

DATE: 4th May 2022
TIME: 5pm – 7pm
LOCATION: Abingdon Police Station/MS Teams

Attendance

David Orpwood	IAG Chairman
Supt Dave Horsburgh	LPA Commander for TVP South and Vale
	IAG member
	IAG member
	IAG member
	IAG member
	IAG member
	IAG member
Inspector Stuart Hutchings	Rural Crime Taskforce Inspector
Sgt Gavin Ward	Problem Solving Team
DS Isaac Van den Eshof	CID
Julia Williams	ASO/Minute taker
Apologies	
	IAG member
	IAG member
	IAG member

Agenda

1. Introduction and welcome.
2. Minutes of last meeting.
3. Supt. Horsburgh: S&V update and challenges to include recruitment, officers' number and officer retention.
4. Stop & Search
5. Members update
6. Rural Crime Taskforce
7. Project Vigilant
8. AOB

1. Introductions

The Chairman opened the meeting and introductions were made by everyone attending. The Chair mentioned the progress towards the introduction of Harper's Law which means emergency workers will receive greater protection from violent criminals and introduce

mandatory life sentences for anyone convicted of killing and emergency work whilst committing a crime.

2. Minutes/actions from the last meeting

The Group were happy with the minutes from the last meeting with no issues raised.

3. South and Vale update and challenges (Supt Dave Horsburgh)

Superintendent Dave Horsburgh introduced himself as the new South and Vale Commander. Dave has worked in the Police for nearly 30 years and his career includes counter corruption, investigation in the professional standards department, counter terrorism and CID (Criminal Investigation Department). Before being promoted to Superintendent, Dave was the Detective Chief Inspector for the South and Vale.

The South and Vale is a large geographic policing area of nearly 500 square miles and has a large rural community and seven market towns. Supt Horsburgh went through some presentation slides and picked out some of the highlights:

- South and Vale have managed to improve our positive outcome rate in the current year.
- Volume of crime has gone up by 13% to 14,171 offences over the last year.
- We had reduced the number of knife crimes on the LPA, which is due to a new way that we are recording, reviewing each case in a specific weekly knife crime meeting which is attended by all departments for intel sharing. All occurrences are reviewed by a detective and the risk identified.
- The use of Out of Court Disposals (OOCD) was explained. These provide justice for our victims without relying on the courts. We have pushed hard with education, training, peer support, scrutiny and clear expectations.
- With regard to robbery. South and Vale Robbery figures sit at: 52 with a target to decrease by 5% below 34 robberies per year. There are no identifiable series on the South and Vale with the crimes spread proportionately across population centres within the 7 x market towns. Repeat offenders are rare, with all of those identified charged with offences and engaged by multiple departments. CID and PCT. The detection rate currently stands at 35.4% (2nd highest in TVP), meaning those that do commit offences are identified and pursued. Out of those 18 repeat offenders, 10 have been charged or received a community resolution and 14 either have an RMO or are being managed by multiple departments through CDL / CCE or knife crime risk management processes.
- Burglary figures (residential) have dropped by 18% on the South and Vale achieving the set performance indicator. This is however the lowest fall across the whole of TVP. 5th highest in Force in volume. This is being tackled through a number of means – inclusive of target hardening, media exposure and activity by the rural crime task force and increased ANPR coverage in the area. Our geographical area poses some complex demands in reducing burglary as a high percentage of crime is carried out by travelling organised criminals from outside the South and Vale who commit offences then leave.

The Chairman, David Orpwood, said that he is keen to see more police visibility in the South and Vale and worries about the public perception of the police because of the lack of presence. The Superintendent talked through some of the resourcing problems on the area and how new routes into policing had opened up to help improve this.

Uplift programme update:

- Thames Valley Police has exceeded the Year Two recruitment target set by the Home Office, as part of the National Police Uplift Programme, with the force welcoming an additional 368 police officers since September 2019. This brings the total number of officers up to 4618, as at March 2022.
- New officers have been allocated to Local Policing teams and we are expecting ICR numbers to steadily increase through the year as these new officers become fit for independent patrol, enabling us to start to increase capacity and resilience across the organisation. The ICR Programme will continue to work closely with the Uplift Programme building on the excellent work already ongoing on LPAs to ensure that our new officers are welcomed, supported and retained.
- The Uplift programme presents policing with a unique opportunity to improve representation within the service and Thames Valley Police have certainly capitalised on this with 13% of all new officers in the past year coming from ethnically diverse backgrounds and 47% have been women.
- The force now offers a number of different entry routes; ensuring the broadest appeal including routes for both those without a degree and degree holders.
- In order to manage the increased number of trainees the force recently opened training facilities at HQ North in Kidlington. These newly refurbished training rooms ensure the force can maximise our estate and cope with the increasing number of new recruits. Practical elements of training will continue to be delivered at our training centre in Sulhamstead, Berkshire.

