



**STANDING COMMITTEE  
OF  
TYNWALD COURT  
OFFICIAL REPORT**

**RECORTYS OIKOIL  
BING VEAYN TINVAAL**

**PROCEEDINGS  
DAALTYN**

**CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL AFFAIRS  
AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

**Youth Justice**

**HANSARD**

**Douglas, Monday, 7th March 2022**

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**Members Present:**

*Chair:* Miss T M August-Hanson MLC  
Mr S G Peters MHK  
Mr C C Thomas MHK

*Clerk:*

Mr J D C King

*Assistant Clerk:*

Miss A H Khan

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# Constitutional and Legal Affairs and Justice

## Youth Justice

*The Committee sat in public at 2.32 p.m.  
in the Legislative Council Chamber,  
Legislative Buildings, Douglas*

[MISS AUGUST-HANSON *in the Chair*]

### Procedural

**The Chair (Miss August-Hanson):** Welcome to this public meeting of the Standing Committee of Tynwald on Constitutional and Legal Affairs and Justice. I am Tanya August-Hanson MLC and I chair this Committee. With me are Mr Stu Peters MHK and Mr Chris Thomas MHK.

Let's ensure that mobile phones are on silent or off, so that we do not have any interruptions; and for the purposes of *Hansard* I will be ensuring that we do not have two people speaking at any one time.

### EVIDENCE OF Mr Gary Roberts, Chief Constable, Isle of Man Constabulary

**Q1. The Chair:** The witness that we are hearing from today is very well known to the Committee. Chief Constable Gary Roberts, welcome. For the benefit of *Hansard* and anyone listening, please could you introduce yourself, including your job title and how long you have been in the post – regardless of the fact that I have just said it?

**The Chief Constable:** I am Gary Roberts. I am the Chief Constable. I have been a chief police officer since 2007 and I have been the Chief Constable for nine years and two months.

**Q2. The Chair:** Thank you very much.

I thought I would add that if you would like to make any form of an opening statement I give you leave to do so now. Otherwise, we will just start with the questioning, if that is all right?

**The Chief Constable:** That is absolutely fine, thank you.

**Q3. The Chair:** We will start with offending and reoffending as a subject area. Could you please tell us how many young offenders there are in the Isle of Man?

**The Chief Constable:** That is a very complex question. It sounds very simple, but it is very complex. I can provide the Committee with as much data as you want. I have not provided you with data in advance, but I will provide you with data afterwards on the basis that you might ask

me questions that I might be able to help you with later on. But certainly in terms of data, it is a complicated picture and it might help if I first explain – and tell me if you do not want me to do this – the system, so you then understand the data, if that helps. (**The Chair:** Please.)

30 There are several component parts of the system and the first component part is a thing we call Link, which is a referral scheme for young people when they first start to get dragged into trouble. If they are in a group of kids who are being a nuisance, to say an elderly resident – they are knocking on the door and running away – that Link process sees them coming to us. For most kids, we will write a letter to their parents and that will be enough, but for others they then go  
35 down a graduated route, which involves a further letter sometimes. It involves a face-to-face meeting with them and their parents. It can involve going on a diversionary scheme. The diversionary scheme might be in respect of them using drugs or using alcohol or because of how they have driven; or, if they are starting fires, we have a special fire starter scheme. Most young people, at that stage, stop offending. They either stop offending after the first letter, or they stop  
40 offending at some point in that process. Some, however, get into the justice system properly and they are cautioned – they are what we call simple cautions because we do not have conditional cautions yet – or they are prosecuted in the Juvenile Court.

The data is quite interesting, and I have got data around reoffending as well. In the 2021 year – that is the year to 31st March 2021 – there were 315 young people who went into the Link  
45 scheme. That is young people who were referred for one reason or another. This year, up to last Friday – so it is really contemporary data – there were 323. Of those 323, 33 have gone on to commit other offences. That is about 11%, so about an 11% reoffending rate. When we strip it all away, there were 164 young people who entered the Juvenile Court system last year. Of those 164, we would deem 27 of them to be persistent and really quite complex, challenging offenders,  
50 and those 27, between them, commit an awful lot of the offences on the Island.

If I go back a year to the end of March 2021, the 16 main offenders at that time committed 275 offences. Fifteen of those 16 were male, one was a girl. Thirteen of the 16 had significant mental health problems, 11 were long-term drug misusers and two had significant alcohol problems, so these are very young people who have significant issues. So 16 committed 275, and of the offences  
55 they committed, two thirds of them, or thereabouts, were criminal damage, theft or minor assaults – so quite low-level offending, but nevertheless important offending – and the most commonly stolen commodity was alcohol. That was last year.

This year, the 27 offenders are of a similar pattern. I have not got the precise data for what those 27 have committed, but it will be in excess of the 275, so we are talking 300-odd offences  
60 committed by 27 young people. Does that answer the first question?

**The Chair:** Yes, I would agree.  
Go ahead.

65 **Q4. Mr Thomas:** Just as a bit of background before we start, could you tell us a little bit about where you get such good statistics from? Has anything changed recently in your statistics and recording systems and so on?

**The Chief Constable:** Two things there. I am a really strong believer in the power of data to  
70 bring improvement and to help an organisation thrive, and I have invested heavily in data analysis. I have a lead analyst. I have one analyst who just does performance data, so he does the work for things like this and he does work for Tynwald Questions. I have two other generic analysts, who are largely crime and intelligence analysts, and I have one analyst who specialises in economic crime. And then, with a fair wind, I am going to employ two more to do work around threats to  
75 the Island around cross-border. That is significant, really. For a small organisation the power of data is really important, and I am doing the best I can with it.

Secondly, we have a system that is much better. Our core computer system is called Connect, and that is a really clever system. In the next two to three months we will be able to use Power BI

80 to bring out that data in a much better way, in a much more accessible way, so we can share it better with you and with the public.

**Q5. Mr Thomas:** So just to finish that off, when did these two innovations come in – the new system, Connect, and also the use of analysts?

85 **The Chief Constable:** We employed our first analyst about 20 years ago. The significant number of analysts we have now has probably reached a peak in the last four or five years, but I had a business case that successfully went through Treasury in the last Budget round for two more analysts.

90 **Q6. Mr Thomas:** And Connect is ...?

**The Chief Constable:** Connect will enter its third year in June. It is a mature, complex system which can give us all manner of data if we ask the right questions.

95 **Q7. The Chair:** The two more analysts you have requested – what gaps are they filling?

**The Chief Constable:** They are not filling gaps. They will be new posts and they will prepare us for the joined-up approach to borders that the Government wishes us to take.

100 **Q8. Mr Peters:** You have mentioned that, I think, 13 of 16 of these young offenders have mental health problems. Can you be more specific about the kinds of problems they have?

