

Sussex Police and Crime Panel

28 June 2013 – at a meeting of the Panel held at 10.30 a.m. at County Hall, Lewes.

Present:

Paul Wotherspoon	Arun DC
Warren Morgan	Brighton and Hove CC
Eileen Lintill	Chichester DC
Dr Howard Bloom	Crawley BC
Chris Dowling	East Sussex CC
John Ungar	Eastbourne BC
Brian Donnelly	Horsham DC
Andy Smith	Lewes DC
Christopher Snowling	Mid Sussex DC
Robin Patten	Rother DC
Claire Dowling	Wealden DC
Brad Watson	West Sussex CC
Paul Yallop (1)	Worthing BC
Graham Hill	Independent
Sandra Prail	Independent

(1) Substitute for Tom Wye

Apologies for absence were received from David Simmons (Adur DC) and Tom Wye (Worthing BC).

In attendance: Katy Bourne, Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner; Steve Waight, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner; Mark Streater, Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer of the Office of the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner (OSPCC); John Eagles, Chief Finance Officer of the OSPCC and Ninesh Edwards and Matthew Evans (Host Authority - West Sussex CC).

Election of Chairman

1. The Panel proposed and seconded Brad Watson as Chairman of the Panel for the forthcoming year. The appointment was agreed by the Panel.
2. Resolved – that Brad Watson is elected Chairman of the Sussex Police and Crime Panel for the ensuing year.
3. The Chairman took his seat and the Panel noted the appointment of Warren Morgan as the additional co-opted member from Brighton and Hove City Council for a period of one year. The Panel also noted the following appointments to the Panel: Ben Duncan, Brighton and Hove CC; Eileen Lintill, Chichester DC; Dr Howard Bloom, Crawley BC; and Chris Dowling, East Sussex CC.

Declarations of Interest

4. In accordance with the code of conduct members of the Panel declared the personal interests contained in the table below. Please also see paragraph 16 below.

Panel Member	Personal Interest
Andy Smith	Chairman of Lewes Community Safety Partnership
Brad Watson	Member of Horsham Safety Partnership
Robin Patten	Member of Rother Safety Partnership
Graham Hill	Member of Horsham Safety Partnership Senior Service Delivery Manager for Victim Support charity Member of Crawley Community Safety Partnership Board
Christopher Snowling	Member of Mid Sussex Safety Partnership
Brian Donnelly	Member of Horsham Safety Partnership
Claire Dowling	Chairman of Safer Wealden
Paul Wotherspoon	Member of Safer Arun Partnership
Eileen Lintill	Chairman of Chichester Safer Community Partnership
Dr Howard Bloom	Chairman of Crawley police Liaison Group
Chris Dowling	Member of East Sussex Safer Community Partnership

Election of Vice-Chairman

5. The Panel proposed and seconded Chris Dowling as Vice-Chairman of the Panel for the forthcoming year. The appointment was agreed by the Panel.
6. Resolved – that Chris Dowling is elected Vice-Chairman of the Sussex Police and Crime Panel for the ensuing year.

Minutes

7. Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Sussex Police and Crime Panel held on 4 April 2013 be confirmed as a correct record.

Part II Matters

8. The Panel was asked to consider if the minutes on the Part II agenda should be brought into Part I. The Panel agreed that the grounds for exemption of the minutes on the Part II agenda still applied and it was agreed that they would be considered in the closed session.

Review of Panel Membership and Proportionality

9. The Panel considered a report by the Clerk to the Panel which set out the political makeup of the Panel's constituent authorities (copy appended to the signed version of the minutes). The Panel was asked to: consider the reappointment of the two independent co-opted members; consider whether the two County Councils should be invited to make one additional appointment each to address the political balance of the Panel; and agree the party political affiliation of the two additional members.
10. The Panel considered the following points:
 - To ensure political balance on the Panel it was proposed the status quo was retained; that the total Panel membership should number 20 and two additional appointments from the County Councils be sought to address political balance. It was noted that any change to the political composition of

political parties in Sussex since the Panel's inception was negligible and that the two additional seats should be allocated to the Liberal Democrats; and

- In future the two additional County Council appointments should be able to take their seats at the annual meeting. *The Clerk to the Panel agreed to investigate the provision of this arrangement for the next annual meeting of the Panel.*

11. Resolved – that the Panel agrees:

- 1) To renew the appointment of the two independent co-opted members for a period of one year;
- 2) To seek two additional local authority members from the County Councils for a period of a year; and
- 3) That the two additional County Council appointments should be drawn from the Liberal Democrat political party.

