

# REPORT OF THE SUSSEX POLICE AUTHORITY

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The Sussex Police Authority met at Pelham House, Lewes, on Thursday 17 July 2003.  
Attendances:

Mr M Dunn (Chairman), Mr L H Barnard, Mrs M G Bishop, Mr K C Bodfish OBE, Dr L E Bush, Mr R J Emerson, Mrs M D Johnson DL, Mr P Jones (Vice-Chairman), Mr J Mortimer, Mr D O Rogers, Mr I Scotland, Mrs A Swain, Mr R Thomas, Mrs M C Turner and Dr J M M Walsh RD.

## **1 Policing Performance**

1.1 Based on national statistics, Sussex had improved its performance in comparison with its family of Forces and with the other forty-two forces across the country. On total crime, Sussex was the safest Force area in its family of Forces and the ninth safest in the country. On burglaries, Sussex was the third safest in the family and the twelfth safest in the country; on violent crime, second safest in the family and eleventh safest in the country; and on vehicle crime, third safest in the family and fourteenth safest in the country. For Sussex, the areas of concern, in comparison to its family of Forces and nationally, remain as the need to improve detecting burglaries, vehicle crime and robberies.

1.2 After the first few months of the current Policing Plan year, the Police Authority noted that there had been some encouraging signs, for example there had been fewer major crimes so far compared to 2002/03 and some of the Policing Divisions had made strong starts on burglary detections.

1.3 The Police Authority welcomed the fact that the Force intended to focus on burglary detections by an initiative across Sussex to improve detection rates and to continue that focus subsequently in the policing districts. The Case Directors, being appointed as part of the budget improvements this year, and their teams, were starting to make an impact. Arrests across Sussex were at an all time high in May – 3,896 people arrested – an increase of 10% on the Force's previous best arrest rate. It was now necessary to convert those arrests into offences brought to justice.

1.4 The Police Authority emphasised the importance of sustaining improvements in detections or other outcomes generally as a result of special initiatives taken across the Force area.

## **2 Race Equality Schemes**

2.1 Both the Police Authority and Sussex Police had previously published separate Race Equality Schemes in accordance with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The Schemes have now been reviewed by the Authority and the Force in the light of further guidance from the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE).

2.2 In addition, the Police Authority was informed of progress made in 2002/03 on implementing the Authority's scheme which it had approved on 18 April 2002. An action plan was presented to the Authority showing the steps taken and to be taken.

2.3 The Authority's published scheme had been reviewed following discussions with the CRE and the scheme, first published on 31 May 2002, had been revised to reflect the advice and guidance received. Subject to further consultations with the CRE about a few

aspects of the scheme, the Authority approved the revised scheme for publication on the Police Authority's website [www.sussex.police.uk/spa](http://www.sussex.police.uk/spa). A limited supply of hard copies will also be produced for distribution to libraries.

2.4 The Force's scheme, first published on 31 May 2002, after being endorsed by the Police Authority at its meeting on 18 April 2002, had also been reviewed in consultation with the CRE. The amended scheme, endorsed by the Authority, will also be published on the Sussex Police website and a limited number of hard copies will be produced for distribution to libraries and Police Stations across Sussex and for sending to partner organisations.

### **3 Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy**

#### Introduction

3.1 The Authority has endorsed the Sussex Police Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy for implementation in partnership with local communities. Tackling anti-social behaviour and disorder is a priority in the National Policing Plan 2003-2006: the primary objective for the police service being to deliver improved police performance and greater public reassurance. This objective is reflected in the Local Policing Plan for Sussex 2003/04 which includes the Operational Priority of increasing public confidence in policing across the whole community. In addition, local Public Service Agreements for Brighton and Hove, East Sussex, and West Sussex all contain a 3 year "stretched" target for reducing public place violent crime.

3.2 The Police Authority and the Force agree that anti-social behaviour in all its guises is unacceptable because the behaviour of the few damages and blights the lives of many. Unchecked, anti-social behaviour can lead to a downward spiral for communities in which the environment deteriorates, fear and intimidation grow, and quality of life is eroded. Such situations inevitably provide fertile ground for increases in crime. The term 'anti-social behaviour' is broad and the behaviours that constitute it are wide ranging. Whilst individuals, parents, families, voluntary and statutory agencies all have key roles to play, Sussex Police will demonstrate leadership and determination in tackling anti-social behaviour.

3.3 In discharging its duty Sussex Police will: work in partnership with other agencies and the community to reduce anti-social behaviour; robustly enforce anti-social behaviour legislation; increase police visibility as reassurance to the community and as a deterrent towards anti-social behaviour; conduct preventative work; and divert offenders.

3.4 In order to inform, drive and monitor this work Sussex Police will: work with local partnerships, especially statutory Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs); use a problem solving approach to take account of the offender, the location and the victim; include assessments of public confidence and the level of anti-social behaviour in National Intelligence Model (NIM) processes; use NIM "problem profiles" and tasking and co-ordination structures to direct activity; review progress at Force Performance Meetings; develop processes and the infrastructure to support the application of new legislation; and provide training for relevant staff.

