

DATE: 24th January 2023
TIME: 5pm – 7pm
LOCATION: Abingdon Police Station/MS Teams

Attendance

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| David Orpwood | IAG Chairman |
| Supt Prescott-Mayling | New LPA Commander for TVP South and Vale |
| Supt Dave Horsburgh | Outgoing LPA Commander |
| Chief Inspector Rachel Patterson | Deputy Commander |
| | IAG member |
| | IAG member |
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| | IAG member |
| Admin Support Officer | Minute taker |
| Apologies | |
| | IAG member |
| | IAG member |
| | IAG member |

1. Introductions

The Chairman opened the meeting and introductions were made by everyone attending. This meeting is Supt Dave Horsburgh’s last IAG before his retirement. The group were introduced to Supt Lewis-Prescott Mayling who started as the South and Vale Commander on 23rd January, and Chief Inspector Patterson who started as the Deputy Commander in November.

Supt Prescott-Mayling has come to us on promotion from the Violence Reduction Unit and has over 20 years-experience as an officer in the Oxfordshire area.

2. Community Policing

The Chair asked the IAG members present what they want from Community Policing. The members said they would like to see more police presence in the Community. Neighbourhood Watch was mentioned as a way of sharing information and the use of

WhatsApp groups for smaller communities which helps people feel less isolated. It was felt that Neighbourhood Watch has declined in recent years but IAG members would like to make contact with area co-ordinators. The group were encouraged to all sign up to receive Thames Valley Alerts (www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk) to get regular crime updates and crime prevention advice.

The South and Vale only have about half of their PCSO (Police Community Support Officer) positions filled at the moment. This is something that TVP are looking into. We have had an uplift of over 60 officers in the last year and therefore more officers on patrol.

The lack of response from the Police was raised as a concern amongst the general public and if the Local Policing areas are reduced to five areas will response rates be effected further? South and Vale, Oxford and Cherwell and West policing areas might be merged to become Oxfordshire policing area. The group discussed the pros and cons if this proposal goes ahead with partnership working and resourcing/deployment around where the demand is.

The problems in the Met Police was mentioned and officers involved in Violence Against Women. The Superintendent explained how TVP invests in the Professional Standards division and we are revisiting vetting for officers and staff and how often we do this.

3. South and Vale update (Supt Lewis Prescott-Mayling/Supt Dave Horsburgh)

The force has a number of priorities set for a year - reducing crime incidents, bringing more offenders to justice and protecting vulnerable people and improving our service. The South and Vale is at the top or near the top for performance in these areas. The new Chief Constable's plan will include rural crime, the service we provide to our victims and community policing.

Officers on the South and Vale manage their work-loads really well with a manageable number of crimes so they can focus on getting the results. We focus on our crime recording and for example in 2021/22 we knew approximately 50% of our rural crime and due to improvement in recording we now know over 90%. We make it clear what is expected of our officers – stop searches, putting in intelligence and getting positive results for our victims (which can be community resolutions). We monitor this through Health Checks for each team with their Inspectors where the expectations are made clear and provide the support that is needed. Positive Outcomes are not always charges and can be community resolution between the two parties involved.

Rural Crime will stay as one of the Force's priorities that will be set out by the new Chief Constable for the year. The Chairman stated he felt that they Rural Crime Taskforce number should be increased. The Superintendent spoke about the competing demands on

the force and the uplift in officers has allowed us to create a team to deal with indecent images of children and deal with the high risk sexual offenders. These are prioritised on our area. The South and Vale has to parade at least 14 PCs with 2 Sgts in the Incident Crime Response Teams (ICR - those who respond to 999 calls/blue lights). Until we have an uplift that strengthens our ICR teams we cannot move officers into teams like the Rural Crime Taskforce. Many Neighbourhood (Community) officers have been backfilling the shortfall in the ICR teams and we are now starting to see them go back into their Neighbourhood teams due to the uplift.

One member asked whether we can use civilians to undertake some of the roles in the police. Civilian roles allow support in a lot of areas but we still need warranted powers who can arrest. Civilian staff cost less and we can use them to interview, for example and therefore save money.

The group discussed the problems with the lack of resourcing on the ICR teams due to the Degree entry route allowing them a lot of protected learning time. Forces are now opening up different routes into policing which opens it up to people who have had different careers and experience. Ex-military personal joining up and how TVP want to encourage this was also discussed. For example tax incentives and shortened training times for ex-military are being considered.

New legislation is now in place to make sure we are tackling violent crime and some of the requirements that fall to Community Safety Partnerships at a district level to reduce serious violent crime like domestic abuse, violence against women and girls and knife crime. We need to work with our partners and concentrate on where the crime is. The group asked if the information on where the resourcing is most needed on the area can be found publically. The TVP Website does have some of this information and officers post regular updates on Facebook. Some of the group felt that Facebook was not an appropriate media outlet to update the public due to declining numbers. Nextdoor.com was mentioned by a member of the group as a preferred platform. The Supt encouraged the group to follow the TVP South and Vale Facebook (www.facebook.com/TVPSouthandVale) as they will get regular updates from officers and what they have been responding too (The South and Vale FB site has 21,000 followers) and Thames Valley Police (Force level) has 246,000 followers.

4. Drugs and Young People

A small number of the IAG, including Supt Prescott-Mayling and the Chair are having a separate meeting to discuss Drugs and young people. A representative from a local charity will be attending to give their views. Gateway drugs and the legalisation of some drugs will be discussed. Any actions from this meeting will be fed back to the IAG meeting next time. This meeting is being set up in response from the last meeting where the group discussed the fact that cannabis seems to be considered widely acceptable. The Chair expressed

concerns about it being a gateway drug that leads onto wider issues, country drug lines etc and wants to explore this further especially for young people's welfare.

There is a central government strategy called From Harm to Hope – which is a 10 year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives. This plan is to cut crime and save lives by reducing the supply and demand for drugs and delivering a high quality treatment and recovery system. A lot of money is being invested in diversion.

The South and Vale Detective Chief Inspector (DCI) does a lot of work around diversion. One of the group said they would be really interested to invite the DCI to the next meeting to hear more about it.

5. AOB

- The Chair to organise a separate meeting as a sub group to discuss gateway drugs. This is to include members of the IAG who work with young people and a representative from a local charity that supports young people in the area.

The Chair closed the meeting wishing Supt Dave Horsburgh well on his retirement.

Next meeting date:

- 19th April 23, 5-7pm