

PERFORMANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY MEETING

DATE: 17 May 2019

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 – Jo Shiner (JS)
Business Support Manager – Ali Robinson (webcasting)
Head of Performance – Graham Kane (minutes)

POLICE OFFICER AND PCSO RECRUITMENT UPDATE

In February 2019, I was given “unanimous” support from the Police & Crime Panel to increase the policing part of the Council Tax for 2019/20. The extra £24 a year per Band D property means that by 2023 there will be 250 more police officers, 50 more specialist police staff and 100 more Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) than there were in March 2018 – a total increase of 400 individuals.

A. Can you provide me with a progress update with regards to this recruitment?

GY confirmed that Sussex Police has been able to increase the recruitment of police officers and PCSOs following KB’s decision to increase the policing part of the Council Tax in 2019/20. This included reiterating a previous commitment that “any money raised locally, will be spent locally”.

The Chief Constable also dismissed suggestions from outside the organisation that Sussex Police is unable to recruit officers and staff fast enough to replace those individuals leaving the Force. This is inaccurate and the increased precept this year and in 2018/19, together with the use of £17m from reserves, has allowed the Force to recruit over above the current establishment - providing faster growth sooner.

In respect of PCSOs, GY confirmed that an intake of 18 is planned in July, with further intakes of 36 planned in September 2019, January 2020 and March 2020. These intakes will ensure that the Force is at its establishment of 296 PCSOs by 31 March 2020.

The Chief Constable was pleased to note that more applications had been received in the most recent PCSO recruitment process compared to the same process last year. This included increases in both the number of applications from female candidates (44% this year compared to 38% last year) and those who declare their ethnicity as Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (6.5% this year compared to 6% last year). A total of 129 individuals from the 491 applications received were interviewed (26%), of which 91 applicants were successful (19%) and have been offered positions as a PCSO within the Force.

GY also confirmed that Sussex Police had an intake of 72 police officers in March 2019, with a further intake of 72 planned in July. A smaller intake of 24 will take place under the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) in August 2019 ahead of a further 14 individuals recruited through the Police Now – National Graduate Leadership Programme – in the autumn.

The Chief Constable reflected on the current and proposed recruitment plans for police officers in Sussex. It was highlighted that the Force had 2,535 police officers as at 31 March 2018 (and was 77 above establishment) which increased to 2,610 officers as at 31 March 2019 (and 43 over establishment) and is anticipated to increase further still to 2,750 by 31 March 2023 – 140 more police officers than there is today.

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GY concluded by confirming that police officer recruitment would open again on 17 June 2019 and encouraged anyone who is interested to apply. The Chief Constable also confirmed that applications continue to be welcomed from experienced officers transferring from other police force areas, police staff and volunteers. Further information about all of these roles can be viewed [here](#).

KB was pleased with the progress that has been made by the Force to date and agreed to revisit this area at a Performance & Accountability Meeting (PAM) in a few months time to receive a further progress update.

101 – NON-EMERGENCY CALL HANDLING TIMES

The call handling times to the non-emergency 101 number continues to remain an area of focus for me.

- A. Can you provide me with an update regarding performance in this area?**
- B. What do you attribute this improvement in performance to?**
- C. A total of 43% calls were abandoned across 2018/19. Are you confident that performance in this area is improving?**
- D. Public contact is another area where the additional funds raised by the increase to the precept in 2019/20 are being used. I was pleased to note that recruitment for Contact Handlers opened earlier this month and will remain open until 27 May 2019. What response has been received to date and what do the timescales look like for the recruitment process?**

JS described the Sussex Police performance in this area as a "steadily improving picture" over the past few months.

The Deputy Chief Constable reminded individuals of the process when contact is first made to the Force Contact Command and Control Centre (FCCCC). All telephone calls are answered within seconds by the Switchboard before they are triaged in line with the Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation, Vulnerability and Engagement (THRIVE) decision-making model. At this point, if the call is not an emergency and it cannot be resolved immediately, it is transferred to the non-emergency number for response. This is the stage of the process where members of the public are currently experiencing delays.

