

Commissioner's targets to crack down on crime

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By Mark Taylor

FRESH performance targets have been set for police in a new four year crime-tackling plan. Set out by Police Commissioner Anthony Stansfeld, who was elected in November, the masterplan aims to reduce violence against individuals, solve more crimes, and tackle problem families.

Mr Stansfeld insisted he would prefer not to set goals but said they would provide a solid measure of progress.

The document for 2013-17 includes targets which will be reviewed after a year.

Officers have been challenged to lower domestic burglary by two per cent, solve 18 per cent of burglaries reported, and carry out at least 40 operations against metal theft. Violent crime against individuals must drop two per cent.

The number of incidents in 2011/12 was 9,310.

Other targets include achieving a 45 per cent crimes-solved detection rate for violent crimes, and a 23 per cent detection rate for rape. The detection rate for both in 2011/12 was 44.9 per cent and 26.4 per cent, respectively. New figures for 2012/13 are expected to be published shortly.

Police must cut cases of persistent and resistant anti-social behaviour problems affecting neighbourhoods and communities by at least 50.

Another target is to disrupt 20 problem and organised crime groups that prey on vulnerable people and isolated areas.

There are also financial targets.

Mr Stansfeld aims to cut a further £13.1m from the Thames Valley budget and reduce "non-pay" costs – those associated with operations, equipment or services bought by the force – by £3.6m.

The force needs to find savings of £40m over the next four years.

Mr Stansfeld said: "I am not a keen supporter of having targets for everything, but I have set targets for reductions in crime and also for detection rates as a useful measure for performance.

"Targets have to be approached realistically. If too ambitious they will lead to chasing easy detections to the detriment of catching more serious crime."

Didcot resident Philip Walker, 53, fought off two hooded robbers with foreign accents who burst into his home last year demanding cash and drugs. He said after the incident was recorded he had not heard back from police and believed keeping in touch with victims of crime could be improved. But he added: "It is right the police prioritise violent crime against innocent people." Kristeen Goodband, from Banbury, was conned out of £2,275 in August 2010 by rogue trader Jason Butcher, 29, of Newlands Farm in Milton Road, Bloxham.

He was jailed in November for one year after admitting a string of offences She said: "It's good to hear they are targeting the vulnerable in cut-off areas.

"I can't speak highly enough of the police for everything they did for me when I was a victim."

Council tax will go up every year for the next four years to pay for policing, and is also outlined in the plan. The police precept will increase by 2.5 per cent for each of the following three years.

To see the plan in full, visit thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/Document-Library/Police-and-Crime-Plan.pdf

TARGETS

- Lower domestic burglary by two per cent
- Solve 18 per cent of burglaries reported
- Carry out at least 40 operations against metal theft
- Cut violent crime against individuals by two per cent
- Achieve a 45 per cent detection rate for violent crimes
- Achieve a 23 per cent detection rate for rape
- Cut antisocial behaviour problems affecting neighbourhoods and communities by at least 50
- Increase the number of cash detention orders by 5 per cent to 160
- Disrupt 20 problem and organised crime groups that prey on vulnerable people and isolated communities

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