

PERFORMANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY MEETING

DATE: 21 September 2018

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

PRESENT: Police & Crime Commissioner – Katy Bourne (KB)
Chief Finance Officer – Iain McCulloch (IMcC)
Chief Constable – Giles York (GY)
Chief Superintendent – Jason Tingley (JT)
Digital Content Officer – Sammi Carwardine
Head of Performance – Graham Kane (retrospective minutes)

POLICE OFFICER RECRUITMENT

I was pleased to be able to use the additional funding raised by the precept uplift and the use of reserves to open the recruitment process for police officers to modernise and strengthen local policing in Sussex.

A. What will this mean for frontline policing in Sussex?

B. When will people start to see an increased visible policing presence throughout Sussex?

C. I also note that Sussex Police is keen to encourage applications from those individuals with a protected characteristic; specifically Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME). How much resource is being put into positively recruiting individuals from BAME groups?

KB began by reiterating that the additional funding raised by the precept is based on an increase of £12 in 2018/19, with further anticipated increases of £12 in 2019/20, £5 in 2020/21, and £5 in 2021/22.

*GY confirmed that the **Sussex Police 2018/22 Transformation Strategy** sets out how the Force will use the additional funding provided by KB to: strengthen local policing; improve ways for the public to make contact with the Force; and further modernise the service to meet new and increasingly complex demands.*

The Chief Constable explained that members of the public should start to see a difference in the investment being made throughout Sussex because the precept uplift, combined with the use of £17m from reserves, means that the Force has been able to start spending the additional funding anticipated up until 2021/22. Sussex Police does not need to wait for the planned year-on-year increases in funding and is only restricted by employment processes (for the recruitment of new police officers) and procurement and development processes (for improving access to technology and the modernisation of the service).

To this extent, it was emphasised that between 2,000 and 3,000 Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) have been provided to all frontline police officers and staff to ensure that they have access to the information they need, as and when they need it, without the need to return to police stations to access this.

GY also confirmed that Sussex Police has already started to recruit some of the 800 police officers planned over the next four years to provide a net increase of 200 more officers than the Force was originally expecting to have by 2021/22, taking anticipated retirements and leavers into account. It was highlighted that 34 police officers will be visible on the streets of Sussex from Monday, 24 September 2018, to complete the final part of their training before they are awarded Independent Patrol (IP). Another intake of 70 police officers began their classroom-based training two weeks ago and all are expected to be visible in Sussex from 2 January 2019, and on IP by 12 April 2019.

It was also emphasised that 22 of the most recent intake of police officers were members of police staff, including Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), and that plans are underway to recruitment individuals to replace them. The additional funding will enable the Force to recruitment more PCSOs than the establishment because it is recognised that many more individuals will follow the career path to become police officers in the future. On Monday, 17 September 2018, an intake of 34 PCSOs began their training with Sussex Police and these individuals are expected to be visible across the county by November 2018.

The new police officers and PCSOs will strengthen local policing and improve the visible policing presence because they are being put into Prevention teams throughout Sussex and will address the issues that members of the public recognise to be the most problematic in local communities.

GY explained that the Force has invested in a full-time police officer over the past two years to positively recruit individuals from BAME groups to improve the diversity of the workforce in Sussex. The increased levels of recruitment and positive activity demonstrated in this area means that between 16 and 18 individuals from under-represented communities could secure employment as police officers in 2018/19, compared to much smaller numbers (approximately 2 BAME individuals) in previous recruitment campaigns.

The Chief Constable concluded by explaining that whilst the number of successful BAME applicants has increased in recent years, the number of applications received remains constant. The Force recognise that more still needs to be done in terms of attraction and engagement. Further applications from individuals with protected characteristics were again encouraged in the subsequent recruitment campaigns that will run over the next four years.

POLICING OF LARGE-SCALE EVENTS

Sussex Police is responsible for policing a number of large-scale events, including football matches, Pride celebrations, bonfire night celebrations, and other events within Sussex.

A. For the benefit of the viewers, can you clarify how the policing of large-scale events is planned and funded in Sussex?

