

REPORT OF THE SUSSEX POLICE AUTHORITY

The Sussex Police Authority met at County Hall, Lewes, on Thursday, 15 April 2004.
Attendances:

Mr M Dunn (Chairman),
Mr L H Barnard, Mrs M G Bishop, Mr K C Bodfish OBE, Dr L E Bush, Miss J A Corcho, Miss M Dean, Miss A Graves, Mr J Mortimer, Mr D O Rogers, Mrs A Swain, Mrs M C Turner and Dr J M M Walsh RD.

1 Joint Annual Report/Newspaper for 2003/04

1.1 The Police Authority has again agreed to publish its joint Annual Report with the Chief Constable in the form of a newspaper which will be delivered to over 707,000 homes across Sussex with the bulk of the delivery to be completed by the end of August 2004. Further discussions are to be undertaken about completing the whole delivery in early Autumn.

1.2 In addition to the joint Annual Report/Newspaper being delivered to households, it will be published on the Sussex Police and Police Authority websites for access by the public and steps will be taken to ensure that local authorities, including parish and town councils across Sussex, have e-mail access to the document.

1.3 The joint Annual Report/Newspaper will also be available as a "talking newspaper" distributed throughout the Sussex area to visually impaired community groups. Also, translation into other languages can be requested through the Force website or by calling the number published in the Report/Newspaper.

2 Beacon Council Scheme Awards 2004

2.1 The Police Authority was pleased to learn that the application made by the West Sussex Community Safety Partnership for Beacon Status for Community Safety had been successful. The application had been made on behalf of the whole of Sussex partnership, covering West Sussex County Council, all seven District Councils, the Police Authority and Sussex Police. This was a significant achievement as the West Sussex application was the only successful one made for a whole County Partnership.

2.2 The Police Authority has congratulated all those involved from the Partnership who contributed to the bid and to the assessment process.

3 Public Consultation

3.1 The Police Authority has been informed of progress with the Spring round of public consultation meetings/events held across Sussex. The Authority was pleased to hear that the Spring round of meetings/events had recorded much improved attendances compared to last Autumn's round of meetings and there had been positive feedback about the style and nature of the meetings. Inevitably, though, some issues had arisen which have been considered further by the Authority because of their implications for future meetings. These issues included the length of presentations and the need to allow the public more time to raise questions.

3.2 In addition, the Police Authority has agreed that there is a need to adopt a more flexible approach to consulting with local people through partnership arrangements or otherwise so as to meet local circumstances. Last year, the Police Authority agreed to hold at least two public consultation meetings/events in each Crime and Disorder Reduction

Partnership (CDRP) area each year working in partnership with the CDRPs. The Authority has now agreed that this approach should be balanced against what is felt to be needed to fit local circumstances. For example, in Adur CDRP area, a "State of the District" event is planned for later in 2004 which it would be very appropriate for the Police Authority to participate in rather than holding a separate public meeting.

3.3 The Police Authority has agreed that its consultation arrangements should be as flexible as possible in working with partners to enable the Authority to fulfil its obligations for consulting local people on such matters as the Local Policing Plan. While there is no statutory obligation on the Authority to have two public meetings each year, there is a requirement to consult local people. The Authority has agreed to amend its approach to public meetings to allow officers greater flexibility so that the Police Authority's arrangements can be styled on what may be needed to fit local circumstances. To an extent, the Authority felt that this was already happening as, for example, its recent public consultation event in Arun was linked with the District Council's regular question and answer session with the public and, at Chichester, the public consultation event in May is being geared to younger people.

3.4 The Authority has agreed that its public consultation meetings/events should not always follow a set pattern and should be as flexible as possible so as to allow the Authority to consult with local people in a variety of ways.

4 Neighbourhood Policing

4.1 Building on the successful introduction of neighbourhood policing, made possible by the changes arising from the Chief Constable's Force Operational Review and the Authority's continuing investment in front-line investment, the Police Authority has been informed about the Chief Constable's proposals to ensure that the public is fully aware of the more local policing style that is now being delivered to them.

4.2 Work is now being undertaken on maximising the opportunities for neighbourhood policing teams to deliver increased awareness and visibility. Ways of doing this include having local town names shown clearly on police vehicles and on the high visibility jackets worn by officers; and providing information to every local resident explaining who their local police are at neighbourhood and district level and how they can be contacted.

4.3 The Authority has noted these developments and has asked to be kept informed.

5 Crime and Disorder Data Information Exchange (CADDIE)

5.1 Sussex is leading the country in partnership data sharing. The Crime and Disorder Data Information Exchange (CADDIE) website was launched in Sussex last February. The launch followed a successful pilot scheme in Crawley and Horsham last Autumn which proved that the mapping and sharing of data can reduce crime and disorder.

5.2 The project has brought together all the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partners to provide detailed maps, graphs and reports of what is actually happening in their areas and to provide assistance in tackling problems. The mapping system provides partners with hotspot and depersonalised data to locate problems and is a major factor in tackling local crime and disorder.

5.3 The public also has access to information with the aim of reducing their fear of crime in their area and encouraging public engagement.

5.4 The project has been funded and supported by the Police Information Technology Organisation (PITO), the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the

Government Office for the South East via the Sussex Crime Reduction Partnership. CADDIE is considered to be in the top ten e-government projects in the country. Other authorities have expressed an interest in implementing the system.

6 Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)

6.1 The Police Authority receives an annual update on the operation of the Sussex Police town centre CCTV schemes and the contribution made by CCTV towards policing in Sussex.

6.2 For the period from 1 April 2003 to 29 February 2004 (the latest date for which information was available), CCTV operators detected crimes which resulted in the arrest of 1,605 offenders. Of those arrests, 497 were for crimes involving street violence and 173 for car crime offences. During the period, 1,863 incidents were resolved using CCTV, so freeing police officers to concentrate on other demands. At the date of the Authority's meeting, the figures for March 2004 were still being collated.

6.3 The Sussex Police CCTV scheme continues to deliver a significant contribution to policing across Sussex. Over 44,700 incidents were observed and recorded in the year to the end of February 2004 with 2,921 being initiated by the camera operators.

6.4 The number of Sussex towns with operational CCTV schemes has now increased to 31 with the addition of four cameras in Petworth, funded by Chichester District Council, and one camera in Rustington, funded by Arun District Council. The Sussex scheme now has a total of 318 fully functional cameras in towns across Sussex. In addition, by July 2004, two additional cameras, funded by Eastbourne CDRP, will be installed in Eastbourne to support crime reduction by extending camera coverage into areas previously not covered.

6.5 Automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) equipment has been installed and commissioned in the Brighton control room and a large number of City cameras have been modified to work with the software. Further work is in hand on developing the system with a view to its application in other areas.

6.6 An increasing number of local authority CCTV partners are now considering using the camera infrastructure for non-policing purposes, such as licensing enforcement. Crawley Borough Council have used their cameras for this purpose for the past two years, with some notable successes, while Hastings now has a dedicated control room and use their cameras to support council parking attendants. A regional CCTV user group has been formed to help facilitate the broader use of CCTV cameras.

6.7 The Authority also noted that Sussex Police has recently introduced five mobile CCTV vans. The use of these is to be expanded later this year. Further information will be presented to the next meeting of the Authority.

MARK DUNN

Chairman

15 April 2004