

PERFORMANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY MEETING

DATE: 21 November 2014

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)
Director of Finance Mark Baker (MB)
Performance & Information Manager Graham Kane – minutes
Communications Manager Rosie Gooch
Correspondence & Administration Clerk Sarah Tibbott
Detective Chief Inspector Emma Brice

OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

What have been the recent operational highlights for the Force?

A. Have there been any key Operations or challenges?

B. How have you reflected on these?

GY reported that Sussex Police have been working in collaboration with Surrey Police to facilitate a peaceful protest at the Horse Hill site near Horley, to allow the exploratory drilling site to operate, whilst simultaneously managing the potential for any crime and disorder.

It was also emphasised that the single-site Contact and Command Centre, at Sussex Police Headquarters, went live on 12 November 2014 and replaced the multiple call-handling centres in Lewes, Brighton, and Haywards Heath. It was highlighted that the single-site at Lewes will provide greater flexibility and improve the Force's ability to respond to both emergency and non-emergency calls.

GY concluded by providing assurances that a consistent approach to policing bonfire celebrations existed across Sussex. This included the policing response to the Lewes bonfire night celebrations which took place on Wednesday 5 November 2014. It was reported that upwards of 40,000 people attended (which was 10,000 more than last year) and that there were fewer injuries and arrests throughout the night.

It was also confirmed that a number of complaints were received by Sussex Police regarding the burning of an Alex Salmond effigy. GY explained that these complaints were dealt with quickly and positively by the Force, including liaison with the Crown Prosecution Service who confirmed that there was no case to answer.

REGIONAL BURGLARY CAMPAIGN

Sussex Police worked collaboratively across the south-east region with Surrey, Kent and Thames Valley police forces as part of a three-week burglary campaign to catch cross-county burglars and to try and prevent residents from becoming victims.

A. How have you reflected on this campaign?

B. What was the impact of the campaign in terms of the recorded number of Burglary Dwelling crimes across the three-week period in comparison to the same period in 2013?

C. What did some of the operational highlights look like?

GY reiterated that Sussex Police worked collaboratively across the south-east region with Surrey, Kent and Thames Valley police forces as part of a three-week burglary campaign, between 27 October and 16 November 2014, to catch cross-county burglars and to try and prevent residents from becoming victims of crime.

It was emphasised that the campaign was the first time that police forces had worked together regionally in such a coordinated manner to tackle burglary. The aims of the campaign were to educate the public (because historically an increase in burglaries is demonstrated when the clocks change), to promote Immobilise (the national property register – www.immobilise.com) and to encourage the reporting of any suspicious activity.

GY confirmed that a number of differently themed campaigns ran across the three-week period, including messages, such as "Like it, Lock it, List it" and "Burglars mess with your head", which were promoted through the media.

It was reported that the impact of the campaign included a reduction of 18 burglary dwelling crimes in comparison to the same three-week period in 2013. This equated to an 8% reduction in recorded crime. It was also emphasised that Kent and Thames Valley also experienced reductions too. GY stated that a total of 144 burglary suspects were arrested during the campaign, of which suspects were charged with 63 burglaries.

Additional operational highlights included 171 vehicles stopped and 15 stop and searches carried out which resulted in a further 11 arrests for other offences across the three police force areas. The names and photographs of the top ten most wanted burglary dwelling suspects were published too which resulted in one suspect voluntarily handing himself in to Sussex Police.

POP-UP HUBS FOR STREET COMMUNITY

As the number of people sleeping rough in Sussex continues to increase, I am pleased to note that a multi-agency approach between the Force and partners exists to engage with the street community through pop-up hubs.

A. For the benefit of our viewers, what are pop-up hubs and how many of them exist across Sussex?

B. How are Sussex Police using pop-up hubs to target the vulnerable members of the street community?

C. What further work is planned by Sussex Police and partners across this area over the winter months?

GY confirmed that homelessness and rough-sleeping have significantly increased in the last two years and it is now estimated that the size of the street community in Sussex is circa 800 individuals. There are three distinct groups of people that make up the street community which include; entrenched and long-term rough sleepers, individuals new to the street and those individuals that move between a range of accommodation (rough-sleeping, squatting, hostels, sofa-surfing and prison).

It was explained that pop-up hubs facilitate multi-agency intervention to tackle and prevent rough-sleeping by providing individuals with an alternative option to sleeping rough and access to a number of support services and providers. This approach represents a more compassionate and supportive approach to targeting vulnerable members of the street community and provides a more sustainable solution. There are currently three pop-up hubs in Sussex, including locations in Brighton & Hove, Eastbourne and Bognor Regis.

GY provided assurances that emergency accommodation plans would be put in place by local authorities should temperatures plummet throughout the winter months, which would include liaison with churches to provide night shelter. The Force is also engaged with Helen Keats, a former Rough Sleeper Advisor at the Home Office, and the NHS Trust, to better identify and mainstream best practice across Sussex.