B. How have you reflected on the policing operation for the Pride celebrations, and what was the police involvement in the decision to close Brighton train station for a short period of time on the Saturday evening?

C. The UK's biggest bonfire night celebrations will again take place in Lewes on Monday, 5 November 2018. Operation Peel is the Sussex Police response to supporting the bonfire societies to ensure public safety. How is the planning progressing for this event?

JT explained that Sussex Police work to a nationally agreed planning process in respect of how the policing of large-scale events are planned for in Sussex. This process has evolved from a previously police-centric approach to a more partnership-based response, with different agencies taking leading roles depending on the nature of the event.

The maximisation of public safety remains a consistent and core objective for all large-scale events. Other nationally agreed core responsibilities for the police service include: preventing and detecting crime; preventing or stopping breaches of the peace; and, at its most extreme, activating contingency plans where there is an immediate threat to life.

An Operational Planning Team exists within Sussex Police to plan for large-scale events with a public order command structure in place, as appropriate. These nationally accredited Commanders have an active role in the planning of any such events.

Alongside the standard and agreed principles for the policing of large-scale events is a nationally agreed funding formula, setting out how the costs will be apportioned. This includes the ability to recharge local authorities and other event organisers for policing services, and long-standing mutual-aid agreements that exist between all police force areas. It was highlighted that Sussex Police were refunded approximately £825,000 in 2017/18 for the cost of providing policing services at large-scale public events.

JT reflected on the policing operation for the Pride celebrations and explained that an unprecedented number of individuals visited the city on that day, with Britney Spears drawing a number of extra visitors for headlining the event. It was emphasised that whilst planned processes and procedures exist for managing the flow of crowds at large-scale events, and are regularly evidenced by Operation Albion and the policing of crowds at Brighton & Hove Albion football matches, the combination of increased visitors and more individuals staying to the end of the celebrations created a surge at Brighton train station.

The Chief Superintendent confirmed that the police involvement in the decision-making process to close the station for a short period of time on the Saturday evening was taken in partnership with British Transport Police, on the basis of public safety. Sussex Police remain supportive of the decision taken in this instance and, whilst they accept the comments and feedback received from members of the public after the event, these have been discussed at both internal and external multi-agency partnership learning debriefs.

It is acknowledged that communication with members of the public could have been improved in this instance to manage better their expectations. However, reassurance was provided that learning events take place after each large-scale event to improve the planning and response in the future.

JT explained that established plans for the policing of November's bonfire night celebrations are progressing well. Sussex Police is part of a multi-agency group working closely with the seven bonfire societies, Lewes District Council, East Sussex County Council, East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service, South East Coast Ambulance Service, British Transport Police and Southern Rail.

Detailed safety advice has been received from experts in respect of crowd density, routing of processions, naked flames and risk of crushing. Minor revisions have also been made to well-rehearsed plans to ensure that public safety is prioritised at the event. These plans will remain under constant review both up to and including the day of the event.

101 – NON-EMERGENCY CALL HANDLING TIMES

The ongoing decline in call handling times to the non-emergency 101 number continues to remain a concern to me.

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

B. I note that despite a reduction of 24,430 calls offered to the 101 number in the rolling year to date, there has also been an increase in both the average wait time for non-emergency calls and the total number of abandoned calls. What do you attribute this to?'

GY explained that the Contact Command and Control Centre, based at Sussex Police Headquarters in Lewes, is responsible for answering all of the emergency (999) calls, non-emergency (101) calls, emails and webforms. The single site centre provides a frontline response to the range of different communication channels available and is more than just a back-office function.

It was emphasised that a triage system exists at the beginning of every contact to order and prioritise the contacts received in the Contact Command and Control Centre based on threat, risk and harm. This process ensures that the contact is passed to the most appropriate area for response.

The Chief Constable acknowledged that for the rolling year period to 31 August 2018, there was an average wait time of 9 minutes and 11 seconds for the 397,630 non-emergency calls made to the 101 number. This performance is set against a 6% reduction in demand to the non-emergency number that equates to approximately 24,000 fewer calls. It was also emphasised that the number of emergency calls received by the Force has increased by approximately 12,000 (and circa. 5%) across the same rolling year period. This increase in demand is having a detrimental impact on the ability of the Contact Command and Control Centre to answer these emergency calls within 10 seconds, with performance levels recorded at 84% for the period. It was also highlighted that this issue is a national one, and not just local to Sussex.

