

PERFORMANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY MEETING

DATE: 13 September 2019

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

PRESENT: Police & Crime Commissioner – Katy Bourne OBE (KB)
Chief Executive Officer – Mark Streater (MS)
Chief Constable – Giles York (GY)
Deputy Chief Constable – Jo Shiner (JS)
Digital Content Manager– Sammi Carwardine (audio recording)
Head of Performance – Graham Kane (minutes)

HMICFRS – FRAUD: TIME TO CHOOSE

In April 2019, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) published an inspection of the police response to fraud.

A. I am pleased that HMICFRS recognised the “good practice” that exists in Sussex in terms of the fraud prevention work through Operation Signature and that a number of other police force areas have adopted similar approaches following the same principles. How is the Force continuing to develop this initiative to ensure that vulnerability to fraud offences is identified and that individually assessed protective measures are implemented to reduce the risk of re-victimisation?

B. The report identified two specific recommendations and five areas for improvement for Chief Constables in England and Wales. What plans are in place to ensure that each of these is progressed within the prescribed timescales?

*GY confirmed that the **Fraud: Time to Choose** report followed a national inspection by HMICFRS for which Sussex Police was one of 11 police force areas to be inspected. Operation Signature, the provision of funding for two Fraud Victim Support Caseworkers and the establishment of a Fraud Working Group were three of the areas recognised in the report as good practice locally. This is because fraud has been on the Force’s control strategy for the past two years and, as such, processes and procedures are well-established in Sussex. This is the mechanism Sussex Police uses to set out what is important to them and determining the resources that are made available to tackle this area.*

Sussex Police introduced Operation Signature in 2014 as a means of identifying vulnerability to fraud offences and to instigate individually assessed protective measures to reduce the risk of re-victimisation. Operation Signature comprises of three areas of work: prevention (before it happens), response (when it happens) and enforcement (after it has happened). This approach is now considered ‘business as usual’ in Sussex.

It was emphasised that the Force is continuing to develop this initiative further still by ensuring that input around Operation Signature is delivered to all new police officers in Sussex as part of their induction and initial training. The same training is delivered to any transferees to the Force too.

Sussex Police has also started to working with the ‘banking industry’ to improve the interventions made by key stakeholders. This has included the development and introduction of a Banking Protocol which highlights any unusual or large transactions made either in person, over the telephone or online through internet banking. It was highlighted that from 1 January to 31 August 2019, the Banking protocol intervened and prevented more than £1million from being taken out of bank accounts fraudulently, in particular.

In addition, the Force is working with money service bureaus to block victims from accessing these services and to prevent them from sending any further money. Sussex Police is also using software to trace and identify the accounts the money has been transferred to.

Sussex Police has invested in 200 trueCall telephone blocking devices that allow high-risk victims and individuals to screen the calls that are received through their telephone number and to block any numbers that are not recognised. The trueCall devices (which can be purchased privately) also record the numbers that are blocked which can then be used by analysts to identify the most commonly used numbers that require further investigation. It is estimated that more than 140,000 calls have been blocked by these devices so far.

GY confirmed that good progress had been made to address the two specific recommendations identified for Chief Constables in the report, as follows:

Recommendation 2: *Sussex Police already has a system in place to report fraud outcomes through the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB).*

Recommendation 9: *The national policy for responding to and investigating allegations of fraud has only just been received by the Force. Sussex and Surrey Police are currently working on a joint strategy for both police force areas that will be in place locally before the deadline of 30 September 2019.*

It was also emphasised that the five areas for improvement highlighted in the report are currently being addressed by the Force through changes to existing working processes and procedures, the establishment of a Fraud Working Group to provide strategic direction and oversight and increasing the use of ancillary orders to redress the harm caused by the offenders and to recover the funds.

