

PERFORMANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY MEETING

DATE: 21 February 2020

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

PRESENT: Police & Crime Commissioner – Katy Bourne (KB)
Chief Finance Officer – Iain McCulloch (IMcC)
Chief Constable – Giles York (GY)
Deputy Chief Constable – Jo Shiner (JS)
Communications Manager – Natalie McFall (webcasting)
Head of Performance – Graham Kane (minutes)

REASSURANCE TO SUSSEX COMMUNITIES – CORONAVIRUS

A number of individuals in the United Kingdom have been diagnosed with coronavirus in recent weeks.

A. What is the role of Sussex Police in this respect?

B. How well prepared do you feel Sussex Police and partner agencies are to respond to a similar outbreak in Sussex?

C. What additional measures or precautions (if any) are being taken in Sussex?

GY confirmed that Public Health England (PHE) is responsible for coordinating the national response to the coronavirus (COVID-19). It is the role of Sussex Police to support them in this work should any similar outbreak occur in Sussex.

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 civil emergencies and major incidents. The SRF consists of members from the emergency services, National Health Service, PHE, local authorities, Environment Agency, military and other government representatives, with support from the voluntary sector too.

A 'major incident' is a widely recognised term nationally and is defined as: "An event or situation with a range of serious consequences which requires special arrangements to be implemented by one or more emergency responder agency".

Reassurance was provided to KB that "tried and tested" plans and structures are in place to respond to any major incidents in Sussex. Further information about the SRF can be viewed through the following link: <https://www.sussex.police.uk/police-forces/sussex-police/areas/au/about-us/preparing-for-an-emergency---sussex-resilience-forum/>

Deputy Chief Constable Paul Netherton, Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Police, is the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) lead for Civil Contingencies and is responsible for coordinating the national structure and response in place. This includes cascading the regular and updated guidance from PHE to regional and local-level responders.

The Operations team within the Force is currently meeting on a weekly basis to ensure that the contribution of Sussex Police to PHE and the SRF is both proportionate and responsive.

The latest information and advice about COVID-19 can be viewed through the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public>

POLICING PRECEPT DECISION 2020/21

I have again been given public support to increase the policing part of the Council Tax by an extra £10 a year or 20p per week per Band D property for 2020/21. This decision received support from the Police & Crime Panel last month.

A. What do the plans look like for this increased investment?

B. What difference do you expect members of the public to see and feel – and by when?

C. What savings are forecast for 2020/21 and what areas are these in?

D. How and where is Sussex Police continuing to make efficiencies on its premises and transport costs and what are the financial and other benefits of these?

JS "really welcomed" the further investment for 2020/21 that will enable Sussex Police to build on the progress made previously to modernise and strengthen local policing and improve public contact. The additional funding will also ensure that the Force is able to continue with its significant four year recruitment programme of police officers, Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and staff to reinforce their prevention, response, enforcement and investigation capabilities.

This is a complex planning programme and the Force has well-progressed plans in place to map out exactly what this investment looks like for Sussex Police and the chronology required around the movement and redeployment of existing police officers and staff and the advertisement of external opportunities to attract new talent to the organisation. The Strategic Planning Board, chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable, continues to review the progress made in respect of the precept spend on a monthly basis to ensure that an efficient and effective approach exists.

The additional funding in 2020/21 will be invested in more enforcement, more investigation and an even greater policing presence in the towns and villages of Sussex. JS is confident that members of the public will notice a difference in the short-term that will contribute towards them feeling safer in Sussex.

Sussex Police has made it easier for members of the public to get in contact with the Force by making significant improvements to its accessibility through reduced waiting times to the 101 non-emergency number and increased functionality through the Single Online Home (see Better Use of Technology on page 4 for further information).

