



Commissioner's horizon scanning briefing

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For further information or to be included on our mailing list, please contact daniel.howitt13452@nottinghamshire.pnn.police.uk

1. Policy and Practice

[PM announces plans to enhance response to domestic violence and abuse](#) – 17th February 2017

Prime Minister announces cross-governmental plans for a major new programme of work to enhance support for victims of domestic violence and abuse, including plans for a Domestic Violence and Abuse Act to make it easier for enforcement bodies to find and use the measures at their disposal. Other announcements include:-

- [Removal of Legal Aid time limits for victims of domestic violence](#) – 23rd February 2017
Ministry of Justice plans to remove the five-year limit on eligibility for legal representation following domestic abuse victimisation, and to admit a wider range of materials as evidence of risk
- [Ensuring survivors in safe houses have the right to vote](#) – 23rd March 2017
Cabinet Office policy proposals to make the anonymous electoral registration scheme more accessible to those escaping domestic abuse
- [£20m awarded to projects supporting victims of domestic abuse](#) – 17th February 2017
Communities Secretary confirms [76 projects](#) that together will deliver over 2,200 new bed spaces in refuges and other specialist accommodation and support more than 19,000 domestic abuse victims through to 2018

[Government announces next steps in Youth Justice reform](#) – 24th February 2017

Justice Secretary appoints Charlie Taylor as the new Chair of the Youth Justice Board who will create a new Youth Custody Service as a distinct arm of HM Prison and Probation Service. A new dedicated Director will have operational responsibility for day-to-day running of the youth estate. Responsibility for commissioning and monitoring of youth custody services will be brought under the Ministry of Justice. Announcement comes alongside publication of [findings and recommendations of the Youth Custody Improvement Board](#)

[Internet safety strategy and green paper in development](#) – 27th February

The Government has begun work on a new Internet Safety Strategy which will aim to make Britain the safest country in the world for children and young people to be online. Ministers will also hold a series of round tables with agencies and representatives in the coming weeks and a green paper is expected in the summer

[Fire and Rescue National Framework to be redrafted](#) – 21st February 2017

Policing and Fire Minister announces plans to redraw the Fire and Rescue National Framework which would ban the practice of re-employing retired senior fire officers in the same or similar roles unless an exceptional public safety need can be demonstrated. The Home Office has initiated a [6 week consultation](#) ahead of a full review of the national framework later in 2017

Guidance for use following a death or serious injury involving the police – 20th February 2017

IPCC guidance on how evidence should be collected in the immediate aftermath of an incident where a member of the public has died or been seriously injured during contact with the police

Draft guideline on recognising and responding to child abuse and neglect – 22nd February 2017

NICE publish draft guideline on child abuse and neglect for practitioners working with children and young people. The draft guideline will be subject consultation until 19th April 2017

Complaints from young people in custody: Learning the Lessons Bulletin – 20th February 2017

Prison and Probation Ombudsman bulletin explores learning from investigations into complaints from young people in custody, including young people under 18 held in STCs and those aged 18-21 held in YOIs

Government Public Services Efficiency Review – 27th February 2017

The Efficiency Review is taking a strategic look at how government delivers services across the whole public sector and delivers value for money. Government departments, excluding NHS and core schools budgets, are modelling scenarios of 3% and 6% savings. An update will be provided in autumn 2017

Trade Union Act 2016 comes into force – 1st March 2017

The [Act](#) implements a number of provisions to ensure strikes can only go ahead as a result of a clear and positive democratic mandate from union members. It will ensure industrial action only ever goes ahead when there has been a ballot turnout of at least 50% - and 40% support from all eligible trade union members for essential public services. Unions are required to give 14 days' notice of action unless employer agrees to 7

New sanctions for motorists using mobile phones while driving come into force – 1st March 2017

Motorists using a phone while driving will receive 6 points on their licence and a £200 fine. Motorists caught twice or accruing 12 points on their licence will face magistrates' court, being disqualified and fines of up to £1,000. New drivers risk having their licence revoked and lorry or bus drivers can be suspended if caught

Recent Commons briefing papers include: [Anti-social neighbours living in private housing](#) (25th Feb), [Anti-social behaviour in social housing](#) (24th Feb), [Brexit: implications for policing and criminal justice cooperation](#) (24th Feb), [Missing persons, guardianship and presumption of death](#) (23rd Feb), [Police Grant Report](#) (21st Feb).

