

MINUTES OF CHILTERN & SOUTH BUCKS POLICING ISSUES FORUM

Wednesday 5th April 2023, via MS Teams

In attendance:

Chiltern & S Bucks Policing Issues Forum: Andy Garnett (in the Chair), Robert Gibson
Thames Valley Police: Inspector James Ellis, Sergeant Dan Ryder, Sergeant Roy Evans

Approx 37 other participants

Presentation by Inspector James Ellis, TVP Neighbourhood Inspector, South Buckinghamshire Policing Area

Residential Burglary:

YoY, local offences have risen by 40% across S Bucks, and in some neighbourhoods have doubled. Other Police areas had experienced such rises a year prior, and delay in Chiltern & S Bucks ascribed to proactive ongoing TVP work.

Online Burglary event was held in December and very well attended.

More recent decline in offending rates across Chiltern & S Bucks, 35% reduction in latest quarter vs prior quarter.

Investigative teams: 27 individuals have been charged, summonsed or received positive disposals over past year, supported by NH teams.

Operation Indigo (Flying Squad operation) - 4 individuals arrested. In total, 72 offences charged across multiple Forces, 22 in TVP and 8 residential burglaries in this area.

Will continue enforcement work along with detect and deter work.

Antisocial Behaviour - recommend reading commentaries in TVP Neighbourhood newsletters, all available on Forum website.

Pony & Trap Racing on A413. 'Operation Gallop'. Some successes in deterring/deflecting events. Experience showing that lane closures most effective method. Dedicated TVP presence across successive months. In recent weeks, has been bidding for additional funding for overtime, but long term reliance on local police presence not sustainable, and takes away from other policing needs. Greater partnership support required for lasting solution.

Topic receiving attention from LPA Commander Supt Burroughs, and TVP Head of Local Policing ACC Bunt and TVP Police & Crime Commissioner. New Chief Constable Jason Hogg also being briefed.

Speeding. 'Operation Go', Neighbourhood Policing speeding enforcement supporting lead department Roads Policing. Details of work undertaken in quarterly newsletters. Research shows that often residents are principally concerned by NOISE of vehicles, presumed to be speeding, and therefore work is being put into antisocial use of vehicles.

Other operations highlighted: Operation Groundhog (burglary), Operation Pandilla (cross-border), Operation Greenbelt (rural crime).

Explanation of how the focus areas voted in the survey and set by Forum fit with other essential/non-negotiable policing work, eg serious violence, violence against women and girls, knife crime etc. Attention and focus will always be delivered on such matters. Survey augments such work by highlighting local concerns and issues, policing can be reflective of these concerns.

Personnel and Strategy. New Chief Constable Jason Hogg in position since 1st April. Producing strategic plan for coming year, keen to see victim focus at forefront of services, and fighting crime as principal law enforcement agency among all public services.. This also reflective of new initiative to be rolled out by Police and Crime Commissioner, very relevant to Neighbourhood Policing.

Uplift programmes - has reported in past that Neighbourhood Policing has helped to backfill front line policing teams as new recruits receive training. Some good news on this score, changes in way training programmes are delivered reduces number of absences. Expecting return of seconded Neighbourhood officers, and news coming through on potential increases in Neighbourhood numbers.

Q: Pony & Trap racing constant drain on time and resources as well as being dangerous. Is Police in general pushing for some kind of regulation on these vehicles on the highway?

A: This is a very long established problem. Repeated dialogue with Force legal team.

Important that process is fair and even, shouldn't 'contrive' or interpret legislation. Aware of active discussions at some very senior levels. Problem is not unique to TVP or this location. Have studied approaches of other Forces, adopted tactics that have been of benefit elsewhere. Long term solution in this locality may lie in changing characteristics of site that attracts racers (opportunity to race side by side along a 2-mile straight stretch).

Animal welfare aspects. RSPCA colleagues have been invited in, not yet evidence base for actionable offence under Animal Health Act. It is argued that the horses are prized possessions and therefore cared for. A member of the public pushed back against this analysis, saying that the care only extends to their useful life; once 'broken' they are of no use and treated as such. Insp Ellis stated that he would be very happy to involve RSPCA again, but reminded that TVP does need to focus on whether crimes are being committed.

Q: Re vehicles parked on road with no tax, MOT or insurance. When is this a crime?

A: This is an offence under Road Traffic Act. But sometimes difficult to allocate and prioritise resource, even when reported. Some powers available to other partners within Community Safety Partnership. TVP social media feeds show examples of enforcement, encouraged questioner to continue to report, also to consider DVLA, Council avenues.

Presentation on Survey Results by Robert Gibson

Presentation available on website. Includes:

- purpose of consultation and survey
- engagement
- changes to survey choices
- survey results.(582 responses)

- top choices (Burglary dominant, followed by Speeding, Drugs, Antisocial Behaviour)
- crime stats from POLICE.UK
- Community Speedwatch
- comments passed on to appropriate recipients within TVP.

Insp Ellis accepted invitation to comment on changes in survey choices, especially dropping of Littering and Fly Tipping. TVP has statutory duty to work with partner agencies, including Buckinghamshire Council on Fly Tipping. Also antisocial behaviour, crime prevention, public safety etc. Local TVP teams have some very strong lines of communication with members of Council's waste team, enforcement officers; Neighbourhood teams recognise that Fly Tipping is an important local concern, and supports Council's work.

Q: we have a number of video recorders, CCTV on our road, and would like to work with Police in providing videos. How do we get footage or images to Police in manner that can be forwarded rapidly to on-duty officers?

A: Now have DEMS (Digital Evidence Management System). Footage can be provided for investigation. Questions of capacity and resource, but moving in right direction.

Q: how do you approach SMARTVILLE, being rolled out across Ivers?

A: offers ANPR resilience and element of CCTV capacity across protected neighbourhoods. Great way in which neighbourhoods can provide information to active Police investigations. We signpost other localities in direction of Smartville for its learned experience. Regular active discussion with Neighbourhood Watch on 2-monthly cycle.

In Chat bar, Ivers Neighbourhood Watch coordinator Jane Brown indicated willingness to meet others interested in such a scheme.

Priority Setting Discussion

Much discussion on choice of 3 between Burglary, Speeding, Drugs and Antisocial Behaviour.

Insp Ellis stressed that he didn't wish to interfere in the process, but contributed the following context:

On Drugs, there is sufficient additional actionable intelligence to make this a useful area for focus. Also opportunities within antisocial behaviour arena - know where there are community concerns to which additional resource could be assigned. Sees potential in all the main choices and the value of assignment of broad priorities, implemented as appropriate by Sergeants and teams at local level.:

CHOICES MADE: BURGLARY, SPEEDING, DRUGS.