Public Question Time

12. The Chairman introduced the public question time which was an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions of the Panel and the Commissioner. Two questions had been received by the deadline (schedule of questions attached to the signed version of the minutes).

13. The first question received was for the Commissioner, the questioner was unable to attend the meeting and the Chairman posed the question which queried the recruitment of PCSOs in preference to appointing frontline officers. *The Commissioner responded to explain that 30 more PCSOs would be appointed shortly but a recruitment exercise was also currently in progress to appoint 80 Police Constables. In addition there was an intention to appoint 120 Special Police Constables in due course.*

14. The second question received was for the Commissioner and the questioner was in attendance to ask a question which queried the holding time for calls to the 101 non-emergency telephone service. The questioner had experience of being kept on hold for 15 minutes whilst using the phone line and requested that the Commissioner considered more resources be dedicated to the service or calls be redirected to a police station. The questioner suggested that monitoring of holding times should be undertaken and that the extension numbers of police stations should be published. *The Commissioner explained that since April the number of calls answered within 60 seconds had dropped from 74% to 54%, the Chief Constable had recently updated the Commissioner and performance had fallen to 46.2%. Sussex Police's target was to answer 75% calls within 60 seconds and the current level of performance had been caused by the introduction of a new call handling system. The need for improvement was acknowledged and work was being expedited by the force to address the situation. The Commissioner explained to the questioner that a system to transfer calls to police stations was being considered and further information would be available later in the year. The Commissioner noted the suggestions of the questioner.*

15. The Panel raised the following points in relation to Question 1 regarding PCSOs:

- PCSOs were valued by local communities as they provided visible policing.

- Increasing the pay and powers of PCSOs would address the perception that their sole function was to reduce the cost of policing. *It was explained that PCSOs had the power to carry out an arrest as a civilian and that PCSOs were trained to provide community policing rather than specialisms.*

16. The Panel raised the following queries in relation to Question 2 regarding the 101 non-emergency telephone service:

- The level of staffing at the centre which answered the calls was queried and whether there had been a recent increase or decrease in the numbers of staff? *The Commissioner explained she would look into the matter and provide a response.*
- How the targets and performance of Sussex Police compared to other police forces and when it was likely that performance would be raised to 75%? *The Commissioner would provide a response following the meeting.*

Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report

17. The Panel considered a report by the Commissioner which provided detail of the work undertaken since November 2012 to the financial year, ending 31 March 2013 (copy appended to the signed version of the minutes). The Commissioner introduced the report, outlined the four priority areas contained in the Police and Crime Plan and provided detail of achievements under each of the areas. The Commissioner highlighted the valuable work of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) which was reflected in her guarantee to maintain the current funding levels in 2013/14. The launch of the Domestic Violence and Abuse Campaign with Sussex Police was highlighted which took place in advance of the Christmas period when an escalation in reports of domestic violence over the 24-hour period saw an average of 40 reports a day rise to 120. In response to concerns from the public regarding detection rates in burglary cases the Commissioner had established a burglary tasking group and the positive impact of this group on detection rates and burglary reduction were marked.

18. Dr Howard Bloom declared a personal interest as a member of Crawley CSP.

19. The Panel raised the following issues with the Commissioner:

- The recruitment exercises were welcomed by the Panel and it was queried whether this would result in larger numbers of 'visible' Police Officers. *The planned appointments represented recruitment above establishment levels. Visible policing was of great importance and the use of modern technology would enable officers to spend more time in the community.*
- There had been a change in the provision of statistics to the joint action group between Adur and Worthing which were formerly compiled by West Sussex County Council. The data had been used as an evidence base in the location of Local Area Teams (LATs) and to assess their success. The Commissioner was asked if she could assist LATs that no longer received the statistics. *The issues would be raised with the Chief Executive of West Sussex County Council.*
- The Panel was reassured by the continued funding for CSPs and the Commissioner's acknowledgement of the value of the Partnerships.
- The work of the Commissioner in respect of domestic abuse was supported particularly in light of the statistics quoted of incidents over the Christmas period.