2. Research, Development and Statistics

Does more stop and search mean less crime? – 27th February 2017

College of Policing has published results of an analysis of Metropolitan Police Service panel data on stop and search between 2004 and 2014. The study found that higher rates of stop and search were occasionally followed by slightly lower rates of crime, however, the associations found were inconsistent and small in size. The study indicates that it may be better to see crime reduction as a useful by-product of this investigative power, rather than its main aim given limited evidence that stop and search has a significant deterrent effect

Violence at work: findings from 2015/16 CSEW – published 28th February 2017

Health and Safety Executive report on findings from the 2015/16 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) shows no significant change in risk of work related violence over the last five years, with around 1.3% of women and 1.5% of men being affected during by assaults (47%) or threats (53%) of violence. Strangers were the offenders in 46% of cases of workplace violence.

New transparency measures for police use of force, including Taser use – 2nd March 2017

Home Secretary announces requirements for police forces to collect and publish detailed data on use of force from April 2017 which will include Taser usage, use of physical restraint and ethnicity and age of those involved. This follows recommendations from the [David Shaw review](#). Data will be published at force level from July onwards. Announcement comes alongside authorisation of the Taser X2 for police use

3. Inspections

HMIC PEEL Effectiveness Assessments 2016 – 2nd March 2017

HMIC PEEL Effectiveness inspections 2016 assessed one police force as overall 'outstanding' (Durham), 28 as 'good', 13 as 'requiring improvement' and one as 'inadequate' (Bedfordshire). Forces have improved their response to vulnerable people in the last year but while most forces were found to provide a largely good service in keeping people safe and preventing crime, HMIC highlighted the following three main concerns:-

- Attempts to manage or suppress demand by some forces' are putting people at risk, in particular, the practice of 'down grading' emergency calls in order to justify a slower response
- Some officers are not working to effectively prevent crime, keep people safe and catch criminals, and **some** capabilities that forces need to cope with demand are either weak or underdeveloped
- Police capabilities such as skilled investigators and neighbourhood policing, are insufficient or being eroded. In particular, HMIC warns of a national crisis in the shortage of detectives and investigators in many forces which is often leading to excessive workloads and stress amongst officers and staff.

HMIC also found evidence of fewer arrests, too often wanted suspects not being pursued and apprehended, and, in some forces, a large number of crimes 'written off' rather than pursued to an appropriate conclusion for the victim and the community.

HMIC has recommended an urgent review of the practice of not investigating crimes where "the victim does not support police action" and the need to develop a coherent national picture of threat posed to communities by organised crime groups. Individual [force level reports](#) available. [Police foundation blog](#)

The Implementation and Delivery of Rehabilitation Activity Requirements – 22nd February 2017

HMI Probation inspection highlights weaknesses in the delivery of Rehabilitation activity requirements (RARs), the flexible provisions in community sentences which enable probation providers be more flexible and innovative in the way they tackle offending behaviour. Inspectors found a lack of impetus and direction in a good proportion of cases and early signs of a reduction in confidence from judges and magistrates. In over one in ten cases examined, there had been no purposeful activity at all. Other government initiatives, such as swifter sentencing, also meant that staff did not always have time to develop sentencing recommendations that suitably addressed offender needs. Inspectors made recommendations which include CRCs and the NPS making sure that NPS court liaison staff have sufficient information about the activities available to make informed proposals for RARs, and HM Prison and Probation Service should make sure case management systems give an accurate record of RAR days and appointments

Ongoing and upcoming inspection activity

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| • JTAI Partnership response to children affected by domestic abuse | Publication pending |
| • Joint Inspections of Stalking and Harassment (HMIC-led) - Fieldwork | Ongoing |
| • PEEL 2016/17: Overall findings and 'State of Policing' published | March 2017 |
| • HMIC Force Management Statement template issued | April 2017 |
| • HMIC: Counter-terrorism thematic report from unannounced visits | April 2017 |
| • HMIC: Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Phase 1 fieldwork | April 2017 |
| • HMIC: Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Phase 2 fieldwork | May 2017 - Mar 2018 |
| • PEEL: Efficiency fieldwork - VfM and matching resources to demand | Spring 2017 |
| • PEEL: Legitimacy fieldwork - fairness, legality and ethics | Spring 2017 |

