

**Response to HMICFRS Report on the South East Regional Organised Crime Unit (SEROCU)**

<https://hmicfrs.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/publications/inspection-of-the-south-east-regional-response-to-serious-and-organised-crime/>

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**Executive Summary**

In response to the HMICFRS report on the South East Regional Organised Crime Unit (SEROCU), I outline Thames Valley Police’s (TVP) approach to addressing the five recommendations concerning resource management, intelligence, and frontline resilience. While recognising TVP's successes in tackling organised crime, I also acknowledge the need for improvements.

This response was shared with South East Police and Crime Commissioners without objections. The force will provide a detailed operational update at the PCC Performance and Accountability Meeting (PAM) in January 2025.

Regional collaboration remains key, with governance frameworks supporting a unified approach. I am committed to using the recommendations to guide continuous improvement and enhance public safety.

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| **Response to the HMICFRS Report**I would like to extend my thanks for the thorough and insightful report on the South East Regional Organised Crime Unit (SEROCU) and the findings pertaining to Thames Valley Police (TVP). We acknowledge the areas identified for improvement and are committed to addressing these challenges with the urgency they deserve.**Addressing Thames Valley Police-Specific Issues**Thames Valley Police has achieved significant successes in tackling serious and organised crime, as recognised in your report. The force’s accomplishments, such as seizing nearly £1 million in cash, executing over 300 drug seizures, and removing 40 firearms from the streets, reflect the dedication and effectiveness of our specialist teams. These efforts have been instrumental in safeguarding our communities and delivering justice.However, we also acknowledge the need for improvement in several key areas:1. **Resource Allocation**: The report rightly identifies the need for enhanced resourcing within our specialist teams. We have implemented a new governance structure that ensures resources are deployed effectively in response to operational threats and risks. This structure is subject to continuous review to ensure we are meeting the demands placed on our force.
2. **Intelligence Management**: Enhancing our intelligence capabilities is a priority. We are increasing the number of analysts and financial investigators to improve our ability to gather, analyse, and act on critical intelligence. These investments are vital to strengthening our response to the evolving nature of organised crime.
3. **Frontline Resource Commitment**: Ensuring adequate frontline resources is crucial. We have made strides in reducing the abstraction rate of Neighbourhood officers and are committed to further bolstering our frontline capabilities. This includes improving the quality and consistency of our 4P (Pursue, Prevent, Protect, Prepare) plans and ensuring they are informed by robust local intelligence.

**Collaborative Efforts Across the South East Region**In addressing the specific challenges within Thames Valley, I recognise that the fight against serious and organised crime is a regional battle that demands a unified and coordinated response. The threats we face are interconnected across our communities, and the strength of our efforts lies in the power of our collaboration across the South East. As Police and Crime Commissioners, we have built a governance framework that goes beyond operational coordination, fostering a deep mutual commitment to supporting each other in delivering safety and justice for all.Our governance structures are designed to ensure that each force can rely on the others for support, advice, and resources, creating a resilient and adaptable regional response. This is more than just a cooperative effort; it is a shared vision where no force stands alone, and every PCC plays a crucial role in our collective strategy. The SEROCU exemplifies this collaborative spirit, enhancing our capabilities and ensuring that we can effectively tackle organised crime as a united front.By working together within this framework, we are not only addressing the immediate challenges identified in the HMICFRS report but also establishing a sustainable model for future success. Our united approach guarantees that we remain vigilant, responsive, and, most importantly, effective in our mission to protect the public from serious and organised crime across the entire South East region.**Commitment to Continuous Improvement**While we have made significant progress, we are not complacent. The findings of the HMICFRS report provide us with a valuable roadmap for further enhancing our capabilities. I am committed to ensuring that TVP implements the necessary changes swiftly and effectively, with ongoing oversight and support from my office.Moreover, I am confident that the collaborative spirit among the South East PCCs and police forces will enable us to build on our strengths and address any shortcomings together. Our shared goal is to protect our communities and ensure that those who engage in serious and organised crime are relentlessly pursued and brought to justice.Thank you once again for your detailed report and the opportunity to respond. We remain dedicated to improving our services and maintaining the trust and confidence of the public. |