

PERFORMANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY MEETING

DATE: 21 July 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)

ASSAULTS INVOLVING CORROSIVE SUBSTANCES – “ACID ATTACKS”

It was recently reported that the number of assaults involving corrosive substances in England and Wales has risen by 30% in two years, with men accounting for two-thirds of these victims.

A. What are the key challenges for the Force in respect of assaults using corrosive substances in Sussex?

B. The true extent of 'acid attacks' may be hidden because victims are afraid of reprisals. What is Sussex Police proactively doing to encourage more victims to come forward?

C. Restrictions on the sale of sulphuric acid, one of the most commonly used substances in these attacks, were introduced in 2015 because of its possible role in the manufacture of explosives. What more could be done to restrict the availability of these substances and how is the Force targeting the retailers that sell these products to remind them of their responsibilities?

D. Given the significant increase in such attacks recorded in London over the past year, have you noticed any increased fears or community tensions locally?

GY explained that the number of assaults using corrosive substances (or 'acid attacks' as they are more commonly known) in Sussex are incredibly low. This has provided the Force with minimal challenges to date. It was emphasised that between January and July 2017 there had only been two acid attacks reported to Sussex Police.

The underreporting of acid attacks remains an ongoing challenge for the Force, particularly in respect of gang-related crime and domestic abuse. Sussex Police is aware that there may be reluctance from gang members to report any such attacks or threats of attack for fear of reprisal. The Force also continues to encourage the increased reporting of any type of domestic abuse, including acid attacks and coercive control, and ensuring that appropriate safety measures are in place for victims is something that the Force remains committed to.

The difficulties pre-empting and preventing any type of acid attacks, or even to spot, detect and search for these substances in the first instance was emphasised. This is because acid can be concealed easily in a number of containers, including drinks bottles, which makes it very hard to tell what it is, in comparison to the possession of a weapon.

The District Commanders on East Sussex Division are currently visiting all of the retailers who sell corrosive substances to remind them of their responsibilities and to ask them to express caution and increase their alertness and vigilance in respect of those individuals they are selling these substances to and. The same approach will shortly be rolled out across the rest of the Force too. This preventative work is also being supported by the Business Wardens.

GY explained that he was very assured that the Force accurately records all incidents of assaults involving corrosive substances. Previous Crime Data Integrity inspections carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) judged Sussex Police to be 'good' at recording crime.

The increased number of acid attacks nationally has not been experienced in Sussex and, as such, the Chief Constable stated that it would not be proportionate to shift further resources or to warrant a change of approach locally at this time. The Force continues to regularly engage and work with all communities who may feel more vulnerable as a result of the recent terrorist attacks and increased reporting of acid attacks nationally.

It was also highlighted that Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH) and wounding are both covered in sections 18 and 20 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861. GY is confident that this legislation should provide sufficient scope to deal with assaults involving corrosive substances and the life changing affects that occur as a result through existing sentencing guidelines.

GY confirmed that he was confident all police officers are fully briefed and trained on the stop and search powers available to them to tackle any assaults involving corrosive substances.

OPERATION DRAGONFLY – SUMMER DRINK-AND-DRUG-DRIVE CAMPAIGN 2017 - RESULTS

“Operation Dragonfly”, the dedicated Sussex Police drink-and-drug-drive campaign took place between 1 June and 10 July 2017.

- A. Can you provide me with the total number of drivers who were breathalysed or tested for substances and subsequently arrested for drink or drug driving offences?**
B. How have you reflected on this latest campaign?
C. I note that the Force supported the National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC) ‘Mobile Phone Enforcement Week’ that took place earlier this month to target individuals using handheld mobile phones when driving. What did this support and targeted police activity look like?

GY reiterated that Operation Dragonfly, the Sussex Police summer drink-and-drug drive campaign, began on 1 June and ran until 10 July 2017.

It was highlighted that 767 vehicles were stopped as part of this campaign. A total of 465 breath and drug-wipe tests were administered at the roadside, of which 139 arrests were made. 111 of these arrests were made on suspicion of drink-driving offences and 28 arrests were made on suspicion of drug-driving offences.