#### Enforcement

3.5 Enforcement is a key element in reducing nuisance and anti-social behaviour. Sussex Police will enforce its Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy through:

- (i) applying a quality focussed investigation approach to the investigation of crime associated with anti-social behaviour;
- (ii) implementing fixed penalty procedures to deliver swift, simple and effective justice;

(iii) agreeing Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) – sub-criminal anti-social behaviour needs to be checked to protect individuals and to prevent those responsible from going on to commit crime. Non-statutory ABCs provide a speedy and low cost way of tackling early indications of this level of anti-social behaviour;

(iv) applying for Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) - these provide for the imposition of restraints and prohibitions which are legally enforceable and for which breaches are arrestable offences. Sussex Police, especially through CDRPS, will encourage those agencies, including local authorities, which are permitted to seek ASBOs, to do so. Where other agencies institute ASBO applications, the Police will support them.; and

(v) licensing enforcement – the links between crime, anti-social behaviour, drugs and alcohol are well recognised. Whilst forthcoming legislation seeks to remove some existing restrictions on licensed premises and the sale and supply of intoxicants, it will also provide additional powers for dealing with those premises and individuals whose activities lead to disorder. Also, the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 enables the police to close premises used in connection with the use or supply of Class A controlled drugs where the premises are associated with disorder or serious nuisance and provides a power to disperse groups of young people who are not under effective control and pose a significant and persistent problem.

3.6 The Authority and the Force recognise that, in partnership with local authorities, effective enforcement can generate public confidence, protect individuals and deter offending.

#### Police visibility

3.7 The results of community consultation frequently demonstrate demands for greater police visibility. Whilst visibility alone is not the solution, there is no doubt that communities find the presence of a capable guardian (whether a police officer, community support officer, or neighbourhood warden) reassuring and a crime deterrent.

3.8 In tackling anti-social behaviour Sussex Police will use the National Intelligence Model (NIM) to prioritise needs and direct resources to where they can have the most effect. The Force will also use specific operations as a means of tackling crime and anti-social behaviour, and encourage the development of 'guardianship' schemes in local communities.

#### Prevention

3.9 In preventing anti-social behaviour, the Strategy places importance on:

(i) Education – the Sussex Police Education Programme, which includes 'Citizenship' inputs, is presented to schools by Schools Liaison Officers (SLOs) who have a high degree of visibility with children and young people;

(ii) Schools Intervention Officers – the intervention role is supported in some areas of the Force with partnership funded Schools Intervention Officers. The Force will support the further use of such officers in schools with the agreement and support of partner agencies;

(iii) Truancy – targeted truancy operations, in partnership with Local Education Authorities, and co-ordinated by the Community Safety Department will continue;

(iv) Youth Crime Prevention Strategies – Youth Offending Teams undertake a great deal of proactive preventive work, and are largely responsible for co-ordinating Youth Crime Prevention Strategies across Sussex. The Force will support these strategies;

(v) Mediation – Sussex Police recognises the value of mediation services as a means of preventing the escalation of disputes and the rise of anti-social behaviour; and

(vi) Designing Out Crime - can be achieved through careful environmental design. This applies not only to the built environment but also to the way in which public places and buildings are used.

### Diversion

3.10 The Authority and the Force will use the Joint Initiative Fund (JIF) to support schemes that aim to reduce crime and disorder including anti-social behaviour. Such schemes will be based on proven need and assessed in respect of the achievement of their objectives. Schemes supported include: sport diversion; summer activity schemes; and music and arts programmes. The Strategy also recognises the role of both Youth Offending Teams and Drug and Alcohol Action Teams in providing important diversionary projects.

### Partnership

3.11 Various partnership arrangements which can assist in preventing anti-social behaviour are also included in the Strategy such as :

(i) Neighbourhood and Community Wardens – have been appointed in many parts of the Force area. The Force will seek to use its powers under the Police Reform Act 2002 to provide an accreditation scheme for Community Safety Officers that will enable warden schemes to take a greater role in enforcement and public reassurance, especially in identified "hot spot" areas;

(ii) CDRPs - the 13 statutory CDRPs in Sussex are each required to produce an Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy in addition to their triennial Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy. Sussex Police supports the appointment of an Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator for each CDRP who will act as focal point for discharging the partnership's duty and facilitate improved joint work;

(iii) Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) – the 3 inter-agency YOTs are each staffed with a Police Inspector on secondment. Their primary objective, to reduce youth offending, links directly to reducing anti-social behaviour;

(iv) Drug and Alcohol Action Teams (DAATs) – Sussex Police are members of, and work in conjunction with, the 3 DAATs in Brighton and Hove, East Sussex, and West Sussex. Government funds directed through the DAATs have, in part, been used to support programmes to deter youths from drug taking and have also aided major proactive police operations;

(v) Local Authorities – are closely involved with the work of CDRPs and are also able to seek ASBOs in appropriate cases. With the responsibility for liquor licensing transferring from the Courts to Local Authorities the functions of planning and licensing will be co-located. The Licensing Act 2003 will

require local authorities and the police to have jointly-agreed protocols for licensing enforcement by July 2004; and

(vi) Business Crime Reduction Partnerships – the development of these Partnerships and the shared use of information through projects such as the Home Office approved Business Information Crime System (BICS) are supported. Evidence prepared through BICS has been used to secure ASBOs to protect retailers and shoppers; this will be developed further.