4. Reviews and Inquiries

Custody Images: Review of the Use and Retention by police – 24th February 2017

Home Office review recommends that people not convicted of an offence should be given the right to request that their custody image is deleted from all police databases and there should be a presumption that images will be deleted except where retention is necessary for a policing purpose or in exceptional circumstances. Police should review custody images after specified periods to ensure that they are needed and may delete custody images under certain limited circumstances. There is no expectation of forces to undertake a review all of the images that they hold as it is recognised that this would be a lengthy and resource intensive process

'Are We Getting it Right for Young Victims of Crime?' review – 22nd February 2017

Victims' Commissioner's review of children's entitlements under the Victim's Code found that many young victims felt they were not believed by the police, social workers or teachers and some had lost faith in the criminal justice system as a result of their treatment and the lack of a conviction. The review also highlights areas of good practice in the treatment of victims. The Victims' Commissioner makes a number of recommendations including reviewing criminal justice agency policies and procedures, providing access to registered intermediaries if needed and providing a single point of contact or children's advocate for child victims of violent or sexual offences. The Commissioner's next review will look at how criminal justice agencies monitor victims' satisfaction and use this information to improve service provision

Government response to the Support for Ex-offenders inquiry report – 25th February 2017

Government response to the Work and Pension Select Committee report into Support for Ex-offenders highlights that range of measures outlined in the Prison Safety and Reform White Paper which will seek to address recommendations made. The response confirms that the Government are considering a range of ways to incentive employers to take on ex-offenders leaving prison and exploring how demand and recruitment plan information can be better shared across the sector. The Government are also introducing enhanced measures of resettlement which include employment progression and exploring options for promoting 'ban the box' principles (removing the 'box' which asks about criminal convictions at the initial stages in the recruitment) across both the Public and Private sector

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- **Report in preparation:** [Lammy Review of BAME representation in the CJS](#) (Spring 2017)
 - **Evidence in progress:** [Child Sexual Abuse Independent Inquiry](#) (Public hearings commenced 24th February 2017), [Independent Review into child abuse allegations in football](#) (ongoing), [Prison Reform inquiry](#) (28th February 2017), [Disclosure of youth criminal records](#) (21st February 2017), [Policing for the Future inquiry](#) (21st February 2017), [Immigration inquiry](#) (2nd February 2017), [Implications of Brexit for the justice system inquiry](#) (1st February 2017), [Hate crime and its violent consequences inquiry](#) (21st February 2017), [Pitchford Undercover Policing inquiry](#) (ongoing), [EU policing and security issues](#) (6th December 2016), [Apprenticeships inquiry](#) (2nd November 2016), [Sharia Law](#) (1st November 2016),
 - **Reports awaiting government response:** [Reform of the Police Funding Formula](#) (Report published 11th December 2015), [Countering extremism inquiry](#) (Report published 25th August 2016), [Inquiry into the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse](#) (Report published 24th Nov), [Child Protection inquiry](#) (Report published 16th Dec), [Troubled Families Inquiry](#) (Report published 20th December 2016), [Emergency Services Communications inquiry](#) (Report published 25th Jan 2017)

5. Legislation

Prison and Courts Reform Bill introduced – 23rd February 2017

[Supporting documents](#)

Justice Secretary [introduces](#) Prisons and Courts Bill which will set the framework to make prisons places of safety and reform, devolve operational policies to prison governors, modernise courts to improve speed and access to justice and improve protections for victims and vulnerable people. The Bill aims to:-

- Courts will be given the power to stop domestic violence victims being cross examined by their attackers in the family courts
- Use of virtual hearings will be extended, and some hearings will be resolved via video or telephone conferencing, allowing justice to be delivered more swiftly.
- Offenders charged with some less serious criminal offences, such as failure to produce a ticket for travel on a train, will be able to plead guilty online, accept a conviction, be issued a penalty and pay that penalty there and then
- powers to HMI Prisons will be strengthened, including enabling the Chief Inspectors to trigger an urgent response from the Secretary of State where they have significant concerns and a new executive agency, HMI Prison and Probation Service will be responsible for all prison and probation operations
- 3 year performance agreements with prison governors will be created (phased in over the next two years) which will include standards around protecting the public, reforming offenders and improving safety that will be measured and reported on from October 2017
- Make it easier for the judiciary to deploy judges more flexibly and handle case backlogs more flexibly
- Introducing new fixed tariffs capping whiplash compensation and banning claims without medical evidence