It was highlighted that in the month of April 2019, it took an average of 11 minutes and 16 seconds to answer the 29,285 calls that were offered to the non-emergency number. This represented a significant improvement from the average wait time of 20 minutes and 23 seconds recorded for the 30,436 calls in October 2018. It was also emphasised that the average wait time for the most recent rolling year period (1 May 2018 to 30 April 2019) was 14 minutes and 14 seconds.

In order to make some long-term technological changes to the processes and procedures in place within the Contact Centre some testing has been required that has had a detrimental impact on call handling performance. The Deputy Chief Constable again acknowledged that whilst the Force has made improvements to performance this remains an area where further progress is required in order to build on the improving trends.

It was also recognised that a reduction in the number of telephone calls received by the Force Contact Command and Control Centre has been replaced by increase in 'non-voice' demand. This includes emails, webforms and online reports received through the Single Online Home platform (see page 5 for more information).

The Force is currently unable to ascertain whether a report has been made online after an initial telephone call has been abandoned. It is anticipated that the aforementioned improvements to technology will provide Sussex Police with more accurate data and an enhanced understanding of performance in this area.

It was also emphasised that the Information Technology (IT) Department are now embedded within the Contact Centre. This approach has sought to improve the working relationship between the two departments and means that any faults, barriers or blockers can be corrected or removed at the earliest available opportunity – smoothing out the journey of the telephone calls and making the process more efficient.

The importance of members of the public having the confidence to report crimes, incidents and intelligence to Sussex Police through the most appropriate system for them was highlighted. The Force is continuing to work really hard to improve performance in this area through three areas: people, processes and technology.

The Deputy Chief Constable confirmed that Sussex Police has continued to recruit over and above its establishment for the Force Contact Command and Control Centre. This has allowed for the high attrition rates in the department and recognition that it is common for individuals recruited into the Contact Centre to want to move on and become police officers and PCSOs or to perform other police staff roles.

The Force has also reviewed and amended the training that is provided to new Contact Handlers to ensure that they are in a position to answer 'live' low-risk telephone calls far earlier on into their training, whilst supervised by a tutor.

In respect of the Contact Handler recruitment process, there are currently 267 live applications in the system. This is already 67 more applications than the total number received across the whole of the previous campaign. The process will remain open for a further 10 days until 27 May 2019. The diversity of the individual applicants received to date was commended in respect of the skills and experience demonstrated in the applications.

KB recognised the improvements that have been demonstrated in respect of non-emergency call handling times and confirmed that this would continue to remain an area of focus. This area will be raised again at the PAM on 19 July 2019.

SINGLE ONLINE HOME

Single Online Home (SOH), a common platform that allows the public to report, transact and contact the police online, launched in Sussex in December 2018.

A. What impact has the introduction of the SOH had in Sussex?

B. Has there been an increase in 'volume crimes' reported through the SOH?

C. What does the plan look like to increase the number of functions available through the SOH over time?

GY confirmed that the SOH system provides a consistent platform for members of the public to report crimes and incidents and to access advice and information online. The SOH ensures that a consistent approach exists regardless of which police force area a report is made from whilst maintaining a localised approach on each of the pages, with individual police force badges and the images of police officers and staff. The system is also efficient and effective enough to ensure that reports are passed to the most relevant police force area for investigation and response, as appropriate.

The Chief Constable confirmed that the SOH replaced a previously mature system in Sussex that already enabled individuals to report crime online. As a result, the introduction of the new platform in Sussex has been less impactful locally compared to other police force areas nationally where the systems used were less sophisticated.

