

PERFORMANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY MEETING

DATE: 16 November 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)
Assistant Chief Constable – Steve Barry (SB)
Assistant Chief Constable – Nick May (NM)
Digital Content Officer – Sammi Carwardine
Head of Performance – Graham Kane (minutes)

POLICING OF THE BONFIRE CELEBRATIONS

The UK's biggest bonfire night celebrations took place in Lewes on November 2018. Operation Peel was the Sussex Police response to supporting the bonfire societies to ensure public safety.

A. How have you reflected on the event?

B. Can you tell me how many arrests were made and how many individuals were treated for injuries?

On Monday, 5 November 2018, Sussex Police and partner agencies worked throughout the evening to ensure that the Lewes Bonfire celebrations were enjoyed by all those who attended. It was reported that between 25,000 and 30,000 people packed into the town centre to watch over 30 processions, before dispersing to watch firework displays in and around Lewes.

Assistant Chief Constable Barry confirmed that Sussex Police made 12 arrests over the course of the evening for a number of different offences including: throwing fireworks, possession of cannabis, public disorder and assault. It was also emphasised that South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAmb) and St. John Ambulance treated around 70 people for minor injuries.

The success of the celebrations was attributed to well-rehearsed and extensive multi-agency planning and partnership working to ensure that public safety was prioritised. These partners included: Sussex Police, bonfire societies, Lewes District Council, East Sussex County Council, East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (ESFRS), SECAmb, British Transport Police and Southern Rail.

SB highlighted that multi-agency and Force-led debriefs are scheduled to take place shortly before the planning for the policing of the bonfire night celebrations in 2019 will commence.

USE OF THE 'THRIVE' DECISION-MAKING MODEL

Sussex Police use the Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation, Vulnerability and Engagement (THRIVE) decision-making model to dispatch police officers based on the information that is made available at the point of contact.

A. How is THRIVE used by Sussex Police?

B. Is THRIVE used as a way of reducing demand?

C. How does the Force scrutinise the calls received by the Force Contact Command and Control Centre to ensure that THRIVE is being used appropriately?

D. The recent 'Channel 4 Dispatches' highlighted that Sussex Police is "screening out" 50% of all reported burglaries. What does this mean?

NM confirmed that THRIVE is the supporting acronym that assists managers and staff in the Force Contact Command and Control Centre to assess reports received by Sussex Police. THRIVE is used to determine the most appropriate police officers, staff and department to respond to crimes and incidents, in the interests of an effective investigation and meeting the needs of the victims.

THRIVE is not unique to Sussex and is used by other police forces in England and Wales. The decision-making model is embedded into processes and procedures in Sussex, as confirmed by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS), and assists the Force to prioritise the level of response and resources required following initial contact, as follows:

Threat: *What is the overall threat posed by the report, not only to the victim, but to the immediate family, children, community and location?*

Harm: *What is the impact of the threat? Consider not just the victim or witnesses, but also the community impact.*

Risk: *What risks are obvious or yet to be determined? What resources and specialist assets are needed to safeguard the victim or community?*

Investigation: *What is the legality, necessity, proportionality in relation to the offence being reported?*

Vulnerability: *What are individual or community vulnerabilities? Identify how police and partners best safeguard against harm.*

Engagement: *What is the safest means of engagement for the victim and what is the most effective means?*

It is acknowledged that staff turnover in the Force Contact Command and Control Centre is high. This highlights the importance of training new staff in the use of THRIVE and monitoring the appropriate use of this system for a year through a probationary period, prior to individuals being signed-off to operate independently. The supervisors in the Control Centre also have a responsibility to scrutinise the calls received and ensure that staff are using THRIVE appropriately. A Quality and Customer Service team exists to provide another layer of scrutiny by 'dip-sampling' the use of THRIVE to assess and review the quality of the contact with the Force too. Additional investment in the Centre, through an increase to the police precept, has also enabled Sussex Police to introduce 'Triage Sergeants' to provide operational advice to members of staff in the Centre, using their extensive experience. The importance of using the decision-making model consistently and setting clear expectations to members of the public was emphasised.

