

Public Document Pack

Sussex Police and Crime Panel

Members are hereby requested to attend the meeting of the Sussex Police and Crime Panel, to be held at **10.30 am** on **Friday, 28 June 2024** at **County Hall, Lewes**.

Tony Kershaw

Clerk to the Police and Crime Panel

20 June 2024

Webcasting Notice

Please note: This meeting will be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via East Sussex County Council's website on the internet – at the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm that the meeting is to be filmed. Generally the public gallery is not filmed. However, by entering the meeting room and using the public seating area you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes. The webcast will be available via the link below: <http://www.eastsussex.public-i.tv/core/>.

Agenda

10.30 am 1. **Appointment of Independent Members**

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 requires the Panel to have a minimum of two Independent Co-opted Members. Independent Co-opted Members have one-year terms and can be re-appointed annually for up to five years.

Mrs Susan Scholefield's appointment commenced in June 2022.
Mr Keith Naphthine's appointment commenced in June 2021.

In line with the recommendations of the interview panel, the Panel is asked to:

1. Renew the appointment of Mrs Susan Scholefield, Independent Co-opted Member, for a one-year term.

2. Renew the appointment of Mr Keith Naphthine, Independent Co-opted Member, for a one-year term.

2. **Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair**

The Panel will be invited to appoint a Chair and Vice Chair for the 2024/25 municipal year.

3. **Declarations of Interest** (Pages 5 - 6)

Members and officers must declare any pecuniary or personal interest in any business on the agenda. They should also make declarations at any stage such an interest becomes apparent during the meeting. Consideration should be given to leaving the meeting if the nature of the interest warrants it. If in doubt

contact Democratic Services, West Sussex County Council, before the meeting.

4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** (Pages 7 - 12)

10.50 am 5. **Annual Review of Membership and Proportionality** (Pages 13 - 18)

Report by the Clerk to the Police and Crime Panel.

The Panel is required to undertake an annual review of proportionality to take account of any changes to the political composition of constituent authorities during the course of the previous year. The attached report provides the latest political composition of local authorities in Sussex and a calculation of proportionality of the Panel.

The Panel is required to agree additional appointments, where these will make the Panel more politically proportionate.

11.00 am 6. **Public and Panel Questions to the Commissioner** (Pages 19 - 20)

The Panel is asked to raise any strategic issues or queries concerning crime and policing in Sussex with the Commissioner.

Written questions may be submitted by members of the public up to two weeks in advance of a meeting. The Commissioner or the Chairman (as appropriate) will be invited to provide a response by noon of the day before the meeting. Questions, together with as many responses as possible, will be published on the Panel's website (www.sussexpcp.gov.uk).

One question has been received from a correspondent. The Panel is invited to note the response and pose any supplementary questions.

11.30 am 7. **The Commissioner's Annual Report and Financial Outturn Report 2023/24** (Pages 21 - 74)

The Police and Crime Panel is required to scrutinise the Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report.

The report provides an update on performance against the three Public Priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan 2021/24 – and the policing and crime objectives contained within – for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

The report also presents the draft revenue and capital outturn position for the overall police budget under the direction of the Police and Crime Commissioner for 2023/24, ahead of the audited accounts being published.

1.00 pm 8. **Annual Report from the Host Authority** (Pages 75 - 78)

Report by the Clerk to the Police and Crime Panel.

The Host Authority is required to submit to the Panel an annual budget report detailing income and expenditure of the Panel during the previous year. The report also includes a summary of the main work of the Panel over the last year.

The Panel is asked to note the report.

9. **Correspondence Since the Previous Meeting** (Pages 79 - 80)

Members are asked to note a letter received from the Minister of State for Crime and Policing.

The correspondence was sent in response to the [Panel Chair's letter \(dated 21 March\)](#), in relation to the review of fairer funding formula for policing.

1.20 pm 10. **Quarterly Report of Complaints** (Pages 81 - 84)

Report by the Clerk to the Police and Crime Panel.

The report provides details of the correspondence received and the action taken.

The Panel is asked to consider the report and raise any issues or concerns.

1.30 pm 11. **Date of Next Meeting and Future Meeting Dates**

The next meeting of the Panel will take place on 27 September 2024 at 10.30 a.m. at County Hall, Lewes.

Future meeting dates are set out below:

- 31 January 2025
- 17 February 2025
- 14 March 2025.

To all members of the Sussex Police and Crime Panel

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Table of standing personal interests

28 June 2024

The Panel is asked to agree the table of personal interests below.

Any interests not listed which members of the Panel feel are appropriate for declaration must be declared under agenda Item 1, Declaration of Interests, or at any stage such an interest becomes apparent during the meeting.

