



Welcome to the Commissioner's weekly horizon scanning brief:

1. **Legislation** (Legislation, Home Office, APCC, press comments, reports and campaigns relating to strategy, policy and programmes)
2. **Policing and crime key developments** (relevant crime and criminal justice information and partners' policy/reports/campaigns)
3. **Reports** (covering research, reviews, inspections and audits across policing and crime)
4. **Consultations** (police and crime bulletins, research, consultations and press releases)

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1. Legislation

[Consideration of time motion and remaining stages \(Day 1\) of the Crime and Courts Bill \[Lords\]](#)

The Crime and Courts Bill was back in the Commons for consideration of changes made in Committee.

[The Government Response to Drugs: Breaking the Cycle.](#)

The response to the ninth report from the Home Affairs Committee Session. Outlines drugs ruin lives and cause misery to families and communities and this Government is committed to breaking the vicious cycle of drug and alcohol dependency. It identifies that there are no quick fixes; simply focusing on reducing the harms caused by illicit drug use is not enough. The cross-government Drug Strategy, '*Reducing demand, restricting supply, building recovery: supporting people to live a drug-free life*' launched in 2010, has recovery at its heart – helping individuals to be free from dependence on drugs and alcohol and to re-build their lives.

[International Development Select Committee – Violence against women and girls](#)

Inquiry: One in three women globally will be beaten or sexually abused in their lifetime. Violence against women and girls occurs in all societies including the UK. Violence against women and girls is a violation of their rights. It also holds back poverty eradication and peace-building. It undermines women's potential and ability to effect change in the world. Girls and women in developing countries are vulnerable to particular abuses including domestic violence, female genital mutilation, forced marriage and violence within schools and workplaces.

[Health Select Committee – Post legislative scrutiny of the Mental Health Act 2007](#)

On Tuesday 12 March the Health Committee held its second oral evidence on post-legislative scrutiny of the Mental Health Act 2007.

[Employment Law Review](#)

Further steps in employment law reform describes the principles behind the Employment Law Review, progress of the review and how the employment law reforms are contributing to a fair, effective and flexible labour market in the UK.

[Introduction of Government Bill: Jobseekers \(Back to Work Schemes\) Bill](#)

Bill to make provision about the effect of certain provisions relating to participation in a scheme designed to assist persons to obtain employment and about notices relating to participation in such a scheme.

[SI 487: The Police Pensions \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

2. Policing and crime key developments

[Under the spotlight: perverting the course of justice and wasting police time in cases involving allegedly false rape and domestic violence allegations](#)

The first ever study by the Crown Prosecution Service into so-called false allegations of rape and domestic violence is being published by the Director of Public Prosecutions. [The report](#), which examines a 17-month period, shows that false allegations of rape and domestic violence are perhaps more rare than previously thought, and that in only a very small number of cases was it considered that there was sufficient evidence and that it was in the public interest to prosecute a person suspected of making a false allegation of rape or domestic violence.

[Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's review into allegations and intelligence material concerning Jimmy Savile](#)

HMIC asked police forces to provide all information relating to sexual abuse by Jimmy Savile recorded before the launch of Operation Yewtree (05 October 2012). The findings are surprising, given what is now known of Savile's prolific offending over many decades: the police recorded just five allegations of criminal conduct and two pieces of intelligence information during Savile's lifetime, with the earliest of these records dating from 1964.

HMIC found that the police made mistakes in their handling of the five allegations and two pieces of intelligence information. While there were systems and processes available that could have enabled the three forces involved to 'join the dots' and spot patterns, these were used either incorrectly, or not at all. This resulted in a series of failings: to understand the potential depth of Savile's criminality; to encourage (given what the report refers to as the 'Yewtree effect') other victims to come forward; and to bring about an appropriate prosecution. A related theme identified in the inspection was the isolation each person felt as a result of believing that Savile had not abused anyone else.

[Call for national consensus on tackling child sexual abuse](#)

CPS and ACPO have come together to call for a package of radical measures to transform the way the criminal justice system tackles child sexual abuse.

[Focus on suspect, not just abuse victims' credibility](#)

Child abuse guidelines are to be reformed, with more focus on the suspect instead of victims' credibility, the director of public prosecutions has announced. Kier Starmer will outline new plans to guide prosecutors and police. Currently characteristics often associated with victims, such as alcohol issues or distrust of authority, can put their credibility in doubt. But more focus needs to be placed on the suspect.

[Government accepts Pay Review Body recommendations](#)

The Government has accepted Pay Review Bodies' recommendations on base pay for public sector workforces for 2013-14. The Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB), NHS Pay Review Body (NHSPRB), the Doctors' and Dentists' Review Body (DDRB), Prison Service Pay Review Body (PSPRB), and the Senior Salaries Review Body (SSRB) were asked to examine how an increase to base pay of an average of 1 percent should be applied to their workforces. Following the recommendations, base pay for these workforces will now increase by an average of 1 percent. This pay award is in line with the Chancellor's Autumn Statement 2011 announcement on public sector pay for the two years following the public sector pay freeze.