GY confirmed that the Force continues to promote the other methods of contact available to members of the public in terms of reporting crimes and incidents. In particular, it was reported that there has been an increase in non-voice demand from members of the public making an additional 44,000 reports through a combination of emails and webforms. This shift in demand is contributing to the reduced number of non-emergency calls received by Sussex Police (described above) but is still taking individuals away from answering telephone calls in order to respond to this contact type.

It was also emphasised that over the past three weekends approximately 500 people have been given behind the scenes tours within the Contact Command and Control Room to find out how the department responds to the calls, emails and webforms that are received.

*KB asked when the investment set aside in the **Sussex Police 2018/22 Transformation Strategy** for 'Public Contact' would start to have a positive impact on the performance of the Contact Command and Control Centre. GY explained that a Contact Improvement Programme, aligned with the Force's other change programmes, exists to ensure that the right systems, training and resources are invested in to meet the needs of the people who call Sussex Police for assistance. The Chief Constable confirmed that an improvement in call handling time performance would require increased expenditure for the Centre, either through the recruitment of more call handlers or by investing in a better operating system.*

It was highlighted that Sussex Police currently uses an outdated online reporting system. This was a nationally procured system and is still used by the vast majority of police force areas in England and Wales. As a consequence, not enough information is provided at source to enable the Force to make accurate judgements in respect of threat, risk and harm. This also means that individuals need to be contacted by the Force to request further information, on regular occasions. It was reiterated that a new Single Online Home (SOH) system is anticipated to be introduced in Sussex in December 2018 that will assist members of the public to report crimes and incidents that take place anywhere in England and Wales. The SOH will provide officers and staff with enhanced information to make accurate judgements, in the first instance, without the need to follow this up with the individual.

KB expressed her concern at the 34% abandonment rate for calls to the non-emergency number across the rolling year period that equated to 134,798 calls. GY confirmed that a large number of these telephone calls are abandoned within four minutes and that a significant number of these individuals subsequently go online to make separate reports. The Chief Constable provided KB with assurances that each time an individual makes a report online they are sent a confirmation email that includes a link to a survey asking individuals about their experience of reporting online. One of the questions includes, 'have you previously tried to contact Sussex Police by some other means?'. It was highlighted that 62% of individuals had previously tried to make the same report through 101.

KB asked whether Sussex Police had enough call handlers employed within the Contact Command and Control Centre to answer calls, emails and webforms. The Chief Constable confirmed that he was comfortable with the number of available call handlers and shared his recruitment plans with the Police & Crime Commissioner. This included confirmation that 34 new contact handlers joined the Force earlier this month, ahead of an additional 24 handlers expected to start training at the beginning of 2019.

Further work is also ongoing to improve the resilience of the Contact Command and Control Centre by creating a pool of 'bank' staff who have previously worked as a call handler. Each of these individuals were contacted over the summer and asked whether they would be interested in earning some overtime to provide additional cover during a period of time when demand traditionally increases and existing staff request leave.

The Chief Constable explained that members of the public should start to see an improvement in call handling times now that the summer period has passed and that increased numbers of call handlers are in post.

KB concluded by stating that she will revisit this area at the Performance & Accountability Meeting on 14 December 2018. The Commissioner will continue to monitor performance in this area closely between now and then.

INVESTIGATIONS AND RESOLUTION CENTRE

The Investigations and Resolution Centre (IRC) endeavours to resolve incidents and crimes at the earliest opportunity and reduce the number of prearranged appointments.