KB challenged Sussex Police regarding the year-on-year reductions in the number of breath and drug-wipe tests carried out since 2014. GY explained that the Force now has fewer Road Policing Unit (RPU) officers to educate road users and carry out enforcement activity. This also means that the RPU has a reduced capacity and capability to perform static road checks. As a result, a more targeted approach to vehicle stops has been adopted that is based on intelligence received from reports made to Operation Crackdown. It was emphasised that circa. 700 reports of drink-and-drug driving have been received through this forum in the past 18 months.

In addition, a dedicated ‘Strike’ team consisting of Special Constables supported the work of the RPU and the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP) as part of Operation Dragonfly. The creation of this team has provided another proactive capability to respond to the reports received through Operation Crackdown. The increased number of people killed or seriously on the roads of Sussex has also resulted in a number of further abstractions being made from the RPU as a result of the requirement for officers to create coroners and prosecution case files.

A full evaluation of the campaign is currently taking place to summarise and evaluate the overall effectiveness of the Operation. GY expressed concern at the number of individuals that are using drugs whilst driving but was reassured to note that the Force now has an evidentially conclusive way of testing for drug use, to remove these individuals from the roads of Sussex.

The NPCC ‘Mobile Phone Enforcement Week’ took place between 10 and 16 July 2017 to target individuals using handheld mobile phones when driving. Sussex Police stopped 50 vehicles as part of this national campaign, of which 25 offences were identified, including 8 offences relating to mobile phones.

The Sussex Police support for the campaign consisted of targeted police activity through directed patrols. A dedicated media campaign was also led by the SSRP to remind and educate drivers about the risks and increased penalties for using handheld mobile phones when driving.

ACTION: KB would like to know how many individuals failed or refused a drug-wipe test at the roadside and what percentage of these individuals were subsequently convicted of drug-driving.

CENTRAL TICKET AND SUMMONS UNIT

The Central Ticket and Summons Unit (CTSU) provides the centralised processing and administration of all fixed penalty notices, speeding offences and penalty notices for disorder and traffic offence reports in Sussex.

- A. For the benefit of the viewers, what is the role of the CTSU?**
- B. What is the establishment and strength of the CTSU?**
- C. Are certain summons prioritised over others?**
- D. How many speeding summons have been written-off because they cannot be processed within the prescribed timescales?**
- E. How is the overall effectiveness of the CTSU monitored and reviewed?**

GY explained that the role of the CTSU is to provide the centralised processing and administration for: penalty notice offences, road traffic collisions, mobile and fixed site speed camera detected offences, postal requisitions for crime, traffic cases, and single justice procedure notices for road traffic offences. The Unit is split into three teams: Camera and Penalty Notice Team, File Building Team and Collision Team.

Sussex Police continue to monitor the establishment and strength of the CTSU. To date, the Unit has an establishment of circa. 50 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) posts and a strength of circa. 40 FTE. It was emphasised that the Force is currently in the process of either recruiting to these vacancies or waiting for successful candidates to clear vetting processes.

It was highlighted that the CTSU dealt with 68,184 speeding offences across 2016. Of these offences, only 513 did not progress to prosecution, which equated to 0.8%. Some of the reasons for these offences not progressing to prosecution included: lack of evidence, offer of an alternative outcome (including National Driver Offender Retraining Scheme), being unable to find the driver, driver deceased or the activation was made by an emergency services vehicle.

GY provided assurances that all speeding summons are processed in date order because of the severity and subsequent timescales set against each of the offences. The overall effectiveness of the CTSU is monitored through the Operations Management Team, led by Superintendent Chris Moon, Head of the RPU. The performance of the CTSU is also reviewed at their Monthly Team Meeting, including representation from the SSRP.

POLICING VISION 2025

The Policing Vision 2025 has been developed by the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) and the NPCC and sets out the future for policing over the next ten years and will shape decisions about how police forces use their resources to keep people safe.