SB confirmed that Sussex Police is not using THRIVE as a way of reducing or 'screening out' demand. Some context was provided that burglary offences were previously split into two categories: domestic burglary and non-domestic burglary. Domestic burglary covered residential premises, including attached buildings such as garages, and non-domestic burglary covered non-residential premises, including businesses and public buildings, as well as non-attached buildings within the grounds of a dwelling, such as sheds and detached garages.

From 1 April 2017, a new classification of police recorded burglary was introduced, dividing burglary offences into two categories: residential and business and community.

Residential burglary: *includes all buildings or parts of buildings that are within the boundary of, or form a part of, a dwelling and includes the dwelling itself, vacant dwellings, sheds, garages, outhouses, summer houses and any other structure that meets the definition of a building. It also includes other premises used for residential purposes such as houseboats, residential care homes and hostels; and*

Business and community burglary: *includes all buildings or parts of buildings that are used solely and exclusively for business purposes or are otherwise entirely outside the classification of residential burglary.*

Assistant Chief Constable Barry confirmed that Sussex Police respond to a minimum of 60% of all burglaries reported to them, including all residential burglaries. This provides the Force with opportunities to identify and gather evidence and to catch those responsible.

It was also emphasised that if the assessment of both the threat and harm is not sufficient to warrant a policing response, the Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) team may be sent to find, preserve and protect forensic evidence recovered from the scene. In addition, local policing teams will assess which recorded crimes require a further follow-up visit too.

OPERATION MAGPIE – BURGLARY CRIME PREVENTION CAMPAIGN

Sussex Police relaunched Operation Magpie, the autumn burglary prevention and awareness campaign, earlier this month at a time of the year when traditionally there is an increase in this particular crime type. The overall solved rate for all burglary crimes is currently at 7.2% (rolling year period to 6 November 2018) and I would like to take a closer look at this.

- A. What percentage of all residential burglaries reported to the Force receive a policing response?**
- B. How are decisions made about which burglary offences receive a response?**
- C. How is the Force looking to improve the solved crime rate for burglaries?**
- D. What new forensic techniques are being looked at to improve solved rates?**
- E. What initiatives are being carried out with partner agencies, including Trading Standards, to prevent and solve distraction burglaries?**
- F. What does the process look like for tracing stolen goods and reuniting them with their owners?**

SB reiterated the answer given in the 'Use of the THRIVE Decision-Making Model' section and confirmed that a minimum of 60% of all burglaries reported to the Force receive a policing response. Where appropriate, forensic evidence may be recovered by CSI teams or secondary visits carried out by local policing teams.

NM confirmed that the THRIVE decision-making model is used to determine the most appropriate response to crimes and incidents reported to Sussex Police. This includes prioritising the reports of burglaries with the greatest threat, harm and risk. If any opportunities for investigation are identified or concerns are raised about vulnerability, a policing response will always be prioritised.

It was recognised that whilst solved crime rates are important for developing trust and confidence in policing, the broadening definition of burglary offences has had a detrimental impact on the overall solved rate. KB asked whether the Force has considered separating the recorded number of residential burglaries to distinguish between those that take place in a dwelling and those that take place in a building outside of a dwelling, together with the solved crime rates for each. Assistant Chief Constable May agreed to look into the practicalities and proportionality of introducing this approach.

It was again emphasised that the risk of experiencing a burglary crime in Sussex continues to remain low. The Force is positioned fifth out of 43 police forces in England and Wales in terms of the risk per 1,000 population. Sussex Police is also top of their Most Similar Group (MSG) of eight police forces for the risk of burglary. The Force is positioned 19 out of 43 police forces in England and Wales (and third in their MSG) in terms of the solved rate for burglary dwelling.

