

Sussex Police and Crime Panel

24 September 2021 – A meeting of the Panel held at 10.30am.

Present:

Cllr Christian Mitchell (Chairman)	West Sussex County Council	Cllr Bob Standley (Vice-Chairman)	East Sussex County Council
Cllr Kevin Boram	Adur District Council	Cllr Alison Cooper (Substitute)	Arun District Council
Cllr Roy Briscoe	Chichester District Council	Cllr Steve Murphy	East Sussex County Council
Cllr Rebecca Whippy	Eastbourne Borough Council	Cllr Judy Rogers	Hastings Borough Council
Cllr Johnny Denis	Lewes District Council	Cllr Norman Webster	Mid Sussex District Council
Cllr Philip Lunn	Wealden District Council	Mrs Susan Scholefield	Independent member
Mr Keith Napthine	Independent member	Cllr Lizzie Deane	Brighton & Hove City Council
Cllr Sean McDonald	Worthing Borough Council	Cllr Carmen Appich (Substitute)	Brighton & Hove City Council
Cllr James Walsh	West Sussex County Council	Cllr Andrew Mier (Substitute)	Rother District Council

Apologies were received from Cllr Brian Drayson (Rother District Council), Cllr Michael Jones (Crawley Borough Council), Cllr Jackie O'Quinn (Brighton and Hove), Cllr Jacky Pendleton (Arun District) and Cllr Claire Vickers (Horsham District).

Present from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OSPCC):
Commissioner Katy Bourne (PCC), Mark Streater (Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer), Iain McCulloch (Chief Finance Officer).

Part I

The Chairman reported the death of a former member of Sussex Police and Crime Panel, Mr Dave Simmons.

The Chairman explained that as the representative of Adur District Council, Dave was the only remaining Panel member who had also served on the Shadow

Panel, which drew up and agreed the Panel's Constitution in the months before its first formal meeting in November 2012.

The Chairman commended his passion for, and advocacy of, the interests of children and young people.

The Commissioner joined with the Panel in sending condolences to Dave's family at this difficult time.

13. Declarations of Interest

13.1 In accordance with the Code of Conduct, members of the Panel declared the personal interests contained in the table below.

Panel Member	Personal Interest
Christian Mitchell	
Bob Standley	
Alison Cooper (Substitute)	Chairman of Safer Arun Partnership
Andrew Mier (Substitute)	
James Walsh	
Steve Murphy	
Jackie O'Quinn	Lead Member of Brighton & Hove Community Safety Partnership
Jacky Pendleton	
Michael Jones	
Kevin Boram	Chairman of Adur & Worthing Community Safety Partnership
Sean McDonald	
Judy Rogers	Member of Safer Hastings Partnership
Claire Vickers	
Lizzie Deane	
Keith Napthine	
Roy Briscoe	Member of Joint Arun and Chichester Community Safety Partnership

Johnny Denis	Co-Chair of Lewes and Eastbourne Community Safety Partnership. Lead Member for Community Safety at Lewes District Council. Member of Lewes District Council – Community Safety Partnership – Joint Action Group.
Susan Scholefield	A serving Magistrate. Chair of the Competition Appeal Tribunal and Competition Service. Senior Independent Director of Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust.
Norman Webster	Member of Mid Sussex Community Safety Partnership
Rebecca Whippy	Co-Chair of Lewes and Eastbourne Community Safety Partnership. Lead for Community Safety at Eastbourne Borough Council. Member of Eastbourne Borough Council Joint Action Group. Member of Eastbourne Neighbourhood Watch. CEO of Embrace East Sussex. Independent SEND Litigator.
Philip Lunn	Chair of Safer Wealden Partnership. Member of Sussex Safer Communities Board.
Brian Drayson	Co-Chair Safer Rother Partnership

14. Minutes

14.1 Resolved – that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 25 June 2021 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

15. Public and Panel questions to the Commissioner

15.1 The Panel noted a published version of written public and Panel questions with answers from the PCC (copy appended to the signed minutes). The Panel had no supplementary questions in respect of the public questions.

15.2 The Chairman invited questions from the Panel to the Commissioner. A summary of the main questions and responses were as follows:

1. Q: How is the programme around more visible street policing progressing?

A: The Commissioner stated that the recruitment of officers continues and this year 121 officers have been recruited. Once training was complete then they get allocated to districts and officers are encouraged to be as visible as possible, especially in neighbourhood policing.

2. Q: Does Sussex Police have a policy to apprehend and stop the illegal use of electric scooters?

A: The Commissioner explained that the use of electric scooters on the highway was illegal. Sussex Police's policy is to stop, explain and encourage not to continue use and provide leaflets explaining the limits of their use. A more formal warning or seizing of goods could follow for repeat offenders. Some hot spot areas have been targeted and three individuals have been prosecuted in the last 12 months and 14 scooters have been seized. The Commissioner felt that the sellers of electric scooters have a duty to inform buyers of the limits of their use and this does not always happen. She also stated that the issue had been discussed at the recent Performance meeting with Sussex Police and that meeting was available for anyone to view online.

3. Q: It has been reported that Thames Valley Police have pulled out of a joint IT project that Sussex Police have so far spent £12million on. Does this have any impact for Sussex Police?

A: The Commissioner responded stating that the IT system was for back-office functions and Surrey and Sussex would continue to work in partnership on this with options for the future being explored. Sussex Police's relationship with Thames Valley remained strong.