Table of standing personal interests

Panel Member	Personal Interest
Cllr Bannister	Cabinet Member for Tourism, Leisure, Accessibility and Community Safety at Eastbourne Borough Council.
Cllr Baynham	Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources at Horsham District Council.
Cllr Bangert	Cabinet Member for Communities and Wellbeing at Chichester District Council.
Cllr Bennett	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communities and Communications at Mid Sussex District Council.
Cllr Hilton	Leader of Hastings Borough Council.
Cllr Rogers	Chair of Safer Hastings Partnership. Co-Chair of Hastings and Rother Community Safety Partnership.
Mrs Scholefield	Senior Independent Director of Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Mental Health Foundation Trust. A serving magistrate.
Cllr Whorlow	Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing at Worthing Borough Council.
Cllr Williams	Cabinet Lead for Public Health and Asset Management.

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Sussex Police and Crime Panel

22 March 2024 – At a meeting of the Committee held at 10.30 am at County Hall, Lewes.

Present:

Cllr Cross	East Sussex County Council	Cllr Czolak	Brighton & Hove City Council
Cllr Bangert	Chichester District Council	Cllr Khan	Crawley Borough Council
Cllr Bannister	Eastbourne Borough Council	Cllr Standley	East Sussex County Council
Cllr Baynham	Horsham District Council	Cllr Keene	Lewes District Council
Cllr Bennett	Mid Sussex District Council	Cllr Drayson	Rother District Council
Cllr Williams	Wealden District Council	Cllr Mitchell	West Sussex County Council
Cllr Whorlow	Worthing Borough Council	Mr Napthine	Independent member
Mrs Scholefield	Independent member		

Substitutes:

Cllr Cross, East Sussex County Council (In place of Cllr Hilton)

Apologies were received from Cllr Rogers (Hastings Borough Council), Cllr Boram (Adur District Council), Cllr Walsh (Arun District Council), Cllr Bagaeen (Brighton and Hove City Council) and Cllr Ali (West Sussex County Council).

Also in attendance: Also in attendance: Mrs Katy Bourne (Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner), Mark Streater (OSPCC Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer), Iain McCulloch (OSPCC Chief Finance Officer) and Mervin Dadd (OSPCC Chief Communications and Insight Officer).

Part I

24. Chair's Welcome and Introductions

24.1 The Vice-Chair, Cllr Czolak, stood in to chair the meeting following apologies received from Cllr Rogers.

25. Declarations of Interest

25.1 No interests were declared in addition to the standing table of personal interests.

26. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 26.1 The Chair asked members to note the following amendment to minute 17.2 from the Panel meeting on 26 January, at the request of the OSPCC:

The Chief Constable has made a commitment that Sussex Police will attend the scene of all residential burglaries reported to them to try and secure the best possible evidence that will support effective investigations and maximise the potential for delivering successful outcomes. It was also explained that a large amount of evidence pertaining to retail crimes is not actionable due to internal processes preventing the Force's access to it.

- 26.2 Resolved – that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 January 2024 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chair.

27. Panel Questions to the Commissioner

- 27.1 The Chair invited questions from the Panel to the Commissioner. A summary of the main questions and responses were as follows:

Question 1: Does the Commissioner know how the Force responded to a letter sent by Suella Braverman MP (September 2023) to all PCCs regarding police involvement in political matters and political activism?

Answer: The Commissioner said that Sussex Police was one of the forces included as part of inspections into activism and impartiality in policing by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS). It was added that she had not seen the formal response but offered to follow-up as a post-meeting action.

Supplementary: Does the Commissioner share the MP's concerns as outlined in the letter?

Answer: The Commissioner said it is her role to ensure that HMICFRS has full access to the Force and it is her duty to respond to the recommendations within the statutory 56-day period.

Question 2: Where can Sussex Police's responses to a number of historical policing reviews be found?

Answer: The Commissioner confirmed that responses are published online where there is a requirement for her to issue a response in her role. She added that reviews are considered in further detail where possible at her monthly Performance and Accountability Meetings (PAMs).

Supplementary: What are the Commissioner's feelings towards the perceived lack of public confidence?

Answer: The Commissioner acknowledged that it has been a difficult time for local policing due to a series of events, but her personal interactions with members of the public have shown widespread support for the Force.

Question 3: Does the Commissioner promote 'good news' about the work of the Force?

Answer: The Commissioner commented that the Chief Constable's staff hold divisional award ceremonies on a regular basis to help showcase individual and collective acts of bravery and achievements. The Commissioner added that she uses her social media channels to highlight two to three positive stories on a weekly basis, known as 'Force Focus Friday'.

Question 4: Is the Rural Crime Team (RCT) sufficiently resourced to combat the threat of invasive drone use? The work of the RCT was praised.

Answer: The Commissioner revealed that Sussex Police is leading the way nationally in their use of unmanned aerial vehicles (also known as drones) in Sussex. The Commissioner suggested that the Panel may wish to consider an agenda item around drone investment within the Force at a future meeting. She also welcomed the positive feedback and said she would pass it on to the Force.

Question 5: How effective is it that Sussex Police are required to obtain Chichester District Council's permission to review CCTV footage since the Council began funding the local operation? Praise was reserved for Will Keating-Jones (District Commander for Arun and Chichester) for his professionalism at a recent meeting with councillors in Arun.

