

Sussex Police and Crime Panel

10 October 2014 – at a meeting of the Panel held at 10.00 a.m. at County Hall, Lewes.

Present:

Paul Wotherspoon	Arun DC
David Simmons	Adur DC
Liz Wakefield	Brighton and Hove CC
Geoffrey Theobald*	Brighton and Hove CC
Chris Oxlade	Crawley BC
Bill Bentley	East Sussex CC
Rosalyn St Pierret†	East Sussex CC
John Ungar	Eastbourne BC
Brian Donnelly (1)	Lewes DC
Pru Moore (2)	Mid Sussex DC
Robin Patten	Rother DC
Brad Watson	West Sussex CC
Graham Jones	West Sussex CC
Val Turner	Worthing BC
Graham Hill	Independent
Sandra Prail	Independent

- (1) Substitute for Sue Rogers
(2) Substitute for Christopher Snowling

*Geoffrey Theobald took his seat on the Panel at 10.42 a.m. please see minute 69 below.

†Rosalyn St Pierre took her seat on the Panel at 12.30 p.m. please see minute 90 below.

Apologies for absence were received from Eileen Lintill (Chichester DC), Andrew Cartwright (Hastings BC), Sue Rogers (Horsham DC), Christopher Snowling (Mid Sussex DC), Claire Dowling (Wealden DC) and Sandra Prail (Independent).

In attendance: Katy Bourne, Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner; Mark Streater, Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer of the Office of the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner (OSPCC); Carl Rushbridge, Chief Finance Officer of the OSPCC; John Willett, Manager for Restorative Justice (OSPCC); Rachel Kemish (External Witness with experience of RJ) and Ninesh Edwards and Matthew Evans (Host Authority - West Sussex CC).

Declarations of Interest

64. In accordance with the code of conduct members of the Panel declared the personal interests contained in the table below.

Panel Member	Personal Interest
Brad Watson	Member of Horsham Safety Partnership
Robin Patten	Chairman of Rother Safety Partnership
Paul Wotherspoon	Member of Safer Arun Partnership
Dave Simmons	Chairman of Safer Communities Partnership, Adur and Worthing Chairman of Safer West Sussex Partnership

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Liz Wakefield	Member of Brighton and Hove Community Safety Forum
Bill Bentley	Chairman of East Sussex Safer Community Board
Chris Oxlade	Member of Crawley Community Safety Partnership
Brian Donnelly	Member of Horsham Safety Partnership
Andy Smith	Chairman of Lewes Community Safety Partnership
Brad Watson	Member of Horsham Safety Partnership
Robin Patten	Chairman 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
Val Turner	Member of Adur and Worthing CSP

Minutes

65. The Panel noted that Paul Wotherspoon was inaccurately listed on the schedule of declarations of interest at the previous meeting; Mr Wotherspoon had provided his apologies for the meeting and needed to be removed from the schedule.

66. Resolved – That subject to the correction above the minutes of the meeting of the Sussex Police and Crime Panel held on 27 June 2014 be confirmed as a correct record.

Part II Matters

67. 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.

Restorative Justice

68. The Panel received a report from the Office of the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner (version attached the signed version of the minutes). John Willett, Manager for Restorative Justice (RJ), introduced the report and explained that RJ was a voluntary process that was undertaken at the request of the victim of a crime and involved the victim engaging directly with the perpetrator. The success of RJ depended upon effective partnership working and good governance arrangements. It was reported that a RJ advocate group was being established and members of the Panel would be welcome volunteers.

69. Geoffrey Theobald took his seat on the Panel at 10.42 a.m.

70. Mr Willett introduced Rachel Kemish who had participated in the RJ process and had met the perpetrator of a crime against her. Mrs Kemish spoke of her experiences and the benefits of the process for her family and the offender.

71. The Panel raised the points below in the discussion that followed:

- The impact and effectiveness of RJ upon reducing the rates of reoffending and if evidence was available to substantiate claims of lowered rates. *It was confirmed that there was no guarantee that a perpetrator would not re-offend after taking part in RJ. On-going contact with the perpetrator and*

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empathy between the victim and the offender would decrease the likelihood of reoffending. RJ was primarily a process for the benefit of the victim; if there was a positive impact upon reoffending rates this represented a significant additional benefit. Evidence was available through academic study commissioned by the Ministry of Justice, available on the RJ Council website.

