



Commissioner's horizon scanning brief:

1. Legislation
2. Reviews and Inquiries
3. Inspections
4. Research, Development and Statistics
5. Policy and Practice
6. Consultations

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1. Legislation

Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill - Date for Royal Assent TBC

Proposals for the reform of combined authorities and local authorities intended as the means of delivering local 'devolution deals', agreed between combined authorities.

- [Devolution to Local Government in England](#) – Commons Briefing Note published 20th January 2016
Analyses the 'devolution deals' agreed between the Government and local government areas
- [Combined Authorities](#) – Commons Briefing note published 20th January 2016
Details combined authority powers and structures, boundary issues and existing examples
- [Ping Pong](#) Commons amendments agreed in House of Lords – 12th January 2016

Psychoactive Substances Bill - Ping Pong - 26th January 2016

Legislation which will make it an offence to produce, supply, offer to supply, possess with intent to supply, import or export psychoactive substances.

- [Commons Report Stage / Third Reading](#) - 20th January 2016
- [Government Response to Psychoactive Substances Inquiry](#) – 19th January 2016
Home Affairs Committee is of the view that the speed at which the Government is proceeding with the legislation means that a number of serious concerns about the Bill have not been addressed.

Immigration Bill Lords Committee stage (third reading) – 1st February 2016

Make provision about the law on immigration and asylum; access to services, facilities, licences and work by reference to immigration status; language requirements for public sector workers; fees for passports and civil registration; to make provision about the Director of Labour Market Enforcement.

- [Committee Stage \(second reading\)](#) – 20th January 2016
- [Committee Stage \(first reading\)](#) – 18th January 2016

Riot Compensation Bill 2015-16 Commons Report Stage – 5th February 2016

Private Members' Bill is being prepared for publication. Repeal the Riot (Damages) Act 1886 and make provision about types of claims, procedures, decision-making and limits on awards payable.

- [Commons Committee Debate](#) - 13th January 2016

Online Safety Bill Lords Report stage - TBC

Private Members' Bill to make provision about the promotion of online safety; to require internet service providers and mobile phone operators to provide an internet service that excludes adult content; to require electronic device manufacturers to provide a means of filtering internet content; to make provision for parents to be educated about online safety and for the regulation of harmful material through on-demand services.

- [First Committee sitting in Lords](#) held 11th December 2015

Advertising of Prostitution (Prohibition) Bill Lords Committee stage - TBC

Private Members' Bill to prohibit the advertising of prostitution; and for connected purposes.

Victims of Crime Etc (Rights, Entitlements) Bill 2015-16 Second reading in Commons on 29th Jan 2016

A Bill to make further provision about the duties and responsibilities of the Victims' Commissioner and about the Victims' Code; to require victims' services plans for each police service area; to establish a duty to report suspected child abuse by those working in regulated activities, a code of practice on the recording of allegations, a right of appeal by victims against a decision to cease a criminal investigation, and standards for the review of open or reopened homicide cases; to make provision about court procedures relating to vulnerable victims and witnesses.

Child Victims of Human Trafficking Bill 2015-16 Second reading in Commons on 29th Jan 2016

Private Members' Bill which will not be printed until close to the second reading debate

Age of Criminal Responsibility Bill Second reading in Lords on 29th January 2016

Private Members' Bill to raise the age of criminal responsibility from 10 to 12

Road Traffic Act 1988 (Alcohol Limits) (Amendment) Bill 2015-16 Second reading in Lords 29th January

Private Members' Bill to lower prescribed limit of alcohol in breath, blood and urine by 37%

Speed Limits on Roads (Devolved Powers) Bill Second reading in Commons 5th February 2016

A Bill to amend Part VI of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996, to make provision about the powers and duties of parish and town councils in relation to applying for speed limit orders; to provide for the conduct of local referendums to determine whether such applications should be made; and for connected purposes.

Convicted Prisoners Voting Bill 2015-16 Second reading in Commons on 5th February 2016

Bill to make provision for rules relating to the exclusion of convicted prisoners from participation in parliamentary and local elections.