105 **The Chief Constable:** No, I cannot – not because I am being obstructive, just because I do not know. We often see young people who, because of the lifestyle they have lived, because of how they have been brought up, find themselves struggling in all manner of ways with their mental health, and often they come from families where there are mental health problems. Maybe, if the conversation allows us, we can talk about adverse childhood experiences at some point, but certainly mental health and accessing the Mental Health Service at an early stage is a significant issue for many of these young people.

110 **Mr Peters:** Thank you.

**Q9. The Chair:** That would be a natural progression on to adverse childhood experiences anyway, so if you could give us a little bit more detail on what you are seeing.

115 **The Chief Constable:** In my Annual Report about four years ago, for the first time I wrote about adverse childhood experiences and I wrote about the groundbreaking work in the United States, going back into the 1980s and 1990s, by the Kaiser Permanente insurance company, which identified in those days, I think, nine – but there are now accepted to be 11 or 12 – things that, if they happen to young people in their formative years, lead to poor outcomes in life. The things are: if they are brought up in a home where there is domestic abuse, where there is misuse of drugs or misuse of alcohol, or where their parents are suffering from poor mental health. If the state does not intervene to support those young people and to support those families, then it is almost certain, if those children are exposed to a sufficient number of these things, that they will have poor life outcomes: their mental health will be poor or their physical health will be poor; they will probably die younger; they are more likely to be victims of crime; they are more likely to commit crime; they are more likely to be abused; they are more likely to go on to abuse. All very complicated stuff. Many young people will be exposed at some point to one or two of those things. If they start to be exposed to four or five of them, then without some form of proper intervention they will be damaged.

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The last administration – and I know Mr Thomas was part of that – tried to pick this up, but it did not really go as far or as well as any of us wanted, I think.

135 For me, when we talk about long-term reduction of crime and long-term reduction of offending, protecting vulnerable people, dealing better with health outcomes, we need, as a community, to get better at adverse childhood experiences. I have absolutely no doubt at all about that.

**Q10. Mr Thomas:** And we need, really, better childhood experiences without the adverse aspect of them.

140 **The Chief Constable:** Yes, but sadly, so many of these young people ... For example, we see lots of young offenders who have never had a positive male role model in their lives, and so then if we start to provide mentoring schemes, we start to give them access to older people who can show them different ways of living and being, it makes a difference.

145 Collectively, as a community, adverse childhood experiences explain so many things – so many people in the mental health system, so many people in the prison system – and I think, as a small community, we should be able to be very good at dealing with it.

**Q11. The Chair:** Is that, then, reflective of what you see in adult offending as well?

150 **The Chief Constable:** Yes, without a doubt. Many young people, because of the interventions that we put in place – or the Juvenile Court puts in place, the Probation Service and Social Services put in place – will stop offending. Many of them will, but some will not, and then they go into prison, and sadly, many of them spend a large amount of their lives in prison.

155 I will just be careful about what I say now, but there was a young boy who died fairly recently from a drug overdose – legal, or it might be prescription drugs. He first came to the attention of the public service when he was three or four years old, when his parents had split up and he was missing and was found barefoot on the road going to try to find his mum. I am being very careful because there will be an inquest on this and there has not been an inquest yet, but over the course of his very short life, collectively as a community we did not address the things that were behind the harm that he had suffered. He had poor mental health and he abused drugs. He abused alcohol, so on a couple of occasions he had burgled places to steal alcohol. It was a slow-motion tragedy that unfolded in front of everybody, and it is so sad. As a community, if we can deal really well with adverse childhood experiences, we will have fewer victims but we will have fewer young people like that, who have such a terrible, short life.

**Q12. The Chair:** What do you see as the Police's current role in that – obviously without going into departmental policy changes or anything like that?

170 **The Chief Constable:** We cannot deal with this on our own. It is a policy matter in many ways, so I am potentially straying into areas of policy and I have to be careful about that, but it needs a joined-up effort on the part of the whole public service. That is what it is about. If we are committed to identifying families who are at risk and young people who are at risk because of these various adverse childhood experiences, we need professionals who feel enabled and confident enough to share information with each other. Then we need joined-up responses to things like that – and those responses have to be swift, they have to be tailor-made to the individuals and they have to be monitored in terms of their effectiveness.

180 **Q13. The Chair:** Historically, have there been any areas of best practice in terms of cross-departmental/Board/Office working? Also, what do you think the barriers might be to working collaboratively like that?

**The Chief Constable:** Professionals are not sufficiently confident, in my view, to share information as frequently and as safely as they should.

185 There was a beacon of best practice, which was the Youth Justice Team. That was a beacon of  
best practice, and when the Scottish Inspectorate came here I think they described it as an  
example for the rest of the public service in terms of how to work together. That was dismantled  
piece by piece by some senior partners who did not necessarily agree with what we were trying  
to do, but when it worked – and it worked well from about 2001 through to its demise in about  
190 2018-19 – at times it worked incredibly well and it made a real difference to young people. It  
reduced young offending, for a start, in its first two years by 30% because it applied bespoke  
interventions to young people. The team consisted then of the Police and Social Services. There  
was input from Education, there was a health worker, there was an employment adviser and that  
person would go out and get jobs for young people, which kept them on the straight and narrow.  
195 But that was all taken apart, largely because of budget cuts but not solely because of that.

**Q14. The Chair:** When you say it was taken apart, could you go into more detail on that, please?

**The Chief Constable:** It was subject to death by a thousand cuts, really. The budget was first  
200 cut in about 2012 and it suffered a series of cuts. There was a philosophical difference of opinion  
between me and somebody who no longer works for what was then Social Services – she had a  
very clear view that it was not the right thing to do. It collapsed, really, so we instituted, in the  
Constabulary, a thing called the Police Early Action Team, which is police officers, a specialist youth  
worker, and we are making a difference – and that Link work I described before is done by that  
205 team.

On the very positive side, I have had discussions with the new Director of Social Services and  
she is really keen that we get back to where we were, and there is a fair amount of work now  
under way to try to get us back to where we were and to have a fully cohesive, joined-up team  
that deals with young people.  
210

**Q15. The Chair:** Just going back to the offending and reoffending, we touched on rehabilitation  
but we did not really manoeuvre into that arena. Obviously, there is an awful lot of rehabilitation  
work that happens in adult offending, and that is quite well known all the way through the system,  
but how much of that is then transferred over into youth offending? How does it cross-compare,  
215 basically?

**The Chief Constable:** There is quite a stark difference in the data. In the 2021 year, 26% of adult  
offenders reoffended; 33% of young offenders did, so slightly higher. This year, 24% of adults have  
reoffended; 50% of young people have reoffended, so that is quite significant. That is a significant  
220 difference.

**Q16. The Clerk:** Can I just ask the Chief Constable to explain: when you say a number like that –  
50% of young people reoffended – do you mean for each offence 50% of them were people who  
had offended before?  
225

**The Chief Constable:** Of the young people who have come into the system – either into the  
system and gone on to our diversionary scheme or into the system and gone into the Juvenile  
Court – half of them have reoffended.