- *If the perpetrator could refuse to participate and if there were any crimes which were considered unsuitable for the process. The offender could refuse to participate in the process and would often be apprehensive about meeting the victims of their crimes. A facilitator was involved to assist the process and full risk assessments were conducted for each request for RJ. RJ would not be undertaken where any doubt had been raised through risk assessment; badly conducted RJ could result in greater harm to the victim. Requests for RJ were considered on a case-by-case basis.*
- *The Panel queried how RJ would coordinate with other local bodies such as the Neighbourhood Resolutions Conferences in the Arun District Council Area. Work was being coordinated with Arun DC as part of developing partnership working.*
- *How RJ was conducted for offences such as cyber crime where it was probable that thousands of people were victims. This was a similar issue to addressing requests for RJ involving perpetrators who had committed multiple burglaries resulting in a large number of victims. Developments in the application of RJ were required to meet such pressures.*
- *The budget of £289,000 was queried, if it was felt to be sufficient and what would occur at the end of the three-year agreement. The dedicated budget for RJ was welcomed and showed recognition for the importance of the area. The budget was being used to develop structures with partners and at the end of the current process the benefits of RJ would be presented to show that the project had a significant impact. The amount of £289,000 was funding for two years, a budget had yet to be agreed for the third year and the Criminal Justice Board was attempting to ensure that the project would be sustainable across the three-year period.*
- *Age limits for involvement in RJ. The Youth Justice Board was conversant with RJ, no age limit was imposed on the application of RJ and each request was considered on its merits. It was noted that RJ was used in many circumstances including in schools to address problems with bullying. The importance of good facilitation was emphasised to ensure RJ was effective and beneficial.*

72. The Panel thanked Mrs Kemish for the moving evidence she had presented to the meeting of her participation in the RJ process.

73. Resolved - That the Panel supports the report and the proposals for RJ.

Medium term Financial Forecast and Budget Timetable 2015/16

74. The Panel received a report from the Office of the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner which set out the medium term financial forecast and budget timetable for 2015/16. The report also included details of potential precept options (copy appended to the signed version of the minutes). The report was introduced

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by Carl Rushbridge who advised the Panel that the draft budget was based upon assumptions including a period of continued austerity and the freezing of grant funding. Budget planning had taken account of the increase of National Insurance contributions from 2016/17 with £4 million set aside to meet this liability. Savings totalling £55 million would be required over the next 4 years, it was anticipated that the financial settlement would reduce in forthcoming years but a balanced budget was forecast for 2015/16. The precept options contained in the report had been based on the assumption that a similar threshold for a referendum would be applied for the 2015/16 financial year.

75. The Panel raised the issues below in the discussion that followed:

- The reduction in the extent of services for sexual investigations as a consequence of the funding short fall in 2014/15 and increases in reporting rates of serious sexual offences. *Increases in reporting rates had been anticipated as projects to increase reporting rates progressed. The increase in the rate enabled an accurate understanding of risk and the extent of the issue in Sussex. A 24/7 service was still a priority but without the additional funding the realisation of this service would not be achieved within the original timeframe;*
- The cost of policing public demonstrations. *A contingency fund had been agreed with the Chief Constable. A proportion of the cost involved in the policing of the Balcombe protests had been recovered from the Home Office and an agreement had been reached with the Secretary of State to refund future costs to the force of policing fracking demonstrations;*
- The Panel highlighted that the precept in Sussex was the fourth lowest in England and Wales and it was in this context that it endorsed the Commissioner's proposal of an increase of 3.6% in 2014/15 to meet the investment needs identified. The referendum threshold had limited the precept increase to 1.98% but the Panel was not obliged to agree the remainder of the agreed 2014/15 increase within any proposed precept for 2015/16. The proposed precept and priorities for 2015/16 would be considered independently of the decision relating to the 2014/15 precept.
- Some members of the Panel outlined provisional support for a proposed precept increase of 1.98%.
- The Panel queried spending on public relations and human resources and identified these as areas where savings could be achieved through partnership working. Further detail of the spending on these departments was requested. *It was reported that the Chief Constable undertook a Star Chamber assessment of each department. Through joint working with Surrey significant savings had been realised including some within human resources. Full collaboration would not realise the full level of required savings. The greater level of detail requested was not strictly within the responsibilities of the Panel but the information could be provided.*
- The Panel sought clarification of where the six new sergeants, appointed under Safeguarding functions, would be deployed. *This information would be provided after the meeting.*
- The Panel referred to the areas of financial risk in the report which provided an assessment from the Chief Constable that priorities within the Police and