[Reform 'Not just a crash diet'; Improving public services through structural reform](#)

Reform presents a report on the cost of the Government's borrowing over the last decade, and the implications of the current ring-fences. The report, *Not just a crash diet*, argues that, by ring-fencing budgets, the Government has created a perception of underfunding while leaving the real drivers of spending unaddressed. Cuts have fallen on departments on political grounds, rather than to improve value for money.

[House of Commons Justice Committee report on Youth Justice](#)

The Youth Justice System is currently failing children in care and care leavers and there should be more effort to prevent the unnecessary criminalisation of these vulnerable young people, the Justice Committee has concluded.

[Action plan to end violence against women and girls](#)

Home Office action plan to address violence against women and girls which has a renewed focus on protecting under-represented victims, such as girls associated with gangs and those at risk of female genital mutilation.

[NAO expresses concern over financial sustainability of local authorities](#)

In a report examining central government's approach to local authority funding, the National Audit Office has highlighted the increasing difficulty faced by local authorities over the rest of the spending review period in absorbing the reductions in their central government funding without reducing services. The spending watchdog recommends that the Department for Communities and Local Government work with other government departments to improve the evaluation of the impact of decisions on local authority finances and services.

[EU pushes to stem tide of homelessness](#)

The first EU round table has agreed six principles to inform policies across Europe to stem the rise in homelessness.

[Victim Support and IARS join forces for restorative justice project](#)

Restorative Justice in Europe is an EU funded project that will help introduce minimum standards to protect victims and witnesses in five EU countries.

[Attorney General speech 'The Case for the Prosecution: Independence and the Public Interest'](#)

The Attorney General considers some options for reform of prosecution policy, notably the return of more charging decisions to the police, in the light of history and a commitment to maintaining the independence of the prosecutor. Dominic Grieve also calls for a full and

frank discussion between the CPS and police to mutually improve the preparation of evidence.

3. Reports

[Written Ministerial Statements: Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures and Government response to the annual report by David Anderson QC on the operation of the Terrorism Acts in 2011](#)

Ministerial statements and the accompanying Government response to the annual terrorism report by David Anderson QC.

[Youth justice system is failing vulnerable young people - MPs report](#)

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[Crime detection rates](#)

House of Lords questions on the proportion of fatal accidents involving young drivers, whether they will introduce measures similar to those in force in Northern Ireland placing restrictions on new and young drivers.

[House of Commons Library note on road accident statistics](#)

The note provides a range of data relating to reported road accidents in Great Britain, including by: severity of accident; road type; road user type; time of accident; and, age. Breath-testing data is included as are international comparisons of road fatality statistics. It also discusses issues about the reliability of reported road casualty data in Great Britain.

[Improved assessment of young people is expected to further reduce re-offending](#)

An enhanced framework for assessing young people who have either entered, or are at risk of entering the youth justice system, is expected to reduce reoffending and bring down numbers in custody.

[Ministers clueless about scale of UK slavery, warns new report.](#)

British girls trafficked within Britain for the sex trade made up nearly one half of all UK slavery victims in the latest set of figures.

[Public sector hiring is expected to outpace the private sector over the next three months due to "a degree of over-firing" in the implementation of cuts.](#)

In a survey of employers conducted by ManpowerGroup, it was found that the public sector had "begun recruiting again with renewed vigour" and that the increase in the number of people employed by 500,000 last year is set to continue.

[Setting the police precept](#)

Findings from consultation with PCC Chief Finance Officers On the 27th February, a questionnaire was sent to PCC Chief Finance Officers, in relation to the recent setting of the police precept and the key strategic issues/considerations which have led to respective decisions being made.

[College of Policing to host What Works Centre for Crime Reduction](#)

The Centre's role will be to identify the best available evidence approaches to reducing crime and potential savings to the police, partners and the public.

[Public spending freeze to fund tax cuts](#)

Freezing all public spending for five years would free up money to cut taxes and the deficit, former defence secretary Liam Fox suggests. In a speech to the Institute for Economic Affairs, Fox set out an alternative economic direction for the Government. The proposals include ending the ringfencing of funding for the NHS, schools and international development. A freeze of all public spending would cut spending in real terms by 2.5% a year, saving £345bn that could be used to cut taxes, particularly Capital Gains Tax (CGT) and the deficit.

[Six major energy companies have petitioned the Government to identify a 2030 target for reducing carbon emissions.](#)

The companies have said that failing to reach a decision will "slow growth in the low-carbon sector" and "is not in keeping with the Government's aspirations for the UK to be the global leader in low-carbon technologies".

[The Government will announce measures this week to increase the quality and take-up of apprenticeships](#)

after research shows that such placements could boost the economy by £3.4 billion a year during the next decade. The study by the Centre for Economics and Business Research found the biggest gains in engineering and manufacturing, with each placement increasing business productivity by an estimated £414 a week.

