

Sussex Police and Crime Panel

27 September 2019 – At a meeting of the Panel held at 10.30 am at County Hall, Lewes.

Present:

Cllr Bill Bentley (Chairman)	East Sussex County Council	Susan Scholefield	Independent member
Cllr Dave Simmons	Adur District Council	Cllr Gill Yeates	Arun District Council
Cllr Roy Briscoe	Chichester District Council	Cllr Rebecca Whippy	Eastbourne Borough Council
Cllr Colin Fitzgerald	Hastings Borough Council	Cllr Jackie O'Quinn	Brighton and Hove City Council
Cllr Johnny Denis	Lewes District Council	Cllr Jay Brewerton	Rother District Council
Cllr Phillip Lunn	Wealden District Council	Cllr John Belsey	Mid Sussex District Council (substitute)
Cllr Val Turner	Worthing Borough Council		
Cllr Dee Simson	Brighton and Hove City Council		

Apologies were received from Cllr Carolyn Lambert (East Sussex County Council), Cllr Tricia Youtan (Horsham District Council), Peter Nightingale (Independent member), Cllr Christian Mitchell (West Sussex County Council), Cllr Norman Webster (Mid Sussex District Council), Cllr Brenda Smith (Crawley Borough Council), Cllr Michael Jones (substitute – Crawley Borough Council) Mark Streeter, Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, Office of the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner (OSPCC) and Mervin Dadd, Chief Communications and Insight Officer (OSPCC).

In the absence of the Vice-Chairman, Mrs Scholefield was elected to fulfil the role for this meeting.

Part I

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
Bill Bentley	Lead Member for Communities and Safety Chairman East Sussex Safer Communities Civil Military Partnership Board
Jay Brewerton	Co-Chair of Safer Hastings and Rother Partnership

Roy Briscoe	Member of Joint Arun and Chichester Community Safety Partnership
Johnny Denis	Co-Chair of Lewes and Eastbourne Community Safety Partnership
Colin Fitzgerald	Employed by Solace Women's Aid Charity Co-Chair of Safer Hastings and Rother Partnership
Susan Scholefield	A serving Magistrate Chair of the Competition Appeal Tribunal and Competition Service Non-Executive 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 of Governors Member of Sussex Crimestoppers
Dee Simson	Member of Brighton and Hove Community Safety Partnership
Brenda Smith	Cabinet Member for Public Protection Chair of Safer Crawley Partnership
Val Turner	Member of Safer Communities Partnership, Adur and Worthing
Norman Webster	Member of Mid Sussex Community Safety Partnership Stakeholder Governor of Queen Victoria Hospital NHS Foundation Trust East Grinstead.
Rebecca Whippy	Co-Chair of Lewes and Eastbourne Community Safety Partnership
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

13.2 Cllr Simson also declared a personal interest in item 6 (Police and Crime Commissioner and Sussex Police Response to Tackling Serious Violence in Sussex) as a trustee of a youth project commissioned as part of the REBOOT programme.

14. Minutes

14.1 The Commissioner requested that minute 11.1, point 3, be amended to better reflect that body-worn cameras could enable victimless prosecutions.

14.2 Resolved – that, subject to the above amendment being made, the minutes of the last meeting held on 28 June 2019 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

15. South East Regional Integration Partnership – Section 22 Agreement

15.1 The Panel considered a report by the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner which was introduced by Katy Bourne, Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner. The Commissioner advised the Panel of the partnership's Terms of Reference, composition and accountability arrangements and described it as an ambitious regional programme. The following key points were highlighted:

- The SERIP was set up with partners and funded by the Police Transformation Fund. SERIP was designed to move policing in a more co-ordinated direction in support of the Policing Vision 2025, which considered 5 key areas.
- The desire was to improve the effectiveness of services through standardising process and technology and aligning key policing functions.
- The Section 22 Collaborative Agreement established the common relationship between the four policing areas in the South East region, however each force does have independence to adopt their own workstreams.
- The Partnership Board considers the overall strategic vision for SERIP and meets quarterly. SERIP meets every six weeks. Performance and progress is formally reported back to the Home Office.