Answer: The Commissioner said this should be directed to Chichester District Council as it is a question about their processes. She welcomed the positive feedback and said this would be passed on to the Force.

Question 6: Do you know if the rates of criminality among Sussex Police officers are comparable to the wider population? If higher, might targeted research help the Chief Constable to discover the root causes?

Answer: The Commissioner said that complaints made against the Force's officers are dealt with by her office and the rate of upheld appeals are currently running at around 10%. Mr Streater added that statistics are held in terms of police officers convicted of a criminal offence, but not a comparison with the national picture. He added that this could be obtained over a relevant time period.

Question 7: Was there sufficient funding in place to transfer to a new CCTV operator and ensure its continued provision across Sussex?

Answer: The Commissioner commented that the self-funded partnership is made up of 21 organisations and since the transition they have found that using different cameras with a new contractor is two thirds cheaper to run than was previously, and represents a significant cost saving.

Supplementary: Is analysis being carried out in terms of any communities which aren't moving forward with the changeover to a new operator?

Answer: The Commissioner said that the Force has appointed Inspector Atkinson to help corral partners around this and that a review is ongoing. She added that Sussex Police does not have sole responsibility for the

partnership and that any gaps in service highlighted by the review will hopefully be resolved by the partnership.

Question: Sussex Police are commended for their success in tackling County Lines, however Brighton & Hove continues to receive residents' reports of a substantial rise in drug use. What assurances can you offer to Brighton & Hove residents and in Sussex that this is a priority for the Force to stamp out?

Answer: The Commissioner referred to Priority 2 in her Sussex Police & Crime Plan (Relentless disruption of serious and organised crime) and highlighted that the Force disrupted 585 drug lines across the County in 2023, of these 175 were County Lines. The Commissioner added that the OSPCC annually contributes several hundred thousand pounds to Brighton & Hove City Council towards the delivery of drug prevention programmes. She emphasised that it remains a focus and there is a balance to find between enforcement and helping people to overcome addictions.

Supplementary: Some residents have voiced how they've found it a challenge to report sightings and the invasive nature of police questioning. How can that process be made more efficient so that we can ensure members of the public continue to play an effective role in being the eyes and ears on the ground?

Answer: The Commissioner explained that officers are required to gather intelligence in a set format and this method prevents the Force from having to go back to a person for further intel, which is resource intensive. She added that residents have the option to report anonymously through Crimestoppers, who work closely with the Force.

28. The Commissioner's Role as the Review Body for Schedule 3 Policing Complaints, and from the Commissioner's Oversight Duties over Sussex Police's Complaints System More Generally

28.1 The Panel considered a report by the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner.

28.2 The Chair invited the Panel to ask questions. A summary of the main questions and responses were as follows:

Question 1: In relation to table 3.1, it shows that 149 reviews were not upheld, have you looked into these and if so, is there a re-occurring theme?

Answer: The Commissioner described the process for initial complaints received by Professional Standards and those referred to the OSPCC where the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome. She acknowledged that the number of upheld reviews is slightly up compared to last year, while the rate is comparable nationally. The Commissioner is confident that there is a robust process in place

and it does not give her any cause for concern. She added that any local or national themes will be picked up at her Governance Team's integrity meetings with the Force and IOPOC for dip sampling.

Question 2: In relation to table 3.1, 37 reviews to be completed is considerably higher than the previous figure reported, what is the reason for that?

Answer: The Commissioner said that the OSPCC are being asked to carry out more reviews and was not surprised by this figure as she explained that a number of cases are quite complex and detailed. She explained that the varied nature of cases means that the OSPCC has to go back to the Force for further information and this can extend the length of the process. The Commissioner maintained that she would rather her team take their time, follow the process and be thorough.

Question 3: Do you feel that your ability to enforce sanctions as Commissioner are not as good as they could be, in comparison to a local government ombudsman?

Answer: The Commissioner clarified that she has powers to make recommendations and the Force can choose to adopt them or not. She added that every recommendation made to date has been accepted by the Force and this demonstrates a good working relationship. The Commissioner explained that the OSPCC does have contact with the complainant and many just want to be heard and made to feel involved in their case, rather than see sanctions imposed. She said it is rare to receive a further complaint once a complaint has been upheld.

Question 4: In relation to table 3.1, what is your assessment of the sizeable increase in the number of reviews received between 2020/21 and the current reporting year?

Answer: The Commissioner said that there is increased transparency in terms of people becoming more aware of their rights and this is evidence of them exercising their right to complain.

Question 5: From your experience, do you think the role of the Commissioner is still necessary and relevant in today's policing or could duties be de-centralised among other local police services?

Answer: The Commissioner said that the Home Affairs Select Committee and Public Accounts Committee have already justified the role in Parliament. She added that she believes members of the public who are aware of her role's responsibilities do value having a Commissioner as their public voice in policing and someone they can approach.

- 28.3 The Chair suggested whether in future the Commissioner's report could reflect the stage of each complaint in the backlog, to enable the Panel to differentiate between those that have been delayed and those at the appeals stage as an example.
- 28.4 The Commissioner reiterated that the volume of complaints received has increased and these are managed by a small team.