The SOH currently provides 30 different services in Sussex. A total of 15 of these services relate to determining the scale, impact and responsible authority for a particular issue, as well as providing information and advice. The other 15 services provide online forms for individuals to report crimes, incidents and suspicious activity through. Sussex Police is presently assessing all information and reports received through the SOH in less than 48 hours. The number of aspirational functions available on the SOH is expected to increase to between 40 and 50 services over time, with individual police force areas piloting and testing any new functions before they are disseminated nationally.

The relative infancy of the new system also means that it is too early to understand whether the small increase in volume crimes reported to the Force through the SOH is significant or not. It was, however, highlighted that two thirds of all crimes reported through the transactional function relate to volume crime.

GY confirmed that approximately 25% (and more than 14,500 reports) of all crimes reported to Sussex Police are now done so through this platform, representing a significant increase from the 12% reported through the previous online system. This also represents a shift in the demand received by Sussex Police, although it was emphasised that the Force Contact Command and Control Centre is still responsible for triaging and responding to each of these reports, together with the emergency and non-emergency calls, emails and webforms received. It was emphasised that 53% of individuals using the SOH go online to contact the Force first.

It was highlighted that 41 of the 43 police force areas in England and Wales have signed up to introduce SOH in their respective areas. SOH is already available to 37% of the population in England and Wales and it is anticipated that 21 forces will have introduced it during 2019/20, with the remaining areas set to implement this in 2020/21. The introduction of the SOH is part of a national benefits programme that is running alongside the Digital Policing Programme. It was emphasised that Sussex Police has incurred higher costs for being an early adopter of the new system but these are expected to decrease in time as more forces implement the SOH.

In September 2019, SOH will be upgraded to provide better access to local information. This will also include the ability to: report traffic collisions; report incidents of anti-social behaviour; make applications under the Domestic Abuse Disclosure Scheme (otherwise known as Clare's Law) and to register and pay for firearms licensing.

SUSSEX POLICE RESPONSE TO SCHOOLS AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS

Prevention Youth Officers were introduced by Sussex Police in November 2017 to develop and maintain working relationships with schools and other educational establishments. The PYOs replaced the Neighbourhood School Officer posts that performed this role previously.

A. For the benefit of the viewers, what policing response is provided to schools and other educational establishments?

B. How effective are the Prevention Youth Officers?

C. How does Sussex Police work with schools and other educational establishments to ensure that any actions or interventions that take place on their premises are recorded accurately?

D. As well as working with children and young people in schools and other educational establishments, how do the PYOs work with some of the most vulnerable children and young people in care?

E. Has Sussex Police considered reviewing its policing response in respect of the increased risk of children and young people becoming involved in serious violence and 'county lines' activity that is reported in the media?

JS confirmed that Prevention Youth Officers (PYOs) work with children and young people in their entirety and that their role is much broader than simply working with schools and other educational establishments.

Sussex Police currently has 21 PYOs in post throughout the Force, all of whom are serving police officers. These roles are supported by an Early Intervention Coordinator on each of three policing divisions (Brighton & Hove, East Sussex and West Sussex) who are responsible for coordinating the multi-agency work in this area and ensuring that the Force is focussing its efforts where they are needed most. The PYOs are further assisted by the Prevention and Response teams, including PCSOs, who visit schools and other educational establishments in their policing districts.

The attention of the PYOs and others supporting them in this work is focussed around knife crime, drugs, gangs and bullying to identify vulnerabilities and understand where they will have the greatest impact in respect of preventing individuals from becoming involved with or becoming the victim of these types of crime. It was emphasised that if a school or other educational establishment has a particular problem, the Force is able to suggest the most appropriate local response.

The Deputy Chief Constable confirmed that PYOs are "extremely effective" in terms of their engagement with children and young people, parents and guardians, and the schools and educational establishments they visit. This also includes attending educational and safeguarding sector events to learn from others and to share best practice as well as signposting individuals to the most appropriate agency when this is not the police.

The effectiveness of the PYOs in Sussex was measured through a recent Post Implementation Review (PIR). The PIR highlighted that PYOs were going beyond what it was originally thought the role would be responsible for. The Force has also received positive feedback about the role of the PYOs from stakeholders involved in this particular area of work too.

