

Sussex Police and Crime Panel

7 April 2017 – at a meeting of the Panel held at 10.30 a.m. at County Hall, Lewes.

Present:

Paul Wotherspoon	Arun DC
Dave Simmons	Adur DC
Lee Wares	Brighton and Hove CC
Eileen Lintill	Chichester DC
John Ungar	Eastbourne BC
Bill Bentley	East Sussex CC
Rosalyn St Pierre	East Sussex CC
Kate Rowbottom	Horsham DC
Tony Nicholson	Lewes DC
Norman Webster	Mid Sussex DC
Tom Graham (1)	Rother DC
Claire Dowling	Wealden DC
Sandra James	West Sussex CC
Brad Watson OBE	West Sussex CC
Val Turner	Worthing BC
Peter Nightingale	Independent
Susan Scholefield (2)	Independent

(1) Substitute for Eleanor Kirby-Green

(2) Substitute for Graham Hill

Apologies for absence were received from Emma Daniel (Brighton and Hove CC), Mr Graham Hill (Independent), Cllr Michael Jones (Crawley BC) and Cllr Eleanor Kirby-Green (Rother DC).

Warren Davies (Hastings BC) was absent.

In attendance: Katy Bourne, Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner; Mark Streater, Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer of the Office of the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC); Iain McCulloch, Chief Finance Officer of OSPCC; and Ninesh Edwards and Laura Johnston (Host Authority - West Sussex CC).

Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and informed the panel that Graham Hill had reached the end of his term as an Independent member and Cllr St Pierre would not be standing in the May election.

The Chairman thanked both for their service since the Panel's creation in 2012.

Declarations of Interest

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

Panel Member	Personal Interest
Graham Hill	Volunteer at Victim Support charity

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Bill Bentley	Chairman of East Sussex Safer Community Board Member of LGA Safer and Stronger Communities Board and LGA National Member Champion for domestic abuse
Emma Daniel	Member of Brighton and Hove Safe in the City Partnership Board
Eileen Lintill	Member of Chichester Community Safety Partnership
Tony Nicholson	Chairman of Lewes Community Safety Partnership
Michael Jones	Chairman of Safer Crawley Partnership
Kate Rowbottom	Chairman of the Community Safety Partnership at Horsham
Warren Davies	Chairman of the Safer Community Partnership at Hastings
Kevin Jenkins	Member of Adur and Worthing Safer Communities Partnership.
Claire Dowling	Chairman of Safer Wealden Partnership
Val Turner	Member of Safer Communities Partnership, Adur and Worthing
Eleanor Kirby-Green	Member of Safer Rother Partnership
Susan Scholefield	A serving Magistrate Chair of Appeal Tribunal
Nigel Peters	Member of Safer Arun Partnership
Len Brown	Member of Safer Arun Partnership
Paul Wotherspoon	Chairman of Safer Arun Partnership
Dave Simmons	Chairman of Adur & Worthing Safer Community Partnership Chair of Trustees of CHAT (Coping with Historic Abuse & Trauma) Charity
John Ungar	Member of Eastbourne Community Safety Partnership

Minutes

99. Paragraph 75, bullet 4 - The Panel requested an update on the recruitment of PCSO's in the autumn. *The Commissioner advised that 196 PCSOs would be in post by the end of January.*

100. Paragraph 75, bullet 4 - The Commissioner stated that she did not believe that she had used the word 'artifice' as part of her response. The Chairman agreed that officers would check the webcast to check what had been said and update the minutes if necessary/

101. Resolved – That, subject to the correction in paragraph 75 above, the minutes of the meeting of the Sussex Police and Crime Panel held on 20 January 2017 be confirmed as a correct record.

Urgent Matters

102. There were no urgent matters.

Harassment and Stalking

103. The Chairman informed the meeting that he had requested this item because he felt that it was the Panel's duty to question the Commissioner on her work in

this area given that her Police and Crime Plan was heavily focussed in victims, supported with an increased level of precept.

104. The Panel made the points below in the discussion that followed:

- Concern was expressed regarding the taking of witness statements over the phone rather than face to face. *The Commissioner explained that Sussex Police had recently changed the way it responded to low risk (grade 3) domestic abuse incidents where previously statements would have been taken over the phone. Witnesses would now receive a timely risk assessment visit.*
- Questioned what improvements residents could expect to see following the significant investment to protect vulnerable people. *The Commissioner informed the meeting that an improvement plan to tackle stalking and harassment had been drawn up. Inspector's briefings now included a specific section on stalking and harassment. 50% of the force had now completed mandatory stalking training. 80% of cases now involved cyber stalking and further funding had been awarded to help people stay safe online. The Commissioner urged members to work with their communities and health partners. Events had been planned to tie in with National Stalking Week.*
- The panel were concerned that the public felt that they may not be taken seriously if they report a stalking crime. *The Commissioner responded that 200 stalking crimes were reported last year which was a 45% increase in the last six months. Sussex Police have the highest level of reporting accuracy at 95%. The Commissioner was monitoring the response of Sussex Police to Harassment and Stalking crimes in relation to the improvement plan. The Commissioner had requested that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) carry out an inspection of the Harassment and Stalking Improvement Plan.*
- The panel commended the Commissioner on her efforts in relation to tackling harassment and stalking but questioned when they might be likely to see evidence of a turnaround accepting that a rising number of victims felt comfortable in reporting? *The Commissioner hoped to see an improvement by the time HMIC returned later in the year but there did need to be time for the training to roll out across the force and bed in. The Commissioner was encouraged by the increase in reporting of crimes. It was important that the public understood what constitutes stalking.*
- The panel questioned what links were made with the NHS; recognising that mental illness in perpetrators was a significant issue? *The Commissioner informed the meeting that links are made with the NHS at the Pan Sussex Board. The working group shares best practice but there are issues around data sharing. The Commissioner encouraged Community Safety Partnerships to work closely to form links. A partnerships manager had been appointed to liaise with partners on collaborative working.*