Agenda Item 4

She maintained that she does not have any cause for concern at this point in time and has belief in the speed of her team's work. She added that the complainants are kept informed at every stage of the appeal process.

28.5 Resolved - that the Panel noted the report.

29. Quarterly Report of Complaints

29.1 The Panel considered a report by the Clerk to the Sussex Police and Crime Panel.

29.2 The Chair reminded members that a meeting of the Panel's Complaints Sub Committee will take place on 11 April 2024 at County Hall, Lewes.

29.3 Resolved – that the Panel noted the report.

30. Date of Next Meeting and Future Meeting Dates

30.1 The next meeting of the Panel would take place on 28 June 2024 at 10.30am, at County Hall, Lewes.

The meeting ended at 11.34 am

Chairman



SUSSEX POLICE & CRIME PANEL

Sussex Police and Crime Panel

28 June 2024

Review of Membership and Proportionality

Report by The Clerk to Sussex Police and Crime Panel

Recommendations

That the Panel:

1. Agrees that Brighton and Hove City Council be invited to appoint a Conservative second representative to the Panel (see para 2.2 & 2.3), for a one-year period of office, to take effect immediately.
2. Agrees that both East and West Sussex County Councils should each be invited to appoint an additional local authority member for a one-year period of office (see 2.6); and
3. Subject to agreeing recommendations 1 and 2, agrees to invite appointments of a Conservative second councillor from East Sussex County Council and a Conservative second councillor from West Sussex County Council. (see 2.6 and 2.7), to take effect immediately.

1. Background

- 1.1 Schedule 6, paragraph 31 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (the Act) requires the Panel to consider ("from time to time") whether available seats could be assigned to additional councillor members to enable the balanced appointment objective to be met, or more effectively met. If so, the Act requires the Panel to exercise this option. The balanced appointment objective is that the councillor members of the Panel (when taken together) represent the political make-up of the 15 Sussex local authorities (when taken together). The Constitution of Sussex Police and Crime Panel sets out that the Panel reviews its political make-up and size once a year, at its Annual Meeting.
- 1.2 The 15 Sussex local authorities can appoint any councillor of their choosing (i.e. without regard to that councillor's political affiliation).

2. Additional Local Authority Members

Agenda Item 5

- 2.1 The Panel is required to appoint additional councillors from East Sussex County Council and/or West Sussex County Council if these would improve political proportionality and, as set out below, this is now the case.
- 2.2 Brighton and Hove City Council (BHCC) has an automatic second appointment, which must be made in accordance with the Panel’s recommendation as to political affiliation.
- 2.3 Referring to appendix 1, the allocation of the second BHCC seat to a Conservative councillor for 2024/25 is the most effective means of contributing towards the balanced appointment objective.

Recommendation 1:

That the Panel:

- 1. Agrees that Brighton and Hove City Council be invited to appoint a Conservative second representative to the Panel, for a one-year period of office.

Including the second BHCC Conservative councillor appointment, the resulting Panel make-up is below:

Table 1 – Political Make-Up of a 16 Member Panel, Assuming Recommendation 1

Number of Councillor Seats	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Labour	Green
16	3	5	5	3

- 2.4 From Appendix 1, the theoretical politically proportionate make-up of a 16/17/18-member Panel is (as of 12 June 2024) set out in Table 2. The statutory maximum number of councillor Panel members is 18. For the purposes of this discussion, the two Independent Co-opted Panel Members are not considered.

Table 2 – Theoretical Politically Proportionate Panel Make-Up

Number of Councillor Seats	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Labour	Green	Other Parties
16	4.69	4.02	3.80	1.91	1.59
17	4.98	4.27	4.03	2.03	1.69
18	5.27	4.52	4.27	2.15	1.79

- 2.5 The Panel’s Constitution states that in order to meet the statutory duties imposed under the Act, additional Local Authority Members must be

appointed from each of the county councils on the agreement of the Panel, to address any perceived imbalance in political proportionality. Such members will have a one-year period of office. The Panel should today review its proportionality against the political make-up of Sussex and determine the arrangement it wishes to operate for 2024/25.

- 2.6 Considering the data in appendix 1, and assuming under recommendation 1 that the Panel agrees that the additional member from BHCC for 2024/25 be a Conservative councillor, the most politically proportionate Panel would arise if both of the county councils were to each appoint a Conservative councillor.
- 2.7 For clarity, make-up of the resulting 18-councillor Panel, by political party, will be as below:

Conservative	5 (5.27)
Liberal Democrat	5 (4.52)
Labour	5 (4.27)
Green	3 (2.15)

Note:

- 1. Shown in parenthesis is the politically proportionate aspiration

Recommendations 2 and 3

That the Panel:

- 2 Agrees that both East and West Sussex County Councils should each be invited to appoint an additional local authority member, for a one-year period of office; and
- 3 Subject to agreeing recommendations 1 and 2, agrees to invite appointments of a Conservative second councillor from East Sussex County Council and a Conservative second councillor from West Sussex County Council.

