

## **PERFORMANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY MEETING**

---

**DATE:** 18 May 2018

**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)  
Executive Support Manager – Gina Wheatley  
Head of Performance – Graham Kane (retrospective minutes)

### **DRUGS IN BRIGHTON & HOVE**

**Last week, I attended the 'St. James' Street Community – Action Group Local Area Team Annual General Meeting (AGM)' and concerns were raised by those in attendance about open drug dealing and drug taking in Brighton.**

- A. What are the key challenges for Sussex Police in respect of drugs in Brighton?**
- B. How are reports relating to drugs prioritised and tasked by the Police Contact and Command Centre?**
- C. How is the Force working with partners to reduce drug use in the City?**

*BO'R began by apologising to any individuals or businesses that have been affected by drugs in Brighton & Hove and explained that the Force continues to take this issue seriously because it understands the "corrosive effect" that open drug dealing can have in any community.*

*It was explained that drug dealing in Brighton & Hove remains comparable to any other city in England and Wales. Sussex Police continues to take regular action to disrupt the supply of illegal drugs by both local drug dealers and organised crime groups, including 'county lines' activity where groups from large urban areas travel to smaller locations to sell Class A drugs.*

*All reports relating to drug activity are initially assessed by the Police Contact Command and Control Centre in respect of threat, risk and harm before decisions are made regarding the deployment of police resources.*

*It was emphasised that a huge amount of action has already taken place in Brighton & Hove, including the deployment of both uniformed and plain clothed officers patrolling the area, carrying out stop and searches, and taking action where it is appropriate to do so. This action is supported by the information and intelligence that has been received from the local community in respect of repeat offenders, times and locations. The Deputy Chief Constable encouraged anyone with any specific information about drug dealing and drug taking in Brighton & Hove to report this to Sussex Police.*

*BO'R explained that the policing response needs to be balanced and proportionate and stated that enforcement alone is not the answer. It was also highlighted that a partnership-based approach is required to safeguard vulnerable individuals from 'cuckooing' by providing them with alternative options and access to support services.*

*The Deputy Chief Constable made a renewed commitment for Sussex Police to work closer with all residents, businesses and partners to provide public reassurance, ensure that members of the public feel safe, and to communicate better the action that the Force is taking in this area.*

*KB agreed to revisit this area at a future PAM later on in the year.*

## **STOP AND SEARCH POWERS**

**Sussex Police used their stop and search powers 4,743 times throughout 2017/18. Of all the individuals searched, those who identify themselves as Black and Minority Ethnic were 3.7 times more likely to be stopped, and those who identify themselves as Black were 14.2 times more likely to be stopped.**

- A. The number of times stop and search has been used in Sussex has reduced by 23% in comparison to last year, and by 59% compared to 2014/15. What do you attribute the reductions in the use of this power to in Sussex?**
- B. What do you attribute this apparent disproportionality to?**
- C. How consistent is the use of body worn video amongst police officers to record stop and search encounters?**
- D. How is the Force proactively promoting the Ride Along Scheme in Sussex?**

*GY explained that the reductions demonstrated in the use of stop and search in Sussex are consistent with the reducing trend nationally in respect of the use of this power. It was emphasised that there are fewer police officers of the streets of Sussex than there used to be which means that the Force has a reduced capacity to use the tactic proactively.*

*The Chief Constable acknowledged that the figures highlight disproportionality in the use of stop and search powers in Sussex. It was also highlighted that any type of disproportionality is taken very seriously by the Force. The Legitimacy Board is one of a number of scrutiny and accountability measures in place within the Force to ensure that the powers are used fairly and appropriately.*

*It was also recognised that the figures used are based on the previous Census that took place in 2011 when the Black and Minority Ethnic population for Sussex was very low, and any disproportionality will appear significantly high as a result. The Force also attributed the policing of Gatwick Airport and the intelligence received about individuals from outside of Sussex as two factors that could potentially 'skew' the figures and those individuals targeted and, subsequently, stopped as a result of this operational activity.*

*GY explained that body worn video is available to nearly every frontline police officer and emphasised that clear guidance exists which states that this should be used as a matter of routine to record all stop and search encounters, although this decision still remains at the discretion of each individual officer. The Chief Constable has commissioned a review about how the Force is currently using this power and the policy in place around it.*

