

PERFORMANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY MEETING

DATE: 23 March 2018

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

PRESENT: Police & Crime Commissioner – Katy Bourne (KB)
Chief Executive Officer – Mark Streater (MS)
Chief Constable – Giles York (GY)
Temporary Deputy Chief Constable – Laurence Taylor (LT)
Correspondence and Administration Officer – Louise Gilbert
Head of Performance – Graham Kane (minutes)

REASSURANCE TO SUSSEX COMMUNITIES – NERVE AGENT ATTACK

A nerve agent attack against a former Russian spy and his daughter took place in Salisbury on Sunday, 4 March 2018.

- A. Are you confident that Sussex Police is well prepared and rehearsed to respond to any such an attack in Sussex?**
B. How is the learning from this attack in Wiltshire being considered by the Force, particularly in respect of how messages around public health concern are managed?
C. Were there any coordination, capacity or response issues that arose during the recent freezing weather and the subsequent prolonged disruption to water supplies?

*LT confirmed that Sussex Police is as confident as it can be in respect of their preparedness to respond to any such an attack in Sussex. It was emphasised that any response locally would also receive national support, as set out in the **Strategic Policing Requirement**.*

It was highlighted that the Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF) is a multi-agency partnership that has statutory responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, to prepare, respond to and recover from emergencies and major incidents. The SRF consists of members from the emergency services, National Health Service/Public Health England, local authorities, Environment Agency, military and other government representatives, with support from the voluntary sector too. LT confirmed that the Force often takes on a coordinating role before this responsibility is passed onto the most appropriate agency.

The SRF is responsible for developing risk assessments to assess the type of hazards that might affect Sussex, preparing plans to address the different types of emergencies, carrying out exercises to test the plans, and keeping staff up to date and trained. The SRF plan, coordinate and run scenario tests locally, regionally and nationally on a regular basis throughout the year to ensure that a sufficient capacity and capability exists. These plans are reviewed, revisited and tested periodically.

In addition, Sussex Police has circa 100 dedicated and trained Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) officers, together with both tactical and operational commanders, who would provide the initial response to any such incident of this nature in Sussex.

It was highlighted that a national CBRN centre exists within the College of Policing and any learning that arises from the nerve agent attack in will be disseminated to the Operations Departments across each of the police force areas in England and Wales to ensure that standard operating procedures are developed in respect of training, and that a consistent, effective and fully integrated approach exists nationally.

LT confirmed that the Force reviewed their response to critical incidents on the back of the events in Wiltshire and found that there was no requirement to amend these plans because they were considered to be effective. Sussex Police has also reinforced the message to all police officers and staff about what would be expected of them in similar circumstances and the importance of keeping themselves safe in order to respond most effectively. In addition, it was emphasised that there is further work ongoing nationally regarding what the response should look like from the public sector, multi-agency partners and members of the public.

It was explained that the water authorities, in conjunction with the local authorities, led on the coordination of the response during the recent freezing weather and the subsequent prolonged disruption to water supplies. It was also emphasised that whilst the Force played a relatively minor and supporting role on this occasion they will still need to take part in the debrief to identify any areas for development to improve their overall response; including reviewing and amending any plans, as necessary.

LT concluded by reassuring KB that there is "absolutely no intelligence to suggest that a similar attack is likely in Sussex" and reiterated that attacks of this nature are extremely rare.

OUTSTANDING WARRANTS

Last month, it was reported that the Metropolitan Police are reviewing approximately 7,000 outstanding warrants in the London area which relate to suspects who failed to attend magistrates' court after being charged, with a view to considering lifting the threat of arrest if the alleged offence was minor enough.

A. How many outstanding arrest warrants exist in Sussex and what different charges do these relate to?

B. What is Sussex Police doing to find these individuals and how are they prioritised?

GY confirmed that Sussex Police currently has 605 outstanding arrest warrants. These relate to a wide range of offences going back as far as 1987, with the vast majority relating to either motoring or theft and handling offences.

The warrants are categorised based on the seriousness of the offence, characteristics of the offender and vulnerability of the victim. The Force has 109 outstanding 'Category A' warrants (for the most serious offences, including drug trafficking, serious assaults and robbery), 470 outstanding 'Category B' warrants (for the less serious offences, including volume crime, theft and criminal damage), and 26 outstanding 'Category C' warrants (for minor public order and low level traffic offences).

