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2 March 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

Review of Local Policing structures

At the end of last year we asked you for your thoughts on potential changes to our local policing structures. Thank you to all who responded. It was great to hear so many supportive comments about the work of our local policing teams, and this sentiment will be passed on.

I can now share with you a report summarising your feedback. Many of you said you needed more information to be able to provide informed comment, therefore I am pleased to also share with you a briefing document with further details on the proposals.

While some partners welcomed the potential aligning of geographical boundaries with a five-area command model, there were others who felt this would decrease the visibility of policing in lower-demand areas, and lead to a loss of local knowledge. I hope the information provided is of reassurance. We would like to provide partners with the opportunity to speak with the Force Review Team as part of the next stages of the review. Within the briefing document you will find details of Teams sessions where the Force Review team will be available to answer questions and note down your thoughts. The closing date to feedback is **Friday 28 April**.

In our earlier correspondence we said we expected to be making a decision on a new structure this February; however this is no longer the case. No final decisions will be made until we have provided you with this further information and a second opportunity to comment on our proposals and inform our decision-making.

More information about the Force Review can be found on the reverse of this letter. Our team can also be reached via: forcereview@thamesvalley.police.uk

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Hogg'.

Jason Hogg
Deputy Chief Constable

What is the Force Review?

The aim of the review is to make sure our force is structured in the best possible way so that it can meet current and future challenges.

It began in May 2022 with a focus on finding out whether the current structure, put in place in 2010, was still the right one to deal with the demands of modern-day policing and the challenges put forward from changes in policing and in society.

Why is it needed?

The last review of this nature was completed in 2010. In 2022, we are working in a much more complex environment, with growing demand and a greater focus on vulnerability, prevention and digital crime. Traditional crime types, such as burglary and property theft, have fallen, and been replaced by new, complex and increasingly harmful forms of crime such as child sexual exploitation, sexual violence and county drugs lines.

Our force structure needs to reflect these changes and critically, make changes that support our workforce, many of whom are under pressure.

Is this about saving money?

A savings target was not originally set for the review, however during 2022 we, like many other organisations, found we needed to make more savings than we had previously planned for. This, combined with uncertainty around future public spending, rising costs from inflation and the need to find a long-term and sustainable way of funding increases to workforce allowances and salaries, meant the review now needed to incorporate savings into its remit.

While the primary aim of the Force Review is still to make sure we have the right structures in place to deal with our increased demand, meet the challenges presented by changes in policing and society and relieve the pressure on our workforce, it also now has a role in helping us meet our overall force savings target.

How will this impact local policing?

The driver for this review is about addressing changes in policing and in society so that our force is fit for the future; for our people, our partners and the public we serve. Any changes in structure will allow further investment into frontline service delivery; especially with regards to domestic abuse, serious crime investigation and neighbourhood policing.

Work so far

Since the project began we have benchmarked our force against six others in detail, looked at long-term trends in policing, carried out extensive resource modelling and spoken to over 200 people of all ranks in our local policing teams to understand what works and what doesn't. In October a set of initial recommendations on local policing structures were put to the Chief Constable's management team, who decided to take forward two options from a list of five. They were:

1. A continuation of the current 11 LPA model, but with enhancements where possible, or
2. A switch to a five-area command model; the five areas would be Oxfordshire, Berkshire West, Berkshire East, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

Timelines

We are now beginning a second phase of engagement with our workforce, partners and the public. This feedback will help inform our Chief Constable's management team when they select a final option in early summer.

How to get in touch: forcereview@thamesvalley.police.uk