

SUSSEX POLICE AUTHORITY – 29 JULY 2010

REPORT OF THE PROTECTIVE SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

REPORT BY CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE

Introduction

- 1.1 This report informs the Police Authority on matters considered by the Protective Services Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 22 June 2010. The meeting was attended by Dr R Walker (Vice-Chairman), Ms E Daniel, Mr A Price and Mrs C Shaves MBE JP.
- 1.2 The Committee considered a wide range of policing issues at the meeting including the following matters. The full agenda and reports for this Committee are available on the Authority's website, and the webcasting of the meeting can also be accessed via the website.

Cumbrian Shootings and Firearms Licensing

- 2.1 The Committee received a presentation by Mrs Carol Pople, Force Firearms and Explosives Licensing Manager on the position in Sussex in relation to firearms licensing.
- 2.2 The Committee welcomed the proposal to institute a procedure to enable a small group of members to inspect the operation of firearms licensing in Sussex and to carry out a short review. It was agreed that this group would be led by the Lead Member for Rural Affairs, Mr Bob Tidy.
- 2.3 The Committee noted the statement made by Sir Hugh Orde, the President of the Association of Chief Police Officers on 9 June 2010, following the tragic events in Cumbria.

Local Policing Plan Performance

- 3.1 The Committee reviewed the progress against the Local Policing Plan (LPP) targets for the Keeping People Safe section covering the fourth quarter: January, February and March 2010.
- 3.2 The Keeping People Safe section of the LPP covers the majority of performance measures relating to crime. During the reporting period overall crime rates have reduced, contributing to a reduction of 6,101 fewer crimes.
- 3.3 The Committee was pleased to note that the domestic burglary crime rate had shown a turnaround in performance equating to 319 fewer victims of crime. The burglary detection rate and the target to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on Sussex roads continues to be a focus for the Authority, Sussex Police and our partners.

Border Policing

- 4.1 Border policing is of particular interest to Sussex, as a coastal county and the home of the country's second busiest airport at Gatwick. Given the challenges posed to the UK from terrorism, the Committee are aware of the importance to constantly review how to keep the borders safe and secure.
- 4.2 The Committee recognises that there is an intention to create a dedicated Border Police Force as part of the refocused Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA), to enhance national security, improve immigration controls and crack down on the trafficking of people, weapons and drugs.
- 4.3 The Authority is well placed to influence and engage in the emerging policy and the Chairman and Chief Executive discussed these matters with Nick Herbert MP, Policing Minister, on 25 June 2010 when he visited Sussex Police.

Domestic Violence Detections

- 5.1 The Committee received a report the use of the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Harassment (DASH) risk assessment tool used by officers after intervention in order to examine the effect that intervention has had in the overall reduction of danger to the victim (and often their family).
- 5.2 The Committee learnt that DASH concentrates on the critical high risk cases. All high risk cases are taken to a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). MARAC data is collected nationally with particular focus on repeat cases. An oversight group has recently been established to review Sussex MARACs with an aim to ensure a consistent approach to high risk cases.
- 5.3 The Authority have been supportive of the idea of encouraging Sussex Police to be victim focused but there is a lack of proposals around how to effectively monitor the outcomes and impact of Sussex Police DV interventions. The Committee accepted the recommendation in the report that using the DASH to monitor impact of intervention was not a good way of moving forward, and accepted that the development work on MARACs would be of value.

Dog Unit

- 6.1 The Committee welcomed a report covering the different areas of work involving the Dog Unit. The Dog Unit is part of the Operations Department within Sussex Police.
- 6.2 The Dog Unit has assisted in the arrest of 1,136 suspects during 2009-2010, attending 11,051 incidents. During the 2009-10 policing year the Dog Unit attended 449 searches for drugs, cash and firearms, recovering drugs estimated to value £2.2m.

- 6.3 The Committee noted that a saving of £200 has been made per visit by using the Force Dedicated Dog Legislation Officer to identify Pit Bull type and Dangerous Dog Act identified breeds instead of using the Metropolitan Police to assess dog type.
- 6.4 Gatwick Dog Unit has been under the line management of the Sussex Police Dog Unit Inspector for the last two years which has enabled a better working relationship between both units, financial savings and the sharing of skills. The Gatwick Unit provide support to the protective security policing of the Airport.
- 6.5 The Committee agreed to appoint a Lead Member for the Dog Unit. The Chief Executive will make the appointment under delegated powers following discussion with members.

Major Crime

- 7.1 The Committee received a report on major crime including a summary of the most recent annual year homicide analysis, a description of the specialist resources within the major crime branch and three case studies portraying the varied demands of major crime work. The Committee requested a further report to coincide with the next annual homicide assessment which will include 'near miss' data

Programme Synergy

- 8.1 The Committee received a report on the progress of joint working in Programme Synergy at Gatwick Airport.
- 8.2 Programme Synergy has three work streams: review of police model at the airport; partnership working looking at the potential to enhance integrated working between the Force and the airport operator, and the joint legislative requirements for the Airport Security Planning Provisions from the Policing and Crime Act 2009.
- 8.3 The Committee noted that the Chief Executive and the Lead Member for Gatwick Airport will be briefed in detail on the policing model shaped through Programme Synergy at the earliest opportunity.

Risk Management

9. The report described how risks identified as part of the directions of the Protective Services Scrutiny Committee are currently being managed and outlined progress that the Force has made with embedding dynamic risk management processes into decision making meetings.

Recommended – that

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) the Authority endorses the proposal that a small group of members inspect the operation of firearms licensing in Sussex and carry out a short review; and

- (3) The Chairman of the Committee and the Lead Member for Domestic Violence would be engaged with the development of the recommendations regarding the monitoring of Domestic Violence interventions and outcomes.

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