

PERFORMANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY MEETING

DATE: 14 December 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)
Deputy Chief Constable – Jo Shiner (JS)
Digital Content Officer – Sammi Carwardine
Head of Performance – Graham Kane (minutes)

POLICE GRANT SETTLEMENT 2019/20

The police grant settlement for 2019/20 was announced yesterday.

A. What was your overall reaction to this announcement?

GY welcomed the police grant settlement in recognition of the increasing demand and expectations that are and continue to be placed on the police service.

As part of the settlement, it was announced that up to £509 million would be added to police funding from additional Council Tax funding by enabling Police & Crime Commissioners to increase the policing precept by up to £24 for a Band D equivalent property. This decision was acknowledged as being particularly significant for Sussex Police because the Force currently has the fifth lowest tax base in England and Wales.

The additional funding raised through the increase in the policing precept in 2018/19 demonstrates that investment is being made by the Force. It was highlighted that further investment is still required and the Chief Constable explained that plans are currently being developed by the Deputy Chief Constable and other senior leaders in respect of the areas any additional investment should be made in.

Initial thoughts included: making local policing more robust and engaging; improving public contact; modernising policing in response to increasing demand and complexity; and keeping up to date with the scale of change around technology, both internally and externally. The Chief Constable also made a firm commitment that "any money raised locally, will be spent locally".

*KB confirmed that she has not made any decision about the police precept for 2019/20 and has launched a **public consultation** to find out if local taxpayers would be prepared to pay more to support policing in Sussex.*

The consultation will remain open until Friday, 4 January 2019. Once it has closed, the Commissioner is duty-bound to inform the Sussex Police & Crime Panel of her considerations. This decision will be reviewed by the Panel at their meeting on 1 February 2019.

OPERATION DRAGONFLY – CHRISTMAS DRINK-AND-DRUG-DRIVE CAMPAIGN 2018

'Operation Dragonfly', the dedicated Sussex Police drink-and-drug-drive campaign, began on 1 December 2018 and will run across the month in the lead up to Christmas and New Year celebrations.

A. How has the campaign progressed to date?

B. Drink-and-drug-driving is regarded as one of the 'fatal four' by the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP). What is the SSRP doing to support this latest campaign?

C. How can members of the public with specific concerns about individuals they suspect of drink-or-drug-driving report these to Sussex Police?

GY reminded viewers that Operation Dragonfly is part of rolling programme of campaigns that are implemented by the Force throughout the calendar year to tackle drink-and-drug-driving in Sussex. The campaign began on Saturday, 1 December 2018 and will run until Tuesday, 1 January 2019, inclusive.

Sussex Police is using a combination of high-visibility operational policing to carry out vehicle stops and checks, during the evenings and early in the mornings, together with a more targeted approach, using unmarked police cars, based on intelligence received from reports made to Operation Crackdown, in an attempt to stop drink-and-drug-driving in Sussex.

It was highlighted that this year's campaign has started well and that between 1 and 13 December 2018, Sussex Police has completed more than 200 breath or drug-wipe tests and arrested 64 individuals after they provided positive samples (39 for drink-driving and 25 for drug-driving). It was emphasised that this was 16 fewer than the 80 individuals arrested during the same period in last year's campaign, however, this was not thought to be statistically significant. It was also emphasised that failing or refusing to provide a sample or to take a test is regarded as a complete offence in itself. A total of 9 individuals have done this so far across the campaign and the consequences of doing so are similar to the full offence.

Members of the public with specific concerns about individuals they suspect of drink-or-drug-driving are asked to report these to Sussex Police by text to 65999, through Operation Crackdown (www.operationcrackdown.co.uk), by email to contact.centre@sussex.pnn.police.uk or via the Sussex Police website (www.sussex.police.uk). Individuals can also contact the independent charity Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111. If it is known that someone is drink-or-drug-driving, members of the public should call 999 immediately.

The SSRP is supporting the work of the Road Policing Unit (RPU) as part of Operation Dragonfly. This valuable resource provides the Force with a proactive capability to educate individuals on the dangers of drink-and-drug-driving. Their message is simple: "Drink OR Drive – but do not do both". It was also highlighted that a comprehensive and consistent 'blue light service' approach to tackling drink-and-drug-driving exists in Sussex with support from East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service, West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service and the South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAmb).