Illegal Immigrants (Criminal Sanctions) Bill 2015-16 Second reading in Commons on 4th March 2016

Foreign National Offenders Exclusion Bill 2015-16 Second reading in Commons on 11th March 2016

Criminal Driving (Justice for Victims) Bill Second reading in Commons on 11th March 2016

Private Members' Bill to change the law to improve justice for the victims and families of road crime

- [First Reading in Commons](#) - 12th January 2016

Rehabilitation of Offenders Bill Second reading in Lords TBC

Amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 introducing revised rehabilitation requirements

Draft Investigatory Powers Bill Joint Select Committee to report on evidence in February 2016

Draft includes provisions for the interception of communications, the retention and acquisition of communications data, the use of equipment interference, and the acquisition of bulk data for analysis.

- [Public Evidence Session](#) – 13th January 2016

Policing and Crime Bill – Package of reforms announced 20th January 2016

Proposals to give chief officers the discretion to expand the powers of their police staff (subject to appropriate selection/training); enable volunteers to be designated with powers without becoming a special constable; create a core list of powers reserved for police officers; adopt new titles for the changed support and volunteer roles; and abolish the office of traffic warden under the Road Traffic Acts.

- [Reforming the Powers of Police Staff and Volunteers Consultation Responses](#) – 20th January

Policing and Criminal Justice Bill Announced as part of the Queen's Speech - 27th May 2015

Proposes reduction in use of bail before charge and release on bail and tighter authorisation requirements; improvements in the treatment of 17-year-olds with regard to a range of interventions; adjusting rights to detain the mentally ill; better protecting children through changes in legislation and sentencing; extending the powers of HMIC and improving professional standards processes and police complaints system; placing a duty on all three emergency services to collaborate where it would drive efficiency and effectiveness); and enabling the fire and rescue services to engage in much closer joint working with the police by enabling PCCs to take responsibility for running the fire and rescue authorities where appropriate or be represented on local FRA in areas where they do not take on the responsibility for both services.

- [Enabling Closer Working Between The Emergency Services Consultation Responses](#) – Pending

Counter Extremism Bill Announced as part of the Queen's Speech - 27th May 2015

Proposals include new civil orders to ban extremist groups, restrict the behaviour of extremist individuals, and to close down premises used for extremist purposes. The Bill will also provide Ofcom with powers to censor extremist content, and enable employers to conduct checks on employees for involvement in extremism.

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS - ORDERS AND AMENDMENTS

The Police and Crime Commissioner Elections (Designation of Local Authorities) Order 2015

This Order designates a local authority for the police areas in England listed in Schedule 1. Also revokes the Police and Crime Commissioner Elections (Designations of Local Authorities) (No. 2) Order 2012 for the purposes of section 75(1) of the Police Reform and Social Resp. Act 2011. Coming into force: **5th May 2016**

The Pensions Act 2014 (Commencement No.7) and (Savings) (Amendment) Order 2015

This Order brings into force paragraph 6(3) of Schedule 12 to the Pensions Act 2014 to enable regulations to be made in relation to National Insurance credits in the new state pension system. Coming into force: **1st Feb 2016**

The Police Pensions and Police (Injury Benefit) (Amendment) Regulations 2015

These Regulations amend the Police Pensions Regulations 1987 and the Police (Injury Benefit) Regulations 2006 to allow widows or surviving civil partners to retain pensions or gratuities in the event they marry, remarry, form a civil partnership or start to cohabit after 1st April 2015. Coming into force: **18th January 2016**

- [Frequently asked questions](#) published 20th January 2016

2. Reviews and Inquiries

[Cyber security: Protection of personal data online inquiry](#) **Receiving evidence 27th January 2016**

Culture, Media and Sport Committee has decided to hold an inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the TalkTalk data breach and the wider implications for telecoms and internet service providers.

[Transgender Equality Inquiry](#) **Report published 14th January 2016**

Commons Women and Equalities Committee (WEC) report makes 30 recommendations for change including mandatory training for police officers on transphobic hate crime and promotion of third party reporting; work to tackle the issue of Trans people being inappropriately 'outed' in court; amending the protected characteristic in the Equality Act 2010 for Trans people to that of 'gender identity'; the introduction of new hate crime legislation to extend existing provisions to all protected characteristics and a new Government cross-departmental strategy for transgender equality to tackle the remaining unaddressed issues.