In 2017, a total of 1,700 warrants were issued in Sussex, of which only 124 remain outstanding. This equates to an execution rate of 93% and confirms that the vast majority of warrants are being executed by Sussex Police as a matter of routine. It was also highlighted that the changes to pre-charge bail introduced by the Policing and Crime Act in April 2017 are not having a detrimental impact on arrest warrants in Sussex.

The Warrant Enforcement Bureau undertakes regular checks of all outstanding warrants in the system and use a range of methods to find and locate these individuals. All warrants remain 'live' until an individual is found or could not possibly be alive anymore. This can be a time-consuming process which directly impacts on the availability of police resources, and the importance of remaining proportionate in terms of the policing response was highlighted. The Force can also apply to the Crown Prosecution Service to null a warrant in exceptional circumstances but it was highlighted that this is not a common occurrence.

MISSING SEX OFFENDERS IN SUSSEX

It was recently reported that 372 registered sex offenders remain unaccounted for in England and Wales.

A. When this was previously raised at the PAM on 18 March 2015, it was highlighted that 11 registered sex offenders were missing in Sussex. Can you provide me with an update in respect of how many of these individuals are still missing and for what range of crimes?

B. What is Sussex Police doing to locate these individuals?

C. How effective are the current Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements in terms of reviewing, assessing and managing registered sex offenders who reside in Sussex?

LT confirmed that there are now 8 registered sex offenders unaccounted for in Sussex. The Force is confident that six of these individuals are known to be abroad, with the other two individuals also anticipated to be overseas too.

Five of the missing registered sex offenders (categorised as low to medium-risk) remain wanted after failing to comply with the 'notification requirement'. The other three are categorised as high-risk, with at least two of these individuals known to be abroad after fleeing the country prior to conviction.

It was emphasised that Sussex Police is proactively working with foreign agencies to locate these missing individuals, and that they will continue to remain subject to ongoing enquiries. It was also highlighted that these individuals would be arrested on their return to the UK.

It was reported that strong and effective Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) are in place to manage sex offenders through three different levels of risk. Sussex Police jointly manages these individuals and their, subsequent, release from prison through MAPPA meetings, in partnership with the National Probation Service, HM Prison Service and local authority representatives.

LT confirmed that whenever a registered sex offender is reported missing, a risk assessment is carried out, to ascertain what level of threat is posed. The subsequent level of risk identified dictates the scale and timeliness of the Sussex Police response.

MAPPA is supported by the Violent and Sex Offender Register (ViSOR) to oversee the registration processes and management of sex offenders in Sussex. ViSOR is a national IT system for the management of people who pose a serious risk of harm to the public, and is used by the aforementioned agencies to enable the seamless transfer of data. The effectiveness of these existing arrangements was confirmed.

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AWARENESS DAY

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Awareness Day took place on 18 March 2018 to highlight the issues surrounding CSE; encouraging everyone to think, spot and speak out against abuse and adopt a zero tolerance to adults developing inappropriate relationships with children or children developing inappropriate relationships with other children.

A. What do you see are the key challenges for Sussex Police in tackling CSE and how is the Force responding to these?

B. How is Sussex Police working with partners in this area to raise awareness, tackle the threat and encourage reporting of CSE in Sussex?

C. Last year, it was reported that the Paedophile Online Investigation Team (POLIT) within Sussex Police was sending warning letters to those suspected of accessing indecent images of children to make them aware they were being tracked and to "deter continuance". Is this approach still in operation and how has the effectiveness of these warning letters been measured and evaluated?

GY explained that there are three key challenges for Sussex Police in terms of tackling and responding to CSE:

- 1. **Discovering CSE in the first place** – This is because, by its very nature, the individuals involved will want to keep this hidden which can make the identification of CSE really difficult. At the same time, the children involved may not even know that they are victims of CSE, depending on their age and vulnerability, or have access to anyone that they can trust in order to be able to report this to the police. This is particularly pertinent if it is those individuals that they are closest to who are breaching this trust;*
- 2. **Acting in the best way to protect victims** – Once CSE is identified, the next challenge is to protect the children who are being subjected to this crime and to gather the necessary evidence in order to be able to convict the offenders; and*
- 3. **Identifying the responsible agency** – Sussex Police has multi-agency teams in place on each of the three policing divisions who work with the local authorities, social services, housing and health to develop a composite picture to protect the most vulnerable individuals. This can prove to be particularly difficult at times if victims of CSE do not want to be helped.*

It was emphasised that there are often blurred boundaries between CSE and child exploitation. This is because children can be duped, coerced and forced into committing low-level criminality. These individuals can then find themselves caught in a cycle of exploitation because they are threatened with being reported to police if they do not commit further and escalating criminal acts. It was explained that these vulnerable victims need to be handled with care, as part of a multi-agency partnership based approach, and highlighted that enforcement is not always the best outcome for the individuals.