LAUNCH OF DOMESTIC ABUSE CAMPAIGN

Sussex Police were the first police force in England and Wales to gain White Ribbon Award status in 2013 in recognition of their commitment to the global campaign to ensure that men take more responsibility for reducing the level of violence against women. A year on, the Force is launching a domestic abuse campaign next week to coincide with White Ribbon Day which is specifically aimed at young girls and women aged 16 to 22.

A. What does the work with Sussex Police and partners look like one year on from the White Ribbon award?

B. What do you anticipate will be achieved as part of the latest domestic abuse campaign?

GY confirmed that domestic abuse remains a priority for Sussex Police and emphasised that strong partnerships have been formed across the county, including working closely with James Rowlands, Violence Against Woman and Girls Strategy Manager and Commissioner, in Brighton & Hove, and Trish Harrison, Principal Manager for Domestic and Sexual Violence, at West Sussex County Council.

The partnership was pivotal in bringing forward Clare's Law (the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme) which has resulted in circa 60 disclosures made in the interests of safeguarding individuals since March 2014. Another difference that the partnership has made includes the introduction of Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPNs) to provide immediate emergency protection to victims of domestic abuse, including certain prohibitions and restrictions. DVPNs went live in Sussex in June 2014 and circa 40 notices have been issued since then. It was highlighted that feedback from victims has been positive, including the "breathing space" provided to victims to deal with the situation and the "access to multi-agency support services", in particular.

Sussex Police will also be working with the partnership to deliver a full one-day training programme for 1,400 frontline officers and staff from January 2015. This training will include topics such as coercive control, same sex domestic violence and what a good safety plan looks like.

GY stated that the Force will be launching their domestic abuse campaign on 25 November 2014 (which coincides with White Ribbon Day) as part of an ongoing commitment to tackling domestic abuse. The campaign has some targeted messages for four vulnerable groups including; 16 to 22 year olds, pregnant women, women with children and males (who are the least likely group to make a report to the police). Posters have been developed which specifically target each of the four vulnerable groups.

GY concluded by stating that Operation Cranberry, the Sussex Police response to reports of domestic abuse over the Christmas and New Year period, has been completely refreshed, and will be known as Operation Candle when launched next month.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Sussex has a combined population of approximately 1.6 million residents and is a cosmopolitan county which embraces its multicultural demographic. It is fundamentally important that Sussex Police understand this diversity and can demonstrate that they connect with the communities they serve.

A. What training is provided to frontline officers and staff in relation to equality and diversity?

GY explained that the Force now includes equality and diversity in a wide range of training areas. This includes initial training for Police Officers, Police Staff, PCSOs and Special Constables, management and supervisory training, investigative training, development of coaches and training staff and the development and design of new training courses.

A national e-learning package from the College of Policing has also been developed to cover the key legislation and application of the Equality Act 2010. All officers and staff joining Sussex Police are required to complete this package, which will become a pre-requisite for many of the other courses run internally and externally by the Force. In particular, the development of an investigative training programme using student actors, from Sussex Downs College, is another example of Sussex Police saving money whilst simultaneously engaging with a young section of the community.

ACTION: KB to attend an investigative training day with the student actors

PUBLIC CONFIDENCE

HMIC – CRIME DATA INTEGRITY

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) published their "Crime Data Integrity" report earlier this week following the most extensive inspection of crime-recording ever carried out, and examined over 8,000 reports of crime to the police. The national average of under-recording of crime was 19%, which amounts to over 800,000 crimes each year. The performance in Sussex was slightly improved but the report identified a number of areas where the Force could further strengthen its accuracy of crime recording.

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

GY reiterated that Sussex Police take crime data integrity extremely seriously and stated that it is essential that any reported crime is recorded accurately.

It was acknowledged that in some instances where the Force has not recorded a crime, some victims would not have received the support that they should have from partner agencies, including victim support services. However, it was emphasised that "in most cases" the crimes would have been investigated regardless of whether or not they were recorded.

GY confirmed that in the past Sussex Police have not always got crime recording right, or often enough, and attributed a lack of understanding of crime recording rules, complex processes and duplicating data-entry procedures as contributing factors. It was explained that in March 2014, GY commissioned an evidence-based review of crime data integrity, which identified 105 recommendations, of which a significant proportion of these recommendations have already been implemented and that the others remain ongoing work-in-progress.

GY provided KB with strong assurances that the Force has developed a comprehensive action plan and taken measures to ensure that staff, processes and systems have all been aligned to ensure that Sussex Police comply with Home Office Counting Rules and National Crime Recording Standards.

GY concluded by stating that both HMIC and the Force recognise that a much improved performance has been made in this area since the inspection was carried out but acknowledged that there is more to do to better serve victims of crime and retain the trust of the public.

PREVENT STRATEGY

At last month's PAM it was emphasised that the UK threat level had been raised to "Substantial" and assurances were provided that Sussex Police had put in place effective measures to deal with this danger. Prevent is an integral strand of CONTEST, the government's counter terrorism strategy, which aims to stop individuals becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

A. How does Prevent help tackle terrorism and violent extremism in Sussex?

B. What assurances can you provide that plans are in place to ensure that all officers and staff are given Prevent awareness training to identify and support vulnerable members of society and tackle those who disrupt neighbourhoods?