The Force is currently carrying out more disruption and enforcement activity through the central Tactical Enforcement Unit (TEU) and expanding the TEU model across Sussex to form three geographically-based enforcement teams on each of the policing divisions (Brighton & Hove, East Sussex and West Sussex) is anticipated to have a significant impact on the Force's ability to proactively tackle criminals operating in Sussex and those with outstanding warrants.

It was confirmed that the further intakes of PCSOs planned between now and the end of the financial year will ensure that the establishment level of 296 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) is reached by 31 March 2020. This additional policing presence will enhance the ability of members of the public to engage with the Force in their communities throughout Sussex.

Sussex Police is also providing investigative teams with more detectives and police staff investigators which should contribute to improved investigation outcomes. Investment in additional police officers to tackle criminality on the roads, expanding the dedicated rural crime teams and the formulation of more local resolution centres will enable Sussex Police to work closer with and support better victims of crime.

The Deputy Chief Constable confirmed that some of the improvements in the policing service provided to the residents of Sussex should become apparent through March, April and May 2020. This could be even earlier in respect of the areas of policing where officers can be redeployed or posted into other roles. The Force is prioritising the areas of policing that members of the public will feel the most benefit from first whilst managing some of the more complex changes on a longer-term basis through a staged-approach, including the recruitment of those individuals from outside the organisation, where required.

JS confirmed that Sussex Police is forecast to save £1.5 million in 2019/20 (with further efficiency savings of £3.1 million planned for 2020/21) and has good plans in place to achieve cashable savings in the areas of: specialist crime; operations command and people services – through enhanced collaboration. The Force has also developed strategies to further drive the non-cashable savings by attempting to use technology in a more effective manner to drive out further efficiency savings and to "achieve more with less (or the same)". This includes wider use of Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) to increase police visibility in local communities and to contribute towards fuel efficiencies by reducing the frequency that officers need to return to police stations.

It was highlighted that Sussex Police has developed a comprehensive strategy to look at a wide range of efficiencies, including an assessment of the organisation's environmental impact and responsibilities. The strategy sets out a five-year plan to: reduce energy and waste; make better use of Information Technology; recycle goods recovered, seized or no longer used and to carry out biodiversity studies on the police estate.

In addition to the above, a review of the Sussex Police fleet has resulted in further savings being generated through reduced petrol and diesel costs – part of the introduction of electric and hydrogen vehicles and unused vehicles being reallocated across the Force to maximise their usage. KB requested a copy of the Sussex Police – Fleet Review.

The Deputy Chief Constable confirmed that Sussex Police is part of a collaboration with 10 other police force areas to negotiate insurance costs for police vehicles. The use of telematics data – captured by each of the forces – provides the underwriters with additional evidence to drive down further the insurance costs, whilst ensuring that an optimum combination of vehicle use and driver training exists locally.

ACTION: KB requested a copy of the Sussex Police – Fleet Review.

BETTER USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Technology is an important tool to assist the police to prevent and fight crime more efficiently and effectively and to serve better members of the public.

A. Single Online Home (SOH), a common platform that allows the public to report, transact and contact the police online, launched in Sussex in December 2018. What impact has the introduction of the SOH had in Sussex?

B. How many functions are now available through the SOH and is this platform operating at full-capacity?

C. What does the plan look like to increase the functionality of SOH further still?

D. What improvements are planned to the technology used across other areas of the Force, including MDTs and Body Worn Video?

E. How is the Force continuing to develop its use of digital channels, including social media, to communicate with members of the public and to increase the involvement of communities in local policing efforts?

F. How will you measure the effectiveness of these online interventions?

GY confirmed that 15 of the 43 police force areas are now using SOH – reaching 56% of the total population in England and Wales. The other 28 forces are on a programme to introduce this platform across 2020/21 to ensure that a consistent approach exists, regardless of the police force area you live in.

SOH provides members of the public with an efficient and effective way to contact the police. It is currently able to record 16 different types of crimes by asking intuitive questions to triage exactly what is being reported. Five risk-based questions are also asked to assess the level of vulnerability. If an individual is identified as being vulnerable through the triage process, then a 24 hour response is triggered. Assurances were provided to KB that any contact received by Sussex Police that should be responded to by another agency is clearly signposted to them, as appropriate.

