

REPORT OF THE SUSSEX POLICE AUTHORITY

The Sussex Police Authority met at Sackville House, Lewes, on 15 December 2011

Attendances:

Mr S Waight (Chairman), Mrs C Shaves MBE JP (Vice-Chairman), Mr P Bratton, Prof G Bull, Dr L Bush, Ms E Daniel, Mr G Daniel JP, Mr B Duncan, Mr P Evans, Mr P Jones, Mrs S Knight, Mr A Price 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

Police Accountability in Partnership

- 1.1 The Police Authority has for a number of years hosted an annual seminar with Sussex local authority Leaders and Chief Executives. This year's seminar was held on 18 November 2011 and was titled "Police Accountability in Partnership" and focused on the transition from the Police Authority to a Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) following the passing of the Police and Social Responsibility Act 2011. Representatives included all local authorities in Sussex, both East and West Fire Services, representatives from the National Health Service, Criminal Justice Board, and the Sussex Association of Local Councils.
- 1.2 The feedback from delegates has been overwhelmingly positive, agreeing that the event was a valuable opportunity to add momentum to transition with a focus on what the change means for the public sector and the public in Sussex. The Police and Criminal Justice Minister The Rt Hon Nick Herbert MP, who attended the seminar, commended the approach that Sussex Police Authority is taking to transition ensuring that not only police accountability remains strong over the next 12 months but that the smoothest possible handover is made to the benefit of the public following the arrival of the PCC in November 2012. Following the seminar, there is a commitment within local authorities in Sussex to begin the process of establishing a shadow Police and Crime Panel which will be administered by one of the authorities within Sussex.
- 1.3 The Police Authority welcomed the success of the event and the Chief Executive paid tribute to the Deputy Chief Executive and the Authority team for their hard work in preparing for and managing such a successful event. The seminar provided a valuable opportunity for district and borough councils, as well as the county councils and Brighton and Hove City Council and other partners to contribute their views on policing issues relating to the PCC. It was suggested that the Police and Crime Commissioner should consider continuing the annual event.

Local Policing Plan Target Setting

- 2.1 Each year the Police Authority, in consultation with Chief Constable, sets out the arrangements to police Sussex for the next three years. Previously the Force was required to take account of the annually refreshed Home Secretary's Strategic Policing Priorities (SPP) when setting the Local Policing Plan (LPP), but this requirement has now been discontinued. The introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners in November 2012 has led the Home Secretary to introduce a Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) which will outline what the national threats are and the policing response required to counter them.
- 2.2 The Police Authority has directed that the 2012-13 LPP should be guided by community consultation and identify where and how Force and partners priorities link together to tackle crime and the causes of crime. To support the priorities, a number of performance indicators will be set and the Authority supported the use of the targets from the 2011-12 plan in the 2012-13 plan, where valid, which allowed effective benchmarking and maintained consistency through a time of widespread change. The drive and emphasis is on local people setting the priorities and being empowered to hold the police to account for their delivery.
- 2.3 The targets were discussed and officers agreed to give further consideration to the 'drive fewer miles' target and the inclusion of a target relating to the positive reporting of hate crime and domestic abuse. The LPP Board will continue to develop the narrative and targets for final approval by the Authority in February 2012, alongside the budget proposals. The Police Authority and Sussex Police websites will be used to provide wide access to the Plan, and discussions will be taking place with Councils and other agencies regarding access to the Plan.

Revenue Budget 2012 – 13 and Capital Strategy to 2015

- 3.1 The provisional grant settlement for 2012-13 has been received and is not expected to significantly change the assumed funding. A revised Medium Term Financial Forecast was circulated to members and will be updated at the Authority's budget setting meeting in February 2012.
- 3.2 The Resources Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting on 1 December 2011, had considered the budget options presented based on a precept increase of 2.5% for 2012-13 and the following two years (giving an indicative net revenue budget of £252.3m); or a 0% precept increase in 2012-13 (based on accepting the one-off freeze grant offered by the Government of £2.6m) and a 2.5% increase for the following two years (giving an indicative net revenue budget of £250.1m).
- 3.3 The Authority supported the approach to be taken towards the acceptance of the one-off 2012-13 council tax freeze grant with the suggestion that the Authority's reserves be used to further stabilise the budget. The Authority also acknowledged the importance of ensuring that issues of equality should be taken into account throughout the budget setting process.

Investors in Volunteers (IiV)

4. It was highlighted that the Police Authority has an excellent record in setting up and managing its Independent Custody Visiting and CCTV Monitoring Schemes. The Schemes have now been submitted for the Investing in Volunteers (IiV) Quality Standard for Volunteer Management. A considerable amount of work is involved in seeking the award which has been undertaken by the ICV Scheme

Manager Mrs Dinah Longden who was commended for her commitment and contribution to the ICV Scheme.

Annual Audit Letter

5. The Audit Commission has highlighted in the Annual Audit Letter that the Authority has coped well in meeting the immediate pressures of the downturn in the economy through the Serving Sussex programme, which aims to achieve the right model of policing in Sussex with a sustainable cost. The District Auditor expressed the view that the Authority was continuing to deliver oversight and scrutiny of the Force and was in a firm and stable position to enable its responsibilities to be transferred to an elected Police and Crime Commissioner. The Authority has expressed its congratulations to the Treasurer and the Director of Finance and their respective teams for the work undertaken in the preparation of the accounts.

Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2011-12

6. The Authority has complied with all of the relevant statutory and regulatory requirements, which require the Authority to identify and where possible quantify the levels of risk associated with its treasury management activities. Further information relating to the Authority's risk taking in relation to its financial policy would be available at the next meeting of the Authority in February. The Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2011-12 was approved by the Authority.

Future of the Local Standards Framework

- 7.1 The Decentralisation and Localism Act includes provision for the abolition of the Standards Board for England from 1 April 2012. The Authority will continue with the Code of Conduct that is currently in use and processes will be adjusted to ensure continuing good governance of the Authority.
- 7.2 The Authority endorsed the Committee's thanks to the Independent Chairman of the Committee, Mrs Christine Swan MBE and the Independent Vice-Chairman, Mr V Kempner, for their continuing contribution to both the Standards Committee and the work of the Authority in general, and noted that both were willing to continue in those roles until the election of the Police and Crime Commissioner in November 2012.

STEVE WAIGHT
Chairman
December 2011