- A. For the benefit of the viewers, what type of crime is considered by the IRC?**
- B. What percentage of total crime recorded by Sussex Police is put through the IRC? Of which, what percentage are resolved at source and does not require any further deployment by frontline officers?**
- C. What impact is the IRC having on the number of prearranged appointments that are required each year?**
- D. What happens to any incidents that are unable to be resolved by the IRC?**
- E. What does success look like for the IRC and how is this measured?**

JT explained that the provision of an IRC enables the Force to remotely investigate crimes and incidents, without the need to deploy frontline police officers and staff. The IRC consider the threat, risk and harm of a recorded crime, rather than the specific crime type, as part of this initial decision-making process. Primarily, these crime types have a low-level threshold and include: criminal damage; theft; shoplifting; minor public order offences; and making off without payment. It was emphasised that no reports of stalking or domestic abuse are investigated by the IRC.

It was confirmed that approximately 15,000 crimes and incidents were passed to the IRC for investigation in the past twelve months. This equates to 12% of all reported crime by Sussex Police. It was also highlighted that nearly 11,000 of the 15,000 crimes and incidents passed to IRC (73%) were resolved without the need to deploy frontline officers to investigate. Resolution was defined as a range of different outcomes based on: the expectations of the victims; evidence available; and proportionality, and includes both criminal justice outcomes and out-of-court-disposals.

Historically, Sussex Police had a Force Appointment Scheduling Unit (FASU) to make prearranged appointments with victims of crime. The unpredictable nature of policing often resulted in these appointments having to be cancelled or rescheduled because of conflicting policing priorities, resulting in the provision of a detrimental service to victims. The IRC has transformed this approach and is having a significant impact on the number of prearranged appointments that are required each year.

JT confirmed that a Detective Inspector and Detective Sergeant monitor and oversee all of the crimes and incidents that are received by the IRC, and pass these to accredited investigators for resolution, as appropriate. More than 90% of all crimes and incidents referred to the IRC are resolved and do not require any further deployment by frontline officers. It was also emphasised that, on occasions, the IRC will be unable to investigate or resolve some crimes and incidents and that these will either be referred to the most appropriate team for deployment and face-to-face contact or filed at source, with no further action taken.

The Chief Superintendent confirmed that the crimes and incidents investigated by the IRC are monitored through a monthly Force Crime Meeting. An increase in the number of crimes and incidents that are resolved at source and do not require any further deployment by frontline officers is one measure of success. Other success factors include: consistent contact and communication with victims and witnesses; increased levels of intelligence received from non-crime reports, and satisfaction levels recorded at over 90% for having concerns taken seriously, being dealt with sympathetically, and having the opportunity to mention anything relevant to the investigation. It was also reported that a third of all respondents who had a negative opinion of Sussex Police prior to making contact with the IRC, had an improved opinion about the Force following this interaction.

RURAL CRIME

I remain strongly committed towards ensuring that rural crimes are taken as seriously as urban crimes in Sussex.

A. When is Sussex Police due to launch its Rural Crime Strategy and what can residents expect to see now that is different from the previous policing response as a direct result of the Strategy?

B. There is no dedicated rural crime team in Sussex, compared to the specialist rural crime officers present in neighbouring police force areas. What provisions are you making to address rural crime issues in Sussex?

C. The National Rural Crime Network recently published the results from the 2018 National Rural Crime Survey. It was recommended that Chief Constables need to change the policing of rural communities, and that police and partner organisations need to do more to understand rural crime and its impact. What is your overall reaction to the findings of the survey?

*GY explained that the **Sussex Police Rural Crime Strategy** (launched today) outlines how the Force will incorporate rural crime and protecting rural communities into the wider approach to deliver policing priorities. The Strategy has been developed by Superintendent Emma Brice and Police Sergeant Tom Carter, working closely with the National Farmers' Union and the Country Land & Business Association.*

The Chief Constable recognised that whilst some things will change as a direct result of the Strategy, other elements and approaches will remain unchanged. The response capability to the rural areas remains uncompromised, although it was acknowledged that the road network throughout Sussex makes this a particular challenge.

The Strategy recognises both the specific crime types which can affect rural communities as well as the unique vulnerabilities of those who live and work in rural areas. It is an enhanced understanding of both rural-specific crimes and the scale and impact that these crimes can have that is anticipated to improve for local residents as a direct result of the Strategy.