[Countering extremism inquiry](#) **Receiving evidence 12th January 2016**

Inquiry into the Government's new five year strategy into countering extremism is now taking oral evidence.

[Reform of the Police Funding Formula inquiry](#) **Report (11 December 2015) awaiting Govt. Response**

The Commons Home Affairs Committee recommends an independent panel of accounting firms, financial experts and the College of Policing be appointed to assist the Home Office in formulating revised proposals.

[Inquiry into the Comprehensive Spending Review](#) **Receiving evidence 9th December 2015**

Treasury Committee Inquiry into CSR and Autumn Statement

[Financial sustainability of fire and rescue services inquiry](#) **Receiving evidence 26th November 2015**

Public Accounts Committee examining impact of funding reductions on fire and rescue service effectiveness

[Role of the magistracy inquiry](#) **Accepting written submissions**

Justice Committee Inquiry into the current and future role of the magistracy

[Restorative justice inquiry](#) **Accepting written submissions**

Justice Committee Inquiry into use of restorative justice in criminal justice system

[Child Sexual Abuse Inquiry \(Goddard\)](#) **Ongoing**

Independent Inquiry to examine the extent to which institutions have failed in their duty of care to protect children against sexual abuse, and to make recommendations to improve child protection for the future. Incorporates 12 current investigations with applications now being invited in relation to the [Anglican Church](#), [Lambeth Council](#) and [Cambridge House, Knowl View and Rochdale](#).

- The inquiry is seeking procurement bids for an [Inquiry Information Line](#) to provide a means for victims and survivors to engage with the Inquiry.

3. Inspections

New Joint inspections of services for vulnerable people announced Announced 14th January 2016

Inspectorates Ofsted, Care Quality Commission (CQC), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) have announced a move to Joint Targeted Area Inspections (JTAI) of services for vulnerable children and young people from February 2016. Each inspection will include a 'deep dive' element, with the first set, to be completed by summer 2016. This will focus on children at risk of sexual exploitation and those missing from home, school or care.

HMI Probation: Transitions Arrangements: A follow-up inspection Published 19th January 2016

Follow up to 'Transitions: An inspection of the transitions arrangements from youth to adult services in the criminal justice system'. The re-inspection found that 'there had not been sufficient improvement in the quality of work undertaken during the transfer of cases from youth to adult services. Transitions were not always well-organised, well recorded or smooth'. The report does, however, include specific examples of effective practice which, if followed by all staff, would ensure a smoother transition for these young people.

HMCPSP: Communicating With Victims Published 13th January 2016

Inspection found that while the CPS have attempted to improve the service provided to victims and witnesses, in 43.4% of cases examined, communications with victims were found to be very slow, and victims felt let down by receiving a standard impersonal letter which did not provide sufficient information with regard to their case. Nearly a fifth of letters failed to inform the victim of their right to seek a review of a decision not to prosecute, and almost all letters failed to provide details of sources of support for victims of domestic abuse.

- [HMIC PEEL Assessment](#) – Effectiveness and Legitimacy Assessment – Expected February 2016
- [HMIC National Crime Agency Inspection](#) – Expected March 2016
- HMIC Digitalisation – Expected March 2016
- [JTAI Missing and absent children & child sexual exploitation \(thematic\)](#) – Expected summer 2016
- [Child Protection Inspection](#) – Rolling programme

4. Research, Development and Statistics

Crime in England and Wales (CSEW), year ending September 2015 – Released 21st January 2016

The CSEW shows no significant change in crime levels nationally compared with the previous year. Police recorded crime increased by 6% compared to the previous year thought largely to be driven by greater compliance with national recording standards. Most notably, this has impacted upon violence against the person offences (up 27%). CSEW estimates for violent crime showed no significant change on the previous year. Police recorded sexual offences continue to increase (up 36%) thought to reflect improvements in recording and a greater willingness amongst victims to report. Offences involving knives or sharp instruments (up 9%) and offences involving firearms (up 4%) have also been increasing. While the ONS highlights anecdotal evidence of a tightening of recording procedures in some forces, [the National Police Chiefs' Council 'believe that...the number of people carrying knives is on the rise'](#).