This alternative approach is contributing to a significant reduction in the demand being placed on the Force Contact Command and Control Centre (FCCCC). In particular, it was emphasised that over 43,000 contacts were made through the SOH in the rolling year period from April 2019 to date, with nearly 85% of these progressed by the FCCCC.

*There are 32 functions currently available through the SOH, including: **Clare's Law – Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme; firearms, shotgun and explosives licensing** and an integrated **latest news** function for members of the public and the press. A pilot to report **anti-social behaviour** is also taking place in Sussex, in combination with another four police force areas, to understand better which reports require a police response and which require a response from the local authority.*

The number of functions available on the SOH will continue to increase over time, including: the ability to apply for fingerprints; register for abnormal loads; report traffic collisions and offences and web chat (messaging). The SOH remains part of the Digital Public Contact strand of the Digital Policing Portfolio and further developments in this area are led on by Chief Constable Simon Cole, Leicestershire Police.

The Chief Constable explained some of the improvements that are planned for the MDTs, Body Worn Video (BWV) and other technology used across the Force. The MDTs – otherwise known as smartphones – have been programmed to be as intuitive as possible for the officers using them across Sussex and Surrey. Increased functionality will soon be made available on the smartphones including the ability to report a sudden death; missing person or those experiencing a mental health crisis. This platform also provides officers and PCSOs with information and reminders about operational policies, intricacies of the law and expectations from the Force in certain circumstances. It was highlighted that the MDTs would have the facility to take finger prints (via a plug-in device) before the end of the year too.

The rollout of BWV cameras across the Force has ensured that all frontline police officers and staff are equipped with personal-issue cameras. These devices are an established way of securing and capturing real-time evidence in an easy to use and accessible digital format.

It was recognised that this technology is now coming to the end of its natural life and new BWV cameras will be rolled out across Sussex from March 2020, starting on Brighton & Hove Division. This will be supported by the introduction of a new digital evidence management system that will enable the Force to move the video captured more efficiently and effectively. This programme has already been successfully delivered by Merseyside Police and the learning and experiences that were captured will be used to assist Sussex Police with the implementation locally.

The Chief Constable recognised that the Force has a good profile in respect of its use of digital channels to communicate with members of the public and to increase the involvement of communities in local policing efforts – something that has been recognised by national awards.

The importance of resourcing this area properly was recognised because there is a misconception that because members of the public can (often) access the full functionality of these websites for free, that the policing of these sites is free too. This is not the case and it is "resource intensive" to provide a 24 hour presence, 7 days a week through these digital channels. It was emphasised that whilst issues can escalate quickly through these forums, the importance of intervening in a proportionate manner was confirmed. The difficulties of responding to any concerns raised online were highlighted because the appropriate level of access is not always readily available for an organisation.

Sussex Police is part of the national programme for policing the digital beat, led by Chief Constable Gareth Morgan, Staffordshire Police, in his capacity as NPCC lead for the Communications Advisory Group Portfolio. The Corporate Development Department within Sussex Police is responsible for both the corporate messages (about what the Force is doing) and the engagement and reassurance messages (to members of the public and local communities).

The effectiveness of these online interventions can be measured through analytics to understand how far the messages have reached, number of individuals who have seen them and those that have gone on to have an interaction. This platform is most effective in respect of appeals for information, with between 30% - 40% of all appeals resulting in tangible policing outcomes. This is contributing to a reduced demand on frontline policing, increased information and intelligence and finding missing and wanted individuals sooner.

The Chief Constable concluded by stating that Sussex Police has a plan in place to measure public confidence by utilising new technologies, such as text messages asking for feedback after certain types of police contact. The Force has contributed to the national strategy that exists in this area and is looking at how this can be introduced locally in Sussex.

