

SUSSEX POLICE AUTHORITY

PROTECTIVE SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Protective Services Scrutiny Committee (PSSC) held on 16 March 2010 at County Hall, Lewes.

Present: Mr L Barnard (Chairman), Dr R Walker (Vice-Chairman), Mrs C Shaves MBE JP, Mrs S Knight and Mr B Tidy.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

59. Apologies for absence were received from Ms E Daniel and Mr P Bratton.

URGENT MATTERS

60. No urgent matters were raised.

DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

61. No disclosures of personal interest were made.

REPORTS

62. Copies of the reports referred to in these minutes are included in the Minute Book.

LOCAL POLICING PLAN 2009-10 PERFORMANCE

63. The Committee received a report setting out progress against the Keeping People Safe section of the Local Policing Plan (LPP) 2009-10 for the months of October, November and December 2009.
64. The Committee were pleased to note that overall crime rates had reduced, contributing to a reduction equating to 3,526 fewer crimes and achieving the target of a reduction of 4.3 per cent against a target of a 3 per cent reduction.
65. Members had previously expressed their concern with regard to the burglary dwelling rate which had seen a further increase in September to plus 7.3 per cent. The Committee welcomed the fact that performance through to December 2009 has shown a reduction of 1.5 per cent whilst achieving the target for domestic burglary detection rates.

66. The target to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on Sussex road remains a concern for the Committee
67. **Resolved** – That the Committee remain focused on the progress and performance across the Force against the Keeping People Safe section of the LPP.

PROTECTIVE SERVICES MINIMUM STANDARDS AND THREAT ASSESSMENT MODEL

68. The Committee received a report on the current position of Sussex Police in meeting the national timelines for compliance with the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) Protective Services Minimum Standards (PSMS).
69. The Committee received an explanation on how the current PSMS were broken down under ten strand headings: counter terrorism, domestic extremism, major crime, protecting vulnerable people, serious and organised crime, civil contingencies, critical incidents, firearms, public order and road policing. Under each heading a number of high level descriptions of the service are provided and these are known as Standards. Standards outline the minimum standard Sussex Police must achieve. Sitting below each standard are varying definitions and these describe how a force might measure its performance against the Standard.
70. The Keeping People Safe Board had agreed that strand owners or their representatives meet monthly with their co-ordinator to provide updates on progress made towards compliance.
71. **Resolved** – That the Committee note that total compliance is required by April 2011.

REGIONAL FORENSICS COLLABORATION PROGRAMME

72. The Committee received a report on the Regional Forensics Collaboration Programme.
73. The Committee considered the collaboration activities within Forensic Services. No other national forensic collaboration project has progressed to a point where a recognised model now exists for significant changes to structures.
74. The collective spend on forensic services by the four South East Region Forensic Collaboration forces is approximately £30m which includes £15m spent on outsourced forensic laboratory services. The Committee welcomed the fact that early scoping work has identified as much as 15 per cent may be saved from this combined spend.

75. **Resolved** – That the Committee continues to oversee the proposals and supporting rationale for a phased approach of option papers, business plans and subsequent implementation of any programmes of work within the South East Region Forensic Collaboration Project.

THE POLICE ROLE IN THE SUSSEX RESILLIENCE FORUM RESPONSE TO THE SWINE FLU PANDEMIC

76. The Committee received a report explaining the role of the Force in the multi-agency response to the H1N1 Pandemic, often referred to as Swine Flu.
77. At an early stage both the Force and other partners within the Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF) recognised the potential for the pandemic to have a serious and detrimental effect on the ability to continue to provide a high level of service to the people of Sussex.
78. During the second week of the pandemic three sub-groups were formed: SRF Pandemic Flu Group who would update the countywide Flu Pandemic Plan in line with advice from the Department of Health, Gold Communications Group who would be tasked with warning and informing colleagues and the public with key messages and the Mass Fatalities Group who would consider all possible eventualities should the pandemic cause widespread death. Initially these meetings were held daily and then weekly as the risk became more managed.
79. **Resolved** – That Authority involvement be considered for any future response to a major incident.

SUSSEX RESPONSE TO SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS 2010

80. The Committee considered a detailed report on Operation Luge, the Force response to the heavy snow that fell in early January 2010.
81. It was reported that heavy snowfall had brought severe disruption to road, rail and air travel and that large numbers of Force employees were unable to get to their normal place of work.
82. Acting on Met Office information a Police Gold Group was formed, contributors included Divisions, Departments, Sussex Resilience Forum and multi-agency partners in order to assess the impact on Force continuity.
83. Sussex Police staff were advised to attend their normal place of work but if they were unable to do so, to take their uniform and personal protective equipment home and report to their nearest police station.

84. The impact of the snow highlighted the importance of having plans and arrangements in place. The Committee noted that the Sussex Resilience Forum will now write a Snow and Ice Plan through the Weather and Environment Standing Group.
85. **Resolved** - that
- (1) the Committee endorse the record of thanks that have been communicated to staff for their efforts to attend their normal place of work during the severe weather; and
 - (2) the Committee consider the Snow and Ice Plan at a future meeting of the PSSC.

AUDIT COMMISSION THEMATIC REVIEW ON ROAD SAFETY

86. The recently published Audit Commission Thematic Review on Road Safety identifies key issues, the first being that highway authorities need to work closely with Highways Agency, Police, National Health Services and Fire and Rescue services.
87. In Sussex the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP) promotes and delivers road safety. The SSRP bring together all the agencies and bodies identified in the Audit Commission report.
88. The Committee endorsed the continuing work of the Force in delivering parts of the national intelligence data picture relating to killed and seriously injured to the Road Policing National Forum
89. The Committee congratulated those involved with 'Embrace Life', a short film about road safety that has received global acclaim.
90. **Resolved** – that the Authority commits to the SSRP as the key partnership focused on casualty reduction.

OPERATION OTTER

91. The Committee received a report summarising the policing operation for the Conservative Party Conference in Brighton.
92. The Committee were pleased to note that the strategic intentions had been met and that no significant incidents had been reported during the conference.
93. **Resolved** – That the Operation Otter team be thanked for the success of Operation Otter.

SECTION 44 UPDATE

94. The Committee received a detailed report on Section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000. The Force remains focused on the requirement to review the authorisation and use of the power. Authorisation under this power may only be given by officers of at least the rank of Assistant Chief Constable.
95. The Committee supported the conclusion to the report that the Force continued to remain cogniscent of current issues and developments in respect of Section 44 powers and reviews its use of powers accordingly.
96. **Resolved** – That a further report be submitted to the Committee in the Autumn on the number of Section 44 authorisations and the resultant police actions.

OPERATION PEEL

97. The Committee received a report detailing the policing operation for Lewes Bonfire Celebrations 2009.
98. Following a review of bonfire event policing issues in 2008, a seminar took place which was attended by other emergency services, local authorities, bonfire societies and members of the Authority. They concluded that the best way to improve the safety of this event would be to reduce the number of people attending which would reduce the associated risks with large crowds.
99. The Committee welcomed the significant co-operation with partners in developing the plan for Lewes Bonfire Celebrations and the arrangements in place to form a Safety Advisory Group to oversee the development of public safety and other events in Sussex.

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

100. **Resolved** – that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the remaining business on the grounds that if the public and press were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as specified under paragraph 14 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, being information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

Lionel Barnard
Chairman