

PERFORMANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY MEETING

DATE: 20 June 2014

LOCATION: Office of the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner, Sackville House, Lewes

PRESENT: Police & Crime Commissioner Katy Bourne (KB)
Chief Executive Mark Streater (MS)
Temporary Chief Constable Giles York (GY)
Temporary Deputy Chief Constable Olivia Pinkney (OP)
Policy Officer Graham Kane – minutes
Communications Manager Clarissa Hawthorne
Administration Clerk Sarah Tibbott
Detective Chief Inspector Emma Brice

OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

What have been the recent operational highlights for the Force?

A. Have there been any key Operations or challenges?

B. How have you reflected on these?

- GY reinforced a public appeal for information regarding the disappearance of Mark Manning, 54, from Lancing, who was reported missing on 22 April 2014.
- It was highlighted that the Sussex Neighbourhood Watch Search Teams are to be awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2014. These search teams are unique to Sussex and enable the Force to utilise nearly 400 fully trained volunteer searchers to help safely restore missing persons to their family and friends or bring closure as soon as possible, without significantly detracting from other important policing activities.
- GY stated that four men were sentenced to a total of 61 years in prison, after a three week retrial at Hove Crown Court on 16 June 2014, after being found guilty of stabbing Ernest Moyo in August 2012.
- It was confirmed that Operation Dragonfly, the Sussex Police Drink Drive campaign was launched on 1 June 2014 and that 48 individuals had been arrested and charged to date (up to and including 17 June 2014).

DEVILS DYKE RAVE

It was reported last month that the unlicensed "rave" event at Devils Dyke was not closed down because of darkness, rain, the numbers present and the lack of police officers available. I subsequently asked Sussex Police to carry out an internal review of the management of the event and the engagement with local residents and partners.

A. Can you summarise what happened?

B. What was the Sussex Police response to the rave?

C. What were the findings of this internal review?

- GY stated that Sussex Police are proactive in response to any intelligence received regarding unlicensed events. It was highlighted that this early intervention is essential now that unlicensed events have become more sophisticated in their planning through the availability of social media and the potential risk that these events can pose.
- The unlicensed event at Devil's Dyke was already well established by the time Sussex Police were made aware of it. An initial assessment anticipated that over 2,000 people were present and this, together with the darkness and weather conditions, were all contributing factors behind the decision to let the event continue rather than dismantling it.
- GY reiterated that additional resources were available in Sussex and from other forces in the south east region and wider areas, had these been deemed necessary. It was emphasised that the Force response was regularly reviewed to ensure that appropriate resources were in place.
- Reassurance was provided to the public and the media regarding the powers available to the Sussex Police. The Road Policing Unit was also in attendance at the unlicensed event and made seven arrests.
- The Commissioner was reassured that an internal review into unlicensed events has taken place within the Force, including a review of the intelligence gathering systems and processes used by Thames Valley Police, to ensure that the response in Sussex is improved. KB confirmed that this learning and best practice would also be developed and shared by the College of Policing.

CHILDREN IN CUSTODY

The recently published report from the Howard League for Penal Reform confirmed that every police service in England and Wales made fewer child arrests in 2013 than it did in 2008. In particular, Sussex Police has seen year on year reductions across the six year period.

A. What is your overall reaction to the findings of the report?

B. Have the arrest procedures and polices been reviewed in Sussex following work with the charity?

C. What more can Sussex Police do to maintain this trend and reduce these numbers further?

- OP confirmed that this report was positively received by the Force and emphasised that these year-on-year reductions in the number of child arrests can be attributed to the wide range of out-of-court disposals that are available and working in Sussex.
- It was also highlighted that Sussex Police has been shortlisted for an award for their restorative justice work, including specific recognition of Community Resolution successes. The outcome of this award will be heard in July 2014.
- OP confirmed that Sussex Police are working hard to keep young people out of the criminal justice system in order to maintain this reducing trend further. This work has included reviewing Force policies, strengthening early intervention with local authorities and improving the support available to troubled families and looked after children. OP also stated that she is the national lead for children in custody.
- OP concluded by stating that the introduction of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 in the autumn will provide Sussex Police with further opportunities to develop restorative justice and put victims at the heart of the criminal justice system.