15.2 The Panel asked questions which are summarised below:

- The Chairman asked how the governance of SERIP could feed into the Commissioners monthly Performance and Accountability Meetings (PAMs). The Commissioner advised there was a governance structure for SERIP in place and joint audit committees.
- Members considered the potential for public concern that the governance of SERIP made local policing feel further away and sought reassurance that effective scrutiny was in place particularly in view of the precept element of council tax. The Commissioner advised her role was to connect the public with the police and that PCCs and Chief Constables held the arrangements to account through various boards and bigger projects run by the Home Office.
- Members of the Panel asked how the Commissioner was assured that adequate vetting of prospective staff was being undertaken in the partner forces. The Commissioner advised that Sussex was her area of responsibility in respect of this, however there was a national level PCC who led on transparency and integrity. The Commissioner added that Sussex Police did various dip checks on cases and that public confidence in police was paramount.
- Members considered the strategic complexity of the collaboration agreement and questioned if one area didn't want to adopt a particular function how this was dealt with. The Commissioner advised a commitment had been made to align and deliver the best policing service,

however there were differing models of delivery. She added that 4 forces coming together was a complex arrangement however the Section 22 agreement demonstrated a joint commitment to underpin everything in the policing delivery plan.

- The Chairman considered if the partnership agreement was obtaining value for money and achieving savings. The Commissioner advised forecast savings were required to be reported back to the Home Office and that long-term efficiencies were being established that were not just financial savings.
- The Panel asked the Commissioner for examples of specific local progress or areas of promise. The Commissioner advised there were collaboration units across Surrey and Sussex and that Thames Valley and Hampshire had a historic relationship of collaboration. Examples included resource planning, forensics and dogs and the National Police Air Service.
- Members of the Panel asked if these efficiencies would result in redundancies, or if the collaboration might turn into a merger. The Commissioner advised a merger would be difficult for Surrey and Sussex due to the varying local precept levels. In any case, whilst there were regional conversations about efficiencies there were currently no plans for mergers.

15.3 The Vice-Chairman summarised the item and asked the Panel to reflect on their role as a critical friend on the specific actions of the Commissioner and how she be held to account for effective delivery of those actions.

15.4 Resolved – that the Panel:

- i. Asks the Commissioner to remain responsible for the interests of Sussex taxpayers and reflect on any specific actions she can take to uphold these in respect of local issues and concerns.

16. Public and Panel Questions to the Commissioner

16.1 The Panel considered a tabled version of the written public questions with answers from the Commissioner (copy appended to the signed minutes). The Panel had no supplementary questions in respect of the public questions.

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

- Members asked the Commissioner about the provision of custody suites under the 30 year Private Finance Initiative (PFI) agreement, the associated cost in 2018/19 of £11.6m and closure of the Chichester suite. Members asked if this was good value for money for Sussex residents. The Commissioner advised the PFI agreement was signed before she was in office and had 12 years remaining. The decision pre-dated her election in 2012, and she advised this wasn't a decision she would have likely made. Of 6 custody suites, Chichester was to be closed and significant improvement had been made to Hastings suite to bring it up to modern standards. The Commissioner invited members to visit the Hastings Custody suite. Iain McCulloch, Chief Finance Officer for the OSPCC advised they were actively looking to renegotiate the terms of the remaining

contract considering benchmarking and reviewing prices. News would hopefully be shared before the next precept announcement. He added that Chichester could be opened up at short notice if required. Costs followed detainees and mortgage payments were covered by the Home Office.

