

Sussex Police and Crime Panel

28 June 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	Cllr Christian Mitchell (Vice-Chairman)	West Sussex County Council
Cllr Dave Simmons	Adur District Council	Cllr Gill Yeates	Arun District Council
Cllr Roy Briscoe	Chichester District Council	Cllr Carolyn Lambert	East Sussex County Council
Cllr Colin Fitzgerald	Hastings Borough Council	Cllr Norman Webster	Mid Sussex District Council
Cllr Johnny Denis	Lewes District Council	Cllr Tricia Youtan	Horsham District Council
Cllr Phillip Lunn	Wealden District Council	Mr Peter Nightingale	Independent member
Miss Susan Scholefield	Independent member	Cllr Rebecca Whippy	Eastbourne Borough Council
Cllr Val Turner	Worthing Borough Council	Cllr Jackie O'Quinn	Brighton and Hove City Council
Cllr Brenda Smith	Crawley Borough Council	Cllr Jay Brewerton	Rother District Council
Cllr Dee Simson	Brighton and Hove City Council		

Apologies were received from Iain McCulloch, Chief Finance Officer, Office of the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner (OSPCC) and Mervin Dadd, Chief Communications and Insight Officer (OSPCC).

Part I

1. Appointment of Independent Members

2.1 Resolved – that the Panel:

1. Renews the appointment of Mr Peter Nightingale, Independent Co-opted Member, to take effect immediately.
2. Renews the appointment of Miss Susan Scholefield, Independent Co-opted Member, to take effect immediately.

2. Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

2.1 Councillor Simmons proposed Councillor Bentley as Chairman of the Panel for the forthcoming year. The proposal was seconded, and the appointment was agreed by the Panel.

2.2 Resolved – that Councillor Bentley is elected as Chairman of the Sussex Police and Crime Panel for the ensuing year.

2.3 Councillor Webster proposed Councillor Mitchell as Vice-Chairman of the Panel for the forthcoming year. The proposal was seconded, and the appointment was agreed by the Panel.

2.4 Resolved – that Councillor Mitchell is elected as Vice-Chairman of the Sussex Police and Crime Panel for the ensuing year.

3. Declarations of Interest

3.1 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
Colin Fitzgerald	Employed by Solace Women’s Aid Charity Chairman of Safer Hastings 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.
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.
Tricia Youtan	Member of Horsham Community Safety Partnership Cabinet Member for Community Safety at Horsham District Council.

4. Minutes

4.1 Resolved – that the minutes of the last meeting held on 26 April 2019 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

5. Annual Review of Membership and Proportionality

5.1 The Panel considered a report by the Clerk to the Sussex Police & Crime Panel which set out the political makeup of the Panel's constituent authorities. A revised version of Appendix 1 was tabled (copy appended to the signed minutes).

5.2 The Panel heard that following the statutory despatch of the agenda, Mid-Sussex District Council confirmed the formation of a Green and Independent Burgess Hill party comprising 4 members, as opposed to 4 Green members for Mid Sussex as was laid out in the original version of Appendix 1. This amendment did not make any change to the proposed proportionality of the Panel.

5.3 Resolved – that the Panel:

- i. Agrees that Brighton and Hove City Council be invited to appoint a Conservative second representative to the Panel.
- ii. Appoints Councillor Dee Simson as second representative for Brighton and Hove City Council to take effect immediately.
- iii. Agrees that either East or West Sussex County Councils be invited to appoint an additional local authority member, for a one-year period of office, and
- iv. Appoints Councillor Carolyn Lambert from East Sussex County Council to take effect immediately.

6. Public Question Time

6.1 Mr Novo asked the following question of the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner:

1. Could you please explain to me why you are not recruiting Special Constables when there is a shortage of officers? I have been looking on your website but there is nothing there.

6.2 The Commissioner gave the following response to Mr Novo's question:

In 2019/20, I increased the precept by £24 per year for an average Band D property. This extra investment, together with the increased precept in 2018/19 and the use of £17m from reserves, has allowed the Force to recruit over above the current establishment - providing faster growth sooner.