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Crime Plan could be funded within existing resources. It was felt that with such a clear statement the Commissioner would have to provide compelling justification for a proposed precept increase of 1.98% in 2015/16. *The Commissioner explained that without increased investment the priorities identified would take longer to achieve.*

- The Panel noted the long term impact of the freeze grant which prevented the expansion of the tax base and the prudence of a precept increase to strengthen the financial footing of the force in the future.

76. Resolved – That the Panel notes the report.

Police and Crime Plan Monitoring report

77. The Panel received a report from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner which provided an update on performance against the objectives and measures in the Police and Crime Plan for the half-year period April – September 2014 (copy appended to the signed version of the minutes). The report was introduced by Mark Streater who informed the Panel of the intention to refresh the Plan in 2015/16 and involve the working group of the Panel to make recommendations on the draft refreshed Plan.

78. Chris Oxlade left the meeting at 11.50 a.m. and Liz Wakefield left the meeting at 11.55 a.m.

79. The Panel raised the issues below in the discussion that followed:

- The measure relating to the objective to reduce the risk of crime per 1,000 head of population only provided data up to August 2014, statistics up to the end of September, consistent with data reported elsewhere in the report, were requested. *The period of the measure for the objective was rolling and the period selected was for comparison purposes. Updated figures to include September 2014 would be provided.*
- The Safer in Sussex Community Fund had been a success and the Commissioner was asked what measures she proposed to evaluate the value of those projects supported through the fund. *The Commissioner confirmed that a framework was being developed that was not excessively prescriptive and would hence avoid the risk of alienating organisations.*
- The joint Sussex and Surrey cyber crime unit and the recruitment of specialist IT operatives. *The cyber crime unit would be fully operational in November and be based at Haywards Heath. The unit was linked in to the national cyber crime strategy and would address such crimes as boiler room fraud. Serious national and regional cyber crime attacks would be addressed by the National Crime Agency and South East Regional Organised Crime Unit. Specialist IT operatives had been recruited to work in the unit and had been appointed Special Constables.*

80. Mr Oxlade returned to the meeting at 11.55 a.m. and Mrs Wakefield returned at 12.00 noon.

81. Resolved – that the Panel notes the report.

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Victims' services Commissioning – Verbal Update

82. The Panel received a verbal update from Mr Streater regarding progress with the commissioning of victims' services. The commissioning exercise had sought to appoint a provider of victims' services in Sussex in partnership with Thames Valley and Surrey areas. The tendering process had now ceased and after evaluation it was anticipated that the successful bidder would be announced in late October. The new arrangements for victims' services would commence on 1 April 2015 and specialist victims' services, beyond the remit of the appointed provider, would be supported through additional funds passported to the Commissioner. Funding for direct investment in specialist services included domestic violence and serious sexual offences. Victims' services outside of the most serious categories would be able to compete for funding under the new arrangements from the middle of October.

83. Paul Wotherspoon left the meeting at 12.10 p.m.

Quarterly Report of Complaints

84. The Panel received a report providing an update on the number of complaints received by the Panel in the last quarter and progress made with those live complaints (copy appended to the signed copy of the minutes). No new complaints received by the Panel over the last quarter pertained to issues within the remit of the Panel.

