

PERFORMANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY MEETING – 16.9.2016

DATE: 16 September 2016

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

PRESENT: Police & Crime Commissioner – Katy Bourne (KB)
Chief Executive – Mark Streater (MS)
Chief Constable – Giles York (GY)
Deputy Chief Constable – Bernie O'Reilly (BO'R)
Performance & Information Manager – Graham Kane (minutes)
Correspondence & Administration Officer – Micha Dawes

OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

A. What have been the recent operational challenges for Sussex Police?

B. How have you reflected on these?

GY emphasised that it had been a particularly challenging summer for Sussex Police and highlighted two operational challenges since the last PAM as follows:

On 1 September 2016, Mr Jodan Hunt, 24, pleaded guilty to two counts of causing death by dangerous driving at Guildford Crown Court after Ms Maria Smith, 48, and Mr Richard Lewis-Clements, 46, were both killed in Eastbourne on 12 August 2016.

As well as being over the drink-drive limit, Mr Hunt also tested positive for having 800mcg of benzoylecgonine, the major metabolite of cocaine, per litre of blood in his system. The legal limit is 50mcg which means that Mr Hunt was 16 times over the legal limit.

Mr Hunt was jailed for six years for each offence, to run concurrently, and banned from driving for eight years. He is also required to take an extended retest should he wish to reapply for a driving licence after he leaves prison.

GY also explained that this case was subject to the Ministry of Justice's – "Better Case Management" initiative which puts strict timescales on the police to get prosecution case files through to the Crown Prosecution Service and court system. As a result, Mr Hunt was sentenced 19 days after the crash occurred, and the speed of the criminal justice system was praised by GY in this instance.

On 10 September 2016, a 16-year-old boy was seriously injured after he was stabbed in the car park of the Abinger Road Co-op in Portslade. The victim remains in a stable condition in the Royal Sussex County Hospital. A 16-year-old boy was arrested and charged with grievous bodily harm with intent at Brighton Magistrates' Court on 13 September 2016.

In addition, a 15-year-old boy was arrested on suspicion of attempted murder and committing grievous bodily harm with intent, and an 18-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of affray. Both have been released on bail until 18 November 2016 pending further enquiries.

GY also explained that Sussex Police are still investigating this crime and made a further appeal for any information to be reported either by telephone to 101 or by email to 101@sussex.pnn.police.uk quoting Operation Autumn.

KB concluded by highlighting the exceptional work of the emergency services during the tragic events at Camber Sands on 26 August 2016 and explained that her thoughts were with the families of all five of the victims.

POLICING OF THE PRIDE CELEBRATIONS

I was again delighted to be part of the Pride celebrations last month and would like to thank Sussex Police and partner organisations for helping to make the weekend as safe as possible for the tens of thousands of additional people visiting the City.

A. How have you reflected on the policing operation?

BO'R reflected on the Pride celebrations in August and confirmed that it had been a hugely safe, enjoyable and successful event for Sussex Police and the local community.

In respect of the policing operation, it was recognised that sensible measures were put in place to ensure those celebrating were kept as safe as possible. It was confirmed that the number of arrests made over the weekend was proportionate to a typical summer weekend in Brighton.

It was also highlighted that Sussex Police received some very positive feedback from the local community regarding the overall policing operation, with minimal negative sentiment.

KB concluded by congratulating Sussex Police and partner organisations for helping to make the celebrations a success and thanked all of the police officers and staff who took part in the Pride parade through the City.

VIOLENCE AGAINST THE PERSON

I note that the number of recorded violent crimes has increased by 25% across the Performance Plan Year 2016/17 (1 April to 31 August 2016), in comparison to the same period a year earlier. Recorded increases are apparent across each of the divisions.

A. These increases have previously been attributed to an improvement in the accurate recording of crime, rather than an actual increase in offending. Do you think the impact of these changes to recording practices have passed now?