CRIME DATA INTEGRITY

A recently published interim report on crime data integrity by HMIC has identified serious concerns about the crime-recording processes to identify to what extent police-recorded crime information can be trusted.

Although this is an interim report, based on inspections carried out in 13 police forces, if the findings are representative across all forces and all crime types, it is anticipated that approximately 20 percent of crimes may be going unrecorded.

A. What is your overall reaction to the findings of the interim report?

B. How confident are you that all crimes are being recorded accurately by Sussex police?

- OP confirmed that Sussex Police take crime data integrity extremely seriously and stated that it is essential that any reported crime is recorded accurately.
- It was explained that a high level Gold Group has been created to focus on crime data integrity to better understand any potential problems and implement solutions wherever necessary. An internal review was tasked by this Gold Group and identified 105 recommendations which the Force is currently working through (and is 40% complete), including identifying specific learning needs and potential process difficulties. However, it is worth emphasising that this review did not provide any evidence to suggest that unfair pressure is being put on officers and staff to either not record or downgrade crime.
- Sussex Police was inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) earlier in June. The Force adopted an open and transparent approach and will take on board any learning and advice that is offered. HMIC were particularly impressed with the level of detail contained in the internal review.
- OP stated that she was confident that crimes are being recorded accurately by Sussex Police and highlighted that 95% of all crimes were recorded accurately across the month of May 2014. It was reiterated that this is excellent by national standards.
- KB concluded by stating that crime data integrity would be revisited at a later PAM following the final report being published by HMIC in October 2014.

POLICE OFFICER FITNESS

I was pleased to note that a recent report from the College of Policing has shown that Sussex Police officers are now fitter than the average officer in England and Wales.

A. Can you explain what the recommended fitness test entails?

B. What does the pass rate look like in Sussex compared to the national average?

C. How have Sussex Police used the College of Policing guidance to support officers through the fitness testing process and to improve overall fitness levels amongst all officers?

- GY explained that the national fitness test has been approved by the College of Policing and comprises of a shuttle run between fixed points that are 15 metres apart. To complete the test officers are required to cover a minimum distance of 525 metres in 3 minutes and 35 seconds.
- Two-thirds of Sussex Police officers have already completed the test, achieving an overall pass rate of 98.3%, compared to the national average of 97.1%. The Force currently has the third highest completion rate in England and Wales. The remaining officers are required to complete their fitness tests by September 2014 and plans are in place to achieve this.
- The fitness test is now part of a two-day course which officers are required to complete annually. This improves the efficiency of the Force by bringing together mandatory elements including personal safety and first aid training.
- GY also stated that he is a strong advocate for fitness which is supported by his role as Chairman of the Sussex Police Sports and Social Association.
- In addition, KB and GY agreed to run the fitness test for charity later on in the year.

EXERCISE CITIZEN

Sussex Police, emergency services and other agencies carried out a large scale major incident training event last month, called Exercise Citizen. Scenarios were arranged to test contingency plans, train staff and exercise co-ordinated responses to incidents that could affect Sussex.

A. What did Sussex Police learn from the Exercise?

B. How is this learning used to develop and improve the ability of the Force and partners to respond?

- OP explained that Exercise Citizen was a large scale major incident training event which required significant planning and included the involvement of over 700 individuals from other emergency services and partner agencies.
- The importance of testing business contingency plans and putting these into practice was highlighted. This was the first exercise that had taken place in Sussex since the training exercises arranged ahead of the London 2012 Olympic Games.

- The exercise was led by the Sussex Resilience Forum and specific objectives included testing the consistency of language used between the emergency services and the ability to efficiently identify commanders within particular strands of the operation.
- OP confirmed that the learning of these exercises is captured through debriefs which identify specific recommendations for the Force and partners. In addition, it was also highlighted that more regular table-top exercises take place throughout the year, including work with other police forces in the south east region.