230 **Q17. The Clerk:** Within six months?

**The Chief Constable:** Within a year. At some point within the year.

235 **Q18. The Clerk:** So the figure that you quote for the year ending March 2022 is about people who had already been recorded as having offended in the year ending March 2021, and within a year 50% of them had reoffended?

240 **The Chief Constable:** Yes, last year 33%, this year 50%, so about half. (**The Clerk:** Thank you.) And then that cohort of about 27 that I described – 16 last year, 27 this year – some of them offend a lot. Several of them have been arrested 10 or more times, so they are quite significant recidivist offenders, really.

**Q19. The Chair:** We were talking about a figure ... is it 2021 of 315 young people?

245 **The Chief Constable:** In 2020-21, 315. This year, to last Friday, 323.

**Q20. The Chair:** And you say that there are 300-plus expected. What do you think the change might have been, in that case, to precipitate such an increase, such a spike?

250 **The Chief Constable:** It is two things. If we went back several years on the data, the Link scheme would say there were 175 people on it. To a significant degree the increase in number is not about the behaviour of young people, it is about the behaviour of police officers. It is about police officers making sure that they refer young people when they need to be referred. And so the new IT system played a part in that, but revitalising the scheme was important for us because we  
255 wanted to make sure that we got a grip of young people who are in danger of becoming offenders at a very early stage.

The figures sound high, but they sound about right to me, professionally, given the profile of crime. In the year that ended 31st March last year, there were 3,084 crimes, or something like that. This year we are on course for about 2,700-2,800 crimes, so 300 young people on the verge  
260 of criminality sounds right, and the vast majority of them do not come to our attention after the first intervention. That is the important thing. The Isle of Man is full of really good young people, but our focus needs to be on those who are really troubled and really difficult, and there might be one or two bad ones in there but they are difficult young people.

265 **Q21. The Chair:** And are they interacting quite well with the Police Early Action group?

**The Chief Constable:** Some do. The work that that team does is before the court process. They will work with young people who will not want to be helped, and there are some young people ...  
270 once they are in the system, they will bypass that and we will send them straight to the Juvenile Court. If they have been to the Juvenile Court, they do not usually get a go at a diversionary scheme; they go back to the Juvenile Court if they offend again.

Fairly recently, when the magistrates had a training session, my colleagues from the Police Early Action Team went along and talked to the magistrates who work in the Juvenile Court about our work, so that the magistrates understand what we do, so that the sanctions that they impose –  
275 which I think are on the same basis, they are all about preventing reoffending ... they understand what we do and they understand what has and has not worked and what potentially we could offer, so the magistrates can impose the right sentences.

280 **Q22. The Chair:** The number of restricted physical interventions in youth custody – what does that look like on the Isle of Man?

**The Chief Constable:** I do not know, because I do not run a youth custody facility. Youth custody would be the responsibility of the Prison Governor for the young offenders who are in prison, or Manx Care through St Christopher's for Cronk Sollysh.

285 **Q23. The Chair:** Okay. I think we will be getting on to that subject matter a little bit later on.  
Whether or not you will be able to add to it, I do not know (*The Chief Constable:* Possibly.) on that  
basis.

Is there any more information that you can provide us with regarding offending and  
reoffending at this point?

290

*The Chief Constable:* Yes. You asked, right at the start, about first-time people. This year – so  
the year right up to date – there have been 34 first-time offenders arrested. That is not a huge  
number. That is fewer than one a week. Fifty four young people account for 145 of the arrests of  
young people that we have made, and so we will make about 200 arrests of young people. So that  
295 is, again you can see, 27 who are really significant offenders and another 27, or thereabouts, who  
are coming to our attention quite frequently now.

**Q24. The Chair:** So it is a bit of a different picture, then, from the usual position, is it? There  
are more serious offences that are being added into the mix, as opposed to the minor offences,  
300 minor assaults and thefts and that type of thing, possibly, from earlier?

*The Chief Constable:* Possibly. The most alarming thing – and it was in my Annual Report last  
year – was the involvement of young people in drug trafficking. In 2011 we arrested one young  
person for a drug-trafficking offence. In the year that ended 31st March we arrested 22, so young  
305 people are now being involved in drug trafficking, often through the operation of what is  
commonly known as County Lines, where people – often in the UK, but not solely in the UK –  
identify vulnerable people, some of whom are vulnerable just because of their age, exploit them  
and force them into the drugs market, where they will carry drugs for people, where they will sell  
drugs, where they will help launder money. It is becoming quite a significant issue.

310 In June of this year we are going to run a conference on County Lines involving our partners  
and some of our colleagues from Merseyside, because unless we deal with it properly and swiftly  
it will become a significant issue in the Island.

**Q25. The Chair:** This is something that you have mentioned in a number of your Annual  
315 Reports, isn't it – obviously one presentation after another of your Annual Reports to politicians  
and to the Council of Ministers? How significant a policy response to that from Government and  
from DHA have you then seen come through?

*The Chief Constable:* I am not convinced it is a policy matter. It is a matter of joining things up  
320 and sharing information and having professionals who understand the signs of County Lines, but  
also having parents who understand it as well. We have seen cases in the last year or so where  
parents have not thought twice about their children appearing in a new £200 North Face coat and  
asking where it has come from – and it has come from drug dealing. It is that lack of curiosity on  
the part of some people which causes some of this as an issue. So raising awareness is a key part  
325 of this, and this conference that we will have in June in part is about raising awareness amongst  
professionals. There are some very good people now in Manx Care who have a lot of experience  
in this world, and we will work very closely with them to do what we can do to improve the  
situation.

330 **Q26. The Chair:** But you say that a lot of that is about information sharing across agencies as  
well, which I am assuming is between yourselves, Customs and Excise and Immigration, on which  
we have a Borders Bill that has gone out to consultation. Will that solve all the problems, or is  
there more work that needs to be done; and, if so, what is it?

335 **The Chief Constable:** The work that needs to be done is ... A very small part of it is addressed  
by the Borders Bill, because that is the gateway for agencies to share information around border  
data. That is part of it.

The biggest issue is about making sure that all of the public service sees this as a problem –  
and young people becoming involved in dealing class A drugs is a problem – and that they then  
340 join up in a concerted way to deal with it and stop it from happening. That could be education,  
and since September we have been involved in a lot of work with the Department of Education,  
Sport and Culture about how we provide the right packages to schools. I went to the head  
teachers' conference in September with some of my colleagues and I went back again a few weeks  
ago, and we are now putting together bespoke packages that will be rolled out across the Island –  
345 and these are the packages that head teachers want, with the caveat that an individual head  
teacher, if he or she has a particular problem, will get different support. Those packages will look  
at things like County Lines, they will look at things like carrying weapons, they will look at issues  
about exploitation – about young people being exploited for sex and things like that – so it is a  
really good piece of work, I think.