4. Q: Are the Police being deployed, as per the strategy, to deal with issues around bikes on pavements?

A: The Commissioner responded by explaining that the strategy was the plan but that operational priorities are for the Chief Constable to manage. However, the Commissioner was comfortable that the strategy was being adhered to and she continued to challenge the Chief Constable on a regular basis. She also encouraged residents to report any hot spot areas.

5. Q: Can the Commissioner confirm a clear strategy for violence against women and girls and that this was a priority?

A: The Commissioner confirmed that this was a priority and that all partners were currently working on a pan-Sussex Domestic Abuse Strategy. The Commissioner confirmed that previously the budget to

support victims of crime had been £2million a year and that £1.5million of that would support women and girls. With more opportunities for funding in the last 12 months the spend this year had been £3.4million.

6. Q: Is there funding to education and stop offenders?

A: The Commissioner confirmed that Sussex Police work with partners on a perpetrator programme and the results of that have been very promising.

7. Q: Can the Panel be assured that all relevant data and information is shared with district and borough councils via the Community Safety Partnerships?

A: Yes, data can be shared. If there was a particular issue, please raise it directly with the Commissioner so she can look into it.

8. Q: The Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) is proposed to move to one location. Why in Sussex is it funded 25% by Police and 75% by NHS but other areas it is 50/50?

A: The Commissioner confirmed there was no set policy in relation to this but that the funding was being looked into.

15.3 In summary of the discussion, the Chairman thanked the Commissioner on behalf of the Panel for answering their questions.

16. Police and Crime Plan Public Priority 3 – Support victims and safeguard the vulnerable.

16.1 The Panel considered a report by the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner (copy appended to the signed minutes) which was introduced by Katy Bourne, Police and Crime Commissioner.

16.2 The Chairman invited the Panel to ask questions. A summary of questions and responses were as follows:

- Many of the projects and pilots were dependant on funding until March 2022 and it was questioned what would happen after that. The Commissioner confirmed that if successful many pilots could become business as usual or in some instances further funding could be applied for.
- The new Police station at Crowborough was welcomed but it was asked what the criteria was for the provision of Police Stations as Littlehampton had been closed now for 10 years. The Commissioner stated that many closures decisions had been made by the previous Police Authority. In the case of Crowborough, it was a relocation of the station to a more appropriate location. Regarding Littlehampton, Mr Iain McCulloch (Chief

Finance Officer) confirmed that it was a shared facility and discussions continued with partners on the future of the site. He confirmed there was a cabin on site for Monday-Friday 9am–5pm reporting. The Commissioner confirmed she would investigate the issues at Littlehampton further.

- The Commissioner confirmed that Sussex Police do look into historic child abuse cases, but this was part of a national programme and therefore not referred to in the report.
- The Commissioner was asked to expand on the impact of Covid on the force and lockdown engagement. The Commissioner paid tribute to all frontline officers during Covid and informed the Panel that this was discussed at every Performance and Accountability Meeting with the Chief Constable, and these were all available to view on the website.
- The sharing of data was discussed. Sussex Police share much data across Microsoft Power Platform but across agencies can be tricky as different systems are used.
- The time taken to get rape cases to court and the backlog for forensic evidence was raised as a concern. The Commissioner confirmed this was an area she recently questioned the Chief Constable on and there was a comprehensive response on the website.

16.3 The Chairman thanked the Commissioner, on behalf of the Panel, for answering members' questions. It was agreed that issues could be picked up further in the Annual Report but there was no need for further scrutiny at this time.

16.4 Resolved – that the Panel note the report.

17. The Commissioner's Role in Sussex Police's use of Stop and Search Powers.

17.1 The Panel considered a report by the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner (copy appended to the signed minutes), which was introduced by Mark Streater, Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer.

17.2 The Chairman invited the Panel to ask questions. A summary of questions and responses were as follows:

- The policy around Body Warn Video was discussed and it was confirmed that every officer attending a domestic abuse call, or a stop and search should wear them but that it was available for all frontline officers. There was some concern around this response and whether it was a choice. The Commissioner undertook to check if there was a set policy and update the Panel.
- With regard to Body Warn Video the Panel requested the figure for the % of officers wearing BWV.

- It was asked if it was documented as to what constituted 'reasonable grounds'. Mark Streater undertook to provide members with a policy or briefing to further explain this.
- The figures provided in section 2.4 of the report were useful, but the Panel asked if a further breakdown could be provided such as a breakdown of ethnicity for the 28% 'no further action taken'.
- In relation to training it was noted this was undertaken nationally and much had been online due to Covid. It was confirmed that specific profiles such as vulnerable people were covered as part of the role play.
- The Panel agreed it would be useful to see figures from a demographically comparable force. It was suggested this would be possible via the HMIC but the Commissioner agreed to forward links to such data.
- It was asked if data could be broken down into district/borough levels and although this was possible, Mark Streater suggested it may not be helpful as often offenders are from outside the areas.

17.3 The Chairman thanked the Commissioner and her team, on behalf of the Panel, for answering members' questions. It was agreed that continuous scrutiny of this matter was important.

17.4 Resolved – that the Panel note the report.

18. Working Group Appointments

18.1 The Panel noted the proposed membership, Chairman, and dates for the Budget and Precept Working Group.

19. Quarterly Report of Complaints

19.1 The Panel noted that that no complaints had been received in the last quarter.

20. Date of Next Meeting

20.1 The next meeting of the Panel would take place on 28 January 2022 at 10.30am at County Hall, Lewes.

The meeting ended at 12.56pm.

Chairman