inspector suggested that they would be happy to discuss any concerns about gold and jewellery thefts

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and give advice on security. The main concerns on the South and Vale are theft of tools from vehicles.

**Action: To send the relevant IAG member some security advice around family gold theft – completed**

**PCSO Engagement** - One member asked for an update on PCSOs as they think their role has been vital with community engagement and building relationships with young people. After the force review and when we become Oxfordshire Local command Unit (LCU) we will have 20 more neighbourhood police officers in Oxfordshire.

There has also been a rise in your council tax which will pay for 15 further neighbourhood officers in Oxfordshire. We have less PCSO vacancies than the rest of the force. There is one vacancy at in the Abingdon Neighbourhood Team. The main vacancies we hold for PCSOs are at Thame and Henley. We would be keen to hear of any events where we could do a recruitment drive for PCSOs in the area.

**Action: Chief Inspector Patterson to pass onto one of the IAG members the neighbourhoods that each PCSO is responsible for (especially the Abingdon area)**

Ride-alongs – a member asked how a younger person could get a taster of being a police officer and it was suggested that a ride-along would be a good option. When someone is 18 years old they can apply to spend some time with an officer and go out with them on patrol.

**Action: the ASO to send the IAG member an application form for a ride-along to pass onto their contact – Completed.**

**Calling 101 (non-emergency number)** – one member discussed the fact that if you call 101, to update a 999 call is the last option given on the automated options message. The Supt suggested that if it was more information about a serious crime, you could call back on 999. However on the original call they were told to update anything using 101.

**Action: The Supt to feed this back to contact management – completed, response from Contact Management below:**

*When a member of the public needs to provide an update on a previously reported incident via 101 they need to press 2 and 2 to get through to updates. This is not the last option in the list of available options, it is the second one. The automated message will always suggest an online option as we have a process set up to deal with the updates provided to us online which takes this work away from an operator having to do it and in turn speeds up the 101 average speed to answer. Online can often be the most efficient way to report many updates. If the update is urgent, and not appropriate for online submission, the caller can stay on the line and they will go through to an operator. The force aims to answer all 101 asap but if more than 15% of calls wait more than 10 minutes we assess this as not meeting our target. Last month 10% of calls waited longer than 10 minutes. There is some variation in volumes*

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*of calls to the police which is seasonal and therefore in the summer we have to work harder to meet this performance expectation. For context we had 396,000 calls on 101 last year and 375,000 on 999.*

**Barracks** – One of the IAG is from the local Barracks and there was a discussion around Policing of the area. Currently, there is a big deployment away and when they are back you might see some activity in the local area. TVP South & Vale have a good relationship with the Barracks who will call us if we need to attend any incidents.

**Trust and confidence in the Police** – One member of the IAG is a Social worker and works with a wide range of people including the vulnerable. His main concern was around vulnerable people/victims not being confident enough to talk to the Police and trying to convince them that it's the right thing to do as they are concerned if they are going to be treated fairly, respectfully and with empathy. It was asked if the Police collect data/survey the public. Yes - we survey victims and those who report crime and assess the initial contact by calling 101 for example, to the initial contact with an officer then around empathy and professionalism. We generally score well in these but don't do as well in providing regular updates to victims.

However, this data is not collecting from those who have not interacted with the Police or maybe vulnerable groups. A critical incident from another TVP area was mentioned and how this would have made vulnerable women and girls less likely to speak out as the Police are a critical part of the safeguarding process.

We have done some surveys with local schools and young farmers to get their views on Policing and issues they are concerned about. Youth workers have a large part to play in this with young vulnerable people as they will be the ones picking up on most of them in a local area. School's need to do more for the vulnerable young people to give them the confidence to disclose and ask for support.

The Chairman spoke about his engagement with Parish Councils around what he does on the IAG. He has also written to MPs in support of getting the South-East allowance raised from £3000 to £5000 for officers.

### **Officer retention**

A question was asked about the uplift in officers and whether we now have more. We are up slightly but we are losing officers, mainly down to poor pay and heavy workloads compared to other careers.

Exit interviews are carried out with officers when they resign to make sure the Force has an understanding of the issues. Night working, for example, is one of the issues raised. Some new officers need more support/confidence and this is put in place early on. The Supt has a meeting with all new starters to make sure they feel welcome and to give them a chance to discuss any concerns. The Supt also outlined some of the pressures and long working hours that are common for officers.

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**Action: To invite the relevant contact to attend at the next meeting to update us on retention.**

### **LCU Implementation update**

There was an update on the Oxfordshire Local Command Unit Implementation. This is when the South & Vale will merge with Oxford and Cherwell and West local Policing areas.

At the moment there are three Superintendents under a Chief Superintendent. This will be reduced to two Superintendents under the Ch/Supt. One will be a Detective Superintendent who will have responsibility for the Detectives in CID, Priority Crime team, Domestic abuse etc and the other will be a uniformed Superintendent responsible for Incident and Crime Response (Blue light) and Geographic Neighbourhood Policing.

We do not know for sure at this stage but the IAG could potentially become Oxfordshire wide to follow the merger.

**Date of next meeting:** Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024, 5-7pm, Abingdon Police Station.