B. What assurances can you provide that the risk of crime in Sussex has not increased?

C. How is the Force continuing to proactively work with partners to tackle violent crime in Sussex?

BO'R confirmed that the number of recorded violent crimes had increased by 25% across the Performance Plan Year (PPY), in comparison to 2015. This equated to an additional 3,737 recorded violent crimes.

However, it was also emphasised that increases in the number of recorded violent crimes can still be attributed to an improvement in the accurate recording of crime by Sussex Police, rather than an actual increase in offending. The increases in recorded crimes in this area are also replicated in the Most Similar Group of police force areas to Sussex, and nationally.

GY provided KB with assurances that the risk of violent crime in Sussex has not increased. Instead, the increase relates to a higher volume of low level "violence with no injury" and "violence with slight injury" crimes being recorded following changes to recording classifications, legislative changes and the introduction of new legislation. This means that crimes which were not recorded previously are now being recorded and contributing to these perceived increases in crime.

KB challenged BO'R regarding the different types of violent crimes that these increases related to. The vast majority of the 25% increase was attributed to a greater number of social media based harassment offences being recorded without any physical injury.

It was also highlighted that these increases are not attributed to the night time economy because the number of "violence with injury" crimes recorded in a public place remained consistent. Only small increases in the recorded number of robberies and sexual offences had been noted. Operation Marble continues to remain the Force's dedicated and targeted response to prevent incidents of crime and disorder within the night time economy.

BO'R also confirmed that further analysis and profiling has been commissioned to understand better whether these increases relate to repeat victims, offenders or locations. The completed report is expected in four weeks and KB requested a copy.

In conclusion, BO'R explained that Sussex Police remains committed to proactively working with partners to tackle violent crime in Sussex. In particular, the ongoing work with community safety partners and local authorities to tackle repeat or vulnerable victims of violent crime was highlighted. It was also emphasised that Daily Management Meetings take place each day across the districts and divisions to look at demand, assign resources and ensure that the police response is appropriate.

ACTION: BO'R to share a copy of the violent crime analysis and profiling with KB once completed.

NON-EMERGENCY CALL HANDLING TIMES

43% of non-emergency calls were answered within 60 seconds across the month of August 2016 which is 32% under the Force target of 75%. More worryingly, the Force has now not exceeded the target for an individual month for 14 months (since June 2015). 999 calls answered within 10 seconds have also reduced to less than 90% in each of the past six months. This continues to remain a concern to me.

**A. Can you provide me with an update regarding performance in this area?
B. At July's PAM, it was highlighted that a detailed analysis into current performance levels had been commissioned to understand better the demand management in the Contact and Command Centre and the causes behind these delays to non-emergency call handling times. What were the specific findings of this review?**

GY acknowledged that call handling performance for non-emergency calls continues to remain a significant area of concern for Sussex Police. It was recognised that whilst 43% of non-emergency calls had been answered within 60 seconds across the PPY (1 April to 5 September 2016), the average wait time for non-emergency calls across this period was three minutes and 37 seconds. In addition, 86% of emergency calls were answered within 10 seconds across the same period, including an average wait time of 5 seconds per emergency call.

GY accepted that performance in the Contact and Command Centre requires improvement but recognised that these remain challenging targets which have been exacerbated with the peak demand experienced across the summer months.

BO'R highlighted that the Contact and Command Centre and Resolution Centre are 14 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) under their combined establishment of 416 FTE. A further 20 FTE will be recruited in October 2016.

Training has also been reconfigured to ensure that these new individuals are able to start positively influencing call handling times sooner by getting them to a position where they are able to operate independently in a reduced period of time. However, owing to approximately three individuals resigning from the Contact and Command Centre each month, the further recruitment planned for February 2017, may need to be brought forward.

In addition, it was emphasised that deteriorating sickness levels are also attributed to these levels of poor performance. This is being proactively managed in an appropriate and supportive manner to help individuals back to work in a timely manner.