### Problem Solving

3.12 Nuisance and anti-social behaviour can take a wide variety of forms, and the Force needs to be able to identify and analyse trends in order to address problems. As most nuisance and anti-social behaviour is conducted at a local level, Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs) are best placed to identify such problems. While responses will often include enforcement options, a problem solving approach will also examine the root causes with a view to removing the cause or the opportunity for the problem to arise.

### National Intelligence Model (NIM)

3.13 Partnership work involved in tackling nuisance and anti-social behaviour with CDRPs needs to dovetail with police NIM processes. Police tasks drawn from CDRP action plans need to be supported by internal police tasking and co-ordination. Similarly, the Force should seek to involve CDRP partners and members of the extended police family within its processes where possible. Getting this balance right will be essential to achieve maximum efficiency.

### Performance Review

3.14 The police are subject to many performance indicators: foremost are the levels of priority crime and associated detection rates. The level of priority crime and levels of public confidence in policing will be influenced by the levels of anti-social behaviour. It follows, therefore, that a performance review focus is required in this area of policing operations. Performance in reducing anti-social behaviour will be reviewed at Force Performance Meetings.

### Infrastructure

3.15 Effectiveness in tackling anti-social behaviour will, in part, be determined by the organisation's ability to: readily share data with other agencies; operate comfortably within the spheres of civil and criminal law; provide organisational support to staff; and enable partners through accreditation.

3.16 To these ends the Crime and Disorder Data Information Exchange (CADDIE) system will be developed to improve the shared access of data and to assist in the exchange of personal data through a pan-Sussex protocol.

3.17 The Force's Criminal Justice Department, Force Solicitors, the Crown Prosecution Service, the Courts and external partners such as local authorities will need to develop a broader approach to inter-agency working to support needs of new legislation operating within the civil and criminal spheres. Suitably integrated procedures will assist police staff in readily accessing appropriate support.

3.18 A system of accreditation for Community Safety Officers will be devised and implemented to enable community wardens to have appropriate legal powers.

## Training

3.19 It is essential that the opportunities to tackle anti-social behaviour created by the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 are mainstreamed in to neighbourhood policing. Sussex Police Training Department will ensure that a suitable training package is identified for delivery either by distance learning or through Divisional Training Officers.

## Conclusion

3.20 The Authority and the Force take the issue of anti-social behaviour very seriously and, through the implementation of the Strategy, intend to demonstrate leadership and determination in tackling the problem. In strongly endorsing the Strategy, the Police Authority has emphasised the importance of tackling anti-social behaviour in partnership with local authorities and other agencies/bodies. The Authority has acknowledged that this is an issue on which everyone concerned needs to work closely together in order to make the necessary impact. Copies of the agreed Strategy are being sent to each of the CDRPs across Sussex.

## **4 Force Operational Review – Local Action Teams**

4.1 The Force Operational Review sought to ensure the involvement of local communities in taking responsibility for their particular area. As part of this process, Local Action Teams (LATs) are being introduced by Sussex Police to increase community involvement in tackling crime and disorder at local levels as outlined in the Local Policing Plan for 2003/04. Various schemes are being piloted.

4.2 An example of one such pilot scheme is in Coldean, Brighton, where, following a public meeting, the District Commander identified a number of community champions who formed the Coldean Local Action Team. This team has matured into a small neighbourhood group capable of devising and delivering a credible Local Action Plan and commissioning action from mainstream services, including the Police, to target victims, locations and offenders directly associated with anti-social behaviour.

4.3 Experience with this project has shown that both crime and disorder and other forms of anti-social behaviour can be reduced by a relatively small number of measures which are very specific to the particular neighbourhood. The police input has been through targeted controls at very specific times and places identified by the local community. The LAT recognises that the police are uniquely qualified to provide the enforcement and coercion part of the measures with the longer term diversion and target hardening aspects commissioned by the LAT. In Brighton, similar schemes are being developed in Woodingdean, Saltdean and Rottingdean, with more comprehensive statutory provision under the Neighbourhood Renewal Scheme in Hollingdean and the New Deal for Communities in the Moulsecoomb and Whitehawk areas of Brighton.

4.4 The Police Authority has welcomed the development of LATs.

MARK DUNN

*Chairman*

17 July 2003