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**Q27. The Chair:** Can you tell us any more about that?

**The Chief Constable:** It is in the course of happening. One of my chief inspectors has led on the  
work. We have been fortunate to go to two or three head teachers' conferences now. We have  
355 been very well received. Head teachers are fully engaged in it, and we are designing things that  
they want us to deliver in schools.

**Q28. Mr Thomas:** Would that be a bit similar to the Drive Safe Live Long shock campaign of the  
Fire Service?

360

**The Chief Constable:** Yes, it is like that. We carry on doing the Drive Safe stuff because it is  
really important – we still get young people, sadly, who either are killed or suffer very serious  
injuries on the roads – but this will focus on things that are really contemporary and really  
challenging for parents and schools to deal with, such as sexting, for example. Some of the high  
365 schools periodically have real issues with sexting and we go through periods, sometimes, where  
we see once, twice, three times a week reports of young people who are being extorted because  
they have shared pictures of themselves online without clothes on. We are doing an awful lot to  
try to help educate young people about that, and the feedback we have had so far from schools  
has been very good.

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**Q29. Mr Thomas:** I suppose what I meant was it is just the idea of people telling their own  
stories and in a quite shocking way. It is quite traumatic to go to a Drive Safe Live Long  
presentation – and that is the sort of thing you have in mind for some of these other topics?

375 **The Chief Constable:** Yes, it is, and if you have not seen that Drive Safe Live Long thing it is  
worth seeing, but we have to manage the traumatic side of that as well because it can have a real  
impact on young people.

We are in the process of setting up, with partners, a mentoring scheme for young people that  
will see people who have got a bit of life experience behind them – one or two of whom are ex-  
380 offenders – being involved in mentoring young people, and that, in other jurisdictions, has shown  
many positive results.

**Q30. The Chair:** Here is a question for you, which you may or may not be able to answer, but  
if the age of criminal responsibility were raised to 16, would it make a significant difference to the  
385 statistics on youth crime, do you think?

390 **The Chief Constable:** It would be really interesting if you did that, because what would happen is that the people who exploit young people would exploit them even more. People who get 14-year-olds and 13-year-olds to carry drugs or launder money would get them to do more of that, because they would do it with impunity. That is the significant issue around that, and some of these young people ... Make no mistake, we are talking about some very vulnerable young people but we are also talking about some young people who are a real handful and really difficult and can be violent and can carry weapons and are, one or two of them, out of control, and so we are not ... All young people are not virtuous. Most of them are, but this tiny number are very  
395 difficult, and if you took them out of the justice system you would have to have some way of intervening, because if you did not there would be real problems.

**Q31. The Chair:** So if it were ever to be done, it would need very well-targeted interventions?

400 **The Chief Constable:** It would, yes. I cannot imagine how you would do it. There is not a common law jurisdiction, I think, that has done that.

**Q32. The Chair:** Just moving on to causes of crime, would decriminalising recreational drugs for personal use have an effect on the number of young people being involved in crime?

405 **The Chief Constable:** There are two levels to that. In terms of drugs offences, we had 3,000-odd offences last year; 86 of them were drugs offences committed by young people, but there were, as I said, in that, 20-odd young people who were actually trafficking drugs.

410 It is a policy matter. If that is what you want to do, that is what you will do. You need to do it with your eyes open because I think the most significant issue for young people and drugs is the potential damage caused to some of them by use of cannabis at a very early age. There is a lot of evidence showing that if you use cannabis – and cannabis now is much stronger than it was – at a very early age, it can impact on mental health as people get older, and the scientific evidence on that is quite strong.

415 **Q33. The Chair:** Do you have statistics on the number of those young people who come through, or that the Police might interact with, who do take recreational drugs?

420 **The Chief Constable:** Lots of young people take recreational drugs, and if we look at young people who are now able to drive, you will have seen in our social media feeds how frequently we are catching people who are driving whilst under the influence of cannabis or cocaine. We are doing about one a day at the moment, and most of them are in the age group of about 17 to about 22, so a really significant issue.

425 I said in a report two years ago, I think, or three years ago, cannabis is ubiquitous. It simply is. That is a fact of life. I have a real concern about cannabis and I have articulated this a couple of times publicly. As societal attitudes change to cannabis, there is a threat to police legitimacy in the middle of it, because as most of the people come to accept that cannabis is okay to use – and I will not offer an opinion on whether it is or whether it is not – the Police enforcing the law in a way that the public disagrees with does threaten our legitimacy. It does concern me and it will  
430 become an issue for my successor, I think.

**Q34. The Chair:** Yes, potentially quite an issue for your successor, I would imagine, because this really is exactly that type of situation, isn't it, really?

435 **The Chief Constable:** It is exactly that.

**Q35. The Chair:** Is there an ethnic disproportionality in crime statistics for children and young people?

440 **The Chief Constable:** Almost none of the young offenders that we have are from a visibly different background, and very few of the victims are as well, so it is not, at the moment, an issue in the Island.

445 **Q36. The Chair:** Is there data to support any concerns on poverty playing a part in the rates of young people involved in criminal activity?

450 **The Chief Constable:** We do not collect data like that, but my professional judgement on this is really clear that at the heart of a lot of offending, and particularly the offending around drug trafficking, is frustrated aspiration, where young people want things they are never going to get. They see drugs as the only way that they potentially can get the shiny things they want – the training shoes, the coats, ultimately the cars and things like that – and that sense of frustrated aspiration leads them to offend.

455 The last Chief Constable of Merseyside, a man called Andy Cooke, retired a few months ago and went on to become one of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), and he made the point that in Liverpool in particular the drugs market and criminality was born out of people who simply wanted to escape where they were, and it was the only way they could do it. He said they have tremendous entrepreneurial spirit and if we could harness it, it would be fantastic. I fear there is some element of that here, where young people ... many of them have underperformed educationally, they have been out of the school system for much of the time. The only way they can aspire to get the things they want is through this illegal route, and it is really sad.

460 **Q37. The Chair:** What work are the Police doing to address the need for targeted prevention efforts in addressing root causes of juvenile crime?

465 **The Chief Constable:** That is a two-part question, isn't it? Let me describe some stuff we are doing around exploitation. We have a thing running at the moment called Operation Yarrow, which is where we identify the 10 most vulnerable young people, some of whom are offenders – in fact, many of whom are offenders. They are vulnerable to exploitation through drugs – so getting drawn into drug trafficking – or exploitation on a sexual basis, where young girls in particular are being given drugs and drink and other things for sex. We have identified the 10 most at risk and we have put all manner of bespoke interventions in place with partners to try to protect these young people and take them away from the threats that they have, and so far it has been really successful. Some have dropped out of the 10 and we have put others into the 10. We can deal with about 10 at the moment. That is one piece of really important work we are doing.