BO'R confirmed that the detailed analysis commissioned to understand better the demand management in the Contact and Command Centre and the causes behind these delays to non-emergency call handling times has now been completed. BO'R highlighted that Sussex Police are doing everything they can to improve performance levels but accepted there is no single solution. It was also emphasised that Sussex Police do not anticipate getting back to the Force target of 75% for a minimum period of six months, if that is even possible at all, without any additional investment.

KB challenged the establishment levels in the Contact and Command Centre and Resolution Centre. GY also queried whether 60 seconds is the most appropriate target for answering non-emergency calls and again explained that he would welcome a discussion with KB to develop a more meaningful and suitable measure. KB clarified that she was receptive to reviewing the existing approach but explained that she would like to see some improvements in the call handling times before any such conversation is had to amend the measures in place to monitor performance in this area.

GY again reiterated that members of the public are able to report crimes and incidents through the Sussex Police website (www.sussex.police.uk/contact-us/report-online/) and/or find answers to generic questions through the 'Ask the Police' website (www.askthe.police.uk/content/@1.htm).

ACTION: KB requested the number of non-emergency calls which are currently being answered outside the average time of 3 minutes and 37 seconds.

HOUSE OF COMMONS JUSTICE COMMITTEE – RESTORATIVE JUSTICE REPORT

The House of Commons Justice Committee published their Restorative Justice (RJ) report last week which stated that high quality, RJ services should be available to victims at all stages of the criminal justice system.

A. What processes are in place within Sussex Police to improve compliance with the Victims' Code, including the requirement for police forces to inform victims about RJ?

B. The report highlighted that "Level 1 – RJ" (usually attached to an out of court disposal) is not appropriate for cases of domestic abuse and that the Ministry of Justice should work with police forces to avoid using RJ in inappropriate cases. What is the position in Sussex?

C. How confident are you that police officers and staff within Sussex Police really understand what RJ is and how they can refer victims into the service?

GY explained that he is confident that Sussex Police have done everything they can to improve compliance with the Victims' Code and are happy with the level of support provided to victims. It was emphasised that the Force has worked with RJ for a number of years now in order to make it a success and that they are huge advocates of the underpinning principles. However, it was also acknowledged that this could always be improved and that more could be done in this area.

In particular, a link to the [Victims' Code](#) is available to all police officers and staff on the home page of the Sussex Police intranet. The completion of a National Centre for Applied Learning Technologies (NCALT) e-learning training package is also a mandatory requirement for all frontline police officers and staff, for which compliance levels are monitored.

It was also emphasised that Sussex Police are working closely with Victim Support to ensure that victims are automatically referred into the service. This approach, which is currently apparent in over 90% of all cases in Sussex, ensures that victims are provided with the most appropriate levels of support. In addition, a review of the letters sent to individual victims of crime has also been commissioned to ensure that RJ is a feature in this correspondence.

Clarification regarding the use of "Level 1 – RJ" for domestic abuse cases in Sussex was provided by GY. It was highlighted that a presumption exists that RJ will not be used for cases of domestic abuse unless it relates to non-intimate partner abuse and is appropriate in the individual circumstances of the case.

GY stated that he was confident that police officers and staff within Sussex Police understand what RJ is and how they can refer victims into the service. He also acknowledged that levels of knowledge will vary depending on the specific roles and responsibilities of each individual. This level of understanding was supported by the fact that over 3,500 individuals had been given information relating to RJ in the past three months. This resulted in 128 referrals to the three specialist RJ hubs across Sussex, of which 88 (and 69%) were progressed.

ACTION: KB requested the latest compliance numbers for police officers and staff who have viewed the NCALT package regarding RJ.

HMIC – CRIME DATA INTEGRITY

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) published their "Crime Data Integrity" report last month. HMIC judged Sussex Police's approach to crime recording to be "good" with 95% of all reported crimes recorded accurately by the Force. Praise was also given to Sussex Police for the concerted efforts made to improve crime recording accuracy and implement the recommendations set out in the 2014 report.

