

## **PERFORMANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY MEETING**

**DATE:** 18 September 2015

**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 Olivia Pinkney (OP)  
Performance & Information Manager Graham Kane – minutes  
Communications & Engagement Assistant Sammi Hide  
Correspondence & Administration Officer Kirsty Blight

## **OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES**

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

**B. How have you reflected on these?**

*Operational challenges for Sussex Police in the past month included the fatal stabbing of Miss Lauren Masters, 20, at a property in Bexhill-on-Sea on 25 August 2015. Following an effective manhunt by local officers the suspect, Mr Paul Withers, 21, was found, arrested and charged with her murder. Mr Withers will appear at Lewes Crown Court on 18 December 2015.*

*A further challenge included the conviction of Mr Peter Ball, a former Bishop of Lewes for charges relating to historic sexual abuse. Mr Ball, 83, admitted eighteen counts of sexual abuse and one count of misconduct in a public office in court which was the culmination of a four year investment of resources by Sussex Police. Mr Ball is due to be sentenced in October 2015.*

*It was emphasised that this case involved some challenging decisions for the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) who had to conclude that a previous decision to caution Mr Ball for an alleged offence in 1993 was incorrect. It is now clear that there was sufficient evidence and it was in the public interest to prosecute at the time. This decision by the CPS has ongoing implications for similar cases relating to historic sexual abuse.*

*GY concluded by commending Superintendent Di Roskilly who was presented with the President's Award for Diversity at the Police Superintendents' Association of England and Wales (PSAEW) Annual Conference.*

## **MAJOR INCIDENTS**

**A 'major incident' is a term used by the emergency services to describe events or situations which would constitute an emergency as defined in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. Sussex Police has a statutory duty to provide an effective response to, and resolution of, major incidents.**

**A. For the benefit of the viewers, can you explain what the role of Sussex Police is in a major incident and what is included in the Force's 'Major Incident Plan'?**

**B. When major incidents do occur, how are these resourced and funded by the Force and what support can Sussex Police expect to receive from neighbouring police force areas?**

**C. What assurances can you provide that police officers and staff are appropriately trained to respond to major incidents both locally and nationally according to need?**

**D. What support is provided to officers, staff and members of the public affected by major incidents and who coordinates the provision of this support?**

*OP explained that any person within the emergency services can declare a major incident and, when this occurs, Sussex Police has a statutory duty to respond under the remit of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.*

*The Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF) coordinates this direction and activity to ensure that the emergency plans for different risks are prioritised, written, exercised and regularly reviewed. The SRF includes partners from the emergency services, health, local authorities, government agencies and departments, and the voluntary sector.*

*GY explained that when major incidents occur they are resourced and funded by the individual police force area, for which contingency reserves exist to cover these costs. Sussex Police is able to request and receive support from neighbouring police force areas, accordingly to need, through the Strategic Policing Requirement.*

*The Emergency and Operations Planning Team within Sussex Police are responsible for planning the emergency response and recovery plans for all major incidents, natural disasters and large policing operations in Sussex. The Force is also part of the South East Regional Organised Crime Unit (SEROCU) which has a responsibility to protect communities in the South East from serious organised crime. The aim of the unit is to deliver enhanced interoperability and resilience across the regions supporting police forces in Hampshire, Kent, Surrey and Thames Valley, as well as national agencies and capabilities.*

*In terms of the Shoreham Air Show disaster, GY confirmed that 560 police officers and staff from Sussex Police had been involved and a further 120 police officers and staff were provided from neighbouring police force areas to assist with the policing response.*

*It was highlighted that every police officer, staff, PCSO and Special Constable receives major incident training through an online package. Refresher training is also provided annually and exercises are carried out regularly to rigorously test the response plans.*

*GY confirmed that the responsibility to provide support to officers, staff and members of the public affected by major incidents is taken very seriously by Sussex Police. The Force know the identity of every police officer and staff who were involved in the policing response at Shoreham and each of them has been written to by GY, outlining the support that is available.*

Occupational health is available to all staff, including access to the Employee Assistance Programme, which provides support for secondary trauma and post traumatic stress. Line managers have also been briefed to monitor the welfare of their staff. In addition, all those affected have been offered defusing meetings, either as an individual or as part of a group. These meetings provide individuals and groups with the opportunity to discuss what they have experienced with a qualified practitioner which is then followed up again after 14 and 28 days.

The response and recovery phases at Shoreham have now taken place and the review phase remains ongoing. A full debrief will take place before the end of the year to identify learning and training requirements to improve the response to future major incidents.

