

Sussex Police and Crime Panel

26 June 2020 – A virtual meeting of the Panel held at 10.30am.

Present:

Cllr Bill Bentley (Chairman)	East Sussex County Council	Cllr Christian Mitchell (Vice-Chairman)	West Sussex County Council
Cllr David Simmons	Adur District Council	Cllr Gill Yeates	Arun District Council
Cllr Roy Briscoe	Chichester District Council	Cllr Carolyn Lambert	East Sussex County Council
Cllr Johnny Denis	Lewes District Council	Cllr Norman Webster	Mid Sussex District Council
Cllr Phillip Lunn	Wealden District Council	Cllr Tricia Youtan	Horsham District Council
Mrs Susan Scholefield	Independent member	Mr Peter Nightingale	Independent member
Cllr Val Turner	Worthing Borough Council	Cllr Jackie O'Quinn	Brighton & Hove City Council
Cllr Paul Barnett	Hastings Borough Council	Cllr Brian Drayson	Rother District Council
Cllr Dee Simson	Brighton & Hove City Council	Cllr Rebecca Whippy	Eastbourne Borough Council
Cllr Michael Jones (Substitute)	Crawley Borough Council		

Apologies were received from Cllr Brenda Smith (Crawley Borough Council).

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

Part I

The Chairman welcomed two new appointments to the Panel, Cllr Brian Drayson (Rother District Council) and Cllr Paul Barnett (Hastings Borough Council) along with Substitute for Crawley Borough Council, Cllr Michael Jones.

On behalf of the Panel, the Chairman thanked outgoing Sussex Police Chief Constable, Giles York, for his six years of service in post.

31. Declarations of Interest

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

Panel Member	Personal Interest
Bill Bentley	Lead Member for Communities and Safety Chairman of East Sussex Safer Communities Board Chairman of East Sussex Civil Military Partnership Board
Roy Briscoe	Member of Joint Arun and Chichester Community Safety Partnership
Johnny Denis	Co-Chair of Lewes and Eastbourne Community Safety Partnership
Susan Scholefield	A serving Magistrate Chair of Competition Appeal Tribunal and Competition Service Senior Independent Director of Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
Dave Simmons	Chairman of Adur and Worthing Safer Communities Partnership Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Council
Dee Simson	Member of Brighton & Hove Community Safety Partnership Member of Woodingdean Neighbourhood Watch
Brenda Smith	Cabinet Member for Public Protection at Crawley Borough Council Chair of Safer Crawley Partnership
Val Turner	Member of Safer Communities Partnership, Adur and Worthing
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
Gill Yeates	Member of Safer Arun Partnership Member of Joint Arun and Chichester Community Safety Partnership

Tricia Youtan	Member of Horsham Community Safety Partnership Cabinet Member for Community Safety at Horsham District Council
Carolyn Lambert	Vice Chair of East Sussex Fire Authority Member of Fire Commission
Phillip Lunn	Member of Safer Wealden Partnership
Jackie O'Quinn	Lead Member of Brighton & Hove Community Safety Partnership
Brian Drayson	Co-Chair Safety Rother Partnership
Paul Barnett	Co-Chair Safety Hastings Partnership

32. Minutes

32.1 Resolved – that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 31 January 2020 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed electronically by the Chairman following the meeting.

33. Public and Panel questions to the Commissioner

33.1 The Panel noted a published version of written public and Panel questions with answers from the Commissioner (copy appended to the signed minutes). The Panel was not invited to ask supplementary questions, as agreed prior to the meeting, due to the significant amount of business on the agenda.

34. The Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner's role in Sussex Police's response to COVID-19

34.1 The Panel considered a report by the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner, who gave an overview. The Panel was informed that the report follows a chronological order of events and contains a breakdown of the Commissioner's role at both national and local level, in addition to the work of Sussex Police. The report was introduced by Mark Streater, Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer of OSPCC.

34.2 The Chief Executive commented that the Commissioner's fundamental duty was to support the Chief Constable and Sussex Police to provide a professional, co-ordinated response to the unique challenges presented by the pandemic.