105. The panel made the following recommendations:

- i. Police Officers, Police Community Support Officers (PSCO's) and front line civilian staff (call handlers) should be trained to recognise harassment and stalking, even if it is not reported as such
- ii. There should be a co-ordinated approach across all Community Safety Partnerships across Sussex for National Stalking week

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC's) Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) programme

106. The Panel received the report by the Police and Crime Commissioner providing the outcome of the annual inspection published on 2 March 2017 and the response of the Commissioner. Mark Streater, Chief Executive of the OSPCC, introduced the report and explained that it outlined the state of policing at the end of the year.

107. The Panel made the points below in the discussion that followed:

- The panel expressed disappointment at the 'requires improvement' judgement in relation to effectiveness. The panel felt that the effectiveness report reiterated their concerns around neighbourhood policing and victim vulnerability. *The Commissioner shared the Panels' disappointment in the 'requires improvement' judgment but informed the meeting that Sussex Police had seen a reduction in anti-social behaviour (15%) and serious and organised crime in the last year. The inspection had taken place during a time of unprecedented change and many officers did not understand the new operating models as these were being implemented in stages. There was a need to modernise local neighbourhood policing to meet differing demands. The judgment was borderline between 'good' and 'requires improvement'. The Commissioner was confident that improvements would be seen by the next inspection.*
- The Panel highlighted that local policing was an issue that was raised at many meetings they attended. The Panel did not feel that residents were convinced by the new policing model. *The Commissioner acknowledged that there was a challenge for Sussex Police to communicate with their local communities successfully. Sussex Police have carried out research to get feedback from residents by setting up an online panel relating to local policing issues.*
- The Panel noted that the report referred to the impact changes to the neighbourhood policing teams were having on rural crime. Crimes such as the theft of oil and diesel, had a significant impact on small and medium enterprises. The Panel questioned what the Commissioner was doing policy wise? *The Commissioner responded that she had challenged the Chief Constable about Sussex Police's support to rural communities at her Performance and Accountability meeting on 24 February 2017. Assurances were sought that the same level of service would be provided by the local policing program including prevention work by PCSO's, PC's and partners. A 24/7 emergency response would be provided out of the custody centres and standby locations which may result in slightly longer response times. There were a number of initiatives designed to keep rural communities safer – Farmwatch, Horsecatch, Pathwatch and Heritagewatch.*
- The Panel expressed concern that crime figures were increasing and this had not been addressed by the Commissioner. The Panel were not reassured that the figures would not continue to increase as budgets reduced. *The Commissioner acknowledged that the number of burglaries of dwellings had increased and this was raised with the Chief Constable every quarter. The Commissioner had questioned the performance of Operation Magpie in light of the figures. Sussex was eighth of 43 for risk per thousand of burglaries. It was thought that the rise in burglary dwellings could be attributed to darker evenings and the release of known suspects but this was being closely monitored.*

108. Resolved –

That the panel noted the report

Quarterly Report of Complaints

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

110. Resolved – that the Panel notes the report.

Written Questions

111. The Panel received and noted the schedule of written questions submitted prior to the meeting and the responses from the Commissioner's Office (copy appended to the signed copy of the minutes).

Commissioner's Question Time

112. The Panel raised the following issues and questions of the Commissioner:

- The Commissioner was asked about her recent attendance at a Headteachers' meeting in West Sussex and the support that Sussex Police provides to schools to tackle the problems they face with drugs. *The Commissioner responded that the Assistant Chief Constable was the lead officer for young people and would work closely with schools and local authorities. Sussex Police had invested in youth intervention teams and worked to build relationships with schools. There needed to be a joint initiative to tackle the issue.*
- It was noted that a new divisional commander had attended a meeting with a local community group which had been very well received as they were armed with better information on the new policing models and plans than the officers that generally attended the meetings. *The Commissioner encourages senior officers to get out and about in their communities but how they spend their time is an operational matter.*
- The Panel sought reassurance that there was ongoing training for officers and support staff to recognise incidents of modern slavery. *The Commissioner stated that this was a key priority area for police forces nationally. Training on the issue was run by the College of Policing. Sussex Police were considered good at tackling modern slavery.*

Thanks

113. The Commissioner thanked the Chairman for his service to the Panel since its inception.

The Vice Chairman extended his thanks to the Chairman on behalf of the Panel.

Date of next meeting

114. The next meeting date of 30 June 2017 was noted.

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The meeting ended at 12.52 p.m.

Chairman