

PERFORMANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY MEETING

DATE: 21 April 2017

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)
Deputy Chief Constable – Bernie O'Reilly (BO'R)
Digital Content Officer – Sammi Carwardine
Head of Performance – Graham Kane (minutes)

ROAD SAFETY

I remain fully supportive of the work carried out by Sussex Police and the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP) to tackle and prevent the main causes of death and serious injuries on the county's roads.

- A. What are the key areas of risk around road safety in the summer months for Sussex Police and how is the Force planning to respond to these?**
- B. How is the Force working with partners to improve road safety?**
- C. What is the Force specifically doing to ensure the safety of motorcyclists and deal positively with those who continue to break the law?**

GY began by expressing his gratitude to KB for revisiting road safety and made a further commitment to make the roads of Sussex as safe as they possibly can be.

The key areas of risk for Sussex Police and the SSRP are the "fatal four": not wearing a seatbelt, speeding, drink-and-drug-driving and driver distractions, including the use of mobile phones, satellite navigation systems and iPods whilst driving. It was highlighted that the Force also experiences an increase in seasonal activity across the summer months in respect of motorcyclists, pedal cyclists and drink-driving.

*Operation Crackdown is a joint initiative run by Sussex Police and the SSRP which provides the communities of Sussex with an opportunity to report specific instances of anti-social driving on the roads. GY encouraged members of the public with any specific concerns about anti-social driving to report these to the Force through **Operation Crackdown** or by telephone to 01243 642222. Any footage captured by in car dash cams can also be uploaded through this forum. This approach enables Sussex Police and the SSRP to develop intelligence regarding repeat offenders, vehicles, times and locations which can then be used to plan, target and deploy police resources. If it is known that someone is driving whilst over the drink-drive limit or after taking drugs, members of the public should always call 999 immediately.*

*Sussex Police and the SSRP continue to work proactively to deliver a series of **campaigns and initiatives** to raise awareness and educate motorists regarding road safety. A combination of education, engineering and enforcement is essential to change driver attitudes and behaviours and ensure long-term improvements to road safety because enforcement alone does not provide a sustainable solution.*

*GY confirmed that the Force will deal positively with any motorcyclists who continue to break the law by assessing the level of criminality and harm caused, identifying anti-social driving that requires an intervention and targeting the most dangerous roads. Sussex Police regularly operate with unmarked cars and motorcycles to provide greater levels of enforcement. In addition, **BikeSafe** is a national police led advisory, assessment and referral scheme which specifically aims to support motorcyclists staying safe on the roads. KB agreed to revisit this area again later on in the calendar year.*

HMIC – OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF POLICING IN ENGLAND AND WALES 2016

Last week, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) published their overall assessments of each police force area in England and Wales 2016. These force assessments are the collation of the findings from HMIC’s 2016 inspection into Police Efficiency, Effectiveness and Legitimacy.

A. What was your overall reaction to this report for Sussex?

BO’R explained that HMIC’s overall assessment was a summary of the findings from their 2016 inspection into Police Efficiency, Effectiveness and Legitimacy (PEEL). Sussex Police was graded as follows for each of the individual inspections:

Efficiency – *The extent to which the Force is efficient at keeping people safe and reducing crime is **good**;*

Effectiveness – *The extent to which the Force is effective at keeping people safe and reducing crime **requires improvement**; and*

Legitimacy – *The extent to which the Force is legitimate at keeping people safe and reducing crime is good.*

Across the three PEEL inspection reports, HMIC recognised Sussex Police to be good at problem solving, sharing intelligence with partners, engaging with members of the public, partnership working, treating people with fairness and respect, and tackling serious and organised crime.

There are two main areas for improvement that the Force has identified: cuts to neighbourhood policing as part of the Local Policing Programme (LPP) and changes to domestic abuse investigations and processes.

The LPP is the Force’s four-year plan for how local policing will be delivered across Sussex in respect of crime prevention, response and investigation. The LPP is the single greatest area of policing and Sussex Police recognise that any changes to neighbourhood policing are likely to have a significant impact. The Force is developing detailed plans to maximise neighbourhood policing in a sustainable manner whilst maintaining and balancing this against cuts to the overall policing budget.

A Domestic Abuse Gold Group has been established to look at and monitor progress against all of the recommendations and areas for improvement set out within the ‘Effectiveness’ report. This includes the provision of ‘Domestic Abuse Matters’ training (including coercive control) to all frontline police officers and staff and issuing Body Worn Video to all Neighbourhood Policing Teams in an attempt to secure more ‘victimless’ evidence-based prosecutions.

BURGLARY DWELLING

I note that the Force experienced an 18% increase in the number of recorded burglary dwelling crimes across 2016/17 (1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017), in comparison to the same period in 2015/16. This equated to an additional 509 crimes recorded in the Performance Plan Year.

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

B. With summer, the improving weather and longer evenings approaching what are Sussex Police doing to encourage people to protect their homes from the threat of intruders?

C. The number of burglaries recorded tends to be exacerbated in the summer months, how is the Force working with partners to address this through proactive campaigns?