GY confirmed that police officers from the POLIT are still hand-delivering warning letters to those suspected of accessing indecent images of children to make them aware they are being tracked and to "deter continuance". This approach is always done on a face-to-face basis and the purpose of the letters is to leave a tangible reminder that the Force is aware of what they are doing and to ask them to desist.

It was explained that the vast majority of the individuals who have received one of these letters have not come to attention of Sussex Police again. KB would like to know how the effectiveness of the warning letters delivered to those suspected of accessing indecent images of children has been measured and evaluated.

It was highlighted that the Public Protection Unit is now at full strength following additional investment in this area made after increasing the policing element of the council tax in 2016/17 and 2017/18. CSE is an area of work that is anticipated to continue to increase in demand in the future.

GY assured KB that he was confident that the Force has sufficient technical capacity and capability to investigate crimes involving indecent images of children but acknowledged that there are, however, some challenges with disclosures and digital media. It was also highlighted that there is a limited number of individuals within the police service with the technical knowledge required in this area and the need for more trained officers and staff was emphasised. It was also confirmed that the Force is looking to reinvigorate a previous idea to use volunteers with specialist skills in their professional employment to assist them in this area.

ACTION: KB would like to know how the effectiveness of the warning letters delivered to those suspected of accessing indecent images of children been measured and evaluated.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

With summer, improving weather and longer evenings fast approaching there my office is starting to receive concerns from residents, communities and businesses regarding the potential for increases in the recorded number of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) crimes and incidents. I have received one such letter from Uckfield Town Council, in particular.

A. How is ASB now being dealt with by the Force through the Local Policing Model?

B. What specific powers do Sussex Police have to deal with ASB?

C. I understand that Operation Asteroid has been introduced to tackle a number of different crimes in the Uckfield area, including ASB. How is this Operation progressing?

D. How is the Force proactively working with partners in Bognor and throughout the rest of Sussex to reduce ASB?

GY began by providing assurances that Sussex Police is working hard to tackle ASB and recognised that, whilst the Force has a role to play, this remains a collective responsibility for all partners to tackle and respond to.

LT added that ASB remains a priority for Sussex Police and confirmed that this is dealt with by their Prevention teams, in conjunction with community safety partners. ASB Co-ordinators are in place across each of the three policing divisions to understand the issues locally, develop problem solving profiles, identify lead area responsibility, and to share information and intelligence with partners.

*The **Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014** introduced a range of new powers to tackle ASB, including:*

Civil Injunction – *To stop or prevent individuals engaging in ASB quickly, nipping problems in the bud before they escalate;*

Criminal Behaviour Order – *Issued by any criminal court against a person who has been convicted of an offence to tackle the most persistently anti-social individuals who are also engaged in criminal activity;*

Dispersal Power – *Requires a person committing or likely to commit ASB, crime or disorder to leave an area for up to 48 hours;*

Community Protection Notice – *To stop a person aged 16 or over, business or organisation committing ASB which spoils the quality of life in a community;*

Public Spaces Protection Order – *Designed to stop individuals or groups committing ASB in a public space;*

Closure Power – *To allow the police or council to close premises quickly which are being used, or likely to be used, to commit nuisance or disorder;*

Absolute Ground for Possession – *Allows for possession of secure and assured tenancies where ASB or criminality has already been proven by another court;*

Acceptable Behaviour Contracts – *A written agreement between a perpetrator of ASB and the agency or agencies acting locally to prevent that behaviour; and*

Parenting Contracts – *These are similar to Acceptable Behaviour Contract but are signed by the parent or guardian.*

It was explained that Operation Asteroid is a partnership-based response to an increase in youth-related ASB in Uckfield and has been running for three months. This activity has included: meetings with key stakeholders (residents, businesses and visitors), targeted patrols by the Prevention teams and the formulation of high-level plans with the local Children's Centre. A communications strategy has also been developed to support the Force and partners in this work. The main offenders have been arrested and referred to the Youth Offending Team, together with the introduction of curfews and the use of dispersal powers in the area. It was reported that Operation Asteroid has contributed to reductions in recorded crime and disorder, including ASB, in Uckfield.