Impact of the reduction in heroin supply between 2010 and 2011 – 21st January 2016

Home Office report concludes that heroin use decreased during the period with some users switching to other substances, particularly benzodiazepines and alcohol. New presentations to drug treatment for opiate use fell and there were no significant changes in drug related acquisitive crime, though there was a decline in heroin possession offences.

New opiate and crack-cocaine users: characteristics and trends – 21st January 2016

New opiate and/or crack-cocaine users are estimated to have reduced by a fifth between 2005 and 2013 and were down hugely since the 1980s and 1990s. The data suggests that this downward trend may have flattened since 2011, though there are no signs that it is set to turn upwards.

Local perspectives in Ending Gang and Youth Violence areas – 13th January 2016

This report examines the perceived changes in the nature of street gangs across the original 33 Ending Gang and Youth Violence areas. 70% of practitioners perceived some level of change in the nature of gangs over the previous year with gang activity thought to be less visible (e.g. less on-street and more covert) and some gangs becoming organised. Findings also indicate that practitioners are becoming increasingly concerned about young people being used to transport and sell drugs, and the sexual exploitation of women and girls.

Social network analysis of an urban street gang using police intelligence data – 13th January 2016

This report demonstrates a method for identifying interrelations in gang-related, criminal, and drugs-related networks using intelligence data from Greater Manchester Police. The report is accompanied by a practical '[How to guide](#)' for police forces considering using this approach.

Is Violent Crime Increasing or Decreasing? – 31st December 2015

New research led by Sylvia Walby (Lancaster University) contradicts Crime Survey for England and Wales findings that violent crime has been in decline since the mid-90s and challenges the assertion that men are the most likely victims.

5. Policy and Practice

New report promotes joined up working on serious offenders – 21st January 2016

The SOMECS (Serious Offending by Mobile European Criminals) project report makes recommendations to enable countries to successfully track high risk criminals who are moving across the continent. This includes using the European Criminal Record Information System (ECRIS) more effectively and introducing joint training on information exchange nationally across judicial, law enforcement and offender management agencies.

Prisons and prevention: Giving local areas the power to reduce offending – 18th January 2016

Briefing paper from the Institute of Public Policy Research which describes how locally devolving responsibility and funding for the management of low-level offenders could empower local service providers to work more effectively to prevent crime and develop alternatives to prison. Paper suggests that the drive to devolve power and resources to groups of local authorities and mayors could hold the answer to this problem.

Government strategy on Ending Gang Violence and Exploitation updated – 13th January 2016

Minister for Preventing Abuse and Exploitation, Karen Bradley, announced a new national gangs policy setting out six priorities: tackling county lines, protecting vulnerable locations, reducing violence and knife crime, safeguarding gang-associated women and girls, promoting early intervention and promoting meaningful alternatives to gangs. The following nine new areas will also receive targeted support.

Home Office Plans for Tackling Exploitation in the Labour Market announced – 12th January 2016

The new cross-Government approach to labour market enforcement includes establishing a statutory Director of Labour Market Enforcement (via Immigration Bill); creating a new offence of aggravated breach of labour market legislation; increasing intelligence and data sharing between enforcement bodies and strengthening the powers and remit of the Gangmasters Licensing Authority.

IPCC Practice Advice – When does a complaint become recordable? – 10th January 2016

6. Consultations

[Independent Police Complaints Commission \(IPCC\) reform](#)

Home Office proposals to reform the governance structure of the IPCC include replacing existing Commission model with a single head of the organisation to provide a direct line of accountability to the public, establishing a unitary Board, with a majority of non-executives to provide robust external challenge to the organisation on behalf of complainants and the public, seeking views on changing the name of the IPCC as it would no longer be organised as a Commission.

Open date: 17/12/2015

Close date: 28/01/2016

[Introducing a stalking protection order](#)

Home Office consultation seeking views on whether the introduction of a stalking protection order will help to offer greater protection to victims of 'stranger stalking' by placing restrictions or positive obligations on the perpetrator. Training has been provided to police and prosecutors since the new offences of stalking were introduced in 2012 under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, and prosecutions under the new offences have begun to increase.