BO'R confirmed that the definition of burglary changed on 1 April 2017. This means that 'burglary dwelling' and 'burglary other than a dwelling' will now be combined within a 'residential burglary' category. A separate 'commercial burglary' category has also been created for all burglaries relating to businesses. In addition, changes to the definitions means that the Force is unable to make year-on-year comparisons for next two years.

The 18% increase in the number of recorded burglary dwelling crimes across 2016/17 was acknowledged. The increases in recorded crime were attributed to a small number of repeat offenders across Sussex. The relatively low risk of experiencing a burglary in Sussex was also highlighted, with the Force positioned 11 out of 43 police forces in England and Wales in terms of the risk per 1,000 population. Sussex Police is also top of their Most Similar Group (MSG) of eight police forces for risk of burglary dwelling crime.

KB was informed that prevention is working in Sussex through Operation Magpie. This is the Force's coordinated response to burglary offenders and includes a prolonged campaign asking members of the public to take additional caution to protect their homes from the threat of intruders. It was explained that the commodities most frequently targeted by burglars include cash, jewellery, mobile telephones and high-value pedal cycles. Sussex Police routinely scan selling forums (including eBay and Gumtree) for these stolen items. It was also highlighted that any information received by the Force through Crimestoppers would be investigated and used to validate other intelligence.

*GY concluded by stating that this remains a high-priority for Sussex Police and that the Force will continue to use the **Investigations Framework** (a decision-making model) to investigate the crimes which cause the most harm.*

EARNED AUTONOMY

Last year, Sussex Police implemented a new system of supervision named 'earned autonomy'. This allows for all staff investigating crimes to finalise their own crime investigations without a supervisor signing it off to ensure that it has been completed to the required standard.

- A. When was the new system introduced and how do individuals achieve 'earned autonomy'?**
- B. What training do officers receive in the preparation of case files and how does the Force measure the effectiveness of this training?**
- C. Supervisors are expected to do random dip-checks on subsequent crime investigations. How often does the Force carry out these dip-checks and how are these evaluated?**
- D. Last month, HMIC published their "Effectiveness" strand of its annual inspections into Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) and raised concerns that "this new system will not bring about better investigations or improved services to victims." How do you respond to this?**

BO'R confirmed that 'earned autonomy' was introduced by Sussex Police in April 2016 to allow investigators to determine outcomes and empower them to make decisions, reducing duplication and multiple reviews.

The new system of supervision involves differential treatment of staff based on their experience. Experienced staff with earned autonomy status are able to finalise their own crime investigations without the necessity for a supervisor to ensure that they have been completed to the required standards. This, in turn, provides supervisors with more time to focus on new and inexperienced staff and those individuals that need a greater amount of assistance and support.

*It was explained that individuals achieve earned autonomy if they are trained in the **Investigations Framework**, have completed their probationary period (two years) and have it recorded in their Professional Development Review. It is also important to note that complex and serious crimes will always be reviewed regardless of the experience of the investigator or their 'status'.*

A Crime Investigation Working Group was established to monitor performance and consistency in respect of this system. A tighter governance structure will be introduced from 1 May 2017 to ensure that a more consistent approach to monitoring exists. This will include continuously reviewing earned autonomy statuses (including withdrawal, where necessary), analysing the role of supervisors in dip-checking case files, scrutinising victim satisfaction and feedback from the Crown Prosecution Service in terms of the quality of case files.

BO'R confirmed that officers receive training in the preparation of case files as part of a National Centre for Applied Learning Technologies (NCALT) e-learning training package. More experienced staff have also been made 'champions' to assist those less experienced with their case file preparation. Additional training has been provided to officers in respect of disclosure too; including what should and should not be included in case files.

It was also emphasised that a small amount of Prosecution Case Workers (PCWs) are still in place to support officers in this work. KB asked for some further information in respect of the decisions taken to preserve the availability of some PCWs within the Force.

ACTION: KB would like some further information in respect of the decisions taken to preserve the availability of some PCWs within Sussex Police.

JOINT FORCE VETTING UNIT

From 1 September 2016, the Joint Force Vetting Unit (JFVU) took over responsibility for vetting all police officers and staff from Sussex and Surrey Police. At November's PAM, it was highlighted that vetting completion times that were expected to take four weeks were actually taking 9 weeks, and that the JFVU was not delivering against the expected levels of performance.

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

BO'R confirmed that the JFVU has improved vetting completion times by four weeks from last year. In November 2016, the JFVU was taking 9 weeks to process vetting applications, against an expected level of four weeks. This reduced to five weeks by the end of March 2017 and was attributed to a change in process and an increased capacity within the unit. The JFVU carries out all of the vetting for police officers and staff from Sussex and Surrey Police.

KB was informed that the a National Vetting Code of Practice is set to be introduced later this year to ensure consistency across all police force areas. BO'R is confident that the JFVU will be ready for the anticipated changes that will be brought about by the new legislation and explained that the Force has already changed some of the working processes in the unit. KB asked whether social media accounts will be included in the new Code of Practice.

ACTION: KB would like to know whether social media accounts will be included in the new National Vetting Code of Practice.

