

DM002 - Police policy to ignore certain crimes

As a barrister I was astonished and disturbed by your report (March 6, page 15) about those yobs who smashed up a car in Warlingham, near where I once lived. You say Surrey police have a new policy, which came into force in January, not to respond to such incidents. This policy is illegal.

My authority for saying that is as follows. On 22 April 1966 the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis issued an instruction to senior officers that no proceedings were to be taken against gambling clubs for breach of the Gaming Acts unless there were complaints of cheating, or a club had become the haunt of criminals. The Court of Appeal said this selective policy was deplorable, and declared it unlawful. Their decision, reported as *R v Metropolitan Police Commissioner, ex p Blackburn* [1968] 2 QB 118, governs this outrageous policy adopted by the Surrey police. They must cancel it at once, or else break the law. They must return to their proud duty of upholding the law. That is what they are paid for.

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