I am pleased to confirm that 220 police officers were recruited to Sussex

Police across five separate intakes in 2018/19, together with an intake of 50 experienced transferees from other police force areas in England and Wales, resulting in an additional 270 officers in post by 31 March 2019.

This investment will ensure that by March 2023 there are 250 more police officers, 100 more Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and 50 more specialist staff than there were in March 2018 – a total increase of 400 individuals.

The Sussex Police 2018/22 Transformation Strategy sets out how the Force will use the additional funding to strengthen the Local Policing Model (LPM), improve public contact and modernise policing by investing in technology to meet a range of complex crime demands. The Strategy can be viewed through the following link:

https://www.sussex.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/sussex/aboutus/priorities-and-direction/sussex-police-transformation-strategy_2018-2022.pdf

I will continue to monitor closely the delivery of this investment through the LPM and revised Transformation Strategy and will challenge Sussex Police on behalf of the public, where appropriate.

As you correctly point out, recruitment for Special Constable applications is closed at present. This is because Sussex Police is currently focussing on recruiting, training and tutoring the aforementioned additional police officers, PCSOs and specialist staff that has been made possible by increases to the police precept in recent years.

It is worth emphasising that the recruitment processes for Special Constables require exactly the same amount of time as the processes used to recruit, train and tutor regular police officers.

It is also important to clarify that the recruitment of Special Constables is not a faster or more simplistic alternative to the recruitment of police officers. Special Constables have the same warranted policing powers as regular police officers and it is, therefore, important that they receive training to exactly the same standards.

I can also confirm that Sussex Police will reopen recruitment for Special Constables again, as soon as capacity and resources allow. This is expected to be before the end of the 2019/20 financial year.

6.3 Mr and Mrs Merritt asked the following question of the Commissioner:

2. I realise this may appear to be a very operational issue, only we have taken this problem up with local PCSO's up through the ranks right up to the PCC before over a number of years. We were informed some time ago that up to 400 vehicles were checked and none were found speeding. However, on a daily basis a large number of drivers are still speeding along the 40MPH roads within Ford and the police don't seem to do anything to stop this from happening.

As a member of Ford Parish council, I have raised this problem a number of times at meetings, some of which a representative of Sussex police attended and still nothing seems to be done to stop the drivers from speeding along the 40MPH roads within Ford, especially near the railway crossing. Even if a camera was put up or a police car was parked from time to time, it may show the speeding drivers that a check is being made on a regular basis and then they would start staying within the 40MPH.

Given the PCC gave a commitment that the 18/19 precept increase would in part fund improvements in roads policing, is the Commissioner satisfied the investment has been well spent? Has the Commissioner noticed a reduction in correspondence from residents in other parts of Sussex on this issue?

6.4 The Commissioner gave the following response to Mr and Mrs Merritt's question:

Thank you for sharing your concerns with me about speeding vehicles in and around Ford.

I understand the importance that the residents of Sussex place on road safety and I know from the public meetings I attend, my recent online consultation and the correspondence that my office receives that this remains a priority for the people of Sussex.

I remain fully supportive of the work carried out by Sussex Police and the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP) to tackle and prevent the main causes of serious injuries and deaths on the roads of Sussex.

As acknowledged, the content of your questions relate to operational policing so I have made contact with the SSRP to highlight your concerns with them directly.

The SSRP have offered to conduct some average speed checks on the roads of Ford at different times of the day (morning, afternoon and evening) over the next couple of weeks. The SSRP will also carry out an assessment of the area to understand better whether there are any suitable sites for enforcement activity to take place on.

The data from the speed checks and assessments will provide the SSRP with information and average speeds that can be used to target enforcement activity, as appropriate. This data will also enable the Partnership to consider whether other initiatives, such as deploying 'Slow Down' signage, could be deployed to reinforce the local speed limits.