Ex-military personnel used to often join up as officers, however due to the College of Policing changing the entry requirements to needing a degree this changed in recent years. The Chairman said he would be keen to support this initiative and an action put in for the Supt and Chair to discuss this in more detail. Supt Horsburgh is exploring processes (with our HQ personnel department) being trialled by other forces which could make the step from military service to policing simpler.

Action: Supt Horsburgh and David Orpwood to meet to discuss how to encourage ex-military officers on the LPA to join Thames Valley Police.

Police mentoring was also mentioned by one the IAG members and how we can use retired/more experienced officers to mentor some of the younger in service. Mentoring is already well established on the South and Vale as Thames Valley Police has a mentoring programme in place for officers and staff.

The group also had a discussion around Police volunteers and the Supt asked the group to think about how we can utilise them.

Action: The IAG to think of ideas of how we can utilise our volunteers, especially now that we are starting to welcome them back into the police stations now that the pandemic restrictions have been lifted.

4. Stop and Search – Sgt Gavin Ward

Sgt Gavin Ward is one of the two Problem Solving Team Sergeants and has a team of ten PCs including a Youth Engagement and School's officer and also a newly appointed Youth Engagement and School's PCSO.

Sgt Ward went through a presentation on Stop and Search. The presentation covered the powers and procedures, what the reasonable grounds are for suspicion, and the stop and search powers. Some equipment was shown including search tongues (to allow bladed articles to be removed from pockets safely), biometrics (finger print recognition that can be used when out on patrol) and knife wands which are similar to a metal detector and will detect hidden weapons. The IAG were keen to know what the South and Vale Stop and Search figures were like in comparison to other policing areas within TVP.

Action: At the next IAG meeting videos of examples of Stop and Searches will be shown.

Action: At the next IAG comparison figures and results of Stop and Searches from other policing areas to be shown to the group.

Action: The IAG to be sent the presentation along with these minutes.

5. Ride-alongs.

One of the IAG briefly update the group of his ride-along he had with response officers from Abingdon Station. Going out and observing police officers highlighted the challenges of the large geographical area and the types of jobs that the officers are called out to as well as the pressure on the police service from Mental health problems. The feedback was positive and the rest of the group were encouraged to go on them to give some insight on resourcing, workload, challenges of the LPA size etc.

6. Rural Crime Task Force – Insp Stu Hutchings.

Insp Hutchings gave the group an update of the taskforce and how they work within the force. They are Forcewide (so not just South and Vale) and keep all their investigations. They

work closely with other Forces sharing intelligence about offenders. In the first six months since they were set up they have recovered approx. £250,000 of equipment that was stolen from 12 different Police Forces.

The Taskforce is proactive at seizing assets and often arrests suspects on money laundering offences.

Insp Hutchings has been involved in setting up 'Barn Events' which gives the rural community an opportunity to discuss issues with the police.

Action – Insp Hutchings to attend another IAG later in the year to update the group on the successes of the Taskforce.

One of the IAG members asked if the same model we have for the Rural Crime Taskforce could be used for other areas like County Drug Lines. Supt Horsburgh explained that the South and Vale has a very successful Tasking Team which focuses on County Drugs Lines in the South and Vale. The group were keen to find out more about the team and their successes.

Action: Sgt Ashby from the Tasking Team to attend the next IAG to talk about the team in more detail.

7. Project Vigilant – DS Isaac Van Den Eshof

Detective Sergeant Van Den Eshof ran through a presentation about Project Vigilant which was launched in Oxford in 2019. This was a response to a rise in sexual assaults and violence during the night time economy (nationally). The aim of the project is to safeguard the vulnerable from sexual violence through proactive disruptive patrols by identifying predatory behaviour, the vulnerable people, to gather intelligence around potential perpetrators and improve the standard of investigations.

Project Vigilant works closely with partners and is offering Bystander Intervention training offered to the partner organisations and staff at local venues to provide them with the tools to identify predatory behaviour and empower them to challenge this behaviour in order to prevent sexual violence. The project also works closely with door staff, CCTV operators, licencing officers, Pubwatch the Community Safety Partnership and the Special Constabulary. All partners will share intelligence and support investigations.

Future deployments will be at Henley Regatta, towns during the night time economy and any events which have the potential for vulnerable people to become a victim of sexual violence.

8. AOB

Action: Chairman to Invite Matthew Barber PCC to the next meeting on 7th September.

Action to all from Supt Horsburgh: look to challenge myself and the LPA. I am keen to hear your feedback and learn from the scrutiny the group provides.

Action: Would the IAG members consider following (and encourage others to follow);

- **TVP South Oxon and Vale of White Horse** on Facebook.
- **TVP South Oxon & VOWH** on Twitter.
- **TVP Rural Crime Taskforce** on Twitter.

Next meeting dates:

- 7th September 22, 5-7pm
- 15th December 22, 5-7pm
- 23rd March 22, 5-7pm
- The above will be at Abingdon station with a Teams option if needed. Invites to follow.