- A. What progress has Sussex Police made towards meeting the Vision?
B. How does the Local Policing Programme (LPP), your four-year plan for how local policing will be delivered across Sussex in respect of crime prevention, response and investigation, fit into the Vision?**

GY provided KB with assurances that he was "incredibly familiar" with the Policing Vision 2025 and explained that this Vision has been used alongside the Police & Crime Plan to inform the priorities for Sussex Police.

There are five priorities for reform set out in the Vision: local policing, specialist capabilities, cyber crime, skills and powers, and business support functions. GY explained that the LPP fits into the Vision and the Sussex Police priorities to: keep communities safe and feeling safe, to identify and protect vulnerable people, and to prevent and respond to harm.

It was highlighted that the Force is continuing to invest in and roll out further digital mobile technology to ensure police officers and staff can receive, retrieve, update and process greater information and intelligence without the constraint of having to be at a single physical location. This technology is currently available to all response officers across Sussex and Surrey which equates to circa. 2,000 devices.

KB asked where Community Investigation Teams were in terms of the rollout programme for digital services. GY agreed to review the programme again and to share a copy of the programme with KB.

ACTION: KB would like to see a copy of the rollout programme for digital services.

HARASSMENT AND STALKING

Earlier this month, HMIC and Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate published their findings following a joint inspection into the police and CPS response to harassment and stalking. The report highlighted that "people who have suffered repeated harassment or stalking are frequently being let down by under-recording, inconsistent services and a lack of understanding by the criminal justice system."

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

B. What plans are in place to deliver the four specific recommendations for Chief Constables set out in the report?

C. How confident are you that police officers and staff within Sussex Police really understand and recognise what harassment and stalking is and that any instances of harassment and stalking reported to them are recorded accurately?

D. The report also highlighted that the police often do not "see the bigger picture" and continue to treat incidents as a single event. This can result in patterns of behaviour not being properly understood which means that, as a result, the severity, continuity and escalation of the offending can sometimes be overlooked. How do you respond to this?

BO'R explained that he welcomed the joint inspection report and reiterated that basic identification and early recognition of harassment and stalking offences remains crucial. Sussex Police has incorporated the findings of the report into a Stalking and Harassment Improvement Plan.

The Force has a full-time Chief Inspector dedicated to improving the local response to harassment and stalking. This includes working with and sharing best practice with other police force areas regionally and nationally. It was also highlighted that Sussex Police has requested a joint thematic learning review with Hampshire Constabulary and both respective CPS areas. BO'R reiterated that the Force takes any reports of harassment and stalking seriously and urged any victims to come forward and report this.

The report made 22 recommendations, of which four were specifically related to Chief Constables. BO'R confirmed that the following progress had been made by the Force in respect of each:

Recommendation 8 – Chief Constables should stop the use of Police Information Notices (PINs) and their equivalents immediately. *BO'R confirmed that PINs are no longer used by Sussex Police for stalking offences. A small number of PINs are still being used for harassment offences because the Force is still awaiting the national implementation of Early Harassment Notices to replace them.*

Recommendation 9 – Chief Constables should ensure that officers are aware of, and use appropriately, the powers of entry and search for stalking. Chief Constables should also ensure that adequate records of these searches are compiled for audit and compliance purposes. *It was highlighted that this recommendation has been included in the Force's Stalking and Harassment Improvement Plan and remains work in progress.*

Recommendation 10 – Chief Constables should work with criminal justice partners to identify what programmes are available to manage offenders convicted of harassment and stalking offences in their respective force areas. In the absence of such programmes, they should review whether interventions could and should be established. *BO'R expressed his support for this recommendation and stated that he was looking forward to working with criminal justice partners through the Stalking and Harassment Working Group.*

Recommendation 11 – Chief Constables and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) Area Leads should monitor and ensure compliance with national stalking protocols. It was explained that the stalking protocol is currently in the process of being updated by Assistant Chief Constable Garry Shewan, NPCC lead for stalking and harassment. As soon as this protocol is updated, Sussex Police will work towards ensuring compliance locally.