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

B. It was also estimated that Sussex Police fails to record over 5,300 reported crimes each year including serious crimes, such as violence and sexual offences. How will you attempt to address the 5% of unrecorded crimes?

GY reflected on the "phenomenal achievement" made by Sussex Police to be judged as "good" by HMIC in respect of their approach to crime recording.

The importance of recording reported crimes accurately, and the contribution of all police officers and staff to achieving this grading, was acknowledged. This enables victims to receive the right service and Sussex Police to proactively target resources to where offences might be happening to increase prevention. The inspection also confirmed that over 96% of serious sexual offences and every case of rape reported had been recorded accurately. The encouragement this should give to vulnerable victims was emphasised.

The report highlighted six areas for improvement, including the provision of bespoke training to the level of knowledge required by police officers and staff in their roles. GY also provided KB with assurances that Sussex Police is already looking to address the areas identified.

KB concluded by praising Sussex Police for their achievements around crime recording accuracy and agreed to revisit the areas for improvement highlighted by HMIC at a future PAM.

ACTION: KB to revisit the areas for improvement highlighted in the HMIC report at a future PAM.

RESOLUTION CENTRE

At June's PAM, it was highlighted that the Resolution Centre was now fully operational and was responding to c.30% of all grade 3 incidents. However, it was also recognised that this figure needed to increase further still in order to reduce the demand to the frontline by the desired 49,000 prearranged appointments each year.

- A. How many fewer appointments have now been created as part of this change?**
- B. How many non-time critical (grade 3) incidents does the Resolution Centre currently respond to and what is your target?**
- C. How are Sussex Police continuing to monitor user satisfaction levels in the Resolution Centre?**

BO'R reiterated that the Resolution Centre is a brand new process which was introduced to deal with non-time critical incidents which have no immediate threat, risk or harm.

It was highlighted that, whilst an average of 82 telephone calls are passed to the Resolution Centre through the Contact and Command Centre each day, the Force has an aspiration to increase this to 89 daily referrals. These current levels of performance are predicted to equate to 40,000 fewer prearranged appointments each year. BO'R was confident that the potential exists for an even greater number of appointments to be saved through the Resolution Centre.

In addition, it was explained that 92% of all incidents referred to the Resolution Centre are resolved and do not require any further deployment by frontline officers. Any incidents that are unable to be resolved by the Resolution Centre are referred to the most appropriate team for deployment and face-to-face contact.

Satisfaction levels in the Resolution Centre are monitored through bespoke surveys. It was highlighted that approximately 76% of all users are currently satisfied with the overall level of service they receive from the Resolution Centre. Conversely, 82% of users are currently satisfied with the overall level of service they receive from face-to-face contact. Sussex Police will continue to address these differences in user satisfaction.

AVERAGE WORKING DAYS LOST TO SICKNESS

The number of working days lost to sickness has increased across all employee types (police officers, police staff and PCSOs) since April 2014, against a Force target of 8 days per employee.

- A. What do you attribute these increased sickness levels to?**
- B. What impact is this having on frontline policing?**
- C. How is the Force addressing these current sickness levels?**

GY confirmed that Sussex Police monitor sickness levels very closely and acknowledged that, whilst the number of working days lost to sickness has increased across all employee types, these increases are consistent across the Force.

Sussex Police remain committed to the welfare of police officers and staff and take a proactive approach to managing sickness and supporting those absent with sickness through early intervention. In particular, a Wellbeing Hub has recently been launched on the intranet which all police officers and staff can access to see what support and assistance is available to them, both internally and externally.

KB expressed some concerns regarding the current working days lost to sickness and the impact this may be having on frontline policing. GY explained that increased sickness levels will always have an impact on frontline services. In particular, it was highlighted that 4.7% of all available police officer hours are currently being lost to sickness and acknowledged that this can put additional pressures on others.

GY concluded by stating that each of the three policing divisions actively manage their sickness processes through monthly Finance and Resources Meetings (FaRMs) to review short and long term sickness absences, sickness trigger activations and to build resilience.