The Chief Constable confirmed that no dedicated rural crime team exists in Sussex; in comparison to the specialist rural crime officers present in neighbouring police force areas (Surrey, Hampshire and Kent). GY explained that a dedicated rural crime team in Sussex would be impractical owing to the geographic make-up of Sussex.

It was, however, highlighted that Police Sergeant Carter has developed a 'Rural Crime Network' of 40 police officers and staff in Sussex, comprising of individuals from across the organisation, to provide extra awareness around what rural crime means and the impact it can have. The Force has also made a commitment to work towards having a rural crime specialist on duty 24/7 who is available to respond to any questions or concerns received.

Sussex Police is now able mark any initial reports received as rural crimes, before each of these reports is reviewed by Police Sergeant Carter to ensure that nothing is missed. In addition, the new intake of 70 police officers (see Police Officer Recruitment on page 1) will each be given three hours of specific and practical rural and wildlife crime training from local farmers during their initial 16 weeks training.

The Chief Constable also confirmed that the Force is looking to modernise its approach to rural policing, through a more "imaginative" use of mobile Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (drone) technology, including heightened response and prevention capabilities.

GY reacted positively to the results from the 2018 National Rural Crime Survey and the recommendations contained within. The revised approach to changing the policing of rural communities is set out in the Rural Crime Strategy and includes a renewed commitment to do more to understand rural crime and its impact.

The findings from the survey also highlighted that "more must be done to engage and communicate with farmers and specific rural businesses who are the lifeblood of our rural economy." The Chief Constable confirmed that he is looking into: providing improved mechanisms to enable timely and convenient contact with the police when there is no longer any immediate threat, risk or harm; enabling rural communities to use a dedicated DISC system to share information and intelligence with both Sussex Police and each other (similar to the approach employed by the Business Crime Reduction Partnerships in Sussex); and providing all police officers with access to a new social media platform on their MDTs to assist them in this area.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT – SUSSEX POLICE TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY 2018/22

The Sussex Police 2018/22 Transformation Strategy sets out how the Force will use the additional investment in local policing to ensure that local residents and those visiting Sussex can feel safe at home, in public spaces, at night time, and on the roads.

A. How have you involved and engaged with the public and other stakeholders the rollout of the Transformation Strategy 2018/22 so far?

B. How will you measure and maintain public confidence following the rollout of the Transformation Strategy?

C. How is the Force using social media platforms to provide information and reassurance to members of the public?

*GY confirmed that a comprehensive communications strategy exists around the **Sussex Police 2018/22 Transformation Strategy** which addresses each of the three strands contained within it: keep communities safe and feeling safe; identify and protect vulnerable people; and prevent and respond to harm.*

This engagement includes promoting stories that relate to each of the strands in order to "bring it to life" for members of the public and other stakeholders. Sussex Police have been supported in this work by BBC Radio Sussex who ran a number of parallel features as part of their 50th anniversary celebrations. The Strategy has also been presented to senior leaders across the organisation, including Divisional and District Commanders, and the Chairs of each of the Parish Councils in East and West Sussex.

A new shared intranet between Sussex and Surrey Police has recently been launched to keep all police officers and staff updated with how the Force is using the additional investment to strengthen local policing. This has included the use of 'blogs' by senior officers and 'live' question and answer sessions. The Chief Constable and the Deputy Chief Constable are also planning to meet with every Police Sergeant and Inspector throughout the organisation between now and the end of December 2018.

Sussex Police will use a 'basket of measures' to understand better public confidence following the rollout of the Strategy. These measures and indicators will be monitored through the monthly Chief Officer Meetings to inform any future decisions taken in respect of the Strategy.

The Chief Constable highlighted that the Force has previously been recognised as one of the better performing police force areas for their use of social media platforms. Sussex Police has a good understanding of how each of these platforms works and has an estimated social media reach of 1.5m users a day.

It was reported that a significant amount of information and reassurance is provided to members of the public through Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat and other social media platforms in respect of 'live' investigations, missing people, wanted individuals, and to target messages to specific communities. It was recognised that the Force could still do more to engage with the public through social media, including the monitoring of locally created pages and platforms online.