## **BURGLARY DWELLING**

**Sara Thornton, Head of the National Police Chiefs' Council, recently stated that the public should not expect to see police officers after crimes such as burglary. She was also quoted saying "we need to move from reacting to some of those traditional crimes to think about focusing on threat, harm and risk and protecting the public." I have since received correspondence from local residents outlining their concerns at this approach.**

**A. For the benefit of the viewers, can you clarify what Sussex Police's approach to burglary dwelling is?**

**B. Burglary dwelling crimes tend to be exacerbated in the summer months but I am pleased to note that the Force has demonstrated a 16% reduction in the number of recorded burglary dwelling crimes across the period 1 April to 31 August 2015, in comparison to the same period in 2014/2015. However, the solved rate has also reduced by 8% and still appears to be low. Can you provide me with an update regarding Force performance in this area?**

**C. What impact will the Local Policing Programme (LPP) have on the investigations of burglary dwelling crimes in Sussex?**

*OP confirmed that Sussex Police treat all allegations of burglary dwelling as a priority and attend each burglary dwelling reported to them. In particular, the Sussex Police investigative process for burglaries and attempted burglaries committed in dwellings stipulates that "the first investigating officer will arrive at the scene within one hour unless the circumstances of the victim dictate that an alternative response is necessary or required". All burglaries recorded by the Force are reviewed by a Detective Sergeant to identify trends and themes and to ascertain whether or not they form part of series. The full Burglary Policy for Sussex Police can be viewed through the following link: [www.sussex.police.uk/policing-in-sussex/transparency/policies-and-procedures/force-policies/burglary-policy](http://www.sussex.police.uk/policing-in-sussex/transparency/policies-and-procedures/force-policies/burglary-policy)*

*It was emphasised that the prevention side is critical too and the three-week Summer Burglary Prevention Campaign which took place in June 2014 was highlighted. The ongoing work with Integrated Offender Management (IOM), Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), National Probation Service, Restorative Justice, Neighbourhood Watch and the Youth Offending Service was also reiterated.*

*OP explained that the risk of being a victim of a burglary crime in Sussex was low (8<sup>th</sup> lowest risk out of 43 police force areas in England and Wales) and confirmed that there had been a 16% reduction in the number of burglary dwelling crimes recorded, in comparison to the same period in 2014. This equated to 203 fewer offences compared to the 1,296 recorded in 2014. It was also emphasised that the solved rate for the Force had reduced by 8%, which equated to 46 fewer crimes solved. However, Sussex Police still had the 9<sup>th</sup> highest solved rate in England and Wales at 17.29% for the rolling year period 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015.*

*OP provided KB with assurances that the LPP would not adversely impact the investigations of burglary dwelling crimes in Sussex. Scaling investigative responses based on threat, risk and harm and empowering police officers and staff to do the right thing will ensure that the focus remains on the most vulnerable.*

### **"THE NICK" DOCUMENTARY**

**A three-part, primetime ITV documentary series called "The Nick" aired earlier this month and portrayed the realities of modern policing at John Street police station, in Brighton & Hove.**

**A. How have you reflected on the series?**

**B. What feedback has been received from officers, staff and members of the public?**

**C. What assurances can you provide me that policing resources, including police officer and staff time, has not been lost as a result of any filming commitments?**

**D. Are there plans to take part in any further documentaries?**

*GY confirmed that he had reflected positively on the series and had been really pleased with the feedback and response received from officers, staff, members of the public and the media. He explained that the series provided a better understanding regarding the work of the police and some of the challenges which are experienced on a daily basis. The series achieved what it set out to achieve in terms of demonstrating the colour, passion and humanity of the police officers and staff in Brighton & Hove.*

*Assurances were provided that policing resources, including police officer and staff time, had not been lost as a result of any filming commitments. It was also emphasised that Sussex Police is approached regularly regarding requests to take part in documentaries. Each request and the motive behind them is considered on an individual basis. GY concluded by stating that he is supportive of a transparent approach to policing which improves public confidence in policing.*

## **PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES**

**In the Queen's Speech on 27 May 2015, the government announced that "new legislation will... ban the new generation of psychoactive drugs". Psychoactive substances are manufactured chemical drugs which try to replicate the effects of Class A and other controlled drugs.**

**A. What do the key issues around psychoactive substances look like for Sussex Police?**

**B. Does a strategic and consistent partnership approach exist to tackle this issue across Sussex?**

**C. As part of the government's Serious and Organised Crime Strategy, local profiles have been created to support local serious and organised crime partnerships in developing multi-agency action plans for tackling serious and organised crime. How significantly do psychoactive substances feature in the local profiles for Sussex?**

**D. What operational challenges has Sussex Police had tackling the use of psychoactive substances at the recent Wild Life and Shakedown festivals and the policing of the Pride celebrations?**

**E. How is Sussex Police working with the public to educate them of the harmful affects that these products can have and to attempt to stop the distribution of these products at source?**

*GY confirmed that Sussex Police take psychoactive substances very seriously in Sussex but explained that they have been around for a long time and are not currently unlawful.*

*The threat, risk and harm of psychoactive substances have been considered by the Force, including the behaviours adopted by individuals after taking these substances and the measures individuals are resorting to in order to get hold of them. Police officers often have to make a difficult judgement in terms of deciding whether or not any policing response is required.*

