

## REPORT OF THE SUSSEX POLICE AUTHORITY

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The Sussex Police Authority met at Sackville House, Lewes, on 9 December 2010

**Present:** Dr L Bush (Chairman), Mr S Waight (Vice-Chairman), Mr L Barnard, Mr P Bratton, Prof G Bull, Ms E Daniel, Mr G Daniel JP, Mr P Jones, Mr A Price JP, Mrs C Shaves MBE JP, Mr A Smith, Mr R Tidy and Dr R Walker.

The Police Authority considered a wide range of policing issues at the meeting, including the following matters. The full set of reports to the Police Authority can be accessed on the Authority's website [www.sussexpoliceauthority.gov.uk](http://www.sussexpoliceauthority.gov.uk)

### 1. **Serving Sussex 2015**

1.1 Serving Sussex 2015, the programme to design the best model for policing Sussex in the future and at the same time deliver significant budget reductions, is making good progress. The Serving Sussex Programme represents a comprehensive review of policing reaching every area of Force activity.

1.2 The programme is being planned to deliver changes over the next four years – the lifetime of the current Government Spending Review. Some significant changes in Sussex Police are already scheduled to be implemented in April 2011. These include creating a single policing division to serve West Sussex, reorganising the intelligence function, and introducing a new structure for finance and business support, and formal consultation is being carried out with staff affected by the proposals. It is estimated that the Serving Sussex 2015 programme will eventually lead to a reduction of 500 police officer and 550 police staff roles.

1.3 The Authority and Sussex Police are carrying out a Police Station Review, assessing the demand for front offices alongside other methods of contacting the police. The data collected suggests that the public are increasingly using digital channels to contact the police. The Review is seeking ways to offer people a wider and more convenient range of choices when accessing police services. The Authority is aware of the importance of undertaking equality and environmental impact assessments during this period of significant change. A process has been developed for testing the anticipated impact of decisions on different groups of people, both public and workforce; identifying how any disproportionately adverse impact can be mitigated and ensuring the eventual effects of decisions are monitored.

### 2. **“Serving Sussex, Together”**

2.1 The Authority has for a number of years hosted an annual meeting with Sussex local authority leaders and chief executives. This year's meeting took the form of a seminar and was held on 19 November 2010. The seminar which was titled “Serving Sussex, Together” discussed opportunities for collaborative working and the real energy for collaboration to be harnessed within the region, enabling the authorities and agencies to work better together in order to meet operational demands within the financial constraints that are familiar to all elements of the public sector in Sussex.

2.2 The seminar explored the implications of budget cuts for the way the public sector organises the delivery of essential public services for the future, and how services can be tailored to meet need, demand and style in accordance with the expressed wish of the public. The seminar reaffirmed the Authority's and Sussex Police's commitment to meeting the aspirations of the Serving Sussex 2015 programme, and working better with our public sector partners within the County and other partners regionally.

2.3 As a result of these discussions, agreement was made to:

- Explore the awarding of a single audit contract for all Sussex public sector bodies (through the South East Seven group);
- Actively pursue together opportunities to share and rationalise estate and future capital projects; and
- Work closer on the sharing of data in order to reduce duplication in public engagement, surveys and in the identification of the service expectations and priorities of the public of Sussex.

2.4 The Authority will be hosting a similar event in 2011 which is currently scheduled for 18 November 2011. The energy that was evident in this event was clear, and it is recommended that progress towards achieving goals outlined are maintained via the Serving Sussex 2015 Programme, a report to the Authority in May 2011, and at the November 2011 seminar.

### **3. Community Resolutions**

The Authority has supported Sussex Police in promoting 'Community Resolutions' as an alternative way of dealing with less serious offences allowing officers to use their professional judgment when dealing with offenders. Community Resolution can be used for low level public order, criminal damage, theft, and minor assaults and, in appropriate cases, will enable victims to have effective resolution to their crime. The experience elsewhere in the country where Community Resolutions has been implemented, suggests that offenders will receive speedy justice and there will be a reduction in bureaucracy for police officers. Community Resolutions can include referral to other agencies, victim and offender conferencing to identify the impact and consequences of the offending behaviour, apologising to the victim in person or in writing or possibly making some form of reparation, like fixing any damage done or paying for it to be fixed.

### **4. Annual Audit Letter**

The Annual Audit letter issued by the Audit Commission indicates that the Authority has coped well in dealing with several major changes to accounting practice in 2009-10 and had prepared financial statements to a high standard. The District Auditor has issued an unqualified audit opinion and an unqualified conclusion stating that the Authority has satisfactory arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The Audit Letter can be viewed on the Police Authority website:

[www.sussexpa.gov.uk/fileUploads/Authority/9\\_Dec/2009-2010\\_-\\_AnnualItem\\_12\\_appendix\\_Audit\\_Letter\\_-\\_Sussex\\_Police\\_Authority\\_v1\\_1.pdf](http://www.sussexpa.gov.uk/fileUploads/Authority/9_Dec/2009-2010_-_AnnualItem_12_appendix_Audit_Letter_-_Sussex_Police_Authority_v1_1.pdf)

**5. Retirement of Dr John Godfrey - Chief Executive**

The Authority paid warm tribute to the Chief Executive, Dr John Godfrey, who retired on 31 December 2010. Dr Godfrey has made a significant contribution to policing in Sussex and the Authority conveyed its thanks and appreciation to Dr Godfrey for his dedication and commitment to the Authority and to policing, both locally, regionally and nationally, and wished him a successful retirement.

LAURIE BUSH  
Chairman

9 December 2010