475 The root causes of crime are not for me, I think. I think the root causes of crime are for policymakers to understand and deal with, because I cannot do everything and my service cannot do everything. It is only by having joined-up public services that are working to the right policy that will eventually deal properly with these things. But going back to what I said right at the start, if you can deal with adverse childhood experiences properly, that is the crux of it. That really must be the crux of it.

480 **Q38. The Chair:** Is there anything other than Operation Yarrow that you perhaps have not mentioned before and that you might want to mention at this point?

485 **The Chief Constable:** We seek all the time to work with partners to identify young people who are at risk. We use the existing safeguarding procedures to highlight the young people and the families that are at risk or are struggling, and then we will do whatever we can with partners to intervene.

490 I touched before on education. One of the consequences of the pandemic is that some young people now believe that school is optional. That is a significant problem, I think, and if we do not do something about it we are storing up problems for the next few years.

495 **Q39. Mr Thomas:** I just thought it might be helpful to the Chair and the Clerk: in the last two answers, you have mentioned partners and you have not actually named any of them. For instance, for alcoholism, will that be Motiv8 or something like that? Who would your partner be when it comes to alcoholism? And who would your partner be for some of the sex things and so on? Would it be a well-known third sector charity, or would it be somebody else?

500 **The Chief Constable:** We do some work with charities. We use different partners for different things. For example, I described a fire-starter scheme before, because some young people do set fire to things. The Fire Service take the lead on that.

We have an alcohol arrest referral scheme where we use partners for alcohol and drugs who are not police officers. We use people from outside, from the third sector, who can provide input in an open, frank way that perhaps people feel they would not get from police officers.

505 On a day-to-day basis we will talk, every day, to Manx Care. We have a very good relationship with many parts of Manx Care.

We talk on a daily basis to Education and to schools in particular. There will be officers in schools all the time, and that is making a difference. If you recall, when my budget was cut significantly in about 2013 one of the consequences was that I had to reduce neighbourhood policing and I predicted at the time that there would be problems. It has taken until now to rebuild neighbourhood policing and to have officers in schools, in places where there are vulnerable people, all the time. I was in Peel last week talking to some of the community officers there, and they were able to show how, by being in the schools nearly every day, they are making a difference on the streets of Peel, which is great because it is a lovely, safe little place, but there were some issues with kids.

515 So we work with anyone who is happy and willing to work with us.

**Q40. Mr Peters:** You mentioned early intervention and the importance of it. What sort of response do you get from the parents or carers of the young people you are trying to intervene in the care of? Are they supportive of it, or are they obstructive to it?

525 **The Chief Constable:** It runs the whole gamut of responses, really. Some people welcome our intervention because they will say, 'I'm really struggling here – what can you do to help me?' and in a case like that, we then, with their consent, make a referral to Social Services so they can get support. We have some who are horrified and do all they can to make sure their young one does not come to our attention again. And we have some who either do not care or who are feckless about the whole thing. In the last 12 months we have made one arrest. We did a search warrant for drugs where a young man in his mid-teens was dealing drugs and his mother was involved.

530 **Q41. The Chair:** Just going back to Operation Yarrow before I hand over to Mr Peters, you said that you address the 10 most at risk and those may change, but you talked about child sex exploitation. Does that exist on the Isle of Man, and to what degree?

535 **The Chief Constable:** It exists, we think, more significantly than we had feared. We made an arrest on Friday, for example: a youngish man – he was about 20, I think – who had had, in a hotel room in Douglas, over a period of several hours, two girls, one of 14 and one of 16, and he was arrested for child sexual exploitation. So it happens. We can see evidence of it, we have intelligence of it and we will take enforcement action if we have to.

540 We have quite significant intelligence about the involvement in drug trafficking of some young women who have been involved, who have been sexually exploited as part of them becoming

involved in that drug trafficking. So it is a significant issue and it is an issue that the Safeguarding Board understands and sees and places on its risk register.

545 **Q42. The Chair:** And it would be more than one situation, so how many of those situations have you come across?

**The Chief Constable:** I could not say how many, but I can say that we talk about it quite often, and partners see the risks as well; partners in the care sector and in the education sector certainly see some of the things that we see as well.

550

**Q43. The Chair:** Is it rising?

**The Chief Constable:** It is hard to say whether it is rising, but I think for a long time it was a problem that was occurring in plain sight and nobody could see it.

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**Q44. The Chair:** Is there anything more that you can tell us about that?

**The Chief Constable:** No, but I think it is one that, over the next couple of years, the public services need to focus a bit more on.

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**Q45. Mr Peters:** If we can look at society's response to crime, what issues have been identified in juvenile justice policy, and is there a danger in oscillating between rehabilitative and punitive approaches to managing young offenders ...? Which of those works and how?

565 **The Chief Constable:** I do not see an oscillation on the Island, I see a progression. There is a progression from interventions – low-level interventions, targeted interventions – through to the justice system and through the courts.

In 2016, the Ministry of Justice released a study that it had commissioned from Middlesex University, which was about what works in young offending. It was an evidence-based study of similar ... It effectively summarised all the evidence-based studies from around the English-speaking world, predominantly the United States but also Australia and the British Isles, and what it said is punitive approaches are not as effective as interventions to prevent. It is quite a lengthy report, but to summarise it says understand the young person, understand what is going on in their life and what is causing them to behave in the way they have, understand what interventions might work for them and understand how best to deliver those interventions. If the young person wishes to engage, then it is easy; if they do not wish to engage, then it is trickier but it still can be done if the intervention is right. It is also down to things like how does a young person learn, so find how they learn and teach them in the appropriate way. It was very much focused on preventative approaches, and it gave me some comfort because to a huge degree in the Isle of Man we have been trying to do that for 20 years. And so it is quite a significant report and it is easily findable online.

580

**Q46. Mr Peters:** And is there consistency as far as the courts are concerned?

585 **The Chief Constable:** The simple answer is I do not know. I would assume there would be, because I know how seriously the juvenile magistrates take their job. My role finishes when they get to court. I pay little attention to what the courts do, to be honest, because that is not my job, but I know from interventions I have had – I have been to the magistrates' training session myself a few years ago, and discussions I have had with the High Bailiff and conversations I have had with my colleagues who work in the youth justice system – that the courts take their job very seriously.

590

**Q47. Mr Peters:** As violent crime rates in youth groups rise, is there, in your opinion, a drive towards tougher punishment for young offenders?

595 **The Chief Constable:** I do not think there is, but then, as I said, I do not really pay that much  
attention to the sentences the juvenile courts give. If there was, given that study I referred to from  
2016, it would be a mistake, because the study talks about things like prison sampling sessions  
where, in some places, they will put young people in prison, and there is real evidence, from the  
United States in particular, that that is counterproductive.

600

**Q48. Mr Peters:** What is being done by police and connected agencies to mitigate damage by  
educating young people and their parents?