NM recognised that distraction burglaries which prey on the elderly and vulnerable remain an ongoing concern for Sussex Police. The Force is currently working with Trading Standards, Neighbourhood Watch and local district and borough councils, to develop and expand the use of 'No Cold Calling Zones' (NCCZs). NCCZs are areas that residents have stated they do not wish to receive unsolicited visits to their homes (cold calls) from businesses.

Sussex Police also works with other partners, including the National Health Service (NHS), ESFRS and West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (WSFRS) to highlight the dangers of cold callers and distraction burglaries during other routine visits. Assistant Chief Constable May confirmed that Operation Signature, the Sussex Police response to criminals targeting elderly and vulnerable members of the community through scam letters, remains ongoing across each of the three policing divisions in Sussex. KB agreed to revisit the work of partners in this area at a future Performance & Accountability Meeting.

It was highlighted that Sussex Police use a range of physical locations and digital platforms to trace stolen goods. This includes visits to second-hand stores, Shopwatch (a partnership scheme where retailers unify as an independent group to pre-empt theft in retail premises) and the promotion of Immobilise (the national property register – www.immobilise.com). If stolen goods are traceable, it was emphasised that the Force will make a considerable effort to ensure that these are reunited with their rightful owners.

ACTION: KB would like to know whether the Force has considered separating the recorded number of residential burglaries to distinguish between those that take place in a dwelling and those that take place in a building outside of a dwelling, together with the solved crime rates for each.

MODERN SLAVERY

The awareness and support of local communities in tackling and preventing serious and organised crime and terrorism is essential.

A. What are the challenges for Sussex Police in terms of understanding better modern slavery?

B. How has the implementation of the Government's Serious and Organised Crime Strategy supported the Force in this work?

C. What support and involvement has been received from local partners?

D. The *Sussex Police Operational Delivery Plan 2018/19* states that "the lack of community intelligence on so-called honour-based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation continues to mean we (Sussex Police) do not have a clear understanding of the extent of these crimes, requiring and receiving continuous attention." How is the community engagement and information sharing between agencies for this specialist area being developed by the Force?

*NM explained that the **Modern Day Slavery Act 2015** provides law enforcement agencies with tools to tackle modern slavery, ensure perpetrators receive suitably severe punishments for these crimes and enhances the support and protection for victims.*

The challenges for Sussex Police are the same as the challenges for all police force areas in England and Wales in terms of understanding better modern slavery and the associated areas of criminality within. The importance of educating and training police officers and staff in this relatively new legislation was highlighted. The Force is working hard to embed this through internal messaging and training to all existing officers and staff to assist them in their understanding and recognition of what these offences are and how to identify them. This is also now included in the classroom-based training that all new police officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) receive. The Force acknowledges that further work is required to educate members of the public and partners about this element of serious organised crime.

It was emphasised that the Serious and Organised Crime Strategy provides a systematic approach to connect the national work in this area with the regional and local work to ensure a consistency of approach, including working towards a national improvement plan and structure.

The Modern Slavery Co-ordinator, funded by the Police & Crime Commissioner, coordinates partnership activity in this area to ensure that all statutory responsibilities are discharged and that a range of learning, training, development and awareness-raising activities are implemented. This post also provides a reference point for partners to utilise and contact to support the Force in this work. The Modern Slavery Co-ordinator reports into Head of Specialist Crime Command.

A Sussex and Surrey Tactical Command meeting, chaired by Assistant Chief Constable Jeremy Burton, takes place on a monthly basis to scrutinise all active operations, assess information and intelligence received and prioritise resources to ensure appropriate investigations. Sussex Police is able to refer the most serious offences directly to the National Crime Agency for investigation.

It was also recognised that whilst Sussex Police has a role to play in respect of modern slavery, this remains a collective responsibility for all partners to tackle. A Pan-Sussex Modern Slavery Network has been established and brings together all of the organisations that are committed to tackling modern slavery, prosecuting perpetrators and assisting victims. East Sussex County Council, West Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove City Council, ESFRS, WSFRS, NHS, SECamb, Gang Masters, Labour Abuse Authority, Immigration Enforcement, Office of the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner and Sussex Police are each represented within the Network.