JS was confident that any information received about children and young people is recorded accurately by Sussex Police where it relates to threat, harm and risk. The Force is not currently capturing every hour that is spent by PYOs and others in schools and other educational establishments and, instead, trusts individual officers and staff to use their professional judgement and the intelligence data relating to demographics to direct policing activity to where it is needed most.

The Deputy Chief Constable is confident that the PYOs are working and engaging with some of the most vulnerable children and young people in care homes, when they are the most appropriate team to do so. This is, of course, dependent on the specific issues, concerns and reports received and may involve working with local authority partners and other organisations.

Where particular concerns are realised, there are existing multi-agency safeguarding structures, arrangements and escalation models in place, including Local Safeguarding Children Boards, to raise any concerns about establishments that might be putting children and young people at risk. It was highlighted that the PYOs are just one part of the much wider work to protect and engage with children and young people in Sussex.

Sussex Police is continuously looking at how it can better engage and improve its current policing response in this area. This includes making targeted early interventions to children and young people and preventing them from becoming drawn into crime, serious violence or both, through an Early Intervention Youth Programme branded as REBOOT. This approach has been developed to rehabilitate, educate and prevent some children and young people from becoming involved in the criminal justice system in Sussex.

KB asked for reflections on the recent publication of the Ofsted inspection into West Sussex County Council which raised concerns about "widespread and serious weaknesses" in the provision of services to support, protect and care for children in West Sussex.

JS confirmed that the Force will always ensure that provisions are in place for the children and young people at the greatest risk of harm. As stated above, there are also clear escalation processes in place for any agencies to raise concerns about the level of care that is provided. The importance of continuing to work together with other agencies to tackle the increasing demand that is being placed on children's services (including safeguarding, exploitation and mental health issues) was highlighted.

The Deputy Chief Constable concluded by stating that Sussex Police would continue to put children and young people at the heart of the services delivered locally, increasing resources as appropriate.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

I recently held an online poll asking people to share with me the policing area that concerned them most from a list of six identified from a previous consultation: theft and burglary; anti-social behaviour (ASB); contacting the police; rural crime; road safety and feeling safe at night and in public spaces. Over 400 responses were received with 48% of individuals citing ASB as their greatest concern.

A. Following the recent media focus on reported increases of ASB in areas such as Brighton & Hove, Eastbourne and Worthing, what is Sussex Police doing to tackle this in the face of heightened public concern and anxiety?

B. What research and consultation is being carried out by the Force to identify ASB 'hotspots' and to identify repeat offenders, times and locations which can then be used to plan, target and deploy police resources?

C. With summer, improving weather and longer evenings fast approaching there are naturally concerns from residents, communities and businesses regarding the potential for the number of reports of ASB to be exacerbated. What assurances can you provide me in respect of the capacity of Sussex Police to respond to any increased demand?

D. How is Sussex Police communicating any positive achievements that have been demonstrated in respect of ASB?

JS confirmed that Sussex Police is "really alive" to the distress that ASB can cause to residents, communities and businesses in Sussex. Assurances were provided that Sussex Police is working hard to review, prioritise and respond to any emerging issues and recognised that, whilst the Force has a role to play, this remains a collective responsibility for all partners to tackle and respond to.

The Deputy Chief Constable provided examples of some of the positive multi-agency partnership work that has taken place at The Level in Brighton & Hove and in Uckfield, Heathfield and Crowborough in East Sussex. Each of these instances has resulted in a strong partnership-based reaction and response to engage with those individuals perpetrating this type of behaviour and to tackle the ASB and other crimes that have taken place.

As part of this response, Sussex Police has significantly increased police visibility in these areas by improving the availability and frequency of police officer, PCSO and Special Constable foot patrols. This approach seeks to encourage members of the public to actively engage with the police and to share their concerns about the ASB taking place. The Force is communicating any positive achievements demonstrated in this area through a combination of printed, online and social media, including publishing any high-profile convictions and orders that have been secured.