- Members considered the HMIC child protection review document and the number of caseloads and questioned if the voice of the child was being adequately heard. The Commissioner advised she had responded to the Chief HMI and this letter was available to view on her website. She would also revisit the report at a future PAM. Caseload numbers were an issue nationally that the Commissioner and Chief Constable were aware of and that with the precept uplift this would hopefully be addressed. The Commissioner further explained the issue of the voice of the child had been picked up by the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners and they were considering how to better display this for policing.
- Members of the Panel asked about the decrease in 101 call-waiting times and how this was achieved. The Commissioner advised a lot of work had gone into improving the 101 service. She explained she questioned the Chief Constable at the September PAM and heard that call handling times were improving owing to a queue buster system which offered a call-back service. There had also been greater recruitment in staff call-handlers and in July the average wait time was 8 minutes and 2 seconds. A “make the right call” campaign had also helped in order to educate the public about what to call about and this would continue to be managed.
- Members considered smaller or absent police stations in certain areas and subsequent feeling of a lack of visual policing. The Commissioner advised she was committed to not closing police stations wherever possible and moving them into areas where they were easy to access. She also cited the additional police officer uplift by 2023 for neighbourhood policing.
- Members of the Panel asked the Commissioner about night time economy in Brighton and Hove and the need for police in places at the times required. The Commissioner advised that as part of the Serious Violence Strategy there would be high visibility patrols, stop and search and knife sweeps and that she would feed the concerns back to the Divisional Commander for Brighton and Hove.
- A question was asked about a local issue of disabled people being prevented from safely using seafronts due to cyclists. The Commissioner and Chairman encouraged members to get to know their Divisional Commanders for local operational issues such as this one.
- The Panel noted the alarming statistics on speeding and the public worry surrounding this. They questioned if the Commissioner was expecting these figures to reduce. The Commissioner advised of Project EDWARD (European Day Without A Road Death) to raise awareness of road safety and better driving. The Commissioner explained she and the Chief Constable were clear about the priority of roads policing and that this was an area of focus in conjunction with work with Community Safety Partnerships.
- Members of the Panel asked the Commissioner if residents could expect a refund on their council tax following the government announcement to increase ranks by 20k over the next 3 years. The Commissioner advised no council tax rebate was planned and that the public were clear they would pay more for more police officers. The Commissioner welcomed the

new uplift and hoped that she would know soon what these numbers would mean for Sussex.

- Members of the Panel asked if Sussex Police was using facial recognition technology and the Commissioner's view on it. The Commissioner advised it was not currently used by local forces and there were many ethical and moral implications. The Commissioner felt conversations needed to be had with the public to gather views and plans were underway to do that. She added technology was moving quickly and that policing was likely to need to utilise data intelligence in the future.
- The Panel considered the fall in convictions of rape cases and asked if Sussex followed this national trend. The Commissioner advised Sussex did follow this trend and that the figures were disappointingly low. She added work was ongoing nationally with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and local criminal justice board working groups. The government had announced an £85m investment into the CPS which was very welcome.

17. Police and Crime Commissioner and Sussex Police Response to Tackling Serious Violence in Sussex.

17.1 The Panel considered a report by the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner which was introduced by Katy Bourne, Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner. The Commissioner told the Panel that the £3.1m of grant funding to tackle serious violence in Sussex would be focussed on the following areas:

- County Lines and misuse of drugs
- Early intervention and Prevention (including REBOOT)
- Supporting communities and partnerships
- Effective law enforcement and criminal justice response.

17.2 The £3.1m of funding had been secured from areas of the Early Intervention Youth Fund (£891,616), Serious Violence Fund (£1.340m) and from the Home Office to create and support a Violence Reduction Unit (£880,000). Sergeant Chris Varrall, REBOOT Programme Manager, provided the Panel with a presentation on the REBOOT scheme (copy appended to the signed minutes). The following key points were highlighted:

- REBOOT is an intervention programme for young people at risk of the early indicators leading to serious violence or exploitation.
- The scheme put children and young people at the heart of the programme, working with them to make decisions.
- There were 9 non area specific coaches who helped developed strength based personal plans. The programme lasted for 3 months but could be enabled for up to 12 months.
- Of 549 referrals to the programme as at August 2019, 376 were accepted and were progressing through the 5 stages of REBOOT. No young person had to date reached stage 5 which would involve receiving a civil injunction.