3. Resource Implications and Value for Money

- 3.1 For 2024/25, the Home Office grant allows for up to £920 per Panel Member for travelling expenses.

4. Risk Management Implications

- 4.1 The Panel must strive to be politically and geographically proportionate. Failure to adequately do so risks breaching the relevant terms of the Act.

5. Other Considerations – Equality – Crime Reduction – Human Rights

- 5.1 Not applicable.

Agenda Item 5

Tony Kershaw

Clerk to Sussex Police and Crime Panel

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Political Make-up of Sussex Local Authorities (June 2024)

Political Make-Up of Sussex Local Authorities (June 2024)

Authority	Principal Member's Party	Con	LD	Lab	Green	AOI ₂	Brighton and Hove Ind	Hastings Ind	Arun Ind	Wealden Ind	Ind Dem	CDC Green and Local Alliance	Burgess Hill Ind	Worthing Ind	Shoreham Beach Residents Assoc	Ind ₁	Vacancy	Total
Adur	Labour	8		17	2										2			29
Arun	Green	20	14	8	6				2							4		54
Brighton & Hove	Labour	5		38	7		2									2		54
Chichester	Lib Dem	5	25									6						36
Crawley	Labour	11		25														36
East Sussex	Conservative	24	12	5	5						2					2		50
Eastbourne	Lib Dem	8	19															27
Hastings	Green	5		8	12			6								1		32
Horsham	Lib Dem	12	27		9													48
Lewes	Green		15	9	16											1		41
Mid Sussex	Lib Dem	18	20	1	4								1			4		48
Rother	Labour	10	7	8	3	7										3		38
Wealden	Lib Dem	9	12	2	11					6	4					1		45
West Sussex	Conservative	45	11	9												5		70
Worthing	Labour	9		23	2									3				37
Total		189	162	153	77	7	2	6	2	6	6	6	1	3	2	23	0	645
Proportionality		29.30%	25.12%	23.72%	11.94%	1.09%	0.31%	0.93%	0.31%	0.93%	0.93%	0.93%	0.16%	0.47%	0.31%	3.57%	0.00%	
Seats	16	4.69	4.02	3.80	1.91	0.17	0.05	0.15	0.05	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.02	0.07	0.05	0.57	0.00	
Seats	17	4.98	4.27	4.03	2.03	0.18	0.05	0.16	0.05	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.03	0.08	0.05	0.61	0.00	
Seats	18	5.27	4.52	4.27	2.15	0.20	0.06	0.17	0.06	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.03	0.08	0.06	0.64	0.00	

Summary of 15 Principal Members:

Conservative	2
Labour	5
Liberal Democrat	5
Green	3

Notes:

Ind₁ Proportionality calculated for a group. However, since this category comprises several separate independent members, the actual proportionality is lower

AOI₂ Association of Independents

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Public and Panel Questions to the Commissioner

28 June 2024

Report by the Clerk to the Police and Crime Panel

Below is a schedule of the questions received prior to this meeting and where possible responses have been included. Responses will be tabled at the meeting that were not available at the time of despatch. Written questions must be received two weeks before a meeting of the Panel and the Commissioner or Panel Chairman is invited to provide a response by noon of the day before the meeting.

Questions relating to operational matters of Sussex Police are passed to a relevant officer at Sussex Police for a response, with a brief summary of such questions provided below. For the current meeting, one question has been received for a response from the Commissioner.

1. Written question from John Cole of Brighton, East Sussex.

Question:

Sussex police is reported to be the worst police force for solving bicycle thefts in the country. To the year ending in December 2023, Government figures say there were 1463 reported and only 10 charges.

It should be also taken into account that many people don't even bother reporting thefts because they believe it's a waste of time.

Brighton and Hove is in the top ten cities nationwide for bicycle theft.

At the March 2023 Crime Panel , in response to a question about lack of prosecutions , PCC Katy Bourne said that Brighton and Hove police had tactical plans to deal with bike thefts at a local level.

Sussex Police have failed to respond to any FOI requests about these tactical plans.

Please could the PCC tell me if she has any information whatsoever on these plans and whether they're in progress

Answer:

TBC

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Sussex Police and Crime Panel

28 June 2024

Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report and Financial Outturn Report 2023/24

Report by The Clerk to Sussex Police and Crime Panel

Recommendations

That the Panel:

1. Reviews, puts questions to the Commissioner, and makes recommendations on the Annual Report and draft Financial Outturn Report for 2023/24

1. **Background**

- 1.1 In accordance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Commissioner must provide the Panel with their Annual Report, and the Panel must question the Commissioner and review it.
- 1.2 Following the meeting, the Panel must make and publish a report to the Commissioner. The Commissioner must respond to the report and publish the response.