JS confirmed that detailed plans are in place to identify ASB 'hotspots' and repeat offenders, times and locations which can then be used to plan, target and deploy police resources. This includes plans to manage the community impact of any local events that are taking place where the potential for an increase in the number of reports of ASB exists. Additional training and guidance has also been provided to officers, staff and partner agencies to enable them to understand better the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014 and the most appropriate powers available to use.

It was highlighted that Sussex Police has sufficient capacity to respond to any increased demand in reports of ASB that the summer, improving weather and longer evenings may present. This is assisted by the proactive planning of resources, understanding the different events taking place locally and the risks that each will present and accepting that better weather will have a significant impact on the amount of ASB that takes place in Sussex.

The Force has also sought to understand better what ASB means to the communities of Sussex. This has included making revisions to the 'basket of measures' that it used to monitor, analyse and measure the impact of ASB to ensure that this addresses the specific concerns of members of the public.

A total of 408 responses to the online poll have been received to date. The consultation will conclude when the summer #TalkSussex programme starts in June 2019. The results of the poll can be viewed below:

Policing Area of Concern	No. of responses	% of responses
<i>Anti-social behaviour</i>	194	48%
<i>Theft and burglary</i>	72	18%
<i>Contacting the police</i>	58	14%
<i>Feeling safe at night-time & in public spaces</i>	37	9%
<i>Road safety</i>	26	6%
<i>Rural crime</i>	21	5%
Total	408	100%

The Deputy Chief Constable concluded by stating that the additional police officers and PCSOs recruited as a result of the increases to the policing part of the Council Tax in 2018/19 and 2019/20 are now at the stage of completing their initial training, achieving Independent Patrol and being posted to policing teams throughout Sussex. JS remains confident that robust plans are in place to address the root causes of ASB in Sussex.

POLICE OFFICER AND STAFF TRAINING

Training is a fundamental part of any organisation to ensure they are delivering a safe and effective service. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services' (HMICFRS) recent thematic inspection report into stalking and harassment highlighted training as an area of improvement for Sussex Police stating that training records were "not as good as it could have been" and that the "training programme was never fully completed".

A. What training is provided to police officers and staff?

B. What criteria is used to decide what training is delivered, the format of this training and who will deliver the training?

C. How do you ensure that the prescribed training is completed by each individual officer and staff and how is this recorded for audit purposes?

D. With an ever-changing demand and policing environment, how do Sussex Police monitor the training that is delivered to all police officers and staff to ensure that it remains accurate, up-to-date and fit for purpose?

GY confirmed that training is provided to police officers and staff within Sussex Police across three different areas: mandatory training; force-level training and local-level training.

- **Mandatory training:** *this is nationally mandated training for all frontline police officers, staff and PCSOs, including officer safety training;*
- **Force-level training:** *this is training that is required to ensure that individual officers, staff and PCSOs have the skills they need to be able to perform their roles;*
- **Local-level training:** *this is specialist and bespoke training that is based on the specific needs of local teams and individuals.*

It is recognised that the current system of recording the training completed by each individual officer and member of staff is simple and accurate. However, whilst the system is competently able to record what an individual has completed and achieved it does not provide an overview for the organisation or an audit function for the Force as a whole.

Individuals also have a personal responsibility to ensure that they complete the training that is required of them and that their individual training records remain updated. The Force has moved away from an inflexible Personal Development Review (PDR) system to a process that focusses on conversations with officers and staff to identify their individual needs based on what they have achieved and any skill gaps that have been identified in order to keep this training up-to-date.

On the back of the HMICFRS observations, Sussex Police is looking at what could be implemented immediately to provide sufficient assurances, taking implications regarding cost-effectiveness into account, ahead of the new PDR system being introduced in February 2020. This system will provide a greater scope for interrogating the training records and auditing the collective records for the Force.