**The Chief Constable:** I think I have answered half of that, really, haven't I, about the work we  
605 have been doing with Education since September? We have done some work around drugs with  
parents, but it has been sporadic and not particularly planned. We could do more, but the danger  
is the parents who come are the ones you do not want to come because they are the parents who  
will do all the right things, and if their child turned up in a new North Face jacket they would spot  
it and do something about it.

610

**Q49. Mr Peters:** I expect that that often happens, that the child turns up in a £200 jacket and  
the parents do not ask any questions because they know beforehand.

**The Chief Constable:** Yes. Those are the parents who would not come along to an education  
615 session.

**Q50. Mr Thomas:** I just wanted to go back to the answer about your potential for oscillation  
between rehabilitative and punitive approaches to managing young offenders work. What I think  
620 you said was that 20 years ago the Isle of Man had a system and a spectrum of approaches, and it  
is exactly the same now. Is that what you really mean to say, or do you think there has been any  
change in the Isle of Man over the last 20 years to use more of one or the other? Or has it been  
going up and down? How much ...?

**The Chief Constable:** No, the approach has always been built around building bespoke  
625 interventions for individual young people, but also about having schemes that will target certain  
types of offence. We have been talking about alcohol, we have been talking about drugs and we  
have talked about traffic. Those schemes have worked a long time. The input that is given might  
vary, and that will change over time, so we are not afraid to beg, steal and borrow content from  
other places that is seen to work in other places. You alluded, I think, before, Mr Thomas, to the  
630 success of the Drive Safe Live Long campaign. Well, that has changed a couple of times over the  
years, and the video presentation, for example, has changed to keep pace with what we see  
outside. So we will keep changing.

What is missing is conditional cautions, which are in the Justice Reform Act, so they will arrive  
635 reasonably soon and they will make a big difference to how we do targeted interventions and  
allow us the proper ability to do restorative justice in a way that we have not done on the Island  
before. So that is a positive. And then, in the Sentencing Bill, which I think is being drafted, I am  
hoping that there is a provision for attendance centres, because if that is the case we can have  
young people who do not want to engage in the system to be caused to go somewhere to get the  
input that they need.

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**Q51. Mr Thomas:** I am just trying to draw out a conclusion. What I think you are saying you  
believe is that 20 years ago already we had it right in the Isle of Man about the balance between  
those two systems and we have not had to change anything over those 20 years.

645 **The Chief Constable:** No, and I ... Well, there was more offending 20 years ago as well. If you  
look at the crime figures for the year 2000 there were 6,000-odd offences. We are only halfway  
at that level now. Yes, we used imagination. We were very creative in some of the interventions  
that we had in place. Having a properly joined-up group of people was key. I talked before about  
having an employment adviser. The employment adviser was so important. We had police officers  
650 who would go and get kids out of bed in the morning and take them to work because it stopped  
them from offending. That stuff was great and it was ahead of its time, and when the Scottish  
Inspectorate came in about 2012 or 2013, whenever it was, and said, 'This is a beacon of best  
practice.' it really was, but unfortunately it withered on the vine. We are determined, in the  
Constabulary, to carry on with initiatives like that, and I know now the partner agencies like Manx  
Care are really committed to it, too.

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**Q52. Mr Peters:** If we can look at the experience of suspects and defendants, what training  
have the Police undertaken in the last five years about how children and young people need to be  
treated on arrest? Have there been any complaints? And can you provide an example without  
identifying the people involved?

660

**The Chief Constable:** We follow College of Policing guidance on use of force, so there is a  
training manual and material that sets out how police officers should use the coercive powers that  
we have. Every officer gets that when they join, and then every officer is required to refresh every  
year. So it is annual training, and we are now in annual training for that at the moment, getting  
665 ready for the summer. The doctrine for use of force is set by the College of Policing and we follow  
however they update it, so I am fairly content that that is accurate.

We had a serious case review here a year or so ago, involving an incident that happened on  
the children's ward and the Safeguarding Board made a recommendation that we look again at  
the de-escalation part of that in terms of young people, so we are looking at that and it is being  
670 factored into the training at the moment. That is taking account of views that partners had about  
how police officers were with the young person in the children's ward. We have dealt with that.

The last time I looked, we had had no complaints about use of force in respect of young people.  
What we have done, which I think is a good piece of work, is created material to show young  
people how to complain. We have had it checked for its relevance for young people by a panel of  
675 young people who are in the care system, and they gave us some advice on what the wording  
should be. That is available for any young person who wants to make a complaint.

**Mr Peters:** Thank you.

680 **Q53. Mr Thomas:** Twice in your answers you have mentioned the Scottish Inspectorate report  
back in 2012-13. You obviously valued it at the time, and in your last Annual Report, in July 2021  
when I saw it in Tynwald, you mentioned that the Constabulary was to be reviewed in the late  
autumn or early winter of 2021 by HM Inspectorate. Has that review been completed? What have  
you learned from it? Will the report be published; and, if not, would you consider sending it to us  
685 at some point, at least in respect of our investigation this time?

**The Chief Constable:** The work is continuing. It has been a hard slog, really. The on-site  
inspection work took place at the end of November, beginning of December. The inspectors  
underestimated the complexity of the Island – that is what they tell me – and they were not ready  
690 to provide me with the hot feedback that they are supposed to provide me with at the end of that  
week. I have had dialogue with them since, on a number of occasions. They tell us that their report,  
which was due at the beginning of this month, will be with us quite soon. I am not holding my  
breath, but it will come. There will be a bit of email tennis then about the factual aspects of the  
report and I would anticipate having a full and publicly available version of it sometime later in  
695 the spring, certainly before TT.

**Q54. Mr Thomas:** So it is in a form that will be made public?

**The Chief Constable:** Yes, in a form that will be made public, and the feedback we were given a couple of weeks ago was that the inspection had been a positive one. They had found a couple of points that we had not identified. The way it works is we do our own work first, so we carried out our own version of the inspection first, to test ourselves against the protocols that are in place. There is a standard set of protocols. We identified a handful of things that we could do better, and so we shared that with inspectors. Rather than hiding it from them and letting them find it, we told them, 'These are the things we think we are not great at,' and then they have come in and had free access to whatever they want. So the report will be good and it will help inform the work that my successor needs to do.

**Q55. Mr Thomas:** I am looking at the criminal justice system in its wider dimension. That was one of the questions in that section.

Moving on, as the Chief Constable, your role as Chief Constable is clearly defined in the Police Act.

**The Chief Constable:** Well, it is defined in the Police Act. Whether it is *clearly* defined ...  
(Laughter)

**Q56. Mr Thomas:** Well, perhaps we will come to that in the context of other questions, but then you also now have this role as a member of the Safeguarding Board, and you have mentioned safeguarding. How does that work? Obviously it is quite new having it in the statute and so on, and there must be some conflicts, sometimes, that you have to manage in the context of the Safeguarding Board role – because you are on the Safeguarding Board, from memory.