In addition, extra resilience is provided in this area by the Armed Response Vehicles who are tasked to proactively support the RPU and target those using the roads illegally when they are not being deployed or in training. The Armed Response Officers (AROs) have been trained to carry out vehicle stops, checks and testing safely and appropriately.

The Chief Constable concluded by confirming that road safety would be one of the areas where any additional funds raised by an increase in the policing precept in 2019/20 would be used.

OPERATION RIBBON – DOMESTIC ABUSE CAMPAIGN 2018

'Operation Ribbon', the dedicated Sussex Police response to reports of domestic abuse over the Christmas and New Year period commenced yesterday (13 December 2018) and will run until 31 December 2018.

- A. What are the aims and objectives of Operation Ribbon this year?**
- B. How will the impact and overall effectiveness of Operation Ribbon be measured?**
- C. How will technology, including body worn video, support this year's campaign?**
- D. Sussex is one of 25 police force areas to have adopted Operation Encompass since it was launched in 2011. This initiative supports children and young people exposed to domestic abuse by reporting this to schools before the start of the next school day. How is this referral process working in Sussex?**
- E. What does success look like for Operation Encompass?**

GY confirmed that Operation Ribbon 2018 will build on the aims and objectives of last year's campaign as well as introducing some new elements. This campaign also provides the Force with an opportunity to shine a spotlight on the work that is carried out in this area throughout the rest of the calendar year and to provide a safe space for individuals suffering from domestic abuse to get the support they require from the police.

The campaign aims to raise the profile and awareness of domestic abuse, including a dedicated capability to respond to any such reports throughout the period. It was again emphasised that Sussex Police has delivered Domestic Abuse Matters training to between 2,500 and 3,000 police officers and staff to positively shift any preconceived ideas and/or perceptions in this area. This training has contributed to an improved level of knowledge and understanding across the Force and has reduced the need to have specialist individuals in position to respond, as in previous campaigns.

The Chief Constable recognised that Christmas and New Year continues to remain a highly emotive time of the year. This is the seventh consecutive year that Sussex Police has run Operation Ribbon for now because, historically, the number of reported domestic abuse crimes increases over this period.

The impact and overall effectiveness of Operation Ribbon will be measured by the anticipated increase in the levels of domestic abuse reports made to Sussex Police. This will be attributed to an improvement in public trust and confidence to report these crimes to the police. Understanding exactly how far reaching the communications around the campaign have been, in terms of spreading the message, will be another measure of its effectiveness. Sussex Police will use the campaign to promote a positive message to members of the public about the support and services that are available.

It was also emphasised that success in this area is not always a criminal justice solution because this may not be the most appropriate outcome for a victim. It is important to ensure that as many partners and third-party organisations are involved in the process to assist individuals in the most appropriate manner.

GY confirmed that wearing body worn video is mandatory requirement for all officers responding to reports of domestic abuse. This is a process that is dip-checked by supervisors to ensure that it is being adhered to. The use of this technology is important because it accurately captures the level of tension in place at the time of police attendance. This can provide strong and critical evidence for court hearings without the need to put a victim through a traumatic process, potentially sometime after the abuse may have taken place. Body worn video is also important where children are exposed to domestic abuse, to assess their safety and associated behaviours.

Operation Encompass directly connects the police with schools to secure better outcomes for children who are subject or witness to police-attended incidents of domestic abuse. This rapid provision of support within the school environment means children are better safeguarded against the short, medium and long-term effects of domestic abuse

The Chief Constable confirmed that Operation Encompass is now available in 90% of schools in West Sussex and has been in place for 12 months now. This initiative went 'live' in Hastings at the beginning of December 2018, and the rest of East Sussex will follow shortly. Brighton & Hove is expected to adopt this initiative next month too. The Force is aiming for 100% coverage of schools in Sussex, including all primary and secondary schools, regardless of whether or not they are state or private schools.

It was highlighted that Sussex Police follow up on any emails that are sent to the schools as part of Operation Encompass to ensure that the children are attending in a timely manner, the information is being circulated to the right individuals and that the systems and processes are working. It was emphasised that this is a multi-agency partnership-based approach that requires each of the schools to engage with and respond to any referrals received.