*The **Ride Along Scheme** operates in Sussex as it does for a number of other police force areas in England and Wales. The Scheme provides members of the public with the opportunity to accompany police officers as they carry out their day-to-day duties, including the ability to feedback on the use of stop and search. It was highlighted that Sussex Police has received 95 requests for the Scheme in the past year and GY agreed to provide KB with the number of these requests that were completed.*

*The Chief Constable explained that he was reassured by the training that is provided to all police officers in the use of stop and search in Sussex. This training covers three distinct areas: lawful and proportionate grounds for searches (including the use of force, where necessary); the procedure for carrying out the searches (including fairness, dignity and respect); and the importance of accurate recording processes for the searches (including the use of hand-held mobile technology devices).*

**ACTION: KB would like to know how many of the requests for the Ride Along Scheme have been completed in the past year.**

## **SUSSEX POLICE 2018/22 TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY**

**The Sussex Police 2018/22 Transformation Strategy was launched last month and set out how the Force will use the additional funding raised by the precept uplift and the use of reserves to modernise and strengthen local policing in Sussex.**

**A. What do your plans look like for the recruitment of 200 new officers each year for the next four years as a result of an increase in the precept for 2018/19?**

**B. How is the Transformation Strategy being promoted internally to police officers and staff?**

*GY explained that the Head of Human Resources Department (HRD) has developed a timeline to set out the plans for the recruitment of 200 new officers each year for the next four years. This has included looking at the capacity of the Force to train such a large number of new police officers, together with the ability to attract transferees from other police force areas into the organisation.*

*It was highlighted that 40 police officers are expected to join Sussex Police in June/July 2018. Further intakes are planned in September and December 2018, and March 2019, each comprising of 72 new officers. These new recruits will all complete classroom-based training, delivered by experienced tutors, at Sussex Police Headquarters in Lewes. The Force does not have enough tutors to do this and is currently training existing police officers, in line with the guidance provided by the College of Policing, to ensure that a sufficient number of tutors will exist to meet the anticipated demand.*

*GY confirmed that when these police officers receive Independent Patrol they will spend varying amounts of time with response, prevention and investigation teams in order to strengthen local policing. KB explained that the sizeable recruitment planned in Sussex means that within the next three years nearly a third of all police officers in post will be new recruits. This represents a fantastic opportunity to change the existing culture and KB asked to know what the training curriculum will look like for these new recruits.*

*The Transformation Strategy is being promoted internally to police officers and staff online, in booklet format and through the new intranet, which will launch imminently. The Chief Constable also confirmed that he communicated the 2018/22 Strategy to all of his senior leaders at the joint Sussex and Surrey Leadership Day earlier this week.*

**ACTION: KB would like to know what the training curriculum will look like for these new police officer recruits.**

## **INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

**My office has received a number of concerns from members of the public regarding delays in the processing of requests for information under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Subject Access Requests through the Data Protection Act 1998. I understand that this is an area that Sussex Police has been struggling with and that the Information Commissioner's Office is fully aware of the problems the Force has been experiencing.**

**A. Can you provide me with an update in respect of these delays?**

**B. What plans are in place to improve these delays?**

**C. The Joint Force Vetting Unit (JFVU) was introduced in September 2016 to improve the timeliness of vetting across Sussex and Surrey and to reduce costs by 20% ahead of 2019/20. However, higher volumes of work, combined with increased levels of recruitment initially resulted in significant delays to vetting completion times. Now that the JFVU is more established, has there been an improvement in the vetting completion times?**

**D. How confident are you that the JFVU will be able to manage the additional pressures of carrying out vetting for the recruitment of 200 new officers each year for the next four years?**

**E. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will replace the current Data Protection directive on 25 May 2018. How has the Force been preparing for the introduction of the GDPR?**

*GY explained that the Information Access Team has recently been restructured and that seven out of the 11 staff in the Team have left the organisation as a result of the change process. It was acknowledged that a combination of staff shortages and the training of new and temporary staff have all had an impact on the ability of the Team to respond to requests within the statutory timescales.*

*It was emphasised that improvements have been made to the backlog of outstanding requests. These have reduced from 257 in December 2017 to 81 in May 2018. KB was also provided with assurances that requests for information have been processed within 20 working days on 90% of occasions in 2018 to date, in line with the target set by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).*