34.3 PCC involvement at local level

The OSPCC Chief Executive highlighted the following;

- The PCC authorised using the Force's reserves to ensure all frontline officers were provided with personal protective equipment at a cost of £2.1 million.
- The PCC's statutory duty includes overseeing the delivery of services to victims of domestic abuse, harassment and stalking – offences which heightened over the course of lockdown.
- Increased communications aligning local and national messaging targeting domestic abuse victims to raise a high profile and increase public confidence in the support services available.
- The PCC provided written evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee on preparedness with a specific emphasis on domestic abuse.
- Revision of the Safe Space Sussex online directory listing victim support services to include a covert tab and safety button.
- Working with the Ministry of Justice to secure an additional near £600,000 in funding on behalf of domestic abuse victim and survivor charities in Sussex.
- The PCC supported the continuation of the REBOOT Sussex Early Intervention Youth Programme in providing additional support to children through imaginative virtual working, teleconferencing and broadcasting via YouTube.
- The PCC continued to Chair online meetings of Surrey and Sussex Criminal Justice Partnership to ensure co-ordinated management of the meetings taking place over the course of lockdown.
- Video Enabled Justice (VEJ) was operated to ensure prosecution continuity adhered to social distancing guidance following the Lord Chancellor's announcement permitting Video Remand Hearings for detainees to undertake their first hearing without physical attendance in the courtroom.
- The PCC organised a bespoke meeting for all Sussex MPs to discuss the policing challenges and kept them informed of the Force's response throughout the lockdown period.
- Performance Accountability meetings continued via online meetings to ensure ongoing scrutiny of issues pertinent to the pandemic (e.g. public confidence reassurance, fixed penalty notices and PPE availability) plus support of the Chief Constable and his team.

34.4 PCC involvement at national level

- As Chairman of The Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC), the PCC held weekly meetings with PCC colleagues, ministers and the Chairman of The National Police Chiefs' Council in relation to coordinating support to meet national requirements. In addition, the PCC carried out a number of media opportunities to

reinforce regional/local policing messaging around pertinent crimes at the time which included; domestic abuse, child sexual exploitation and fraud.

34.5 Sussex Police response

- The final aspect of the report covers Sussex Police's role in co-ordinating the Local Resilience Forum and the subsequent financial impact.

34.6 The PCC reflected on the report by praising the Force's policing in response to recent cases of large outdoor gatherings of young people in Brighton & Hove and the effectiveness of the national approach - 'engage, explain and encourage to go home'.

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

- Members raised concerns about the pressures put on the county's coastal areas during lockdown due to increasing visitor levels as restrictions ease and non-essential travel is permitted, as well as the public health risk this poses to both residents and visitors. The Commissioner acknowledged the Force cannot prevent people travelling to coastal areas but was so far pleased with the officer engagement and general cooperation of the public where crowds began to form with enforcement only being used as a last resort. She went on to comment that the majority of fixed penalty notices issued were to visitors from outside of Sussex. The Commissioner reiterated her belief that the Force is adequately resourced to respond and sufficient PPE is available to all frontline officers.
- It was questioned on a resident's behalf whether Sussex Police has powers to impose a 'local lockdown' in coastal areas with high visitor footfall. The Commissioner advised to refer to the Coronavirus Bill and raise the matter with the local MP, reiterating that Sussex Police will assist local authorities and health partners where possible, working within the law.
- It was asked if funding could be made available through the OSPCC to street homeless projects in Eastbourne and help re-locate homeless people temporarily occupying the town's hotels as the hospitality sector begins to re-open. The Commissioner confirmed that her office is working with criminal justice partners on finding housing for prisoners upon their release, which is a particular issue in West Sussex. She added that the OSPCC's Community Safety Fund has previously contributed to street homeless projects and invited expression of interests from local organisations in response to COVID-19.
- Further clarification of Sussex Police's powers to manage crowd control ahead of the next phase of restrictions lifting on 4 July and

an example given of road closures put in place between Rye and Camber to prevent further access to Camber Sands. The Commissioner strongly reiterated that the Force cannot be held to account for monitoring social distancing but it is responsible for upholding the Coronavirus Bill emergency legislation. The Commissioner also identified that the example offered is a public safety measure and represents a decision taken by the multi-partnership Strategic Coordinating Group.

- The Commissioner was asked for her thoughts on the use of IT by the force in light of changing circumstances. The PCC confirmed Microsoft Teams video conferencing software is being rolled out across Sussex Police and re-assured the Panel that virtual meetings conducted by the Force are high security.
- Members sought an indication as to the certainty of the Government fully reimbursing Sussex Police's budget to cover the significant extra costs involved with resourcing the COVID-response in addition to the alternative contingency plans. The Commissioner confirmed she is in regular contact with the Minister for Policing and remains confident of a positive outcome from the imminent announcement. She added that forming contingency options is an ongoing piece of work and it will be informed by the Medium-Term Financial Forecast.
- Members raised concerns on behalf of local residents in Brighton & Hove as to the lack of action against drug dealing and drug-taking by young people during recent large outdoor gatherings in the area. The Commissioner confirmed that no arrests were made but recognised that the Force would have taken action had intelligence indicated that illegal activities took place.
- The added stress caused to individual frontline members of the workforce was raised as a cause for concern and whether the Force has support services in place. The Commissioner said that the mental welfare and wellbeing of the Force's employees is extremely important and explained that there are many permanent channels open to police officers and staff (available prior to COVID-19) to access help and support. She gave an example of the 'back-up buddy' mobile application, developed by a police officer, which offers advice to staff and officers.

