

Sussex Police and Crime Panel

4 July 2016

Annual Report from the Host Authority

Report by The Clerk to Sussex Police and Crime Panel

Recommendations

That the Panel:

1. Notes the budget outturn for 2015/16;

1. Background

1.1 The Panel incurred the costs below in respect of its operation in the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016.

- £60,403 for administrative expenses.
- £3,127 for members' expenses.

Total: £63,530

In line with the terms of the grant, the Host Authority (West Sussex County Council) submitted a claim for this amount in April 2016.

1.2 The Panel considers a summary of its operating costs every year, at its Annual Meeting. A breakdown of expenses can be found on the Panel's webpage: www.westsussex.gov.uk/pcp.

2. Discussion

2.1 The Panel formally met four times formally in 2015/16 to undertake its statutory duties.

2.2 In order to implement the Chief Constable's Local Policing model, the Panel was briefed on the technologies Sussex Police plans to adopt to maximise the productivity of frontline officers, and was given an interactive demonstration. The Panel raised concerns around connectivity, reliability, and security, and was encouraged to learn how these issues had been addressed.

2.3 Reflecting ongoing concerns raised by residents, the Panel continued to monitor performance of the non-emergency 101 call handling arrangements. The Panel considered a performance update report in April 2015. Noting that the Commissioner had continued to challenge the Chief Constable on the

issue, the Panel was pleased to learn that performance had improved significantly, and took the opportunity to question the Commissioner around the resilience of the service.

- 2.4 At its 2015 Annual Meeting the Panel sought reassurance from the Commissioner that the increase in reported crimes related to domestic abuse, serious sexual offences, anti-social behaviour and hate crimes was due to the promotion and encouragement of reporting of these crimes, and did not reflect an increased incidence of crime. The Panel learned about the Local Policing Model, due to be implemented over the following 4-5 years, but, while understanding the changing nature of crime, voiced concerns around the plans for PCSOs across Sussex.
- 2.5 The Panel considered the PCC's work in enabling the approach to tackling child sexual exploitation, and in working closely with the Chief Constable to understand what Sussex Police (in partnership with the relevant agencies) had done to develop a local problem profile and action plan. The Panel posed questions around trust in the police, the adequacy of resources, support for victims, and reporting mechanisms.
- 2.6 Following discussion at the Annual Meeting, and, again, reflecting concerns raised with Panel members by residents, and an increase in the numbers killed and seriously injured on Sussex roads, the Panel requested an item on Road Safety. The particular area of focus was enforcement of speed limits, and the PCC offered to feed back concerns to an upcoming meeting of Sussex Safer Roads Partnership.
- 2.7 The Panel worked closely with the Commissioner, both in formal session, and in Working Group meetings (see 2.8) to develop a budget and proposed precept in the light of the financial outlook. Over the course of the process Panel members voiced concerns about morale, reserves and neighbourhood policing. The Panel urged the Commissioner to help Sussex Police better make the case for a shift away from a visible policing presence, in the face of significant public disquiet. The progress on work to save money through closer collaboration with neighbouring police forces was an area the Panel continued to press the Commissioner on.
- 2.8 The Police and Crime Plan Working Group acted as a critical friend to the development of the "refreshed" Police and Crime Plan and the budget, and presented its report to the Panel's meeting in January 2016. The Victims' Services Working Group (VSWG) visited the Victims Assessment and Referral Centre, in order to inform its work, and scrutinised the Commissioner's work in respect of restorative justice.

3. Funding for 2016/2017

- 3.1 The Home Office has confirmed that funding will remain unchanged for 2016/17, comprising £53,300 for Panel administration costs, and up to £18,400 (20 x £920), available for members' allowable expenses). However, since there is no longer a ring fence, an underspend in member expenses can now be used to offset an overspend in administrative costs.
- 3.2 The funding will be paid in arrears, in six-monthly instalments. The PCP must publish details of all Panel expenditure, including administration costs and individual Panel member claims for expenses, on its website.
- 3.3 It is anticipated that the staff costs of administering the Panel will be achieved within the envelope of funding provided by the Home Office for the forthcoming year.

4. Resource Implications and Value for Money

- 4.1 The Constitution of Sussex Police and Crime Panel states that its total running costs shall be contained within the funding provided by the Home Office.

5. Risk Management Implications

- 5.1 None

6. Other Considerations – Equality – Crime Reduction – Human Rights

- 6.1 Not applicable

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Appendix

- 1. Work Programme 2016/17