101 – NON-EMERGENCY CALL HANDLING

It was highlighted last year that the percentage of non-emergency calls answered within 60 seconds had fallen from 74% across 2012/2013, to 57% across 2013/2014. This has worryingly reduced further still to 46% across the first few months of 2014/2015 and remains of considerable concern to me.

A. Can you provide me with an update regarding performance in this area?

- OP stated that the current percentage of non-emergency calls answered within 60 seconds is unacceptable and requires improvement.
- The delay in the movement to a single site Communications Department at Sussex Police Headquarters, Lewes, from April to September 2014 because of technical difficulties, was attributed to the adverse performance in call handling times. In particular, staffing levels were reduced according to the needs outlined in the workforce plan but have proved to be insufficient because of the delays experienced.
- OP confirmed that 30 call handlers have already been recruited in 2014 and 20 more will be in post by July. A further interim solution has been to offer overtime to existing staff in the Police Contact Centre to ensure that increased resources are available throughout the summer months which are historically more demand intensive.
- GY stated that he was confident that the move to a single site in September will provide the Force with increased flexibility in terms of live-time resource management for emergency and non-emergency calls. An improvement in performance is expected by the end of the year and will be revisited at a later PAM.
- OP concluded by reiterating that 93% of emergency calls are answered within 10 seconds against a Force target of 90%.

RECRUITMENT UPDATE

I was pleased to be able open the recruitment process for Police Officers again last month to increase the resources at your disposal. Recruitment processes are also underway for PCSOs and Special Constables.

A. Can you provide me with a progress update for each of the processes?

GY provided progress updates for each of the recruitment processes:

Police Officers

- The Force received 657 applications when recruitment was opened in May 2014. Online aptitude tests and paper sifts reduced this number to 263 candidates who are scheduled to attend a national SEARCH assessment centre in September 2014. Interviews, fitness tests, vetting and medical checks will then follow for the successful candidates.
- GY explained that he was delighted with the number of applications (although these were far reduced from the previous police officer recruitment process when recruitment was opened again after three and a half years) but explained that there were not as many diverse applicants as he would have liked.

Special Constables

- Sussex Police received 210 applications when recruitment was opened in June 2014. These applicants are currently going through the online aptitude test and paper sifts. GY reiterated that the Force is now constantly open for Special Constable applications.

Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)

- Recruitment for PCSOs is not currently open. GY confirmed that this would reopen later in 2014.
- GY also highlighted that e-recruitment across all of the recruitment processes has already generated savings in excess of £120,000.

ESTATES STRATEGY UPDATE

Q. A year ago (June 2013), I unveiled a 5-year estates strategy. This is a £20m investment programme for police buildings to improve the accessibility and visibility of neighbourhood policing by looking at how services can be delivered more efficiently.

A. Can you give me a further update on the progress made to date?

B. What has been the greatest challenge in terms of delivering against the estates strategy?

GY provided an update regarding the progress made against the estates strategy:

Hammonds Drive, Eastbourne

An extensive site refurbishment has taken place at the Hammonds Drive Operational Policing Base in Eastbourne. This work is scheduled to be completed in July 2014 and was the first operational site to incorporate Future Workplace principles.

The base will be formally opened in September 2014 and the Force is currently looking into providing an open day for the public later on in the year.

John Street, Brighton

Brighton Police Station is also being extensively refurbished to include the Future Workplace principles. This work will include making the cladding around the building safe and providing Light-Emitting Diode (LED) lighting throughout, which is expected to achieve savings of between 30% - 50% in lighting costs.

This refurbishment will ultimately improve the efficiency of the building which will allow more people to work in the existing amount of space.

Sussex Police Headquarters, Lewes

The training block at Headquarters is in the process of being refurbished too to enable more staff to work out of less space.

GY concluded by stating that Sussex Police have sold four sites and are currently in the process of selling a further two. The money generated from these sales will provide the Force with increased capital whilst simultaneously reducing revenue costs.