One of the greatest challenges for Sussex Police in this area is to get individuals to report these crimes of fraud in the first instance. The Chief Constable encouraged members of the public who have either been a victim of fraud themselves or who know a family member or friend who has to make contact with Sussex Police and report this. If the fraud is currently occurring, Sussex Police should be contacted by telephone to: 101 or by email to: 101@sussex.pnn.police.uk. If the fraud has already taken place, individuals should contact Action Fraud to report this. Further information about Action Fraud can be viewed through the following link: <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/>

ACTION: KB requested a copy of the national figures which set out the number of ancillary orders that have been applied for by each police force area.

STOP AND SEARCH POWERS

In the rolling year period to August 2019, there were 7,192 stop and searches in Sussex, an increase 1,933 more searches in comparison to last year (+37%).

- A. What do you attribute the increases in the use of this power to in Sussex?**
- B. What measures have you put in place to ensure that every stop and search is justified and is likely to have a positive outcome in reducing crime?**
- C. What scrutiny and accountability arrangements are in place to ensure that the use of stop and search in Sussex is effective and legitimate?**
- D. What training is provided to police officers in the powers of stop and search and how frequently does this training take place?**

JS explained that stop and search is one of a number of different tactics used by police officers to prevent and detect crime and to keep people safe in Sussex. The importance of using these powers fairly, effectively and lawfully to build and maintain public trust and confidence in the police was emphasised.

Much of the 37% increase in the use of this power in Sussex was attributed to the proactive and targeted use of stop and search through dedicated policing operations conducted throughout the year. Some of these operations in 2019 to date have included: Operation Safety and Operation Sceptre (targeting knives and bladed articles); Operation Foreland (the Sussex and Surrey Police response to 3,000 Hells Angels taking part in a motorcycle ride across both police force areas) and tackling county lines activity (targeting gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more areas, using dedicated mobile telephone lines). The increasing number of searches that result in either an arrest or a positive outcome (29% in July and 28% in August 2019) demonstrates that officers are using these powers effectively through a combination of policing operations and intelligence that is received locally.

An "incredible amount" of scrutiny and accountability measures are in place to ensure that the powers are used fairly and appropriately in Sussex. This includes overall governance through a 'Legitimacy and Ethics Board' (looking at the numbers of searches carried out and whether any disproportionality exists through a stop and search dashboard) and improved supervisory responsibility (by monitoring the frequency that individual officers are using this power and the compliance of these searches against the legislation).

A Stop and Search Independent Scrutiny Panel exists to dip-check all 'use of force' records (including stop and search), review and quality assure body worn video footage of the searches taking place and to look at the multiple use of stop and search on any one individual and the geographical areas that the searches take place across Sussex.

In addition, a stop and search 'REWIND' video has been produced to provide young people with an explanation as to what they can expect if they are ever subjected to a stop and search. This video was developed in partnership with the Commissioner's Sussex Youth Commission and can be viewed through the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XLHA-BXTAzY&feature=youtu.be>

It was recognised that the quality of the training delivered to all new police officers in this area has improved too, together with the refresher training that is provided to all existing officers as part of their annual staff safety training. This approach ensures that officers remain comfortable in the use of these powers and is supported further by ongoing 'roadshows' across the county.

It was highlighted that whilst a complaints procedure exists in Sussex for the use of stop and search, the number of complaints that are actually received continues to remain very low. The Deputy Chief Constable concluded by stating that she was confident that stop and search powers are carried out professionally, effectively and legitimacy in Sussex. This position is supported further by the range of scrutiny and accountability arrangements in place.

ACTION: KB would like to know what proportion of stop and searches comprise of 'stop and accounts'.

POLICE OFFICER RECRUITMENT UPDATE

In July 2019, the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, announced that 20,000 new police officers would be recruited throughout England and Wales over the next three years.

A. What impact will this decision have on Sussex Police?

B. Do you anticipate any “logistical challenges” highlighted by the College of Policing?

GY confirmed that Sussex Police is in a “good place” to respond to the recent Government announcement that 20,000 new officers would be recruited over the next three years. This is a direct result of KB’s decision to increase the police precept in recent years and the strong workforce planning which has enabled Sussex Police to work towards having 2,750 police officers in post by 31 March 2023.