C. What role do partner organisations have in Prevent?

GY emphasised that Prevent is one of four separate strands of CONTEST, the government's counter terrorism strategy, which aims to stop individuals becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. The other three strands are Pursue and Protect (which are police-led activities) and Prepare (which, in addition to Prevent, are local authority-led activities).

It was explained that Prevent helps to tackle terrorism and extremism in Sussex through a series of community engagement activities, often through education, which seek to steer vulnerable individuals away from extremist behaviour. Four partnership panels exist in Sussex to support the identified individuals, alongside the core statutory services. It was emphasised that the conflict in Syria has resulted in an increased focus in this area, in particular.

GY stated that local authorities are also engaged in this process, including the existence of a dedicated Prevent lead in Brighton & Hove and a review of the awareness training that is delivered to front-line staff across the county. However, it was acknowledged that further partnership work is required across this area to better improve understanding and early recognition.

YOUTH COMMISSION

The Youth Commission today published their findings and recommendations from their "Big Conversation" which gathered the views of over 2,000 young people across the county on policing issues. At the "Big Conversation Conference" in September you were presented with the findings of the report and made a personal commitment to look at all 16 recommendations?

A. Can you provide me with an update in relation to the progress made against these recommendations to date?

GY reinforced his personal commitment to look at all 16 recommendations made by the Youth Commission following the publication of their "Big Conversation" report. It was emphasised that all five of the priority issues identified by the Youth Commission have been allocated a lead officer(s) from within Sussex Police to work with an identified member of the Youth Commission as follows:

- ✓ *Relationship between young people and the police – Superintendent Laurence Taylor;*
- ✓ *Bulling and cyber-bullying – Chief Inspector Richard Bates and Police Constable Caroline Adams;*
- ✓ *Domestic abuse and sexual abuse – Detective Chief Inspector Miles Ockwell;*
- ✓ *Reducing offending and reoffending – Temporary Superintendent Julia Pope and Chief Inspector Justina Beeken;*
- ✓ *Drug and alcohol abuse – Chief Inspector Katy Woolford*

GY also confirmed that Sussex Police have established a Youth Independent Advisory Group (YIAG). This group will have their first meeting in December and two members of the YIAG will also have a seat on the Strategic Independent Advisory Group too.

KB concluded by announcing that recruitment for the next cohort of the Youth Commission will open shortly.

VALUE FOR MONEY

HMIC – VALUE FOR MONEY PROFILE

HMIC's recently published the Value for Money Profile for 2014 which outlines how each of the police forces in England and Wales are providing value for money across their service areas.

A. What do you see as the key strengths and weaknesses highlighted in the report from a Sussex perspective?

B. How are you going to use the information to improve the Force's ability to demonstrate value for money?

C. The costs of criminal justice arrangements appear to be much higher than other police force areas, with custody more than double the average. Why do we have such an expensive system?

MB explained that the Value for Money Profile is produced annually by HMIC and compares the relative spend across all police forces in England and Wales.

It was highlighted that the overall spend per head of population in Sussex had decreased from last year and remains the fifth lowest across all forces. The same was also true for Sussex in terms of the Band D council tax which was the fourth lowest nationally, despite an increase to the precept across 2014/2015.

It was also emphasised that Sussex is the 14th lowest force nationally in terms of receipts received from central government funding (per thousand population) and MB explained that the Comprehensive Spending Review affects Sussex to a greater degree because of this in comparison to other forces.

It was confirmed that Sussex Police use the report internally to challenge financial and operational performance, as part of the annual budget setting process, to focus and challenge areas of relatively high spend.

MB explained that the criminal justice costs per charge were significantly higher than the national average but highlighted that the costs per function are lower than the average in the majority of areas. The main reason for the increased costs across criminal justice relate to the nature of the Private Finance Initiative agreement because all of the custody and financing costs are included in the overall costs. This makes comparisons with other forces more difficult because this is not comparing like-for-like.

COLLEGE OF POLICING: COST OF TRAINING

The College of Policing has announced a 5% increase in the cost of training that will be enforced from July 2015.

A. What training courses will this affect?

B. Can efficiencies be made in the training budget to accommodate these potential increased costs?

MB confirmed that the College of Policing (CoP) has announced a 5% increase in the cost of training but explained that the Force were not in a position to confirm exactly what training courses would be affected because this level of detail is still being worked through.

It was emphasised that the highest spend on training is currently for specialist roles, including public order and command courses. Sussex Police's annual spend for training with the CoP was £175,000 last year. The potential increases amount to an extra £9,000, which is not significant but is still above the rate of inflation.

MB concluded by stating that efficiencies can be made in the training budget to accommodate these planned increases in training costs through more effective management of training centrally and through further realising collaborative savings opportunities with Surrey.