HMICFRS – PEEL ASSESSMENT 2018/19

Earlier this month, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published their findings for Sussex Police in the 'PEEL Assessment 2018/19'. The report found that Sussex Police:

- **is good at effectively reducing crime and keeping people safe;**
- **requires improvement in operating efficiently and providing sustainable services to the public; and**
- **is good at how it treats the public and its workforce.**

A. How have you reflected on the findings of this report?

B. I am pleased that the Force was commended for the way it has improved how it prevents crime and anti-social behaviour. The investment in neighbourhood policing, together with the clear plan in place for how these additional resources will be used to support local communities and prevent crime from happening were all recognised. What more can be done to understand better the threats facing communities in Sussex?

C. I am disappointed to note that Force has not responded to previous concerns and recommendations in respect of how it safeguards vulnerable people, with inconsistent processes for assessing risks and not responding in a timely manner highlighted in the report as two areas where individuals at risk may not always be adequately protected. How will this cause for concern and the six recommendations to address it be progressed within the prescribed timescales?

D. HMICFRS also highlighted that the Force is struggling to meet demand for its services and should gain a better understanding of how it uses and prioritises resources to meet demand. How will Force performance be improved?

E. The report identified 13 areas for improvement. What plans are in place to ensure that each of these is progressed?

JS began by explaining that whilst the report was published on 7 February 2020, the HMICFRS inspection took place in May 2019. Sussex Police was alive to the findings of the report following the 'hot' debrief that took place immediately after the inspection and before the draft report was issued. As such, the Force has been working to address the areas where improvements were identified for more than 10 months now and has developed a comprehensive action plan to achieve this.

Whilst good practice was identified by HMICFRS in some areas of the report (that has since been replicated by other police force areas) the Deputy Chief Constable expressed "disappointed" at how the progress made by the Force had been reflected in other areas, with the scale of the improvements and the progress made not represented as accurately as it (possibly) could have been. A further commitment to keep people safe in Sussex was reiterated.

*It was highlighted that the Force already carries out a lot of engagement with members of the public. This position is expected to be strengthened further by the new PCSO model that was launched in November 2019 to provide every community throughout the county with at least one **named PCSO** and greater attendance at community engagement and online events. Members of the public can find out who this individual is for the geographic area where they live by inputting their postcode at www.police.uk (Edit: Please note that some areas will have more than one named PCSO).*

JS was "bemused" that HMICFRS had highlighted that the Force would only attend community meetings when there is a policing purpose and it would add value. It was emphasised that there has not been a unilateral decision taken in respect of the attendance at community meetings and, instead, an agreement about how police attendance will be managed has been established.

It was explained that whilst Sussex Police will not go to every local council meeting they will endeavour to attend the vast majority of these, including all annual meetings and any other meetings where police attendance is required. The Force remains fully engaged with the Surrey and Sussex Associations of Local Councils (SALC) to try and improve this coverage further still. The Force has also set up bespoke communication channels with the Parish Council clerks to ensure that they have a direct route into the organisation.

It was emphasised that a huge amount of effort was undertaken by Sussex Police immediately after the inspection to ensure that plans were put in place to address each of the recommendations identified. This has resulted in improvements to the service provided in respect of identifying, safeguarding and responding to risk.

The Deputy Chief Constable explained that Sussex Police has been working on the six recommendations to address the cause of concern identified in the report around risk-management across the areas of: initial contact; triage and supervision.