The Chief Constable reiterated the position that the Force is recruiting over and above the number of police officers leaving the service and confirmed that this recruitment represents genuine growth for the organisation of 140 more police officers in post than there were at 31 March 2018.

The national recruitment campaign was launched on 5 September 2019 and, whilst the allocations to each police force area are yet to be confirmed, it is anticipated that up to 6,000 officers will be recruited by the end of 2020/21. Further information about the recruitment plans and process can be viewed on the national website through the following link: <https://www.joiningthepolice.co.uk/>

GY explained that Sussex Police is preparing for the additional recruitment by looking at three individual areas: attraction; assessment and on-boarding

Attraction: *Sussex Police has an “incredibly energised” recruitment profile which complements the national recruitment campaign. The Attraction Team within the Force are also visiting slightly different locations from previous campaigns (including railway stations) to try and target a range of individuals. It was also emphasised that there are now up to 9 different entry routes and pathways into Sussex Police.*

Assessment: *Sussex Police currently has enough recruits in the “pipe-line” to ensure that police officer intakes are full until July 2020. Tutoring candidates after they have completed their classroom-based training and the availability of uniform and equipment are two logistical “bottlenecks” that have been highlighted by the Force. Sussex Police are building resilience in these areas by increasing the number of tutors available in Sussex and planning for anticipated uniform and equipment requirements now.*

On-boarding: *Sussex Police has “tried and tested” plans in place to recruit towards the numbers required and to get individuals into the organisation in an efficient and effective manner.*

KB was encouraged 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. I was pleased to note that non-emergency call handling times have been steadily improving. Can you provide me with a further update in this area?

B. What do you attribute the continued improvement in performance to?

C. QueueBuster went 'live' in Sussex in July 2019 and means that members of the public are now offered a call-back service instead of holding the line. What impact is this system on call-handling performance?

D. At July's PAM, it was highlighted that Sussex Police will launch a 'Make the right call' campaign to provide members of the public with advice about what to contact the Force about to reduce unnecessary demand for non-police-related matters. When is this campaign due to be launched?

JS confirmed that she was "really pleased" with the progress Sussex Police has made in this area 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 have been experiencing delays.

Across the month of July 2019, it took an average of 8 minutes and 2 seconds to answer the 34,157 calls that were offered to the non-emergency number. This performance improved further still in August with the 31,767 calls offered answered within 6 minutes and 15 seconds. The performance demonstrated across these two months is even more encouraging because these are two of the busiest months for the Force. A reduction in the number of abandoned calls was noted across both of these months too, reducing from 25.0% in July to 21.2% in August 2019. Reassurance was also provided to KB that calls to the emergency 999 number continue to be answered within a very timely manner, with the vast majority answered within 10 seconds.

The continued improvements in performance were attributed to a combination of answering more calls sooner and more effective use of the QueueBuster system. This call-back service is in operation between 8am and 8pm and is triggered once a call has been on the system for 4 minutes and 30 seconds. This service is provided to approximately 30 individuals a day out of the 1,000 calls that are received by the FCCCC and equates to 3%. Of those individuals who use the service, 91% are called back within 30 minutes, with the rest receiving a call-back within the hour.

The provision of more call handlers in the FCCCC made available through the investment and recruitment following the additional funds raised by the increase to the precept in 2019/20, the streamlining of processes and procedures within the Department and the continued improvements made through the Contact Transformation Programme are all recognised to be contributing factors behind these continued improvements in performance.

The Deputy Chief Constable confirmed that the 'Make the right call' campaign is now 'live' in Sussex after receiving a soft-launch this month. The campaign aims to educate members of the public better about what to contact the Force about and is reportedly progressing well ahead of the official launch of the wider campaign that is set for November 2019. This campaign – "to make the right call, at the right time, to the right place" – will be promoted further through the use of social media and case studies.

IMPROVING PUBLIC CONFIDENCE

Maintaining engagement with members of the public in the delivery of local policing services remains fundamentally important to improving public confidence.