2. **Discussion**

- 2.1 The applicable Police and Crime Plan in place for the reporting period is that for 2021/24, which can be found here: <https://bit.ly/3GWKfE1>
- 2.2 The three objectives (termed Public Priorities) set out in the Plan are:
 - Strengthen local policing, tackle crime and prevent harm
 - Relentless disruption of serious and organised crime
 - Support victims cope and safeguard the vulnerable
- 2.3 The content and structure of the Annual Report should be determined on the basis of local preferences and need, but might include:
 - How the PCC has exercised and fulfilled their statutory duties and functions in each financial year

- The progress that has been made in the year in meeting the objectives in the PCC's Police and Crime Plan (see 2.2)
 - End-of-year performance against any targets set, including exception reporting on any areas in which performance has substantially fallen short of, or exceeded, expectations
 - Performance outcomes in relation to specific crime, community safety or criminal justice grants or feedback on delivery at a geographical area or departmental level
 - End-of-year financial positions, including how resources have been allocated, details of any significant under or overspend and the decisions made with regard to council tax precept
 - Aims and aspirations for the following year, based on any re-evaluation of local need.
- 2.4 Following the meeting, a report by the Panel will be prepared in consultation with the Chairman, and dispatched and published within two working days.
- 2.5 Following the Commissioner's re-election in May 2024, the Commissioner is required to publish a new Police Crime Plan, no later than 31 March 2025. Having considered the Annual Report, the Panel is invited to raise matters which could be taken into account as the new Plan is developed.

Tony Kershaw

Clerk to Sussex Police and Crime Panel

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 – OSPCC Covering Report for the Commissioner's Annual Report and Financial Outturn Report 2023/24

Appendix 2 - Annual Report 2023/24



To:	The Sussex Police & Crime Panel.
From:	The Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner.
Subject:	The Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner's Annual Report and Financial Outturn Report 2023/24.
Date:	28 June 2024.
Recommendation:	That the Sussex Police & Crime Panel note the report.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an update on performance against the three Public Priorities set out in the Sussex Police & Crime Plan 2021/24 and the policing and crime objectives contained within for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.
- 1.2 The report also sets out the draft financial outturn position for 2023/24, ahead of the audited accounts being published.

2.0 Annual Report 2023/24

- 2.1 The Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) has a statutory duty to produce an Annual Report as set out in Chapter 3 – Section 12(1) of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.
- 2.2 The Act prescribes that the content of the Annual Report should include:
 - (a) the exercise of the elected local policing body's functions in each financial year; and
 - (b) the progress which has been made in the financial year in meeting the policing and crime objectives in the body's Police & Crime Plan.

3.0 Achievements, areas of work and progress made in 2023/24

- 3.1 The achievements, areas of work and progress made by the PCC and her office in 2023/24 are summarised in the Annual Report under each of the Public Priorities contained within the Plan, as follows:

Priority 1 – Strengthen policing, tackle crime, prevent harm and anti-social behaviour.
Priority 2 – Relentless disruption of serious and organised crime.
Priority 3 – Support and safeguard victims and tackle violence against women and girls.

- 3.2 The draft financial outturn position for the year ended 31 March 2024 is also included within the report, ahead of the audited accounts being published.

Mark Streater
Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer
Office of the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner

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**Sussex
Police & Crime
Commissioner**

**Annual Report and
Financial Outturn Report
2023/24**

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1. Introduction

Welcome to my 2023/24 Annual Report.

This is my 11th annual report looking back for the year on how the policing priorities for Sussex, determined by residents, have been addressed and how local people feel about their police force.

I was honoured to be re-elected to serve a fourth term as your Police & Crime Commissioner in May 2024. It is a responsibility that I take extremely seriously and I look forward to continuing to deliver on the priorities mattering most to people across our county.

Sussex is still a very safe place in which to live, work or visit and much of the police work that keeps it that way goes unseen and unnoticed.

Maintaining His Majesty's peace is a tough ask in the second decade of the 21st century, especially when crime gangs operate internationally and cybercrime and fraud recognise no borders.

Despite these threats and calls for a more paramilitary police response to deal with them, we still have a mainly unarmed and locally managed police service in this country. That is because most people still value the Peelian traditions of British policing that are nearly 200 years old.

At the heart of public confidence is local, visible and accessible policing providing a reassuring presence and that is exactly what Sussex Police is continuing to deliver with record numbers of police officers having been recruited over the past five years.

The Conservative Government's Police Uplift Programme recruited 20,000 police officers across the country and has added 500+ officers to Sussex Police ranks over the past three years. Thanks also to local households supporting a rise in the police element of their council tax, a further 250 officers have been recruited since 2018/19. On 31 March 2024, Sussex Police had 3,259 police officers [3,165 full time equivalent officers] which was 33 more officers than the target set for the Force.

This extra investment into Sussex Police is now starting to pay dividends in key areas that matter most to the public, including swifter call-handling, tackling rural and retail crime and taking knives off our streets, alongside making public spaces safer for women and girls.