It was emphasised that **Adverse Child Experiences** (ACEs) can harm children's developing brains and result in changes to how they respond to stress that have been shown to have an effect decades later. ACEs can be responsible for causing many chronic diseases, most mental illnesses, and are thought to be at the root of most violence. GY explained that Operation Encompass cannot prevent what has already happened to or been witnessed by children but it does aim to mitigate against the experiences that children have had in respect of domestic abuse.

The Chief Constable concluded by stating that it is the role of the police to provide lawful and proportionate data sharing to schools regarding the children they are responsible for educating. This involves ensuring that safeguarding is delivered to the most appropriate individuals in the most appropriate manner.

HMICFRS – NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION INSPECTION

Last month, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published the findings from their inspection of child protection services in Sussex. Inspectors were impressed by the commitment of senior leaders to improve the service provided to all children but warned that the Force had more work to do.

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

B. The report highlighted that whilst there is "strong evidence" that the Force manages the risks to children and meets the ongoing increase in demand for child protection, "there are still problems in the Safeguarding Investigation Units in relation to workloads, resourcing and inconsistency" (page 4). Do you acknowledge and understand the concerns raised by HMICFRS?

C. HMI Zoë Billingham also raised concerns about "officers taking shortcuts to close some cases as quickly as possible in the face of heavy workloads". How do you respond to this statement?

D. The inspection report made 8 recommendations for Sussex Police: two were to be undertaken immediately; four within three months; and two within six months. What plans are in place to ensure that each of these recommendations is progressed within the prescribed timescales (pages 41 and 42)?

JS confirmed that this is the first time HMICFRS has inspected Sussex Police's child protection provision. It was emphasised that the Force should celebrate both the positive leadership demonstrated in the [report](#) and the strong commitment shown by the Force to improve the policing service provided to children in Sussex.

It was recognised that the whole Force needs to understand the report and that it is not just a responsibility for those who work in this specialist area. This is because all frontline police officers and staff need to recognise when there is a risk to a child, where there could be a risk, and what to do about it when any reports are received. A Vulnerability Board, chaired by Assistant Chief Constable Nick May, provides the strategic governance for Sussex Police in this area and ensures that any recommendations made by HMICFRS are progressed by the Force.

The Deputy Chief Constable acknowledged that there has been a significant increase in the demand for officers in the Safeguarding Investigation Units (SIUs). In particular, it was reported that there had been a 27% increase in the number of complex cases being investigated by the SIUs, compared to last year. This equates to an additional 800 cases per month. JS confirmed that increased resources have been made available in Brighton & Hove and Crawley, including looking at the number of detectives in each of the SIUs, the individual skill sets of these individuals, and the number of cases they are each responsible for.

It was recognised that Sussex Police need to continue to invest in this area of policing because it is anticipated that demand will continue to increase moving forward, including further reports of historical offences. It was also emphasised that there is a national shortage of accredited detectives and that the Force is working hard to increase the numbers available in each of the SIUs. It was acknowledged that, whilst improvements have been made to police officer and staff morale in the SIUs and reductions in the number of cases held by individual officers, more work still needs to be done in this area.

The Deputy Chief Constable responded to the statement made by HMI Billingham by explaining that the Force needs to react proportionately to all referrals made to Sussex Police. This is because the police are not always the primary agency to respond and a partnership-based approach is required to ensure that the best possible outcome is realised for the child, balancing the needs for safeguarding and protection with a criminal investigation.

As a result of this approach, some of the referrals need to be assessed very quickly and proportionately with the other partners, including reasoned judgments that these agencies are sometimes better placed to provide a more effective response to the child than the Force is, taking all of the circumstances into account.

JS explained that Sussex Police is progressing well with each of the 8 recommendations made by HMICFRS and that a lot of energy, commitment and activity has been put into improving this important area for the Force. It was emphasised that the two recommendations that were to be undertaken immediately, together with the four recommendations within three months, have each been progressed by Sussex Police.

Each of these recommendations is subject to a Tactical Delivery Plan that is reviewed and held to account through the Vulnerability Board. The two outstanding recommendations from the report require technological improvements to be made to systems and processes by the Force before they can be shown as completed. HMICFRS has confirmed that it will revisit the Force within the next six months to assess how it is progressing with the recommendations.