- A. How does Sussex Police measure public confidence?**
- B. What is the Force doing to improve public confidence?**
- C. What proactive work is Sussex Police carrying out with local authority partners?**
- D. How are any posting changes to existing District Commanders communicated to all relevant stakeholders?**
- E. It has been brought to my attention that it can be difficult to search for and find some information on the Sussex Police website. How frequently is the information updated?**
- F. How are the dedicated communications officers being utilised by the District Commanders to provide information and reassurance to members of the public?**

GY explained that measuring public confidence remains a "difficult" challenge for Sussex Police and each of the other 42 police force areas in England and Wales. This is because there is not any one binary measure that determines how confident the public are in the police service.

Sussex Police uses a 'basket of measures' to try and provide indicators around public confidence including: the number of reports of anti-social behaviour, intelligence submissions and applications to join the Force received. The Crime Survey for England and Wales, surveying of victims of crime in Sussex and social media analytics are also used to measure public confidence. The outcomes of each of these measures is discussed at the Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) Board to look at how Sussex Police can react better to any concerns identified that will make a tangible difference and improve confidence locally.

The Chief Constable recognised that there is "always room for improvement" in terms of the number of intelligence submissions that are either gathered or received by the Force. The Divisional Commanders on Brighton & Hove, East Sussex and West Division, together with the District Commanders that cover the areas within, are each responsible for monitoring patterns of crime and the levels of intelligence that are received alongside these for action.

Sussex Police is striving to make the process for submitting this intelligence as simplistic as possible and encouraged members of the public to continue to make these reports. It was reiterated that reports about intelligence or criminality can be made to Sussex Police in person at any police station, by telephone to 101 or by email to 101@sussex.pnn.police.uk. These reports can also be made anonymously through Crimestoppers with further information available through the following link: <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/>

It was emphasised that Sussex Police is carrying out a huge amount of work with local authority partners. GY recognised the benefits that co-location between services can have as a way of "breaking down barriers" that can exist between teams and organisations. The Safer East Sussex team based at Hammonds Drive in Eastbourne and the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASHs) throughout Sussex were recognised to be two good examples of this approach in practice and include employees from the local authority, health, Sussex Police and other partner agencies working alongside each other from one location. This approach enables a more efficient and effective exchange of information and intelligence to take place. It was also highlighted that the benefits that this co-located multi-disciplinary team can provide far outweigh the initial challenges that can be apparent in terms of establishing these teams.

The Chief Constable confirmed that it remains the responsibility of existing District Commanders to communicate any posting changes to the network of stakeholders that has been established in each area and set an expectation that this is managed as part of any handover process locally.

The Single Online Home (SOH) system enables members of the public to report crimes and incidents and to access advice and information online. GY encouraged members of the public to make contact with the Force if they cannot find the information they require online or if they discover any broken links on the website. It was highlighted that as well as updating the website regularly there are plans in place to increase the number of functions available through the SOH further still over the next few months. This will include the availability of an embedded local newsfeed; applications for firearms licensing; anti-social behaviour reporting process and a Domestic Abuse Disclosure Scheme function (also known as Clare's Law) by the end of October 2019. It was also emphasised that Sussex Police now receives the second highest number of enquiries through the SOH, behind only the Metropolitan Police Service.

The communications officers within the Force are used in a variety of different ways by the District Commanders to provide information and reassurance to members of the public. This includes the communication of national messages through corporate campaigns (including the summer and winter drink-and-drug-drive and domestic abuse campaigns), managing local policing team-based social media accounts by providing a trusted source of information and providing reassurance, clarity and definitive answers to any non-urgent enquiries received.

The Force is continuing to react to the intelligence submissions received from members of the public and to adapt its approach to communicate and share information with members of the public in the most efficient and effective manner possible. This includes the creation of Instagram accounts to develop engagement further with the police.

ACTION: KB requested to know how many intelligence submissions have been received by Sussex Police in recent years.