Call handling times – For many years now, I have continued to challenge Sussex Police to improve its call-handling times for both the 999 and 101 numbers and we have seen periods when waiting times dropped but then crept up again. I am particularly delighted, therefore, that on top of more staff, investment and training, a new telephony platform for triaging calls and the implementation of a callback service, Sussex Police became one of the top performing police forces in England and Wales for answering emergency calls between December 2023 and March 2024, with this position set to be maintained across 2024/25.

Homicide, serious violence and knife crime – Having secured over £1.5 million to tackle serious violence, I am pleased to report that, over the past year, Sussex Police have been able to deploy officers on nearly 800 operations over the equivalent of almost 1,000 days of policing to tackle serious violence and knife crime in Sussex. This activity supported knife sweeps and night-time patrols which contributed to 45 arrests and led to 3,300 knives being surrendered.

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I am also pleased to have been able to maintain funding for our Violence Reduction Unit which has worked with partners to engage with over 8,000 children and young people to deter them from violence and knife crime.

Rape and serious sexual offences – My office continues to financially support organisations which help victims and survivors of rape and sexual violence which you can read more about within this annual report. We have also been part of the national programme to improve rape investigations, through Operation Soteria, with the improved performance in the solved rates recognised by the Home Secretary. To further supplement this, I have funded eight Victim Co-ordinator posts in a ground-breaking unit we have called 'Fides' to support victims of rape and sexual assault during police investigations and prosecutions. I look forward to seeing the results of this innovative Unit in the coming months.

Making public spaces safer for women and girls – To make our public spaces safer for women and girls, I allocated £462,000 from Round 5 of the Home Office's Safer Streets Fund to directly support 26 activities, including enhanced policing patrols and behavioural change programmes for perpetrators.

Drugs and county lines – A dedicated County Lines Team called Centurion was set up in 2020 to tackle county drug lines and they have successfully disrupted more than 130 lines in the past year. Sussex Police have also established a specialist Exploitation Team to support and protect the young people who are often coerced into working with drug gangs.

A rural county needs a specialist team – The dedicated Rural Crime Team (RCT) within Sussex Police attended almost 1,500 calls for service during 2023/24 ranging from the recovery of stolen property and fly tipping to wildlife and heritage crimes as well as providing crime prevention advice and property marking for rural residents and businesses. With a team comprising two sergeants, 12 PCs, six PCSOs and two special constables, the RCT are regularly engaging with farmers and remote communities from our border with Hampshire right across to Kent. Using drones and trackers, the RCT has successfully deployed technology to recover dozens of vehicles and prevented many valuable items from being smuggled abroad.

Reduction in roads collisions, injuries and fatalities – There has been a slight reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads thanks to the combined efforts of our Roads Policing Unit and the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership, although there is still much more to do. The Specialist Enforcement Unit (SEU) within Sussex Police also targets roving criminals on the road network in specialist operations and supports regular speeding and anti-social driving campaigns.

Tackling shoplifting in Sussex and nationally – Four years ago, I established the Safer Sussex Business Partnership to help local retailers work more effectively with police and to improve our response to shoplifting, in particular. During that time, we have seen the formation of a dedicated Business Crime Team within Sussex Police, the deployment of innovative reporting technology and massively increased awareness of shoplifting at both a local and national level.

I am pleased to say that my lobbying of Government has led to the introduction of tougher measures to tackle shoplifters, including the agreement to electronically tag persistent offenders and a specified offence to be created for assaulting a shopworker. In addition, I have brought together 15 of the country's largest retailers and established Project Pegasus, providing nearly £1 million funding for a specialist crime-mapping and intelligence capability to work with the National Police Chiefs' Council's Opal Team to tackle the organised crime gangs involved nationally in retail crime.

Cracking down on anti-social behaviour – Through my consultations and conversations with residents, I know that anti-social behaviour (ASB) continues to remain the biggest issue most people face and which most affects their quality of life. That is why I was keen to promote the ASB Case Reviews [formally known as a Community Trigger] so that repeat victims of this type of offending can get professional help to find a resolution.

It is also the reason why I ensured that Sussex was one of the pilot force areas for Immediate Justice, where offenders have the choice of a reparative activity instead of facing other sanctions. At the time this report has gone to print, the Immediate Justice programme in Sussex is being extended across the whole county with a provider called Red Snapper managing the reparative activities.

Low risk of burglary – The risk of being burgled in Sussex thankfully remains comparatively low but there was an increase in the number of incidents recorded over the past year, alongside a small increase in the solved rates. I will continue to scrutinise and challenge the performance of Sussex Police in this area in the coming months.

Fraud and cybercrime – In 2022, I allocated extra funding to the Digital Investigation Support Unit and I was delighted that, last year, they received an international award in recognition for designing a unique device that can identify spyware and tracking installed on electronic devices. Sussex Police continue to provide prevention advice for potential fraud victims and Operation Signature and the Banking Protocol continue to prevent vulnerable individuals from losing vast amounts of money.

Victims' services – Over the last year, nearly 60,000 victims and survivors were referred to the support services that are commissioned by my office through £5.2 million of funding, alongside the allocation of more than £250,000 for the Safe Space Funding Network which consists of 40 approved local providers.