34.8 In summary of the discussion, the Vice-Chairman thanked the Commissioner on behalf of the Panel for answering their questions and praised the impressiveness of the Force's response to the pandemic in unprecedented circumstances.

34.9 The Chairman concurred and concluded by appealing to the general public that Sussex Police is there to offer support and attacking police officers is never acceptable.

Resolved - that the Panel:

i) Noted the report on the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner's role in Sussex Police's response to COVID-19.

35. The Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report and Financial Outturn Report 2019/20

35.1 The Panel considered a report by the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner, which was introduced by the Commissioner, Katy Bourne. The Commissioner reiterated the Chairman's reminder to the Panel that the report was published following the lockdown period, enforced by the COVID-19 pandemic, and therefore does not inform of the financial implications and challenges as a result of the national health emergency. The Commissioner highlighted the progress made against the Police & Crime Plan's four policing and crime objectives:

1. Strengthen local policing

The Commissioner noted;

- The increase in precept will enable the force to recruit 400 extra personnel by March 2023 – made up of police constables, police community support officers (PCSOs) and specialist staff.
- Improvements made to the non-emergency 101 helpline included reduced call waiting times and handling of an increase in online reports.
- The Tactical Enforcement Unit made 76 arrests and produced 190 intelligence reports in its role targeting serious offenders and disrupting organised crime since launching in December 2019.

2. Work with local communities and partners to keep Sussex safe

- The Safer in Sussex Community Fund awarded £150,000 to 54 community projects during 2019/20 – a total of 364 projects have received £1.7M in funding since 2012.
- A new Rural Crime Team comprised of 16 officers launched in June 2020 as a direct result of the precept increase.
- An additional 824 days of policing was funded by a £1.3M grant awarded by the Government's Serious Violence Fund – the equivalent of 2,000 police officers being deployed.
- £880,000 was secured in forming a Violence Reduction Unit to bring specialists together to tackle serious violence and the underlying causes of violent crime.
- Continuation of funding for Community Safety Partnerships was protected for a 7th consecutive year and each partnership was awarded a share of £182,000 allocated from the Serious Violence Fund.
- The award-winning Restorative Justice Partnership has maintained a 100% satisfaction rate following mediation meetings between victims and offenders.

- The Force's Independent Custody Visitor Scheme was one of two in the country to be awarded platinum status in May 2019, of which coincided with an 11% year-on-year increase in the number of detainees willing to accept visits from trained visitors.

3. Protect the vulnerable and help victims cope and recover from crime and abuse

- Progress made in raising the profile of stalking at local and national level led to its inclusion within the Home Secretary's National Domestic Abuse and Stalking Working Group, sat on by the Commissioner.
- All national police forces have now adopted the F.O.U.R acronym (Fixated, Obsessed, Unwanted, Repeated) to describe the signs of stalking behaviour and incorporated by College of Policing guidance.
- Almost 40,000 victims of crime with complex needs were supported through the service delivered by Victim Support – of which 2,500 individuals identified as 'really vulnerable' received face-to-face support.
- Around 1,000 vulnerable victims of fraud have been supported through funding of specialist fraud case workers.
- The REBOOT intervention programme supported 938 young people across Sussex – this exceeded the force's target three times over.

4. Improve access to justice for victims and witnesses

- Sussex Police are one of five force areas to practice video-enabled justice and a further two vulnerable victim and witness units have ensured there is one in each policing division. The unit allows the victims to give evidence remotely and the provision was highlighted given the current social distancing guidelines in effect.
- The OSPCC has invested more than £500,000 into The Safe Space Sussex Funding Network – made up of 32 approved specialist providers. The network was designed to ensure funding longevity among smaller groups and enable the OSPCC to review levels of service provision prior to recognising and awarding new providers.

35.2 The Commissioner thanked her team for their professionalism and support amid the COVID-19 pandemic in enabling her to carry out her role effectively.

35.3 The Chairman left the meeting at 11.38am.

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

- Members sought re-assurance in respect of a recent report highlighting the disproportionate number of stop and searches carried out on the county's black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities. The Commissioner acknowledged the report was produced by her office and re-assured the Panel that the matter is; under ongoing review led by the Temporary Chief Constable (TCC),

Jo Shiner, featured as a standing item on the force's Ethics and Legitimacy Board and being considered by an external scrutiny panel. The Commissioner concluded that mid-term success should be measured by the proportionality level of stop and searches compared with the tangible outcomes. The Commissioner added that BAME representation within the force is improving and drew attention to a recent attestation ceremony recognising 64 new officers - of which 10% were BAME.