It is recognised that each of the offences within modern slavery remain under-reported and that it remains a challenge for the Force to maintain community engagement with members of the public in these areas in order to empower victims to report these crimes. Assistant Chief Constable May reiterated that community engagement and information sharing between agencies for this specialist area continues to remain a Sussex Police priority in 2018/19.

HOME OFFICE – ARREST FIGURES FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

The Home Office recently published figures which confirmed that the police arrested 62,501 fewer people in England and Wales across 2017/18, in comparison to the previous year, despite a 13% increase in recorded crime. Sussex demonstrated a 4% reduction, with 770 fewer arrests made, over the same period despite crime increasing by 8%.

A. What do you attribute the reduction in arrests to in Sussex?

NM explained that there have been year-on-year reductions in the number of arrests made in England and Wales since 2007/8. This trend has been replicated locally with a 55% reduction in the number of arrests made in Sussex since 2010/11. In particular, the number of arrests has reduced from 37,692 in 2010/11 to 16,736 in 2017/18.

In terms of the other police force areas in the South East region, it was highlighted that Kent Police and Thames Valley Police had demonstrated reductions in the number of arrests made in 2017/18 by 4% and 7%, respectively. Surrey Police increased the number of arrests made by 1% but Hampshire Constabulary arrested 22% more people in comparison to the previous year. This was the second greatest increase throughout England and Wales, behind only Cambridgeshire Constabulary (+55%).

The reduction in arrests in Sussex was attributed to a greater use of voluntary attendance suites and the availability of out-of-court disposals. Assistant Chief Constable May also confirmed that an arrest is only one option available to the police and that it is not always the most appropriate power and procedure to progress an investigation. It was emphasised that voluntary attendance suites, with improved recording capabilities, can actually be more efficient and effective than an arrest.

Part of the year-on-year reductions in the number of arrests made in Sussex were also attributed to the Force doing all it can to reduce the criminalisation of children and young people. It is recognised that whilst the Force has a role to play in terms of enforcement, an arrest should be the last resort after a range of other practical alternatives are considered first. The importance of understanding that "children should be treated as children first" and the promotion of child-centred policing were highlighted too.

HOME AFFAIRS SELECT COMMITTEE: POLICING FOR THE FUTURE

Last month, the *Home Affairs Select Committee* published a *Policing for the Future* report which stated that police forces in England and Wales are "struggling to cope" amid falling staff numbers and rising crime.

A. The report confirmed that "without local engagement, policing is at risk of becoming irrelevant to most people in the context of low rates of investigation for many crimes." How do you respond to this statement?

SB began by welcoming the report and confirmation from the inquiry that the changing complexities and increases in recorded crime, together with the police funding issues and the additional safeguarding responsibilities that police force areas have taken on, have created massive challenges for Sussex Police and the wider police service.

Assistant Chief Constable Barry recognised the significance of the language used in this report and highlighted one paragraph, in particular: "Without additional funding for policing, we have no doubt that there will be dire consequences for public safety, criminal justice, community cohesion and public confidence." The report strongly recommended that police funding was prioritised in the Autumn Budget. This was not the case and SB hoped for an improvement in police funding as part of the next Comprehensive Spending Review.

The report also stated that a greater focus should be made on the reallocation of responsibilities and capabilities at a local, regional and national level to improve the processes, procedures and traction in place in this area. The establishment of both a National Policing Council, chaired by the Home Secretary, and a National Policing Assembly, comprising of all Police & Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables, were two ideas recommended in the report.

SB confirmed that the Force is well placed to respond to the challenges set out in the report through the continued delivery of the Sussex Police Transformation Strategy 2018/22. This includes tangible investment in local policing, refinement of the public contact model, and working to make best use of all available resources.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT – BREACH OF FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

The Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) has reported that Sussex Police has breached the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000 on at least three occasions in recent months.

A. How is the Force planning to respond to these decisions?

B. My office continues to receive concerns from members of the public regarding delays in the processing of requests for information under the terms of the FOI Act. Can you provide me with an update in respect of these delays?