Open date: 5/12/2015

Close date: 30/01/2016

[Assessing the effectiveness, contribution and added value of Police and Crime Panels](#)

Frontline Consulting Associates and Grant Thornton UK LLP are consulting Police and Crime Commissioners on their experience of working with Police and crime Panels during their first term. Findings will be used to inform preparation and formation of panels following the PCC elections on 5 May 2016, particularly in developing working relationships and promoting effective arrangements. A report will be issued in mid March and shared with the sector, the Policing Minister and others.

Open date: 04/01/2016

Close date: 01/02/2016

[Changes to ONS Products 2015](#)

The Office for National Statistics is proposing a series of changes to free up resources and reinvest to develop the skills and technology. The consultation seeks views on proposals to change how statistics are published, stopping production of some statistical bulletins, stopping some surveys, reducing some survey sample sizes, publishing some statistics less frequently and stopping production of some statistics altogether. Areas affected include [suicide statistics](#), [migration indicators for local authorities](#), [low level population estimates](#) and a proposal to update population estimates once every 3 years.

Open date: 14/12/2015

Close date: 08/02/2016

[Keeping children safe in education – Changes to statutory guidance](#)

The government is seeking views on proposed changes to the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in education, July 2015 which include increasing the focus on the importance of a child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding; further emphasising the fact it is everyone's responsibility; highlighting the importance of early help and how it sits in the wider safeguarding system; highlighting the importance of data sharing; a new section to cover online safety; and a new section covering children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Open date: 22/12/2015

Close date: 16/02/2016

[DCLG Local government pension scheme: investment regulations](#)

This consultation proposes to revoke and replace the regulations that currently govern the management and investment of funds in the local government pension scheme. The proposals include removing some of the existing prescriptive means of ensuring that investments are suitably diverse - instead make authorities responsible for determining the balance of their investments and taking account of risk; introducing safeguards to ensure that the more flexible legislation being discussed is used appropriately; guidance on pooling assets is followed.

Open date: 25/11/2015

Close date: 19/02/2016

[Imposition of community and custodial sentences](#)

Sentencing Council are seeking views from a range of criminal justice professionals on proposals to replace the outdated 'New Sentences Guideline - Criminal Justice Act 2003' with a more concise, technical guideline covering the process for deciding when a community or custodial sentence/suspended custodial sentence should be imposed.

Open date: 14/01/2016

Close date: 25/02/2016

[Changes to Police and Crime Commissioners complaints system](#)

Home Office proposals to clarify through non-statutory guidance what constitutes a complaint and ensure PCPs take forward complaints about a PCC's conduct rather than their policy decisions; provide PCPs with greater investigatory powers to seek evidence about allegations; clarify, through non-statutory guidance, the parameters of "informal resolution" and setting out that, where agreement cannot be reached, it is open to PCPs to make recommendations on the expected level of behaviour of a PCC, and that they have powers to require the PCC to respond.

Open date: 17/12/2015

Close date: 10/03/2016

[Health risks from alcohol: new guidelines](#)

Seeks views on the UK Chief Medical Officers' proposed new guidelines to limit the health risks associated with the consumption of alcohol. The guidance makes recommendations for both men and women to not drink more than 14 units per week and if as much as 14 units per week are consumed, that it is best spread evenly over 3 days or more.

Open date: 08/01/2016

Close date: 01/04/2016

[Law Commission Sentencing Law in England and Wales consultative document](#)

The Law Commission published their second consultative document on this project on 9 October 2015. Consultation on their compilation of the legislation currently in force relating to sentencing will close on 9 April 2016. A further consultation, on certain policy issues, will follow in spring 2016. In the summer of 2017, they plan to publish a consultation paper including a draft of the New Sentencing Code. The final report and draft Bill for this project is due by early 2018.

Close date: 09/04/2016

[Policing On-line Crime Survey](#)

On-line survey commissioned by the national policing lead for digital investigation and intelligence (Chief Constable Kavanagh). This survey, aimed at policing professionals, is exploring real views and experience of coming into contact with cyber and digital crimes. The data gathered will be shared with policy makers and national policing leads to help shape and inform the national response to digital and online crime.