- ✓ **Initial Contact:** *Significant improvements have been made to both the 101 non-emergency call handling times and the abandonment rates in the FCCCC. These have improved to an average of 4 minutes and 46 seconds and a 16.1% abandonment rate for the rolling year period to 31 January 2020 (compared to an average of 11 minutes and 58 seconds and an abandonment rate of 50.7% in October 2018). This positive performance has enabled the Force to ensure that risk is mitigated, wherever possible, and to safeguard individuals that might not have been either spoken to or seen quickly enough previously;*
- ✓ **Triage:** *Sussex Police has improved the understanding that officers and staff have in respect of risk and the importance of carrying out Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation, Vulnerability and Engagement (THRIVE) and Domestic Abuse, Stalking and 'Honour'-based violence (DASH) risk assessments at the point of contact. Through increased precept investment, the Force is set to introduce Domestic Abuse (DA) Hubs (Resolution Centres) in April 2020 on each of the three policing divisions. The DA Hubs will use Power BI analytics and partnership data to understand better and to prioritise initial and continued risk and vulnerability, as appropriate, including looking at the victim, offender and anyone else involved and escalating or de-escalating the police response, accordingly;*
- ✓ **Supervision:** *Additional precept investment in recent years has allowed for improvements to be made to the regular and active supervisions in place to ensure that the workload of specialist investigators is manageable. The further increases to resources that are planned in 2020/21 are anticipated to improve the quality of the investigations that involve vulnerable people too.*

JS explained that discussions about how the Force uses and prioritises resources to meet demand are managed through the governance arrangements of the Strategic Planning Board. This includes matching increased resources to demand through more intelligent deployment and moving resources according to geography and particular specialisms. This work also extends to looking ahead to the additional skills that will be required in the future as part of a structured forward planning process.

The Deputy Chief Constable concluded by stating that Sussex Police will "always take on board" any feedback that is provided by an independent body to improve the service that is provided to members of the public in Sussex. Each of the 13 areas for improvement highlighted in the report has been recorded with ongoing plans and actions in place to progress these through existing governance structures. JS is "confident" that these will be addressed as a matter of course.

ACTION: KB agreed to revisit the progress made against the PEEL Assessment 2018/19 at a future Performance & Accountability Meeting (PAM).

STALKING AND HARASSMENT

Stalking Protection Orders (SPOs) are now available in England and Wales.

- A. What impact will the introduction of SPOs have on victims of stalking and how will these be used to support the work of Sussex Police in this area?**
- B. What training have officers received in the use of SPOs to ensure that these are applied for in the most appropriate circumstances?**
- C. How will Sussex Police balance the demands of maintaining victim contact and safeguarding whilst managing perpetrators who have received SPOs?**
- D. What measures have the Force taken to ensure that the training provided to police officers and staff in respect of stalking and harassment meets the recommendations made by HMICFRS?**
- E. A new stalking screening tool 'App' will shortly be piloted in collaboration with Surrey Police and Cheshire Constabulary. When will the pilot commence, how long will it run for and how will it be evaluated?**
- F. Sussex Police has put in place a policy to treat all crimes with stalking-related behaviours as stalking offences first and foremost and to only amend these offences to harassment once stalking has been completely ruled out. What assurances can you provide me that this practice is being adhered to?**
- G. Are perpetrators of stalking offences being arrested in the first instance, where appropriate, to allow police officers to utilise the full powers of search, rather than asking these individuals to attend police stations for interviews?**
- H. What work is being done to improve the quality of the case files being presented to the Crown Prosecution Service for charge in respect of stalking and harassment?**

GY explained that Stalking Protection Orders (SPOs) – introduced by the Stalking Protection Act 2019 – provide the police service with an earlier formal intervention to improve the safety of all stalking victims.

The SPOs are a powerful tool for police forces and provide them with the authority to address the danger that perpetrators pose while they gather more evidence. The SPOs can be designed with stringent and restrictive conditions to address specific issues related to the crimes and allow the police to prevent better stalking behaviours and control the actions of perpetrators, including stopping them from making contact or getting too close to a victim.

The SPOs are a civil order that can be granted for either a fixed-term period or indefinitely and require authorisation from an officer at Superintendent rank or above. There are legal costs associated with applying for and securing each SPO that are payable by each police force area locally. This is a process the Force is familiar with and follows a similar approach taken to make applications under the Proceeds of Crime Act.