SB recognised that Sussex Police has a duty to provide certain information to members of the public and reiterated that the Force is keen to comply with both the legislation and any decision notices issued by the ICO.

Assistant Chief Constable Barry explained that three decision notices had been issued to Sussex Police by the ICO in recent months. Assurances were provided to KB that each of these breaches has now been rectified.

The first related to information requested in respect of a football match between Brighton & Hove Albion and Crystal Palace. The initial assessment made by the Information Management Team within Sussex Police established that releasing all of the information requested would be detrimental to the partnership working that exists between the Force and the football club and, as a consequence, some of the information was withheld. After reviewing the information held, discussing this with senior managers within the football club and the period of time that had elapsed since the game, a decision was taken that the partnership working between both parties would not be compromised and all of the information has subsequently been provided.

The second notice related to a request for statistics about roadside breath tests for suspected drink-driving and the Love Supreme Jazz Festival. This was acknowledged to have been an administrative error and the information requested has since been provided in full, together with an apology to the requestor.

The third notice requested statistical information about arrested persons who have been released whilst under investigation and was received via a third-party website. Sussex Police sent a response to this website but this was not received by the requestor. This position was rectified by sending a copy of the information requested, after the requestor’s personal email address was obtained.

SB apologised for the delays that members of the public had received previously in the processing of requests for information under the FOI Act. Assistant Chief Constable Barry confirmed that the Information Management Team is now up to establishment and that a recovery plan has been implemented to reduce the backlog of outstanding requests.

It was emphasised that the Force is now responding to 89% of FOI requests within the statutory deadline of 20 working days. The national average for responding to these requests is 85% and means that Sussex Police now compares favourably to other police force areas in this respect.

HMICFRS – VALUE FOR MONEY PROFILE 2018

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) recently published the *Value for Money Profile 2018* which outlines how each of the police forces in England and Wales are providing value for money across their service areas.

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

SB welcomed the HMICFRS report and the information contained within which highlighted that Sussex Police is delivering good value for money. This achievement was further emphasised by the Force having the fourth lowest net revenue expenditure per population at £152.78, compared to £159.11 for the MSG and £174.50 for all of the police force areas in England and Wales.

This translates to a comparably lower spend in the areas of local policing (third lowest spend), intelligence (fourth lowest) and investigations (seventh lowest). The data also demonstrated some of the investment that has recently been made, including a 15% increase in public protection spending from 2017, as part of the precept increase of £5 in 2017/18. In addition, it was emphasised that Sussex and Surrey Police are both getting good value for money from their collaborative activity, significantly improving the resilience of both forces.

*It was highlighted that the information made available in the report can vary from police-force-area-to-police-force-area. However, it does provide a good benchmarking opportunity for continuing to compare, contrast and review the demand, risk and skill gaps. The development of an annual **Force Management Statement** has provided the Force with another way to identify the risks, demands and plans in place to resource these.*

It was highlighted that Sussex Police has the fourth lowest workforce at 2.69 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) per 1,000 population, in comparison to 2.87 FTE for the MSG, and 3.17 FTE nationally, and the seventh lowest number of police officers at 1.51 FTE per 1,000 population, 1.58 FTE for the MSG, and 1.83 FTE for England and Wales. The Commissioner confirmed that these were two of the reasons for lobbying central government for additional resources. KB is also currently carrying out a survey with the residents of Sussex regarding the proposals for the police funding contribution in 2019/20 – further information can be viewed [here](#).

*IMcC concluded by highlighting that Sussex Police has made significant savings of more than £90million since 2010, and explained that further information about Force spending is available in the **Operational Delivery Plan 2018/19**. The Police & Crime Commissioner's **Medium Term Financial Strategy** is currently in the process of being revised – this will identify the maximum level of resources available that can be provided locally.*

In addition, the provisional local government finance settlement is due in early December 2018, including confirmation whether any additional funding will be made available for police forces.