KB concluded by explaining that she felt "very reassured" with the responses provided by the Deputy Chief Constable.

HMICFRS – POLICING AND MENTAL HEALTH: PICKING UP THE PIECES

Last month, HMICFRS published their 'Policing and Mental Health: Picking up the Pieces' report which states that whilst the police service is doing a good job in difficult circumstances, there are concerns over whether the police should be involved in responding to mental health problems at the current level.

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

B. Do you know what proportion of Sussex Police time is spent responding to individuals with mental health?

C. I was particularly pleased the report commended the Force for being equipped to identify people with mental health problems at first contact (page 26) and for offering an effective street triage service (page 45). How will the Force continue to build on this identified best practice?

D. The report highlighted that the quality of mental health training is "inconsistent" with forces "relying too much on e-learning". What training has the Force invested in to support officers and staff to identify and respond to people with mental health problems (page 20)?

E. The report made FIVE recommendations, of which three specifically relate to the police service. How will you ensure that each of these recommendations is completed (pages 21 to 25)?

*GY explained that Sussex Police has worked really hard with the Sussex Partnership National Health Service (NHS) Foundation Trust to improve the service that is provided to individuals suffering from mental health problems. The Chief Constable acknowledged that the **report** accurately reflects the everyday realities that police officers and staff are experiencing. The difficulties separating criminal actions from behaviour that constitutes a mental health crisis was highlighted, including recognition that these can be the same thing on occasions.*

It was accepted that whilst Sussex Police provide a 24/7 primary response to individuals in a mental health crisis, the Force is not always the most appropriate agency to respond. Positive changes in this area mean that individuals detained under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act are no longer taken into police custody and are, instead, taken into health care settings. It was, however, emphasised that one of the biggest frustrations for the police service is the length of time it takes to access professional mental health care for the individuals who require it because it is the police officers who are responsible for accompanying these individuals in the first instance until they are assessed by the health authority.

The proportion of Sussex Police time that is spent responding to individuals with mental health is difficult to calculate because contact with the Force is not always recorded as being health-related. The HMICFRS report acknowledges that 4% of all police time is spent responding to individuals with mental health – a "really significant number" according to GY.

It was highlighted that whilst there are currently six places of safety in Sussex, more of these spaces are required to assist with a demand that is currently greater than capacity and to provide improved access across all of Sussex. GY confirmed that he will meet with the Chief Executives of both the Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and SECamb to discuss the implications of this early in 2019.

The Chief Constable confirmed that the provision of the street triage service in Sussex is a partnership-based approach and, as a direct result, the costs are shared between the police and the NHS. This approach enables both parties to complete risk-assessments alongside each other at the same time which should result in a better experience provided to the individuals, together with significant cost savings for both services. It was also highlighted that the provision of a street triage service went live in Brighton & Hove yesterday (13 December 2018).

GY explained that Sussex Police previously piloted a dedicated mental health nurse in the Force Contact Command and Control Centre (FCCCC). This resource proved to be "immensely positive" in terms of enabling police officers and staff to immediately obtain medical records and advice, and to speak to those suffering from a mental health crisis directly over the telephone, averting the need to deploy officers, triage cars or mental health practitioners, on occasion. The pilot has now concluded and a full-time post has been funded by the Force that has recently been recruited into.

Sussex Police has invested in a number of different training provisions to identify and respond to people with mental health problems. This includes a National Centre of Applied Learning Technologies (NCALT) training package that is available to all officers and staff on the intranet. In addition, face-to-face training takes place in classrooms, including valuable input from mental health practitioners and those with 'lived experiences' of mental health crisis. An element of training also takes place when individual officers crew together with mental health professionals as part of the street triage service, including developing a better understanding about the role of each agency. It was also highlighted that all serving officers are required to complete mandated staff safety training each year, including first-aid, with core elements of this training specifically around recognising how to react differently to an individual experiencing a mental health crisis.

The Chief Constable confirmed that recommendations 1 and 5 in the report were national, with recommendations 2, 3 and 4 relating to each of the police force areas in England and Wales. KB agreed to revisit mental health at another PAM in approximately six months time to look at the progress made by the Force for each of these recommendations.