The Chairman re-joined the meeting at 11.43am.

- The Commissioner was congratulated on the success of the REBOOT programme. On the back of this, Members questioned whether funding would be made available to projects in direct response to Mate Crime (a form of hate crime which involves the offender befriending a vulnerable/at-risk individual, who may have special needs, with the intent to exploit, abuse or theft). The Commissioner advised that TCC Shiner would represent an appropriate contact to raise the matter with as the National Policing Lead for Children and Young People.
- It was asked whether the 10 new officers recruited for the Rural Crime Team are now in post and this was confirmed by the Commissioner along with an explanation regarding their suitability for the role.
- A suggestion was made that an Equalities section should be included in future reports. The Commissioner noted the suggestion.
- An explanation was requested on the monitoring, feedback and reporting process for grant awards made to local programmes. The Commissioner outlined expectations of funding applications for up to £5,000, which are required to demonstrate how a project will deliver in line with one of the Police & Crime Plan's four objectives. A member of the Commissioner's office follow-up with grant recipients for an informal update at the end of the year.
- The Chairman acknowledged the report is in draft format in terms of its design and asked when the final version is due to be published. The Commissioner estimated the report will be finalised for publication to include infographics and photos by the end of July 2020.
- In relation to the Estates Strategy, Members raised concerns regarding police presence from residents of towns and villages without a police station in light of growing populations caused by new housing developments. The Commissioner summarised the national Operation Uplift campaign and recruitment drive at local level. The strategy is under constant review and the Commissioner re-iterated that consideration will be given as to whether current facilities can be transformed to improve public assurance and engagement. A revised strategy will be published later in the year.

- The report was commended for the achievements demonstrated, local farmers' appreciation was passed on with regard to recognising and addressing the rural crime issue. The Commissioner thanked Head of Performance, Graham Kane, for the report's production.
- 35.5 The Vice-Chairman echoed the commendation and complimented the comprehensive report.
- 35.6 Resolved - that the Panel:
- i) Noted the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report and Financial Outturn Report 2019/20.
- 35.7 The Commissioner placed on record her thanks to the Panel for their input and expressed appreciation for their support.

36. Quarterly Report of Complaints

- 36.1 The Panel considered a report from the Clerk to the Panel, providing an update on complaints received in the last quarter.
- 36.2 Under paragraph 2.4.3, it was highlighted that a response had since been received from the OSPCC and would be shared with the Panel in the following week.
- 36.3 Resolved – that the Panel notes the complaints against the Commissioner.

The Chairman welcomed two new attendees to the meeting; Temporary Chief Constable and the Commissioner's preferred candidate to Chief Constable of Sussex Police, Jo Shiner – in addition to WSCC's Principal Solicitor, Diane Henshaw.

37. Procedure to be followed at Confirmation Hearings

- 37.1 The Panel received and noted the procedure to be followed at confirmation hearings of the Panel (copy appended to the signed version of the minutes).

38. Confirmation Hearing for the proposed Chief Constable of Sussex Police

- 38.1 The Panel considered a report by the Police and Crime Commissioner concerning the proposed appointment of the Chief Constable of Sussex Police. The Commissioner introduced the candidate, Jo Shiner, and informed the Panel of the selection process to make the proposed appointment.

38.2 The Chairman invited TCC Shiner to deliver a five-minute verbal presentation on her 'five-year vision for Sussex Police'. The following themes were covered:

- Protecting and working in partnership with communities
- Catching criminals and excellent standards of evidence gathering
- Delivering an outstanding service to victims and witnesses

38.3 The candidate answered questions from the Panel on the following topics:

- 'Policing by Consent' and the challenge to uphold amid COVID-19;
- Managing resource levels in the county's urban and rural areas;
- The challenge of working with colleagues, as an in-house appointment;
- What does success look like in terms of successful and effective policing;
- Involving partners and local communities in policing;
- Motivational techniques and communicating the future direction of the force to all staff;
- Examples of challenging the course of action set out by a superior;
- Maintaining levels of staff performance in high-pressure situations; and
- Career challenges and achievements that will help to perform the role.

39. Date of Next Meeting

39.1 The next meeting of the Panel would take place on 25 September 2020 at 10.30am at County Hall, Lewes – subject to Government guidance.

Part II

40. Exclusion of Press and Public

40.1 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.

41. Private Determination of Recommendations to the Police and Crime Commissioner

Exempt: paragraph 1, Information about individuals

41.1 Resolved - The Panel considered the appointment of the proposed Chief Constable to Sussex Police and it was RECOMMENDED that the proposed candidate be appointed following unanimous agreement. The Panel was content that the professional competence and personal independence of the candidate had been established.

The meeting ended at 2.52pm.

Chairman