*GY confirmed that Sussex Police is ready for the introduction of the GDPR later this month. The Force has been working through the '**Preparing for the General Data Protection Regulation – 12 steps to take now**' guide produced by the ICO. The Force has collaborated with the police force areas in Surrey, Hampshire and Thames Valley to increase the efficiency of their preparedness.*

*It was also highlighted that the GDPR does not change the information that can be shared in respect of criminal allegations, proceedings or convictions. GY has convened a summit comprising of chief executives from upper-tier local authorities and local health bodies to create an environment where individuals and organisations are willing and capable of sharing information properly, even without consent, if it relates to safeguarding.*

*The Force strives to be in line with the Management of Police Information Code of Practice which sets out the requirements for collecting, recording and retaining information about individuals in respect of protection of life and property, preservation of order, preventing the commission of offences, bringing offenders to justice, and any duty or responsibility arising from common or statute law. Discussions remain ongoing in this area at the Chief Constables' Council.*

*GY explained that the JFVU carries out all of the vetting for police officers and staff from Sussex and Surrey Police. It is currently taking the JFVU an average of six weeks to process 'non-critical clearance' vetting applications and more than 900 of these applications are being completed each month. These improvements were attributed to changes in processes and increased capacity within the Unit. A total of 679 vetting applications remain outstanding, of which 405 relate to Sussex Police and 274 relate to Surrey Police.*

*The Chief Constable concluded by confirming that he was confident that the JFVU will be able to manage the additional pressures of carrying out vetting for the recruitment of 200 new officers each year for the next four years, as stated above. It was also emphasised that pragmatic risk-based approaches are being used by the Force to assist the JFVU with carrying out vetting. This includes making 'appointments at risk' that are subject to applicants receiving retrospective clearance from vetting after they commence their employment.*

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

**In the last rolling year period to 30 April 2018, 74% of all non-emergency calls to the 101 number were answered in 8 minutes and 79% were answered in 10 minutes. A total of 26% (116,322) of these calls were abandoned across the same period. This continues to remain a concern to me.**

- A. Can you provide me with an update regarding performance in this area?**
- B. Earlier this month, I visited the Contact Command and Control Centre and heard that updates to the IT system have not been completed. This was an issue when I last visited in September 2017. Why has this not been resolved?**
- C. How do you monitor the calls to the Centre in terms of quality assurances?**
- D. Last month, Sussex Police launched phase-two of the Contact Campaign to reinforce the messages regarding how members of the public should use each of the different methods available to get in touch with the Force, set out in phase-one of the Campaign. How has this been promoted and communicated to members of the public?**

*BO'R provided some context and explained that the Contact Command and Control Centre respond to a range of different communication channels. This includes a combination of approximately 600 emergency 999 calls and 1,200 non-emergency 101 calls every day, together with a number of emails and webforms. It was reported that in the past three years there has been a 45% increase in the contact made by members of the public through email and webforms. It was reiterated that 999 calls always have and will continue to remain the priority for the Force.*

*The number of different channels available to members of the public means that at certain times of the day it can take longer to answer the non-emergency calls received, than others. It was also acknowledged that there is a difference between the types of non-emergency calls received by the Contact Command and Control Centre in terms of their complexity and the time it takes to respond to these effectively.*

*It was explained that the Contact Command and Control Centre is not just a call centre but a control room that is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It was explained that only half of the staff within the Centre actually answer the 999 and 101 telephone calls received. The other staff are responsible for responding to radios, monitoring CCTV footage, carrying out risk assessments, and dispatching officers to graded calls.*

*In order to understand better the increased number of abandoned calls, the Force has started to survey those contacting Sussex Police by email and webform to ask them whether they have previously tried to make contact using the 101 number. It was highlighted that 50% of the 100 individuals surveyed so far had contacted 101 before submitting a report by email or webform. This channel shift was recognised as a good thing by the Force and an ambition to demonstrate a "neater displacement" from 101 to emails or webforms moving forward was expressed.*

*BO'R explained that competing demands on IT has meant that the updates required to the Niche system have not yet been completed. These improvements will enable the call handlers to flex between 101 and 999 telephone calls and become more omniscient. It was confirmed that these updates will be in place by June 2018.*

*The Deputy Chief Constable confirmed that recruitment for an additional 40 call handlers will open next week. KB queried whether this would be sufficient and asked whether more recruitment would be required because, historically, a number of staff from the Contact Command and Control Centre have left to become police officers when recruitment has opened previously, and the decision to recruit 200 new officers each year for the next four years as part of the 2018/22 Transformation Strategy is anticipated to have the same detrimental impact on the attrition rates for the Centre.*