I have asked the SSRP to make contact with you directly and arrangements will be made through my office. I will continue to monitor the situation in Ford.

I would also like to make you aware of Operation Crackdown. This is a joint initiative run by Sussex Police and the SSRP which provides the communities of Sussex with an opportunity to report specific instances of anti-social driving and enables Sussex Police to develop intelligence regarding repeat offenders,

vehicles, times and locations which can then be used to plan, target and deploy police resources.

If you have any specific information about anti-social driving, including speeding, in and around Ford, please visit the Operation Crackdown website (www.operationcrackdown.org) to report this. Alternatively, you can call 01243 642222 during office hours to speak to an operator. I would ask that you pass these details onto the Clerk of the Parish Council to share with the wider membership.

Road safety is also a theme I challenged the Deputy Chief Constable about during my monthly webcast Performance & Accountability Meeting (PAM) on 21 June 2019. The Deputy Chief Constable confirmed that Sussex Police has invested money into roads policing, including the Serious Collision Investigation Unit. This ensures that the Force is able to investigate properly the most serious collisions that lead to death or serious injury on the roads in Sussex. This session is archived and can be viewed on the webcast through the following link: www.sussex-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/webcasting/.

7. The Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report and Financial Outturn Report 2018/19

7.1 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 the format of the annual report had been amended following feedback, and that it highlighted the work of the team, including some wider issues not obviously recognised as policing. The Commissioner highlighted the 4 priority areas of the Police and Crime Plan:

1. Strengthen local policing

- The Commissioner noted the increase in precept had protected 476 Police Officer posts, in addition to the recruitment of 200 additional police officers.
- The launch of a Rural Crime Strategy would see a network of approximately 40 officers and staff led by Sergeant Tom Carter who would have overall responsibility for rural crime matters.
- An £891k funding award was granted from the Home Office for the youth programme Reboot. Reboot was designed to focus on county lines and young people coming to the attention of the police for the wrong reasons, providing interventions and alternatives.

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

- Increased working with Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs).
- A Restorative Justice Partnership continued to provide successful outcomes for crime victims. There were 20 statutory partners involved delivering justice in different ways.
- Further working with volunteers, including the independent custody visiting scheme, in which the welfare of detainees was

checked upon. Sussex Police's scheme had been awarded platinum status, alongside only 1 other in the country.

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

- A resource intensive victim support service had been introduced.
- Serious fraud case workers had supported 638 victims in the last 12 months.
- There had been a 540% increase in the reporting of stalking.
- The College of Policing had adopted the Commissioner's acronym of FOUR; fixated, obsessive, unwanted, repeated for recognising the signs of stalking and harassment behaviours.
- A vulnerable witness suite was introduced to enable young and vulnerable witnesses to provide evidence remotely and safely.

4. Improve access to justice for victims and witnesses.

- Sussex Police was leading the £40m Video Enabled Justice (VEJ) programme which aimed to provide victims and witnesses with a better experience, whilst saving police officer time.

7.2 The Commissioner noted the draft financial outturn report would be finalised shortly and thanked her team for their hard work.

7.3 The Panel agreed the Commissioner's report was well laid out. A summary of questions and responses were as follows:

- Members noted the appointment of a dedicated modern slavery delivery manager and asked the Commissioner how she saw this postholder engaging with existing partnerships. The Commissioner advised the purpose of the role was to convene the work of partners, and added the position had been exclusively funded by her office. Organised crime groups and exploitation was a national policing priority, and the Commissioner felt it important to fund the post.
- Members considered the funding allocation of £11,137 to Paws Protect and asked that the Commissioner justify this spending. The Commissioner explained the charity supported domestic abuse victims and explained that pets were often used as a form of coercive control in abusive relationships. The Commissioner considered this a unique and vital service for domestic violence victims who could seek refuge knowing their pet was also safe.
- The Panel noted the increased reporting and considered how this translated into more police action, including a call-handler's ability to grasp emerging problems and appropriately deal with the report. The Commissioner advised this was complicated given the plethora of crime, and that experience was vital to draw out the crux of the issue behind the report. The Commissioner mentioned a historic churn of staff in the Command and Control Centre and noted the challenge of keeping staff in those roles. The Commissioner advised whilst the service was not yet perfect, change was happening through better technology, set lists of questions and inspectors in the centres with practical knowledge and experience. The Panel asked for the percentage of leavers in a year, the

Commissioner would provide this information as part of the action list following the meeting.