If an SPO is breached, the police have powers to arrest an individual and secure evidence of the breach that can result in criminal consequences, with perpetrators facing either a fine, imprisonment (up to five years) or both.

The Chief Constable confirmed that Sussex Police has secured two SPOs to date, including the first one in England and Wales on 20 January 2020, and has applied for another three. Further information about the SPOs can be viewed through the following link: <https://www.sussex.police.uk/news/sussex/news/force-news/police-in-sussex-to-lead-the-way-over-new-stalking-protection-law/>

The National Centre for Applied Learning Technologies (NCALT) has produced an e-learning training package to assist the 43 police force areas with information about when to apply for an order, the application process and how to deal with a breach of a full or interim order. This training builds on the previous work that has been carried out around the stalking acronym FOUR – Fixated, Obsessive, Unwanted and Repeated.

In addition, there is a mandatory one-day classroom-based training course on stalking and safeguarding that all frontline officers are required to complete, with the rollout of the this course beginning later this month. It was emphasised that the training provided to officers and staff in this area addresses the recommendations made by HMICFRS and has been developed in partnership with the College of Policing, Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and Veritas Justice (an external stalking advocacy service).

Further advice will be provided to officers and staff by the 70 x Single Point of Contact (SPoCs) officers from across the Force who have received enhanced stalking training covering the areas of: legislation; indicators; behaviours and the safeguarding for victims. Any officers considering making an application for an SPO are encouraged to seek early advice from a SPoC to assess the appropriateness in the circumstances.

In addition, the question set that the contact handlers within the FCCCC use at the first point of contact has already been updated to capture accurately the information received and to provide the victim with the most relevant and recent safeguarding advice. The Chief Constable explained that, rather than establishing new processes, Sussex Police will balance the demands of maintaining victim contact with managing perpetrators in receipt of SPOs through existing safeguarding mechanisms (including victim contracts).

The Force is in the process of finalising the stalking screening tool 'App' for the MDTs to provide officers with guidance to complete the risk-assessments required. The screening tool pilot will assist the three forces (Sussex Police, Surrey Police and Cheshire Constabulary) with decision-making but will not make a judgement for them. This will still need to be done independently using all of the information available in the individual circumstances. The pilot is anticipated to run for six months.

KB was reassured that the practice of treating all crimes with stalking-related behaviours as stalking offences first and foremost is being adhered to by Sussex Police. The Force will look at all of the behaviours of the perpetrator (including the identification of any offences) and the experiences of the victim collectively to understand the most appropriate offence(s) to proceed with. It was also highlighted that officers will always endeavour to target the "most serious offences" available.

GY confirmed that police officers must meet a 'necessity test' before the arrest of any individual can take place. Any subsequent search powers used must also be fully justified. The Commissioner was pleased to note that the most serious offences of stalking that relate to "intentionally causing harassment, alarm or distress" (under Section 4A of the Public Order Act) do result in the Force making arrests and utilising the powers of search available to them. Clarification was provided that individuals suspected of committing stalking offences were asked to voluntarily attend police stations for interviews six times in each of the months of November December 2019 – voluntary attendance has not been used for this purpose in 2020 to date.

KB took the Chief Constable through three anonymised case studies of current stalking victims and their experiences of police contact, investigation, updates and the policing response received to date. The Commissioner agreed to share a copy of the case studies with GY for further action and investigation, as appropriate.

The Force has improved the quality of case files presented to the CPS for charge through a combination of factors. The CPS has developed a mandatory pre-charge checklist for officers to complete before any file submission to CPS, together with providing officers with early advice about investigations and case files standards from a nominated stalking lead. The Sussex Police lead for stalking, Detective Chief Inspector Mick Richards, has also established an effective working relationship with the CPS. This is all contributing towards improved consistency and the "best possible" outcomes for those investigations.

ACTION: KB to share the three anonymous case studies with GY for action and investigation, as appropriate.