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. What is the establishment and strength of the FCCCC in Sussex?**
- C. A total of 38.5% calls were abandoned across the rolling year period to 30 November 2018, spiking at 50.7% for the month of October 2018. What do you attribute this to?**
- D. The *Sussex Police Operational Delivery Plan 2018/19* states that a “Contact Improvement Programme will create a flexible, resilient and agile workforce that will be best placed to manage future demand. How is this progressing?**
- E. Single Online Home, a common platform that allows the public to report, transact and contact the police online, launched in Sussex yesterday. How will this improve the experience and available services to members of the public in Sussex?**

JS began by explaining that the type of contact being used by members of the public to report crimes and incidents to Sussex Police is changing from the previously traditional 101 and 999 telephone call channels to a range of different types including: email, online and webforms. In particular, the 29% increase in online reports and a 104% increase in the use of webforms, across the rolling year period in comparison to the same period a year earlier, were welcomed by the Deputy Chief Constable in terms of the greater convenience that this is providing to individuals reporting.

The need for police forces to remain flexible to the different contact options available was highlighted, including the requirement to properly assess each of the reports received using the Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation, Vulnerability and Engagement (THRIVE) decision-making model.

It was emphasised that there have been some recent changes to the way 101 and 999 calls are answered by the contact handlers within the FCCCC. This has presented some technological challenges for the Force but testing is going well and it is anticipated that members of the public contacting Sussex Police through this method will experience a significant difference. Further testing is taking place with the QueueBuster system (with telephone numbers taken and call backs arranged) and this is expected to be reintroduced again soon.

JS recognised that telephone calls are now taking longer to respond to than ever before, including responding to those with mental health issues, and highlighted the importance of providing the caller with exactly what they want and need, instead of preconceived ideas about what the Force think they require, including a proper assessment of risk using THRIVE.

The Deputy Chief Constable acknowledged that this is an area of performance where the Force still has to make improvements in and made reference to the significant investment that has been made in the FCCCC to ensure that the most appropriate individuals with the correct competencies are in post.

It was confirmed that the FCCCC has an establishment of approximately 430 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) posts and strength of approximately 424 FTE, representing a vacancy rate of less than 1%. It was, however, acknowledged that not all of these police officers and staff are fully operational yet because they are still in training. The high attrition rate in the FCCCC was acknowledged, including recognition that a number of individuals who were previously recruited into the Centre have subsequently moved on to become police officers, Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and police staff. The Force is working hard to improve the environment of the FCCCC and is continuing to try and recruit more effectively.

It was also highlighted that this is an area where increased resources are required to respond to an increasing volume and demand. The Deputy Chief Constable stated that public contact is another area where any additional funds raised by an increase in the policing precept in 2019/20 would be used.

JS reiterated that not all call abandonment is a negative, providing that the reports that would have been made by telephone are still made to Sussex Police via one of the other formats available. The Force is looking to improve call abandonment but recognises that there is still a lot of work to do to understand better the technological complexities involved and to accurately track the alternative methods that members of the public are using to report incidents to the police when a call is ended prematurely. In particular, Sussex Police has only recently been made aware that a number of mobile telephone companies have a policy to terminate calls after a specific period of time has elapsed. This process, although outside of an individual's control, will be a contributing factor to the number of calls that are currently being abandoned.

The Deputy Chief Constable confirmed that the Contact Improvement Programme aims to create a flexible, resilient and agile workforce that will be best placed to manage future demand. JS is currently reviewing the content of the Plan to ensure that it is still fit for purpose because some of content has already been delivered and other elements continue to change very quickly.

It was confirmed that the Single Online Home (SOH) became fully operational in Sussex yesterday. The SOH system, original designed by the Metropolitan Police Service, enables members of the public to report crimes and incidents, and to access advice and information online. This is a further commitment from the Force to invest in the best available technology. It was also emphasised that the number of functions available on the SOH will increase over time. Each police force area in England and Wales is also on a programme to have this introduced in their respective areas over the next calendar year.

In addition, GY explained that Sussex Police is looking at introducing Chatbots, pending the successful trial currently underway by Northamptonshire Police, to automate the reporting of low level crime and intelligence and to triage the response received.

KB agreed to revisit non-emergency call handling times at a PAM early in 2019.