**The Chief Constable:** Yes, I am on the Safeguarding Board. I have been on several versions of it over the last 10 or 15 years. When I sit on the Safeguarding Board, I sit there as a senior public servant, not as the Chief Constable. It will say in the law that the Chief Constable sits on the Safeguarding Board, but I try to apply a completely objective view of my own service. If my own service is not doing something right I will say so, and collectively, as members of the Safeguarding Board, that tends to be how we try to operate, so that you do not then get involved in a fierce debate about the rights and wrongs of what you have done; you try to see things clinically and objectively.

**Q57. Mr Thomas:** Okay, that is helpful.

In passing, you seemed to say that you did not really have too much knowledge of what came out from the Deemsters and from the magistrates. I just wanted to go back to that, perhaps asking you is there anything that the legal and judicial bodies have suggested, that you have not agreed with, or anything that you would like to suggest to them about how they do their job. How does the feedback work?

**The Chief Constable:** If I had an issue with them, I would not say so publicly – I do not think that is appropriate, so I have made it my policy all the time I have been in a senior role never to criticise the courts. Sometimes I will see decisions or sentences and I will be puzzled by them, but I will never make public comment about them because that is their job, and I do my job. I think that is really important, because if senior public servants like me started to criticise the judiciary or the court processes we would then begin to undermine trust, and that would be fundamentally wrong.

I have frequent dialogue with the Attorney General and people within the Attorney General's Chambers, which is really helpful and beneficial. Periodically, I will have some contact with the judiciary to talk about how well the Constabulary operates, but we are also very mindful that we

cannot interfere with each other's operations, and we are also very clear that there has to be a very separate line between us. I alluded, before, to talking to the magistrates a number of years ago, and that is exactly the sort of thing I am talking about, where we explain to the magistrates the things that we see and the processes that we have around diverting young people from crime. That is the entirely right way. We should have that sort of link with the judiciary. I certainly would not tell you if I had a problem.

755 **Q58. Mr Thomas:** That is what I meant. I must have misheard you. I am not trying to lead a Chief Constable in any way whatsoever, but basically you know all the time what the magistrates and the Deemsters are deciding, but you respond to it properly, not making public comment; you just learn from it and think about influencing politicians in the future and so on?

760 **The Chief Constable:** Yes, and periodically after a case – it happens maybe once or twice a year – I will receive a letter from someone like the High Bailiff saying, 'You might need to think about improving this,' and I simply seek to improve them.

765 **Q59. Mr Thomas:** Okay. Going on to the way you work with other public servants – because you have described yourself as a public servant, for instance, in your Safeguarding Board role, and earlier on in your answers you talked about the Director of Social Services working with you much better than somebody else in the past, in respect of adverse childhood experiences and so on – how is that handled? What is the mechanism for that multi-agency approach and for joined-up public service and so on? How does that work?

770 **The Chief Constable:** That is a really interesting question and I think the clue to the fact that things are not right is in the Government plan. In the programme for Government you can see reference to a community safety partnership. I have spoken a couple of times publicly, and I think I even wrote about it last year. The community safety architecture in the Isle of Man is inadequate. Partner agencies are not properly brought together and held to account for a common purpose. The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs is determined to establish a community safety partnership that would do just that, and when time allows we are going to look at a scheme in the UK which is seen by the Inspector of Constabulary as being the best, because we want to establish something similar here, and it is in the Department of Home Affairs plan, which links into the Government plan.

780 **Q60. Mr Thomas:** I hate to mention it, but 10 or 15 years ago didn't the Chief Constable sign a community safety partnership with Douglas Borough Council and so on?

785 **The Chief Constable:** Yes, and we do have relationships with local authorities, and that is good but it does not deal with systemic stuff. If we are joined up and we are all on the same page on things like adverse childhood experiences, you can hold us all to account for not dealing with them.

790 **Q61. Mr Thomas:** Exploring another aspect of the multi-agency approach, at one point you seemed to suggest there was your work, then there was the work from the Prison Governor and the Probation Service in this area, in youth justice, and then there was the work from Social Care and Cronk Sollysh. Surely those three things are at least co-ordinated for optimal ...?

795 **The Chief Constable:** I think there is a gap in terms of co-ordination, which we will address through dialogue. For example, when young people have gone through the system and find themselves being charged and go to the Juvenile Court, a social worker will write a report on them. Not every time does that social worker then ask my team what work they have done, what interventions have worked and what approach to take with the young people. It is possible that

800 the report the magistrates get could be better if that were to have happened, so that is a gap in the system.

**Q62. Mr Thomas:** You have spoken about intervention a lot. You obviously believe in it passionately. You are a Chief Constable, so you do not go into policy; you try to get politicians to take things forward. You also said that your job ends when a defendant is charged and goes to court. Do they not need similar interventions after having been convicted as they did before they were convicted? And is there not scope for even closer working with Prison and Probation inside the Department with which you are both associated?

810 **The Chief Constable:** We work closely with the Probation Service, and the interventions do happen. I talked before about the reoffending rates for adults being low. They are lower than the UK – they are significantly lower than the UK – so something works in the Prison Service here and the Probation Service. I know they have had a difficult time over the last couple of years with staffing, and the pandemic has not helped with that, but their focus is on preventing reoffending and they do a lot of very good work to do that. The Prison regime in the past has won awards for its educational input, for example.

815 I will be in a meeting with the Governor this week – I am in a meeting once a month with the Prison Governor. He will say that getting on for 90% of the people who are in prison have mental health problems. A significant number of them in prison cannot read and write, and so we go back again to adverse childhood experiences going through people’s lives and causing these poor outcomes as they get right through their lives.

**Q63. Mr Thomas:** You obviously believe in this passionately, adverse childhood experiences, and you hinted at the fact that another senior officer did not have the same view. I recall that, because I think as a politician I tried to knock heads together and organised a high-level workshop of chief executives and Ministers to see if we could come to some mutual understanding of the causes of youth crime.

825 Do you sometimes think you push the boundaries of being a Chief Constable, in terms of your frustration and what we should do about it, especially as your career gets towards the end – because I think you have the privilege of retiring quite soon?

**The Chief Constable:** I think being in my last year gives me slightly more of a licence than I would have been prepared to exercise in the past. But on a serious note, I understand absolutely where the line in the sand is. I will have appropriate discussions behind the scenes with the Minister I am accountable to, and that is how it should be. I will be very cautious about criticising any parts of the public service in public. I will try to nudge politicians on policy matters when it is appropriate and when I think I have the evidence to do it, but I will certainly not stray over the line.

840 **Q64. Mr Thomas:** Would you ever say, at the end of 30 years in public ... as part of that last year and in retirement, ‘I wish I had done more to get rid of adverse childhood experiences,’ or ‘I wish I had done more or we had done things differently in certain aspects of policing’? Is that the role of a Chief Constable, especially towards the end of the ...?