BO'R explained that a National Centre for Applied Learning Technologies (NCALT) e-learning training package for stalking and harassment has now been mandated for all police officers, all police staff in front line/front facing roles, and all police staff senior leaders. As at June 2017, over 85% of all active police officers and staff in these roles had completed this training.

In addition, Single Point of Contacts within public protection, investigations and call handling have received enhanced training in stalking and harassment to facilitate them in the provision of advice and support to other police officers and staff across the Force. Stalking and harassment is also now included as part of the Inspector Development Programme.

BO'R confirmed that he was confident that police officers and staff within Sussex Police understand and recognise what harassment and stalking are and that any instances of harassment and stalking are being recorded accurately. In particular, it was explained that in 2016, circa. 18 instances of stalking were recorded each month, compared to the circa. 50 instances of stalking that had been recorded in 2017 to date.

This significant increase was attributed to a combination of individuals being more confident to report these offences to Sussex Police and a greater understanding and recognition from the outset. Assurances were also provided that the Force is now dealing with incidents collectively to ensure that the severity, continuity and escalation of the offending is not inadvertently overlooked.

KB concluded by stating that she has commissioned HMIC to undertake an inspection into the Sussex Police response to stalking and harassment which is scheduled to take place in November 2017.

MONITORING OF SEX OFFENDERS

It was recently reported that the police are implementing a new risk-based approach to managing registered sex offenders. This means each offender will have a personalised risk management plan to reduce the risk they pose to the public.

A. How many registered sex offenders does Sussex Police currently jointly manage with partners?

B. How effective are the current Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements in terms of reviewing and assessing sex offenders who reside in Sussex?

C. Integrated Offender Management (IOM) processes are in place in Sussex to integrate the work of agencies to provide a high level of monitoring, supervision and support to offenders. What positive impact is IOM having on reoffending rates in Sussex?

BO'R confirmed that well-established national Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPAs) are in place to manage Registered Sex Offenders (RSOs) in Sussex through three different levels of risk: low, medium and high.

It was highlighted that there were 1,539 RSOs in Sussex as at June 2017. Sussex Police currently manages 361 of these RSOs through MAPPA meetings, in partnership with the National Probation Service. 347 of these RSOs are low-risk, 12 are medium-risk and two are high-risk. The remaining 1,178 RSOs are visited based on the timescales set out in the national Risk Matrix 2000 to support consistency in the identification, assessment and management of risk in relation to offenders.

BO'R provided KB with assurances that the registration processes and management of RSOs in Sussex is very effective. The MAPPA arrangements are supported by the Violent and Sex Offender Register (ViSOR) which is a national IT system for the management of people who pose a serious risk of harm to the public. It was also highlighted that the Force has made a 49% reduction in the number of outstanding visits since October 2016.

It was emphasised that approximately one-third of all offenders engaged in IOM processes have a conviction for domestic abuse. BO'R explained that the risk and complexities for each individual need to be analysed in order to ensure that the most appropriate agency is used to monitor, supervise and support these offenders. IOM is just one of the processes used for these purposes.

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 (AROs), Public Protection Investigators and Expert Youth Teams.

A. At April's PAM you provided me with a progress update in respect of Community Priority Crime Teams and at June's PAM you updated me with the progress made to increase the number of AROs available across Sussex and Surrey. Can you provide me with a progress update regarding how the additional funds have been used in respect of Public Protection Investigators and Expert Youth Teams?

BO'R provided KB with a progress update regarding how the additional funds have been used to date in respect of Public Protection Investigators and Expert Youth Teams:

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 24 more officers comprising: 7 more Police Sergeants and 17 Police Constables. These posts are currently being recruited to through a combination of direct recruitment, promotional procedures and changes brought about by the LPP. Once in post, these officers will be allocated according to need across the three policing divisions in Sussex.*

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 Force is currently in the process of recruiting to these 20 posts as part of the changes to the LPP.*