- The Panel congratulated the Commissioner on the identification of savings during the year and sought further information regarding the sources of the underspend of £11.9m. *The Deputy Commissioner explained that £4m had resulted from a proactive savings programme which anticipated the requirement for future savings. A number of vacancies had not been filled during the year which contributed to the underspend. There was a need for on-going savings which would become more challenging to achieve.*
- The positioning of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras was raised and the importance of working with forces from bordering areas to help control cross-border crime. *Funding was available for the positioning of more cameras and work would be undertaken with adjoining areas to ensure strategic placement.*
- The level of progress made in the development of the online reporting tool to encourage hard-to-reach groups and victims of hate crime to report crime. Detail of the engagement undertaken with specialist service providers in Sussex working with hard to reach groups/victims of hate crime was requested. *The project was still at an early stage and more information would be provided after the meeting. An intelligence-led scoping exercise was to be undertaken across Sussex to identify areas of need and ensure a focus of service upon such areas. It was suggested that members of the Panel could form a working group to examine the issue and assist the Commissioner.*
- What work was being undertaken to address the potential impact on domestic violence resulting from the changes to welfare provision and would the Commissioner lobby the Ministry of Justice to seek a strengthening of domestic violence sentencing guidelines. *The Commissioner explained that she had met with Inspire, the Worth Project and was involved in the Troubled Family Initiative. The Commissioner was prepared to discuss the lobbying of the Ministry of Justice.*
- The incidence of mobile crime was raised particularly the targeting of supermarkets without adequate security and the Commissioner was asked what she could do to address the issue. *The Commissioner acknowledged the problems associated with mobile and business crime and identified the recently established Business Watch scheme in Hastings as an example of an effective programme to combat the problem.*
- The Panel noted that planning for the current year included closure of existing police stations and the transfer of services to alternative accommodation. The Panel was supportive of shared accommodation and co-location of services particularly with local authorities in Sussex. The absence of a police station in North Wealden was raised as a concern. *The Commissioner explained that the policy was part of a five-year strategy with the intended closure of 25 traditional police stations but with those closures mitigated by the opening of 30 Sussex Police outlets. This was consistent with public demand for more visible policing and followed the outcomes of the review of estates which had identified a number of buildings with high maintenance costs. The Commissioner referred to the example of the police station in Brighton which had been sold to the City Council and services co-located to the Town Hall which had achieved savings of £900,000 and ensured the station was open for an extra 1.5 hours per day. A hub had also been established at Crawley library which offered the opportunity for co-ordination with community groups such as those offering support to victims of domestic violence. The programme represented an investment of £20 million over 5 years which would result in savings for Sussex Police. The Commissioner confirmed that no police station or facility would be removed*

from an area without appropriate, alternative accommodation first being in place locally.

- The Panel asked the Commissioner how the cost of her office compared to the budget of the Sussex Police Authority (SPA). *The Commissioner outlined the cost of the SPA which was £1.175 million and the cost of her office which was £1.184 million. These figures did not take account of inflation and therefore in real terms there was a decrease in costs under the new regime. The Commissioner acknowledged that to operate within current financial circumstances with the imperative to realise continual savings was a significant challenge particularly whilst attempting to respond to public expectations.*

20. Resolved – that the Panel notes the Commissioner’s Annual Report and agrees to write to the Commissioner to outline the comments made.

PCP Working Groups and Work Programme

21. The Panel considered a report by the Clerk to the Panel which contained a proposal for the establishment of a working group of the Panel to examine the Commissioner’s Police and Crime Plan for 2014/15 (copy appended to the signed version of the minutes). It was intended that the working group would work with the Commissioner in developing areas of the Plan where it was felt that the Panel could provide valuable input. The Panel was required to agree the establishment of a working group and its membership.

22. The Panel was supportive of the proposal and proposed the following membership: Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Panel; an independent member; a representative from the District and Borough Councils in East Sussex; a representative from the District and Borough Councils in West Sussex; and a representative from Brighton and Hove City Council.