845 **The Chief Constable:** No, but I think when I do look back I wish that people like me had seen this earlier. When the public service was more prosperous, for example, we could have done much more with it, 10 or 15 years ago. Before we first saw the VAT cut, we had the opportunity then to do things – you make hay while the sun shines; we should have been doing that then, I think – but that is a long time ago.

850 Yes, I am passionate about it because we have so many very good young people, and stopping some young people from getting into trouble is such an important thing to do.

855 **Q65. Mr Thomas:** When things are still going on from 20 years ago and 30 years ago, never mind 10 years ago, do we have adequate mechanisms for the Constabulary and the Chief Constable to talk with politicians, and society and those affected at the time to actually say, 'Things could have been done differently and I wish they had?'

**The Chief Constable:** I think I have always had open dialogue with Ministers, and I have been privileged enough to come to Tynwald, a couple of times a year normally, to give briefings. When my Annual Report is debated, in advance of that I usually give a briefing.

860 One part of the HMIC inspection is about governance. There are three parts to the inspection and the first part is about governance. The guy who has carried out that work is an academic from Northumbria University who set up the governance system for Police Scotland, so he is an expert in the field. I hope he makes recommendations both about how the Chief Constable can do a bit more of that, but, more importantly, I think, how the Chief Constable is properly held to account.

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**Q66. Mr Thomas:** My last question on this area, which is entitled 'New legislation and policy and issues with the criminal justice system' is about something you said earlier about neighbourhood policing in 2013 and how you started this session with a description of how your analysis and statistics had got much better in the last few decades, and particularly in the last few years with Connect and things. Do you reckon there is ever a chance that the statistics could be biased to say 'I told you so; I said this at the time and I was right' and so on? Do you reckon we ever need to step back and somebody else needs to look at the statistics?

870

**The Chief Constable:** HMIC has, in part, looked at how we record things, so that will come out in the inspection. We follow what are known as the Home Office Counting Rules, so albeit some of the terminology we use here is a bit different, the basic rules in terms of how many crimes we count and how we count them ... If someone walks down a street and scratches 20 cars with a key, that would be 20 crimes. It is not one crime, even though they happened almost instantaneously. We follow the same rules, and so we can open our books up and let people see what we have.

880

The important thing on this, though, is that crime figures are pretty meaningless. I can say I want more of some crimes – I want more victims of abuse to come forward and I want more people who have been beaten up in the home at night by their partners to come forward, so I really want that level of crime to increase. It is happening but it is just not reported to the Police. So the crime figures are really misleading and the success or the effectiveness of a Police Force should be judged not on the crime figures but on what it actually does.

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**Q67. Mr Thomas:** So the best compliance officer is one in an organisation where there are no compliance failings, in a way?

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**The Chief Constable:** Yes.

**Q68. The Clerk:** Just routing back to a former life – thank you, Chair – the Chief Constable makes the point that the recorded crime stats tell you as much about the recording of crime as about the experience of living in that jurisdiction, so would it be right ...? I think in the UK they do a crime survey which is looking at it the other way round, a random sample of people's experience of crime. Do we have that in the Isle of Man?

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**The Chief Constable:** No. The British Crime Survey looks at unreported crime. It surveys a big number of people and tries to assess the true level of crime. And so, broadly speaking, what you would expect from that is that the patterns in changes of crime are reflected not only in the Police statistics but in the British Crime Survey. They sort of run in parallel, so if violent crime were going up in police figures you would expect it similarly to be going up in the British Crime Survey figures.

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905 We do not have that. What we have on the Island is the Government survey annually, which  
asks people how safe they feel in their homes. Ninety eight per cent of people in the Isle of Man  
feel safe in their homes at night, which is fantastic – nowhere else in the British Isles have you got  
that. You could do more and you should do more, because actually that view of crime and the  
propensity of the public to report crime is really important. They do not report crime if they do  
not trust the Police, so some detailed survey like that would be good, but it is big and expensive  
910 to do.

**The Clerk:** Thank you.

915 **Q69. The Chair:** Are there any significant gaps affecting the criminal justice system that have  
not been addressed by the legislation that has been brought through Tynwald fairly recently, that  
might address any issues that you believe perhaps ... anything that needs amending, anything that  
needs introducing? I think you have been quite vocal about the firearms legislation.

920 **The Chief Constable:** That is a good leading question, that one. Our firearms legislation is no  
longer fit for the contemporary world. The primary Act is 70-odd years old. The law that covers  
shotguns is 30 years old and, whereas on handguns and rifles we license the individual, the  
weapon and the ammunition, with shotguns, air weapons and crossbows we license the individual  
and he or she could have dozens of weapons that we do not know about.

925 We had a case in the south of the Island about three years ago where someone began to suffer  
from dementia quite quickly. They had threatened to shoot the postman. Their family were really  
concerned about them, and we went into their home and they had 60-odd shotguns. The law here  
does not put a duty on medical professionals to share with the Police concerns they have about  
the mental health of people who hold weapons.

930 I am absolutely not anti-shooting. I think shooting has a place in a community like the Isle of  
Man – it absolutely has a place – but the law is now outdated and needs to be modernised.

**Q70. The Chair:** Is there anything in addition to that, that you feel needs amending?

935 **The Chief Constable:** Without straying into the world of policy – and I know the Minister for  
Home Affairs is really keen on hate crime legislation and I would absolutely support her – it is long  
overdue.

940 **Q71. The Chair:** Just moving on to another matter that you may not be able to talk about,  
which is not necessarily policy driven but is led elsewhere: Cronk Sollysh. Can you give us an  
overview of what Cronk Sollysh is for and what the Police are aware of in relation to Cronk Sollysh?

**The Chief Constable:** I know nothing about Cronk Sollysh.

945 **The Chair:** That's a very quick one!

**The Chief Constable:** It is a bit like the court thing: it is not my responsibility.

**Q72. The Chair:** So you have no idea of the ...?

950 **The Chief Constable:** No. Just as I would not know how the Prison is run because that is the job  
of the Prison Governor, I do not know how Cronk Sollysh is run because that is the job of other  
people.

**The Chair:** Well, then, moving on, is there anything that we have not –?

955 **Q73. Mr Thomas:** Just before we move on from that, you do not know anything about it, but is there a possibility that a place like that could be a place where communities of young criminals get to know each other and get to swap stories and so on?

960 **The Chief Constable:** That is feasible, and the report from Middlesex University for the Ministry of Justice in 2016 talked about some aspects of that. The only thing I would say is that the running of prisons is complicated and should be left to professional prison officers, and there is a danger that we now have a prison for young people that is not run by people who are professional prison officers – but I cannot say more than that.

965 **Q74. The Chair:** Is there anything else that we have not asked about that you would like to make mention of at this point?

**The Chief Constable:** No, it has been quite wide-ranging, really, hasn't it?

970 **The Chair:** In that case, thank you very much, Chief Constable, for your time. The Committee will now sit in private.

**The Chief Constable:** Thank you.

*The Committee sat in private at 3.40 p.m.*