Crime (Assaults on Emergency Services Staff) Bill introduced - 7th February 2017

Private Members' Bill to make certain offences including malicious wounding, grievous or actual bodily harm and common assault aggravated when perpetrated against a constable, firefighter, doctor, paramedic or nurse in the execution of his or her duty or against a person assisting these persons in the execution of their duty

Sexual Offences (Amendment) Bill introduced – 8th February 2017

Private Members' Bill to make provision for the circumstances in which the sexual history of a victim of rape or attempted rape may be introduced at a trial; to prohibit in certain circumstances the disclosure by the police of a victim's identity to an alleged perpetrator of a serious sexual crime; to extend the range of serious offences which may be referred to the Court of Appeal on the grounds of undue leniency of the sentence

Children and Social Work Bill – Report Stage in Commons – 7th March 2017

Bill to make provision about looked after children; ensure lessons are learned from serious child safeguarding cases; create a new 'power to innovate' giving local authorities the freedom to test out innovative new ways of working and introduce measures to improve how agencies share information. [Commons analysis](#)

- [Plans for relationships and sex education in schools tabled](#) – 1st March 2017

Digital Economy Bill – Report Stage in Lords – 20th March 2017

Bill to make provision about; restricting access to online pornography; protecting intellectual property related to electronic communications; [improving government data to transform public services](#) - allow public authorities to share personal data with other public authorities to improve the welfare of individuals (e.g. Troubled Families programme), measures to help detect and prevent government losses due to fraudulent activity, The Bill also proposes tougher penalties for nuisance callers and increasing the sentencing options for people who infringe copyright laws online. Royal Assent is expected spring 2017. [Commons analysis paper](#)

National Citizen Service Bill – Report Stage in Commons – TBC

NCS brings different communities together and gives 15 to 17-year-olds the opportunity to take part in new experiences, develop skills and give back to communities across England. The Government has committed to offer an NCS place to everyone that wants one. [Lords briefing](#)

Homelessness Reduction Bill – Lords Committee Stage – 10th March 2017

Private Members Bill to place a duty on local authorities to help eligible people at risk of homelessness to secure accommodation, 56 days before they are threatened with homelessness, and to provide those who find themselves homeless with support for a further period of 56 days to help to secure accommodation. The bill will also ensure that other local services refer those either homeless or at risk of being homeless to local authority housing teams. Bill builds on the government's commitment in December 2015 to consider all options, including legislation, to prevent homelessness. [Lords briefing](#) – 13th Feb 2017

Criminal Finances Bill – 2nd reading in Lords – 9th March 2017

Tackle corruption, money laundering and tax evasion. Allow the Government to recoup more criminal assets by reforming the law on proceeds of crime, including provisions to strengthen our enforcement powers and protect the public. Introduction of a criminal offence for corporations who fail to stop their staff facilitating tax evasion; Improve the operation of the Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs) regime to encourage better use of public and private sector resources against the highest threats; to target entities that carry out money laundering instead of individual transactions; and to provide the National Crime Agency (NCA) with new powers; Improve the ability of law enforcement agencies and courts to recover criminal assets more effectively, particularly in cases such as those linked to grand corruption. [Explanatory documents](#) , [Commons briefing](#) published 16th February 2017

Preventing & Combating Violence Against Women & DV Bill - 2nd reading in Lords – 10th March 2017

Private Members' Bill to require UK to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention)

Asset Freezing (Compensation) Bill – 2nd reading in Commons – 24th March 2017

A Bill to make provision for the imposing of restrictions on assets owned by persons involved in supplying terrorist organisations in the United Kingdom with arms, for the purpose of securing compensation for citizens of the United Kingdom affected by the supply of such arms.