*Psychoactive substances do not currently feature in the local profiles produced by the serious and organised crime partnerships because they are not illegal. References to psychoactive substances will be considered in the local profiles once the Psychoactive Substances Bill receives Royal Assent and the new legislation becomes law throughout the UK. This is expected to be introduced in April 2016 but GY expressed caution at a total reliance on legislation and explained that this rarely solves the problem.*

*The Wild Life and Shakedown festivals, the policing of the Pride celebrations and the return of university students to the area have each presented Sussex Police with operational challenges in relation to psychoactive substances. However, this has provided the Force with opportunities to work with other agencies and partners, including the National Health Service and Trading Standards, to educate individuals of the harmful affects that these substances can have and to attempt to stop the distribution of these products at source. Targeted work with event organisers has also resulted in the introduction of specific conditions of entry and the availability of amnesty bins which prevent substances from entering the events.*

*Specific challenges for Sussex Police include examining substances efficiently and effectively and actually identifying what the substances are. Sussex Police has invested in training and equipment to facilitate them in these processes.*

## **101 – NON-EMERGENCY CALL HANDLING TIMES**

**I was pleased to note that Sussex Police demonstrated significant improvements in the number of non-emergency calls answered within 60 seconds following the restructure to a single-site Contact and Command Centre in November 2014. This included exceeding the Force target of 75% in each of the eight consecutive months since November. However, whilst performance remains at 77.4% across 2015/2016 to date, performance for the individual months of July, August and September demonstrate a reducing trend.**

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

*GY confirmed that significant improvements had been made to the number of non-emergency calls answered within 60 seconds following the restructure to a single-site Contact and Command Centre in November 2014. The hard work and flexibility demonstrated by the Contact and Command Centre staff to improve performance was also commended. In particular, it was emphasised that staff are now trained to answer both non-emergency calls and emergency calls.*

*The disproportionate demand placed on the Contact and Command Centre staff was also highlighted, including one individual who previously used to call over 1,000 times each month which both prevented and delayed other callers from getting through.*

*GY explained that he would welcome a discussion with KB to remove the locally imposed Force targets and to, instead, focus on an approach based around user satisfaction.*

PUBLIC CONFIDENCE

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## **MIGRANT CRISIS IN CALAIS – STRATEGIC POLICING REQUIREMENT**

**The British and French governments are coming under increasing pressure to tackle the migrant crisis in Calais from where large numbers of people have attempted to reach the UK by crossing the Channel. Sussex Police has already provided support to Kent Police to assist them in their policing response as part of the Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR).**

**A. For the benefit of the viewers, can you explain what the SPR is and clarify exactly what support Sussex Police has provided to Kent Police?**

**B. What contingency plans have you put in place to ensure that Sussex Police is in a state of readiness to provide any further support to Kent or to fulfil any other national commitments?**

**C. Given the number of ports, harbours and marinas along the Sussex coast, what assurances can you provide me that Sussex Police are working with the UK Border Force and are well positioned to respond to any potential threat?**

*GY explained that the SPR requires police force areas to work together to ensure that sufficient capabilities are in place to respond to serious and cross-boundary threats, both nationally and locally. The six national threats set out in the SPR include: public disorder, civil emergencies, organised crime, terrorism, large-scale cyber incidents and child sexual abuse.*

*It was confirmed that Sussex Police has been asked 23 times for support by Kent Police but has not had to provide this support and remain in a state of readiness should this support be required.*

*A basic Public Order Unit (POU) is defined nationally as a team of six Police Constables and three Police Sergeants commanded by an Inspector. It was explained that each police force area must have a minimum number of officers trained to respond as part of a POU and that the numbers, skills and equipment required are all reviewed annually.*

*GY provided assurances that Sussex Police, in partnership with the UK Border Force, are well positioned to respond to any potential migrant threat along the Sussex coast. The risk is reviewed locally on a daily basis and primarily centers on the Newhaven Ferry Port. Weekly intelligence updates are received from the Port and from October 2015 the number of ferry crossings will reduce to two incoming and two outgoing each day.*

*It was also highlighted that Project Kraken exists to increase public reporting and strengthen the general maritime industry's response to local threats. This is a national initiative which is delivered collectively by the National Crime Agency, UK Border Force and individual police force areas with coastal boundaries.*

VALUE FOR MONEY

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### **POLICE OFFICER RECRUITMENT**

**At the PAM in June, it was highlighted that police officer recruitment may open again in Sussex in the autumn.**

**A. Can you confirm whether or not police officer recruitment will reopen again in 2015?**

*GY explained that the operational need for Sussex Police to recruit police officers is currently the subject of live debate. It was emphasised that this is an area which is being regularly visited with the Head of the Human Resources Department in consultation with KB.*

*The Comprehensive Spending Review 2015, reform of police funding arrangements in England and Wales and operational requirements will all contribute towards a decision as to whether or not police officer recruitment will open again this year in Sussex.*