In respect of Bognor, it was highlighted that there has been an increase in reports of ASB in the past year which the Force is keen to address through their Prevention teams. It was also emphasised that this was set against a reduction of nearly 25% over the past four years.

It was highlighted that two dedicated ASB partnership-based operations with Arun District Council and British Transport Police were carried out in Bognor in March 2018. A further joint-operation is planned for early next month. It was again reiterated that this remains a collective responsibility for all partners to tackle and respond to.

The Local Policing Model encompasses the three areas of prevention, response and investigation. LT stated that whilst the Prevention teams lead on tackling ASB, they will be supported in this work by both the Response and Investigations teams.

Two problem profiles for Bognor have been created after speaking with key stakeholders in the area. This is the format used by Sussex Police to gather information and intelligence to ensure that the policing and partner response is both efficient and effective. The Force is also working with the local schools that these individuals attend through their Prevention Youth Officers (PYOs).

LT stated that there has been a lot of activity in this area, including dedicated patrols in 'hot spot' areas to increase visibility, making arrests, and putting appropriate measures in place, such as Public Spaces Protection Orders and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts. The importance of understanding the impact that this intervention and enforcement work is having on the local area was highlighted too. It was, however, recognised that Sussex Police needs to do more in this area and communicate more effectively with all key stakeholders. It was also recognised that this situation in Bognor would not be resolved overnight.

In conclusion, LT confirmed that it remains a priority of the Force for individuals to be safe and feel safe in Sussex, and stated that Sussex Police need to do more if this is not the case. LT also explained that he is the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) lead for ASB in England and Wales and stated that he would ensure that Sussex Police is able to take any learning and best practice identified in other police force areas and use this in Sussex.

KB agreed to revisit this area at a future PAM.

ACTION COUNTERS TERRORISM CAMPAIGN

Earlier this week, the Counter Terrorism Policing launched an Action Counters Terrorism (ACT) campaign. The campaign encourages members of the public to report suspicious activity or behaviour, increase public understanding, reporting channels and intelligence received from communities, and to reinforce the message that “communities defeat terrorism”.

A. How is the Force supporting the campaign?

B. How does the Force gather intelligence from local communities?

C. What do the reporting and referral mechanisms look like in schools in respect of terrorism?

*LT explained that the Force is supporting the four-week **ACT campaign** which launched on 20 March and runs for four weeks until 18 April 2018. The objectives of the campaign are to:*

- *Encourage the public to report suspicious activity or behaviour and increase intelligence from communities;*
- *Increase public understanding of what activity or behaviour to look out for by highlighting examples of terrorist attack planning methods;*
- *Increase awareness of key reporting channels; and*
- *Reinforce the message that communities defeat terrorism – and the key role the public have to play in helping tackle the terrorist threat.*

LT reiterated the campaign’s key messages and stated that any piece of information could be important. Members of the public were encouraged to report any suspicious behaviour or activity and not to be worried about wasting police time because the Force will only take action after appropriate checks have been carried out.

*Members of the public were asked to **report online** or telephone the Anti-Terrorist Hotline on 0800 789 321 when an urgent response is not required. Members of the public were reminded to telephone 999 when there is an imminent threat to life or property. Crimestoppers can also be contacted anonymously by telephoning 0800 555111.*

*Sussex Police gathers intelligence from local communities through their **Prevent** teams. The Prevent Coordinators work with schools and the Channel Panels, a national Home Office safeguarding project, which aims to prevent children and adults from being drawn into violent radicalisation or becoming involved in terrorist related activity. It was emphasised that this covers all forms of extremism (including jihadist, extreme right-wing and others).*

PYOs are used by Sussex Police in schools and other educational establishments to deliver targeted inputs around specific priority areas. These inputs are agreed at the start of each academic year and include both the policing priorities for Sussex Police, including awareness raising in respect of terrorism, and the data recorded by the Force in respect of crimes in schools. The PYOs also provide regular input for all teachers, staff and governors in this area too.

Project Griffin is a national counter-terrorism initiative which is delivered at Gatwick Airport and aims to engage, encourage and enable members of the public and the business community to work in partnership with Sussex Police to deter and detect counter terrorist activity and crime.