[The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has had to enlist support from Deloitte to finish its accounts because of a lack of financial expertise within its ranks.](#)

Staff from the auditor were brought in as the department buckled under the task of including the BBC and other bodies in its figures for the first time.

[The first NHS league tables are published today as part of a review commissioned by the Health Secretary, Jeremy Hunt, to investigate ways to introduce "Ofsted-style" comparisons into the NHS.](#)

Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust is rated last of 146 trusts with West Suffolk at the top of the table.

[The Work and Pensions Secretary, Iain Duncan Smith, outlined the Government's plans to get welfare claimants with drink and drug problems into employment.](#)

Two pilot schemes under the Government's Work Programme will offer bonuses to private contractors for getting addicts into lasting employment.

Parents with children who are severely disabled who are unable to share a room with their siblings are to be exempted from [the "bedroom tax"](#).

[Ministry of Justice](#)

Knife possession sentencing quarterly brief – October-December 2012.

[Department for Communities and Local Government](#)

Troubled Families Programme – Progress by December 2012.

[National Treatment Agency](#)

Falling Drug Use: The Impact of Treatment.

[New Local Government Network](#)

The Road Not Taken: New Ways of Working for District Councils.

[Responsible Recovery](#)

Responsible Recovery: A social contract for local growth.

[Squatters' Action for Secure Homes](#)

The Case Against Section 144.

[Third Sector Research Council](#)

Scaling-up or going-viral: comparing self-help housing and community land trust facilitation.

[Human rights work in 2011](#)

Inquiry status: Commons Select Committee has reported and Government Response received.

[Curb sharp practices and impose tougher compensation threshold for whiplash say MPs](#)

MPs have called on the insurance industry to abandon sharp practices in the management of car accident claims to curb the runaway cost of motor insurance premiums. The cross party Transport Committee has also called for the Government to impose a higher threshold for the payment of any compensation in whiplash cases.

UK employers are still looking to EU migrants to fill gaps in the jobs market, despite efforts by the Government to reduce youth unemployment.

Research by the Chartered Institute for Personnel Development shows that just under a third of businesses and public sector organisations are using EU nationals to perform low-skilled jobs with one third of British companies using specialist recruitment agencies to hire migrant workers from the rest of the world ([FT](#)).

Qatar has begun talks with the Government to invest up to £10 billion into infrastructure projects in Britain. The potential projects being discussed include energy plants and new road and rail links.

Lord Deighton, Commercial Secretary to the Treasury, will say in a speech today on foreign investment that the Government is looking to ensure that: "the deepest possible sources of capital are available to the widest possible range of infrastructure projects" ([FT](#)).

The Health Secretary, Jeremy Hunt, has announced that so called "gagging clauses" in NHS severance agreements are to be banned.

Following whistle-blowers being prevented from speaking out over alleged hospital failings, staff will be given the right to raise issues in the public interest - such as poor care and patient safety -when they leave their jobs ([Independent](#); [Mail](#)).

A House of Lords enquiry has concluded that the UK is "woefully under prepared" to deal with an ageing population.

Citing Office for National Statistics figures that forecast a 50 per cent increase in people aged over 65 by 2030, the peers have suggested raising the retirement age, as well as called into question the benefits automatically received by pensioners ([Telegraph](#); [Guardian](#); [BBC Online](#); [Mail](#)).

MPs have warned that computer systems controlling powers stations, water plants and telecom networks 'are vulnerable to cyber attacks'.

Secretary chiefs and academics said that there was a "chronic shortage" of experts to tackle the growing cyber-attacks, while also voicing concerns that the government did not know how many critical infrastructure control systems were vulnerable to attack ([Times](#)).

International students and businesses are set to benefit from a series of changes to the Immigration Rules being announced today.

The [changes](#) are part of the government's continuing work to ensure the best and brightest talent can come to the UK to work, study and invest in business. From April 6 the UK Border Agency will expand the Graduate Entrepreneur scheme to allow up to 1,000 international MBA graduates from British universities to stay in the UK for a year after graduating. These gifted graduates will be able to develop their own business idea, or work in a start-up, after which they will have the option to stay on in the UK as a skilled worker or entrepreneur

[Security Minister's speech on the radicalisation of the far right](#)

Extremism in all its forms, including far right such as the English Defence League, will not go uncontested by the Government.

4. Consultations

[New legal advice charity needs feedback from victims of domestic abuse](#)

Flag DV is a legal advice charity set up with a vision to provide free legal advice for victims of domestic violence and abuse. Supported by the solicitors pro-bono group LawWorks they are to develop legal surgeries and to provide advice online. They have launched a short survey. Feedback from victims and survivors who have experienced abuse or violence in the past two years is crucial.

[Communities and Local Government Select Committee – Private rented sector](#)

Inquiry: The Communities and Local Government Committee has decided to conduct an inquiry into the private rented housing sector. The Committee invites submissions from interested parties covering the quality and regulation of private rented housing, and levels of rent within the sector.