85. Mr Wotherspoon returned to the meeting at 12.15 p.m.

86. Resolved – that the Panel notes the quarterly report of complaints.

Written Questions

87. The Panel received the schedule of written questions submitted prior to the meeting and the responses from the Commissioner's Office (copy appended to the signed version of the minutes). One question had been considered to be operational in nature and had been passed to Sussex Police for a response.

88. The Panel discussed the response to the written question regarding the illegal parking of unregistered vehicles. The powers of the Police and local authorities in respect of this issue were complicated and misunderstood. More information was requested to outline action the police could take against the owners of the vehicles and if there were powers to remove such vehicles. *An update would be requested from Sussex Police by the Commissioner.*

89. Mr Oxlade and Andy Smith left the meeting at 12.30 p.m.

90. Rosalyn St Pierre joined the meeting at 12.30 p.m.

91. There was a brief recess at 12.30 p.m. until 1.00 p.m.

Sussex Youth Commission Conference

92. The Panel watched a video produced by the Commissioner's Office highlighting the role and work of the Youth Commission. Following the video the Commissioner explained that the Youth Commission had been established in 2013 to engage with young people in Sussex. The Commission consisted of

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representatives between the ages of 14 and 25 and it was intended that the membership was as wide ranging as possible, including hard-to-reach groups. The Youth Commission had recently undertaken a conference that had been well attended and the outcomes of the event were available on the Commissioner's website.

93. Some members of the Panel had attended the conference and raised the following comments along with more general comments from members on the work of the Youth Commission:

- The Youth Commission was supported as it offered a forum for young people who often felt disenfranchised by structures of authority;
- The strength of feeling evinced by attendees at the conference demonstrated that the Youth Commission was a worthwhile exercise that had a valuable and significant role to play in youth engagement in Sussex;
- The importance of including children looked after on the Commission's membership was raised. *The Commissioner confirmed that the membership of the Commission did include children in care;*
- The Commissioner was encouraged to attempt to safeguard the existence of the Commission beyond her term of office; and
- The Panel recognised the benefit of the Commission as a method to communicate effectively with a wide range of young people in West Sussex through peer feedback.

94. Resolved – That the Panel supports the work undertaken with the Youth Commission.

Commissioner's Question Time

95. A member of the Panel referred to reports he had heard concerning proposed reductions to Community Policing Teams. Assurance was sought that Police Constables would not be removed from Community Policing Teams. *The deployment of police officers and the structure of Sussex Police were within the responsibilities of the Chief Constable. The value of local policing was acknowledged.*

96. The Commissioner was asked how she would assess the success of the cyber crime initiative. *The initiative was currently evaluating key areas to focus on and risk assessments were being conducted to identify priority areas from which discernible measures would be drawn.*

97. The Commissioner was asked if the Rapid Response Teams represented an extra level of bureaucracy. *Visible policing was a priority and mobile technology ensured that police officers spent longer in the community. Innovation funding had been secured for the priority in conjunction with Dorset Police.*

98. The Commissioner was asked about the impact of proposed bus service cuts upon crime in Sussex. *The Commissioner was aware of the issue and any potential consequences would be assessed by the involvement of her Office on local CSPs.*

Visits to other PCP meetings

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99. The Panel received an update on a visit to a meeting of the Thames Valley PCP. The Thames Valley Panel was moving toward a member-led approach to setting themes for meetings to scrutinise areas of interest. External witnesses were invited to contribute to discussions and it was felt that the topic of young people would offer a good opportunity for the Panel to have a themed meeting on an issue of interest. It was confirmed that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman would review the information gathered from visits to other areas and identify any areas of good practice that should be adopted in Sussex.

Contact Centre Tour

100. The Panel provided feedback from the tours to the contact centre. The Panel was impressed with the operation of the contact centre but was mindful that Sussex Police faced a significant challenge to maintain performance levels and introduce new methods of communication for the public to contact the Police.

101. Geoffrey Theobald left the meeting at 1.50 p.m.

Exclusion of Press and Public

102. 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 27 June 2014

Exempt: paragraph 1, Information about individuals

103. Resolved – that the minutes (Part II) of the Sussex Police and Crime Panel held on 23 January confirmed as a correct record.

The meeting ended at 1.52 p.m.

Chairman