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for Thames Valley

Response to HMI State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2024-25

[State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2024–25 - His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services](#)

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PCC Response: September 2025

As Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley, I welcome His Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Constabulary’s annual assessment of policing in England and Wales. The 2024-25 report offers a candid and constructive view of the challenges and opportunities facing policing, and I am pleased to see recognition of the ambition and progress being made across the sector.

Thames Valley Police serves one of the most diverse and economically vital regions in the country. Our communities rightly expect a police service that is visible, responsive, and trusted. That is the standard I hold the Chief Constable to, and it is the foundation of my Police & Crime Plan for 2024-2029, which sets out a clear mission to protect communities, people, and property.

Delivering Safer Streets and Public Confidence

The Inspectorate’s emphasis on neighbourhood policing, crime prevention, and public confidence aligns closely with our local priorities. Thames Valley is one of the few forces nationally to have achieved full Safer Streets coverage across all 12 local policing areas - a milestone made possible through PCC-led investment. This has supported targeted action on anti-social behaviour, rural crime, and violence against women and girls.

Visible policing is not just about reassurance - it is about proactive crime fighting. Through initiatives such as Operation Deter and Project Vigilant, which I have championed and funded, Thames Valley Police is delivering results. We are also expanding the Rural Crime Taskforce, which will nearly double in size this year thanks to PCC budget support, and increasing the number of officers and PCSOs in proactive neighbourhood roles.

Supporting Victims and Tackling Serious Harm

The Chief Constable’s Strategic Plan rightly places victims at the centre of policing. We are improving call handling, incident response, and investigation quality. I continue to support efforts to improve outcomes for victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence, including the adoption of victim-centred, suspect-focused approaches.

Despite a reduction in Ministry of Justice funding, I have maintained support for 14 frontline services helping over 2,700 victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence. These services - including advocacy, counselling, legal advice, and outreach to underserved communities - are commissioned and funded through the PCC's Victim Services Grant and reflect our commitment to trauma-informed support.

Protecting Property and Tackling Emerging Threats

While serious violence commands national attention, I remain focused on the crimes that most affect public confidence - burglary, vehicle crime, and fraud. Thames Valley Police continues to attend all residential burglaries, and the Retail Crime Strategy, which I launched in early 2024, is showing early signs of success.

Cybercrime and fraud present growing risks. We are investing in prevention, education, and digital capabilities, including drones and digital forensics. The launch of the Thames Valley Data Hub, a PCC-led initiative, is improving transparency and accountability, and we continue to work with national partners to strengthen the wider response to these threats.

Valuing Our People and Leading Change

The Inspectorate's concerns about workforce experience and morale are well founded. Thames Valley Police is responding with a renewed focus on leadership, retention, and welfare. I support the Chief Constable's efforts to embed leadership standards, improve professional development, and build a workforce that reflects the communities we serve.

We are also improving the use of organisational data to support operational readiness and decision-making. This is vital to ensuring that resources are deployed effectively and that neighbourhood officers remain visible and accessible.

Funding, Reform and System Change

I share HMICFRS's view that reform must be matched by investment. Multi-year funding settlements, capital grants, and a fairer allocation formula are essential to long-term planning. I have set a £557 million operational budget and a £132 million capital programme over four years to ensure Thames Valley Police has the tools it needs. This includes investment in buildings, ICT, vehicles, and digital infrastructure.

I support the proposed National Centre of Policing, provided it delivers efficiency and consistency without undermining local accountability. Reform must be pragmatic, collaborative, and focused on outcomes for the public.

Custody Inspection and Oversight

I note HMICFRS's reference to Thames Valley's Custody Inspection report. My published response reflects our commitment to transparency, continuous improvement, and the highest standards of care for those in custody. Oversight continues through the Independent Custody Visitor Scheme, which I fund and support, and through regular scrutiny panels.

Prevention and Early Intervention

Crime prevention is at the heart of our approach. The Choices Programme, delivered in schools across Thames Valley and funded by the PCC, reached over 935 Year 5 pupils last year and showed measurable improvements in wellbeing, resilience, and help-seeking behaviour. This is a practical example of how we are investing in early intervention to reduce future harm.

I have also committed over £5 million through the Crime Prevention Fund and £12 million through the Partnership Fund to support local authorities and community safety partnerships in delivering targeted prevention and deterrence initiatives.

Conclusion

There is much to do, but Thames Valley is well placed to meet the challenges ahead. I welcome HMICFRS's decision to pause new recommendations this year, allowing forces and PCCs to embed reform and focus on delivery.

I will continue to hold the Chief Constable to account through regular performance scrutiny, published HMICFRS responses, and through my own scrutiny and engagement with the Police and Crime Panel. Together, we will protect Thames Valley and deliver a police service that our communities can trust.

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