23. The following nominations were made to the working group: Graham Hill to act as the independent member on the Panel with Sandra Prail as his substitute; and David Simmons to act as the representative of District and Borough Councils in West Sussex. The representative from District and Borough level in East Sussex and the representative from Brighton and Hove City Council would be subject to further discussions and confirmed at the next meeting of the Panel. It was proposed that the same system of substitution for quarterly meetings of the Panel would operate for the working group.

24. Resolved – that the Panel agrees:

1) the formation of a working group to examine the Police and Crime Plan for 2014/15;

2) the following membership and nominations to the working group:

Chairman of the Panel – Brad Watson

Vice Chairman of the Panel – Chris Dowling

1 Independent Member – Graham Hill (Sandra Prail as substitute)

1 representative of West Sussex District and Boroughs – David Simmons

1 representative of East Sussex District and Boroughs – tbc

1 representation of Brighton and Hove City Council – tbc; and

- 3) the substitutes of participating members would be entitled to attend meetings of the working group when the principal member was unavailable.

25. Paul Wotherspoon left the meeting at 12.08 p.m.

Future Working Groups

26. The Panel considered topics for the formation of working groups and it was proposed that the Panel could provide valuable input to the work of the Commissioner in the area of victim support. It was proposed that a paper be provided to the next meeting of the Panel outlining a proposal for a working group concerning victim support.

27. Resolved – that the Panel supports the formation of a working group concerning victim support and agrees that a proposal be presented to the next meeting of the Panel.

Panel Work Programme

28. The Panel considered its work programme of items to be debated at meetings of the Panel over the course of the forthcoming year up to the next annual meeting in June 2014 (copy appended to the signed version of the minutes).

29. Resolved – that the Panel:

- 1) Agrees the work programme for the forthcoming year until the annual meeting in June 2014; and
- 2) Notes the dates of the meetings in 2013/14:

11 October 2013
24 January 2014
27 June 2014

30. Chris Dowling left the meeting at 12.11 p.m.

Quarterly Report of Complaints

31. The Panel received and noted a quarterly report by the Clerk to the Panel of complaints received by the Monitoring Officer over the course of the last quarter (copy appended to the signed version of the minutes). The report outlined the initial handling of complaints received and provided an update on complaints previously reported to the Panel.

32. Paul Wotherspoon returned to the meeting at 12.13 p.m.

Written Questions

33. The Panel received and noted a written question received prior to the meeting and response provided by the Commissioner (copy appended to the signed version of the minutes). The Commissioner provided an update to the information contained in the response and confirmed that an organisational chart for the Office

of the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner was now available on the website together with all other required information.

Questions for the Commissioner

34. The following issues were raised by the Panel under Commissioner's question time:

- The Commissioner was asked for her view on the enforcement of 20mph zones. *The Commissioner confirmed that local authorities led on the introduction of 20mph and was hopeful that police would provide enforcement.*
- It was asked if the proposal to be considered for the victim support working group at the meeting in October accorded with the Commissioner's timescales for advancing the priority. *The Commissioner confirmed that it was a four-year plan and therefore fitted with her timetable.*
- The costs of providing public order policing as detailed in the Commissioner's annual report was raised and what provision was there to recoup the costs. *The Commissioner confirmed that the costs in the report related to the policing of marches and if the cost reached a certain threshold the costs could be recouped from central government. The costs incurred in Sussex were not a level that was sufficient to receive money from central government.*
- What work was being undertaken following the recent spending round announcement? *The Chief Finance Office confirmed that he was currently working on the implications of the spending round announcement and that more details would be available at the meeting of the Panel in October.*

Annual Budget Report from the Host Authority

35. The Panel received and noted a report by the Clerk to the Panel providing details of the income and expenditure of the Panel over the first year of its operation (copy appended to the signed version of the minutes).

Exclusion of Press and Public

36. Resolved – That under Section 100(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I, of Schedule 12A, of the Act by virtue of the paragraph specified under the item and that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption of that information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information

Minutes (Part II) of the meeting held on 4 April 2013

Exempt: paragraph 1, Information about individuals

37. Resolved – that the minutes (Part II) of the Sussex Police and Crime Panel held on 4 April 2013 be confirmed as a correct record.

Chairman