

RESPONSE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER OF WILTSHIRE AND SWINDON TO THE HMICFRS REPORT

An inspection of how well the police tackle serious youth violence

Police and Crime Commissioner's comments

My office is working hard to address the issues at the centre of serious youth violence, through working with Swindon Borough Council to create a successful youth strategy and by helping their bid to obtain over £560,000 in Safer Streets Funding to tackle violent crime.

The introduction of a Serious Violence Duty Coordinator, hosted by my office and working alongside both Swindon Borough and Wiltshire Councils, as well as the justice and health agencies, will be the foundation of our collective work to reduce serious violence and knife crime and will complement the work we are already doing with youth organisations.

My office has commissioned the PL Kicks scheme, a diversionary activity for hundreds of 10 – 18-year-olds allowing them access to football sessions and tournaments. Co-funded Street doctors' sessions in Swindon and Wiltshire through a charity awarded for empowering young lifesavers and helped pilot EOTAS (Education Other Than at School) which will work with young people coming to the notice of youth exploitation teams.

In 2018 Wiltshire police recognised First Time Entrants (FTE) into the youth criminal justice system had risen, introducing the youth restorative intervention panels to determine the most suitable out of court disposals for our youths. Since that time youth FTE volumes have dropped by over 70%.

The panels utilise Outcome 22 working with youth justice partners. I joint fund the youth justice team who facilitated 180 interventions, and long-term support for young people at risk of exploitation, drug mis-use and county lines. Recently rated outstanding for the work and support they provide to young people in Swindon.

I am confident that the work being done by Wiltshire Police to target more resources and proactive policing to protect public spaces and tackle violent crime, as is set out in the priorities by the Chief Constable, will be successful.

I have been impressed with the Chief Constable's commitment to implement a culture within Wiltshire Police which is truly victim-focused and through the appointment of a senior officer responsible for scrutiny, oversight, and accountability across all departments, I am assured that these standards will be upheld.

The implementation of the three key priorities set by Chief Constable Roper based around reducing violence and burglary as well as protecting public spaces, reflects the priorities of my Police and Crime Plan and the demands placed upon us by the people of Wiltshire.

Through managing these priorities successfully, we will continue to build public confidence and as a result, see better outcomes in the crimes which are being reported.