17.3 Members of the Panel asked questions regarding the REBOOT scheme and wider Serious Violence Strategy. A summary of the main questions and responses were as follows:

- Members queried how the scheme could be sustained after the funding ended. The Commissioner advised she was working with Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and that this was a work in progress.
- The Panel considered the importance of the continuum of need and the effects of local government restructures of prevention and early help services that could lead to a potential loss of key work at levels 1 and 2 of the REBOOT scheme. The REBOOT programme manager advised the project was built to be standalone within the area of need whilst linking in with partners. He advised it could continue on its own in its current context and should be able to carry on if the existing partner platforms were to change.
- Members of the Panel were pleased to see that the scheme addressed mental health issues and considered how the programme planned to engage with partners outside of CSPs. Members also queried how data was being gathered in terms of hot spot areas and locations of offenders and as well as the location of the incident. The REBOOT programme manager advised the analyst team had created a formula which identified these things which could be shared with the Panel after the meeting.
- The Panel considered the data regarding 55 hospital admissions for assault by sharp objects and asked the Commissioner if the focus was too much on gang-related knife crime, as opposed to domestic abuse where this type of violence was common. The Commissioner advised the VRUs were in their infancy and that work to encourage greater partnership working with health partners was in progress in the cases of domestic violence and homicide.
- Members considered if the stages 1 to 5 of REBOOT gave offenders impunity to continue with anti-social behaviour or criminal damage without punishment. The Programme Manager advised that when intervention at stage 1 began, a flagging system was used to notify of any concerning behaviour. Of 376 young people, the majority had not gone on to continue with criminal activity of poor behaviour. This impactful data was required in order to access and secure future funding.
- Members of the Panel considered the wider involvement of a family in the scheme. The Programme Manager advised that families were supported along the journey and that it was being explored how best to deliver this with consistency going forward.
- The Panel asked for the percentage of Children Looked After (CLA) referred to or on the scheme. The Programme Manager advised there were currently no CLA within the scheme as there were existing arrangements for this cohort. He added that as part of planning for the future and sustainability how REBOOT engaged with CLA without interfering with existing mechanisms.
- The Panel asked if individual successes of the scheme were captured and shared in order to deter young people from crime and raise aspirations. The Programme Manager advised the benefits were being seen already and would help mould the project going forward through real examples and success stories on the website.

17.4 Resolved – that the Panel:

- i. Thanks the Commissioner and Programme Manager for their support and work in this critical area.
- ii. Requests that efforts are made by the Commissioner to ensure that the REBOOT scheme becomes a multi-year funded programme.

18. Quarterly Report of Complaints

18.1 The Panel considered a report from the Clerk to the Panel, providing an update on complaints received in the last quarter.

18.2 Resolved – that the Panel notes the complaints against the Commissioner.

19. Working Group Appointments

19.1 The Chairman called for volunteers to form the precept working group.

19.2 Resolved – that the Panel appoints the following members to the precept working group:

- Susan Scholefield (Chairman)
- Jackie O’Quinn
- Johnny Denis
- Roy Briscoe
- Dave Simmons
- Colin Fitzgerald
- Rebecca Whippy

19.3 The Chairman advised that following a member request, a single Task and Finish Group be established to consider estates and PFI agreements to be Chaired by Cllr Denis.

19.4 Resolved – that support officers to the Panel organise the single Task and Finish Group.

20. Reflection on London Gatwick visit

20.1 The Chairman suggested that this item be deferred until all members had undertaken the London Gatwick Tour.

20.2 Resolved – that this item be deferred until the 31 January 2020 meeting of the Panel.

21. Date of Next Meeting

21.1 The next meeting of the Panel would take place on 31 January 2020 at 10.30am at County Hall, Lewes.

The meeting ended at 12.39pm.

Chairman