- Members asked about response times, and if the Commissioner was confident in police contact and response. The Commissioner advised the 101 service was considered at a Performance and Accountability Meeting (PAM) in May which included an update on performance and call abandonments. This remains an item of business at PAMs. Work was ongoing with the single-online home, and that 101 was a problem area for all forces across the country. The Panel requested the Commissioner report on 101 in her annual report next year.
- The Panel considered the success of the Reboot scheme and questioned how this could be sustained when the funding came to an end. The Commissioner advised she joined the Home Secretary for a Serious Violence Task Group as a Police and Crime Commissioner representative, where as part of the Serious Violence Strategy, a youth endowment fund of £200m would be available over the next 10 years for Commissioner's to bid into. The Commissioner also highlighted a number of other local funding streams which could be accessed.
- Members noted the precept uplift of £24 for a Band D equivalent property, and sought assurance for those in Band E to H properties that crime in rural areas would be adequately addressed. The Commissioner advised an extensive consultation process took place to increase the police element of the council tax for 2019/20, and added that 25% of properties were Band E or above. The Commissioner advised that burglary was taken seriously, and that whether rural or urban, all crime was dealt with in the same way.
- Members considered open spaces being blighted by anti-social behaviour and asked for assurance this was being tackled in a timely way. The Commissioner advised the Panel of Operation Minster which would increase the visibility of officers by patrolling areas. The Commissioner also encouraged the reporting of anti-social behaviour and crime.
- The Panel requested further information on support for female offenders. The Commissioner advised she would report back with more detail, this would form part of the action list arising from the meeting.
- The Chairman asked the Commissioner what she would like to see change for Sussex Police. The Commissioner advised she was keen to see improvement across the board, particularly for the 101 service. The Commissioner felt greater visibility would reassure the public of a police presence and improve confidence, as did her PAMs. HMICFRS reports were useful to identify areas requiring improvement and to identify where to direct funding to take pressure away from the police, such as the VEJ programme.
- The Chairman noted the Panel needed to see pace of change in terms of 101 and requested this item return to an appropriate meeting in the future.

7.4 Resolved – that the Panel:

- i. Requests a progress report on the 101 service at a future meeting.
- ii. Notes the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report and Draft Financial Outturn Report for 2018/19.

8. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services Inspection of Stalking and Harassment.

8.1 The Panel considered the HMICFRS report on Stalking and Harassment, the minutes of the Commissioner's PAM of 12 April 2019 and the Commissioner's letter in response to the HMICFRS report. The Commissioner did not have anything to add and the Chairman invited questions from the Panel. A summary of the main questions and responses were as follows:

- Members of the Panel asked about the types of stalking and harassment. The Commissioner advised this was a sensitive area of criminality and that there were many different types. The Commissioner added stalking was a hidden crime, and that often over 100 incidents would occur before a person comes forward to report criminal activity of this kind.
- Members considered a progress report would be helpful to understand if Sussex Police had been successful in tackling the issue of stalking and harassment. The Commissioner advised this was a country-wide issue, and a national police working group had been established, the recommendations arising from which would be implemented into a stalking improvement plan.
- The Panel noted that whilst there had been a 540% increase in reporting these crimes, convictions were decreasing. The Panel considered how these issues extended into other areas such as bullying, mental health and family cohesion, and questioned if Sussex Police had the capacity to understand and explore these problems fully. The Commissioner advised the relative number of convictions when compared to national statistics seemed lower, however when considered in the context of the volume of crimes coming in this was not surprising. The Commissioner was not too concerned currently but was continuing to monitor this.
- Members of the Panel considered cyber stalking and the impacts of hidden apps or spyware. The Commissioner agreed there was a lot of work to be done in this area, and that people needed to be educated to stay safe online.