ROAD POLICING UNIT

I remain fully supportive of the work carried out by Sussex Police and the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP) to tackle and prevent the main causes of death and serious injuries on the county's roads.

A. I know that the number of individuals killed or seriously injured (KSI) on the roads of Sussex is relatively stable at approximately 1,000 a year. I am, however, concerned to note that the number of deaths on the roads of Sussex has increased in 2016 and 2017 and is forecast to increase again in 2018. Does the Road Policing Unit (RPU) have sufficient resources to respond to this demand and the increased number of road death investigations?

B. What is the establishment and strength of the RPU in Sussex?

C. How is the overall effectiveness of the RPU monitored and reviewed?

D. What is the Force doing to reduce the number of KSIs in Sussex?

E. How many police officers in the RPU have access to Tasers?

F. In respect of Taser training, how many officers are trained on each course, and what percentage of those officers booked onto each course actually attend and complete the course?

JT confirmed that the RPU is a collaborated policing response between Sussex and Surrey Police, with a shared Operations Command.

Reassurance was provided that the RPU has sufficient resources to respond to this demand and the increased number of road death investigations. The 27 fatalities and 690 KSIs recorded across 2018 to date are forecast to increase to approximately 35 fatalities and 880 KSIs by the end of the year. It was emphasised that whilst the estimation of both fatalities and KSIs is still too high, this would represent a reduction in the total numbers recorded in both 2016 and 2017.

The RPU currently has 41 Forensic Collision Investigators in place across both police force areas. These numbers have reduced over the past four years in line with the savings plans in place for Sussex and Surrey Police and means that both forces have to rely on the collaborative arrangements that exist between them because each has fewer specialist RPU officers available than they did previously.

The RPU in Sussex has an establishment of 1 Inspector, 10 Police Sergeants and 75 Police Constables. It was emphasised that the RPU is currently 12 posts under this establishment and that whilst the Force has plans to recruit into these positions, this is determined by other priority areas and demand identified across the Force. This process is managed through the Postings and Establishment Control Group that is chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable.

GY reiterated that making our roads safer in Sussex is a multi-agency responsibility that is carried out through three E's: Engineering, Education and Enforcement.

Engineering – it remains a local authority and highways responsibility to build and maintain roads that are as safe as possible;

Education – the emergency services continue to work proactively to deliver a series of campaigns and initiatives to raise awareness and educate motorists regarding road safety; and

Enforcement – this remains a police-led responsibility but enforcement alone does not provide a sustainable solution. A combination of engineering, education and enforcement is essential to change driver attitudes and behaviours and ensure long-term improvements to road safety.

JT confirmed that the teams within Operations Command are in the process of being merged to improve resilience in this area, similar to the approaches taken for both Specialist Crime and Major Crime previously. It was acknowledged that the uncertainty of this change programme is having a detrimental impact on police officer retention in the RPU. The Force is trying to ease some of this uncertainty through enhanced communication and engagement with all staff affected by these changes.

The Chief Superintendent confirmed that Sussex Police and the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership continue to prioritise the 'fatal four' areas of risk in line with the other police force areas in England and Wales. These are: excessive or inappropriate speed; driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs; driver distractions (such as using mobile devices); and not wearing a seat belt.

The RPU monitor their performance and effectiveness through a task and coordination process. This includes looking at demand on a daily basis to plan, target and deploy police resources most effectively. Pre-planned enforcement operations are also run regularly to tackle each of the four strands, in partnership with Prevention teams.

GY confirmed that the uplift of 52 more Armed Response Officers (AROs) and three new specialist vehicles across Surrey and Sussex is nearly complete following the additional funding raised by the precept increase in 2017/18. The AROs are tasked to proactively support local policing teams, including the RPU, when they are not deployed elsewhere or in training.

It was highlighted that police officers in the Response teams on each of the policing divisions were asked whether they wanted to be trained in the use of Tasers. A policy decision was taken to not include officers from the RPU in the original rollout of Tasers, although 12 officers are now accredited in the use of. It was also emphasised that whilst seven officers are enrolled on each Taser training course, generally only six officers are able to attend because of sickness, court commitments and other operational priorities.