Modern Slavery (Transparency in Supply Chains) Bill – 2nd reading in Commons – 24th March 2017

Private Members' Bill to require commercial organisations and public bodies to include a statement on slavery and human trafficking in their annual report and accounts; and to require contracting authorities to exclude from procurement procedures economic operators who have not provided such a statement. [Briefing](#)

Road Traffic Offenders (Surrender of Driving Licences) Bill - Commons Committee Stage – TBC

Private Members' Bill to make provision about the surrender / production of driving licences or test certificates in relation to certain offences; and identifying persons / securing payment in connection with fixed penalty notices [Commons briefing](#) – 25th January 2017

Rehabilitation of Offenders (Amendment) Bill - Lords Committee Stage – TBC

Private Members' Bill to make provision about rehabilitation periods for particular sentences - amending Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. [Commons briefing](#) – 24th January 2017

Unlawful Killing (Recovery of Remains) Bill - Commons 2nd reading – 24th March 2017

Private Members' Bill to remove eligibility for parole, create a separate offence and make provision about available sentences in cases where a person, convicted of unlawfully killing another person, has not provided relevant knowledge in their possession for the purposes locating and recovering the remains

Animal Cruelty and Animal Fighting Sentencing Bills - Commons 2nd reading – 24th March 2017

Private Members' Bills to increase the maximum sentences available for specified animal cruelty related offences including animal fighting and amend the Animal Welfare Act 2006

British Victims of Terrorism (Asset-Freezing & Comp) Bill – Commons 2nd reading – 24th March 2017

Private Members' Bill to make provision about the freezing and seizing of assets belonging to states or organisations who sponsor or perpetrate acts of terrorism for the purposes of enabling compensation to be paid

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Amendment) Bill - Commons 2nd reading – 24th March 2017

Private Members' Bill to repeal CT and Security Act 2015 provisions requiring teachers, carers and responsible adults to report signs of extremism or radicalisation amongst children in pre-school educational settings.

[Commons briefing](#) - 24th January 2017

Malicious Communications (Social Media) Bill - Commons 2nd reading – 24th March 2017

Private Members' Bill to make provision about offences, penalties and sentences in relation to communications containing threats transmitted or broadcast using online social media

On-line Safety Bill – Lords 2nd reading - TBC

Private Members' Bill to require internet service providers (ISPs) to provide an internet service that excludes adult-only content; require information to be provided about online safety; make provision for parents to be educated about online safety; make provision for the regulation of harmful material through on-demand programme services; to introduce licensing of pornographic services

Missing Persons Guardianship Bill – Lords 2nd reading – TBC

Private Members' Bill to make provision for the administration of the affairs of missing persons

Age of Criminal Responsibility Bill – Lords 2nd reading - TBC

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

Support to Exit Prostitution Bill – Lords 2nd reading - TBC

Private Members' Bill to improve support for people exiting prostitution

6. Consultations

[Firearms licensing fees](#)

Home Office consultation on proposed fee levels for prohibited weapons, museums and approved shooting clubs. New fees are expected to come into force in 2017, subject to enabling powers in Policing and Crime Bill

Open date: 12/01/2017

Close date: 09/03/2017

Licence to Practice and Professional Registration

College of Policing consultation on plans to introduce a Licence to Practise for specific high-risk / high-harm policing roles and on the potential benefits and issues associated with the longer-term development of a general registration in policing

Open date: 24/02/2017

Close date: 24/03/2017

[Corporate liability for economic crime](#)

Ministry of Justice call for evidence seeking views on reforming the law on corporate liability for economic crime and, in particular, whether the 'identification doctrine' (requirement to prove a "directing mind" and will in terms of corporate offending) is deficient as a tool for effective law enforcement against large modern companies

Open date: 13/01/2017

Close date: 24/03/2017

[Re-employing senior fire officers after their retirement](#)

Home Office consultation on proposed changes to the Fire and Rescue National Framework to restrict senior fire officers retiring from post and subsequently being re-employed in the same or very similar roles

Open date: 21/02/2017

Close date: 04/04/2017

[Draft Codes of Practice for Investigatory Powers Act 2016](#)

Home Office consultation on draft Codes of Practice in relation to interception of communications, national security notices, bulk acquisition of communications data, equipment interference and use of bulk personal datasets under provisions of the Investigatory Powers Act (IPA) 2016

Open date: 23/02/2017

Close date: 06/04/2017

[Draft guidance on Child abuse and neglect](#)

NICE consultation on draft guideline for professionals on recognising, assessing and responding to abuse and neglect of children and young people

Open date: 21/02/2017

Close date: 19/04/2017

[Sanctions to tackle tobacco duty evasion](#)

HM Revenue and Customs consultation seeking views on additional sanctions to increase financial penalties for repeat offenders, introduce a new civil penalty for dealing in illicit tobacco, reducing the threshold for publishing details of those evading duties and introducing a statutory Duty of Care on landlords and landowners

Open date: 17/02/2017

Close date: 10/05/2017