8.2 Resolved – that the Panel:

- i. Requests to be kept up to date on national progress on the issue, including an update from the Commissioner on the national police working group recommendations.
- ii. Notes the HMICFRS Inspection on Stalking and Harassment and the Commissioner's response.

9. Annual Report from the Host Authority

9.1 The Panel considered a report by the Clerk to the Police & Crime Panel which was introduced by Ninesh Edwards, Senior Advisor, West Sussex County Council. The Panel heard the following key points:

- The Panel had underspent on the available grant this year, however more was spent than last year due to the development of the Sussex Police and Crime Panel website.
- Approximately £6k had been spent on the development of the Panel's website.
- Officer support continued to be provided by West Sussex County Council.
- The Home Office had confirmed the funding for the Panel would remain at £53,300 for administration costs for the next year.

9.2 The Chairman thanked West Sussex County Council officers for their support to the Panel.

9.3 Resolved – that the Panel notes its annual report and budget outturn for 2018/19.

10. Quarterly Report of Complaints

10.1 The Panel heard that no correspondence had been received since the last meeting and there were no ongoing matters to report.

10.2 Resolved – that the Panel note the update.

11. Commissioner's Question Time

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

- The Panel considered how Sussex Police dealt with Class A drug users, noting some other force areas were adopting treatment approaches as an alternative to criminalisation. Members asked the Commissioner if this approach was to be adopted by Sussex Police, how would she hold the Chief Constable to account in terms of differentiating between users and suppliers. The Commissioner advised Class A drugs were illegal and if found would be dealt with appropriately. The Commissioner did not envisage this attitude changing in Sussex.
- Members of the Panel questioned the Commissioner regarding the dismissal of a number of Sussex Police officers due to sexual misconduct. They further queried if she had raised this with the Chief Constable and asked if she was concerned about the reputational damage to Sussex Police. The Commissioner advised she was aware of these events and that the Chief Constable had dealt with them at a professional standards meeting. She added there was no tolerance of this type of behaviour.
- Members asked the Commissioner if the body-worn cameras were proving successful. The Commissioner advised Hampshire Police had run a pilot which had shown the efficacy of the cameras, and had recommended their use is adopted. The body-worn cameras could enable prosecution without the necessity of a court process.
- Members asked about the support available for those with disabilities or learning difficulties when reporting crime, and the projects in place to keep these vulnerable people safe as both victims and perpetrators. The Commissioner advised she was in touch with officers about these particular issues and the adoption of a child-centred policing approach. She added careful working with these cohorts was required to understand the specific needs, and there were officers who were trained in these areas.
- The Panel requested an update on roads policing, citing a concern from the public about speeding and the number of fatalities and serious incidents. The Commissioner advised road safety was a priority area for Sussex Police, tackling excessive or inappropriate speed, driving whilst under the influence and not wearing a seat belt. The Commissioner advised the Panel about Operation Dragonfly and Operation Ride, aimed at building a robust response to road action. Operation Ride in particular targeted areas where there were

reports of anti-social driving on motorcycles. The Commissioner explained the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP) had a responsibility to reduce road casualties through collaborative working between Sussex Police, East and West Sussex County Councils, East and West Sussex Fire and Rescue teams and Highways England, who met regularly. The Commissioner added further investment had been given to the serious collision investigation unit, and that Operation Crackdown was an excellent tool for reporting anti-social driving.

- The Chairman urged the public to report anti-social driving using Operation Crackdown (www.operationcrackdown.org)

12. Date of Next Meeting

12.1 The next meeting of the Panel would take place on 27 September 2019 at 10.30am at County Hall, Lewes.

The meeting ended at 13.15pm.

Chairman