INVESTMENT AREAS FOLLOWING PRECEPT INCREASE

I was again given public support to increase the policing part of the Council Tax for 2017/18. This investment will provide over 100 additional police officers and specialist staff to strengthen four areas of local policing: Community Priority Crime Teams, Armed Response Officers, Public Protection Investigators and Expert Youth Teams.

A. Can you provide me with a progress update on how the additional funds have been used?

B. In 2016/17, it was agreed to invest the £5 precept increase into two areas: protecting children and vulnerable adults from exploitation and abuse and improving the Force's digital forensic capability. What outcomes and outputs were delivered from this investment?

BO'R provided KB with a progress update in respect of how the additional funds have been used to date:

Expert Youth Teams – *This year's additional funding will provide a dedicated team of police officers and staff who will work directly with schools, colleges and universities, focusing on prevention advice and interventions, supporting the vulnerable and those most at risk, and dealing firmly and quickly with incidents. The planning for the recruitment to these 20 posts is still in progress and is anticipated to be implemented by July/August 2017.*

Public Protection Investigators – *Sussex Police is dealing with more cases of rape, serious sexual offences and offences against children as a consequence of the public's increased confidence in how reports are managed. The additional funding will be used to increase the Force's capacity in this area by 30 more officers. As per the above, the planning for the recruitment to these posts is still work in progress.*

Armed Response Officers – *The extra funding will result in 52 more Armed Response Officers (AROs) and three new specialist vehicles added across Surrey and Sussex. When the AROs are not being deployed or in training, these armed officers will continue to support local policing teams. A small number of these AROs have been recruited and trained to date.*

Community Priority Crime Teams – *Sussex Police has already recruited to these 24 new posts to proactively intervene to disrupt local crime groups and take these offenders off the streets. The new teams will provide additional resources to crack down on these small groups and individuals whose criminal activity feeds the anti-social behaviour which affects the communities of Sussex.*

An update was also provided in respect of the investment made in 2016/17:

Protecting children and vulnerable adults from exploitation and abuse – *There has been an increase in the number of recent and non-recent serious sexual offences recorded. Sussex Police is able to meet this increased demand through increased resourcing. The police officers working in this area have also had their workload reduced which enables better quality investigations to be carried out. This has resulted in the Force being able to secure a number of more challenging prosecutions and convictions in this area.*

Improving the Force's digital forensic capability – *There has been an investment made to modernise the digital forensic equipment used by Sussex Police which has ensured that the previously recorded backlog has now been cleared. The provision of better technicians has provided the Force with an improved level of expertise to meet the increased demand too. BO'R also explained that he was confident that Sussex Police would be able to deliver the changes to the national standards relating to general requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories ahead of October 2017 (ISO 17025).*

AVERAGE WORKING DAYS LOST TO SICKNESS

The average number of working days lost to sickness has increased to 10.52 days per police officer as at 31 March 2017, against a Force target of 8 days per employee.

- A. What do you attribute these increased sickness levels to?**
- B. How is Sussex Police addressing these current sickness levels?**
- C. What impact is this having on frontline policing?**
- D. How are abstractions, including sickness and annual leave, managed by the Force in respect of resourcing and duty planning?**

BO'R confirmed that the average number of working days lost to sickness has increased by 17% to 10.52 days per police officer as at 31 March 2017. It was also emphasised that police officer sickness remains high compared to police staff sickness (9.20 days lost) and remains above the Force target of 8 days per employee.

The sickness days lost was noticeably high for police officers in the Communications Department (14.02 days lost) and in Public Protection (13.70 days lost). The increased sickness levels were attributed to a number of police officers still going through significant levels of change and uncertainty as part of the Local Policing Programme (LPP). Additional resilience training has also been given to officers in an attempt to improve these figures.

KB commended the Force for the improvements demonstrated in respect of Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) sickness levels. These have reduced by 35% from 10.45 days lost as at 31 March 2016 to 6.81 days lost as at 31 March 2017. These improvements were attributed to the reduced levels of uncertainty brought about by realigning the role of PCSOs within Sussex Police as part of the LPP. From 4 July 2016, PCSOs were given a greater number of powers and skills and recompensed for this at a higher grade than the previous role. A month-on-month reduction in sickness levels has been demonstrated since the new PCSO role was implemented.

GY explained that in his role as Chief Constable of Sussex Police he has a 'duty of care' to all police officers and staff. BO'R confirmed that the Human Resources Department is working closely with the Police Federation and Unison to develop a health and wellbeing strategy and plan.

An Operations Planning Unit manages resourcing, duty planning and abstractions throughout the Force by moving people to match demand. They are supported in this work by a duties team. This unit endeavours to give officers and staff as much notice as possible in advance of any changes to planned duties.

It was also highlighted that in periods of high demand, the Force is able to borrow resources from other police force areas. The Shoreham Air Show disaster was provided as an example to demonstrate this because 120 police officers and staff were provided from neighbouring police forces to assist with the policing response. This is a reciprocal arrangement that Sussex Police support other police force areas with too.