The Force continues to monitor ongoing community tensions and trends, and shares these returns with the NPCC. LT concluded by stating that Sussex Police continues to remain a safe place to live.

101 – NON-EMERGENCY CALL HANDLING TIMES

In the last rolling year period to 8 March 2018, 76% of all non-emergency calls to the 101 number were answered in 7 minutes and 84% were answered in 10 minutes. A total of 20% (and 84,370) of these calls were abandoned across the same period. This continues to remain a concern to me.

- A. Can you provide me with an update regarding performance in this area?**
- B. At December's PAM, the recorded increase in abandoned calls was attributed to a small and incremental increase in demand, outside of seasonal trends. Has this increased demand now subsided?**
- C. How is the Force's two-phase contact campaign progressing to highlight the most appropriate method of contact for members of the public to use?**
- D. I understand that a technical glitch earlier this month meant that some 101 non-emergency calls went unanswered or were diverted to Surrey Police to answer. Following your investigations, are you confident that the problems with the system have been diagnosed and resolved?**
- E. I am also aware that user satisfaction levels with the Contact and Command Centre reduced across the rolling year period to 28 February 2018 to 67.1%. What steps is the Force taking to improve user satisfaction in this area?**

GY started by providing some further context and explained that the Contact and Command Centre responds to a range of different communication channels. This includes a combination of circa 500,000 telephone calls a year, together with circa 115,000 emails and online reports through webforms. The Contact and Command Centre is also responsible for answering 999 emergency calls, and contains the radio and CCTV monitoring operatives too. The number of different channels available to members of the public means that at certain times of the day it can take longer to answer the non-emergency calls received, than others.

The Force has continued to track the abandonment rate against the online reporting rate which has demonstrated a positive correlation between a reduction in the number of abandoned calls and an increase in the number of emails and online reports received. GY highlighted that approximately 25% of all abandoned calls occur within the first two minutes, and over 55% of all abandoned calls within the first five minutes. It is recognised that whilst only 20% of individuals are still waiting for their calls to be answered after 10 minutes, this is the area that the Force is looking to prioritise. Other avenues in place to shift some of this demand on the non-emergency number, including the use of emails, webforms and the QueueBuster system, were reiterated.

The Chief Constable explained that a single national online home system is already in place within the Metropolitan Police, Thames Valley and Hampshire police force areas which enables individuals to report crimes, lost items and road traffic collisions that take place anywhere in England and Wales. GY has signed a letter of intent for Sussex Police and Surrey Police to implement this system collectively as soon as possible. It was, however, emphasised that this is not likely to be developed until autumn this year, ahead of being fully operational by spring 2019.

It was again reiterated that a two-phase contact campaign was initiated last year to improve the knowledge of members of the public, manage user expectations, and ensure that the Contact and Command Centre is efficiently and effectively staffed according to the level of demand. The first element of the campaign focussed on raising awareness of the different channels available to members of the public in respect of making contact with Sussex Police through a 'contact card'. The second element will be launched early in April 2018 and will provide scenarios for the different contact methods with the Force dependent on the specific report being made, highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of each. This transparent approach should help individuals make the most appropriate choice.

GY confirmed that there was a technical glitch with the recorded 'comfort message' which every telephone call to the 101 non-emergency number receives on 4 March 2018. It was explained that whilst an increased number of abandoned calls were recorded across this period, there were no recorded increases in the number of 999 calls received, and that this glitch was rectified within three days. It was also highlighted that none of these calls were diverted to Surrey Police to answer across this period, and that robust plans and contingency arrangements are in place to respond to any further problems encountered by the Contact and Command Centre.

It was explained that user satisfaction is measured by Sussex Police through a telephone survey with victims of burglary, violent crime, vehicle crime, and hate incidents. Approximately 1,500 surveys are carried out each year by the Force to populate five Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) that were previously reported to the Home Office. The SPIs measure satisfaction with: ease of contact, police actions (taken to deal with the incident), follow up (being kept informed), treatment (by Sussex Police), and whole experience.

GY explained that the user satisfaction only relates to the crimes where the investigation is considered to have been completed within the Contact and Command Centre, and does not include crimes that are allocated for attendance or secondary investigation. It was confirmed that the 7% reduction, from February 2017, relates to a relatively small and recent decrease in user satisfaction with the whole experience. The same survey also highlighted a steady and continued increase in the actions taken by the same department to deal with incidents, increasing by 6% from February 2017. Sussex Police agreed to monitor performance in this area closely.