*BO'R confirmed that phase-two of the Contact Campaign was launched last month and included the creation of animated scenarios to reinforce how to contact the police. The animations aim to get members of the the public to think more about in what circumstances they need the police, so that their query, concern or crime report can be dealt with by the right person first time. The two 90 second animations can be viewed [here](#).*

*The implementation of the single national online home system is also expected to assist members of the public in terms of reporting crimes and incidents that take place anywhere in England and Wales.*

*In addition, it was highlighted that on 3 June 2018 approximately 250 people will be given behind the scenes tours by specialists at the Contact Command and Control Room to find out how the department works. Visitors will also have the chance to meet the frontline staff who are the first to respond to the calls, emails and webforms that are received by the Force. Another open day has been arranged for September 2018.*

*KB concluded by stating that she would continue to monitor performance in this area closely.*

## **SERIOUS VIOLENCE STRATEGY**

**Last month the Home Secretary launched a Serious Violence Strategy to steer young people away from crime and to tackle violent drug-dealing gangs. I am pleased that the Strategy looks to bring together effective interventions rooted in enforcement, prevention and regulation to tackle the cause in the recent growth in violent crime.**

**A. How is the Force supporting the Strategy by establishing a balance between prevention and law enforcement?**

**B. The Strategy states that "tackling serious violence is not a law enforcement issue alone. It requires a multiple strand approach involving a range of partners across different sectors." How is Sussex Police proactively working with partners to tackle serious violence?**

*BO'R explained that the Serious Violence Strategy reinforces the approach that Sussex Police is currently taking in respect of serious violent crime. The Strategy is centred on four main themes: tackling county lines and misuse of drugs; early intervention and prevention; supporting communities and local partnerships; and law enforcement and the criminal justice response.*

*It was explained that the Strategy covers knife crime, gun crime and homicide, for which there have been increases in the number of reported crimes across nearly all police force areas in England and Wales since 2014. These increases have not, thankfully, been demonstrated in Sussex.*

*BO'R explained that tackling county lines and the misuse of drugs remains one of the biggest challenges for the Force in respect of serious violence. Sussex Police has a number of powers and legislation available to them to tackle this area, including the use of Drug Dealing Telecommunications Restriction Orders (DDTROs).*

*The Force continues to proactively work with a number of different partners across Brighton & Hove, East Sussex and West Sussex to tackle serious violence based on threat, risk and harm.*

## **AVERAGE WORKING DAYS LOST TO SICKNESS**

**The average number of working days lost to sickness has increased across all employee types – police officers, police staff and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) – since 30 April 2017, 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 Sussex Police addressing these current sickness levels?**

*GY confirmed that the average number of working days lost to sickness increased by 6% to 10.24 days lost per employee across the rolling year period to 30 April 2018. It was explained that sickness levels had increased across all employee types, as follows: police officers (+3%), police staff (+11%) and PCSOs (+10%). It was also emphasised that the number of days lost to sickness equates to approximately 5% of the total capacity of Sussex Police at any one time.*

*The increased sickness levels were attributed to the significant and continued change and uncertainty that police officers and staff have been going through as part of the Local Policing Programme and the 2018/22 Transformation Strategy. It was also recognised that figures can be skewed in a division or department if a few police officers or staff are on long-term sickness absences at any one time.*

*The increases in sickness days lost was noticeably high on Brighton & Hove Division (+13%), Specialist Crime Command (+13%) and within the Contact and Command Centre (+13%). KB commended the Force for the 3% improvement demonstrated in respect of the sickness levels in Public Protection. The Force endeavours to try and maintain frontline capacity as far as possible, irrespective of sickness levels, moving people to match demand.*

*GY provided KB with assurances that every division and department has a monthly Finance and Human Resources Meeting (FaHRM) to review all sickness absences. This includes collectively looking at quantitative trigger points and repetitive short-term sickness absences the plans in place for those on long-term sick in respect of keeping in touch and bringing them back to the workplace as soon as it is appropriate to do so.*

*It was also highlighted that HRD has introduced a comprehensive Health and Wellbeing Strategy to identify the need for supportive action. This has included the provision of physiotherapy for police officers and staff and the introduction of Mental Health Advocates across the Force.*