Supporting community safety, specialists and volunteers – Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) bring the police, local authorities and specialist services together and have provided valuable support to local substance abuse and crime prevention initiatives as well as delivering on improvements to infrastructure, public facing CCTV and lighting. That is why I allocated ringfenced funding to the CSPs for the 11th year running in Sussex.

It is always a pleasure to visit some of the 532 community projects which have benefited from nearly £2.3 million allocated through my Safer in Sussex Community Fund – from sports clubs through to groups providing older residents with advice about cybercrime and fraud. Small amounts of funding can make an enormous difference to these community projects but most of them depend on the unwavering dedication and commitment of volunteers.

Performance and accountability – For the past 12 years, I have been giving the public an insight into how Sussex Police is managed through my monthly webcast Performance & Accountability Meetings (PAMs). Across more than 100 PAMs, I have scrutinised almost every area of Force performance to reflect public concerns and discuss national issues that affect us here in Sussex. These meetings remain a vital part of my commitment to transparency in police governance and I know that the Chief Constable appreciates these opportunities to explain and clarify how and why the police prevent and investigate crime.

I do want to acknowledge the help that I get from members of the public to understand what matters most to them. Every year, I meet with and talk to hundreds of residents and visitors and people who work in our glorious county, with further engagement provided by my office to the thousands of people who reach out to us by telephone, email and online – through polls and consultations – alongside attendance at engagement events. These are valuable interactions and they directly affect the questions and challenges I put to Sussex Police and what the Force does to address them.

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Finally, I would like to thank the members of staff in my office for their professionalism and total dedication to the people of Sussex as well as all the partners and volunteers who have stepped forward and stepped up over the past year.

I remain committed to delivering for all Sussex residents and making sure your concerns and ideas are heard and articulated. I look forward to continuing to build on our collective achievements over the next year and further developing my effective working relationship with the Force to keep us all Safer in Sussex.

Katy Bourne OBE
Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner

2. Progress Made Against Public Priorities

2a. Public Priority 1 – Strengthen policing, tackle crime, prevent harm and anti-social behaviour

Local, Visible and Accessible Policing

Recruitment of more police officers – Following a public consultation, the PCC was given public support to increase the policing part of the council tax for 2023/24. This added an extra £15 per year for an average Band D property and was supported and endorsed by the Police & Crime Panel at their meeting in January 2023.

Sussex Police has made significant improvements to increase their capacity, visibility and accessibility in crime prevention, response and investigations and to re-establish vital communication and engagement with local people.

This extra investment has ensured that Sussex Police is able to continue to protect communities, catch criminals and deliver an outstanding service despite the significant financial challenges, building on the improvements to protect and modernise the police service that have been delivered with the help of local taxpayers since 2018.

The Government also introduced a maintenance grant worth £275m to support police force areas in England and Wales to maintain police officer numbers during 2023/24, following the Police Uplift Programme (PUP) which recruited 20,000 new police officers in England and Wales over the past three years.

The maintenance grant for Sussex Police in 2023/24 was £5.9m. To qualify for the full amount, the Force was asked to maintain a baseline headcount figure at two points within the year – 30 September 2023 [target of 3,205 officers] and 31 March 2024 [revised target of 3,226]. Sussex Police overachieved against both targets at each checkpoint with 3,259 officers [and 3,165 full time equivalent officers, based on actual hours worked] in post as of 31 March 2024 – this represented an additional 33 officers [headcount] compared to the revised target.

The PCC has continued to work with the Chief Constable throughout the year to improve workforce diversity and ensure that this better reflects the demographics of Sussex, demonstrating a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusivity and promoting a culture that fully embraces this position.

LOOKING AHEAD: In 2024/25, the PCC increased the precept by £13 per year for an average Band D property. This extra investment will ensure that Sussex Police is able to maintain the police officer numbers and the improvements made to operational policing capacity, capability, visibility and accessibility delivered through precept and Operation Uplift since 2018, whilst continuing to meet the increases to costs, pay and inflation.

Call Handling Times and Contact

Responding to a shift in demand for public contact – Call handling times and digital contact remains extremely important to members of the public who need to contact Sussex Police.

There has been a sustained shift in demand for public contact, with the public continuing to contact Sussex Police in range of different ways, moving away from traditional telephone contact to non-voice demand and online digital. The PCC has supported the Force to respond to this shift in demand by improving its capacity to manage contact, reduce repeat calls and engage with the public through the further recruitment of more omniscient call handlers, improved triage processes and the expansion of Single Online Home (SOH) capabilities – a common platform that allows the public to report, transact and contact the police online – alongside further enhancements to technology.

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There was a 5% increase in the number of 999 calls offered in 2023/24 which equated to an additional 14,968 emergency calls received compared to 2022/23. This shift in demand for emergency policing services was recognised to be reflective of a nationally increasing trend for all blue light emergency services, with this increase in demand for calls to the 999-emergency number set to be maintained moving forward.

Of the 308,123 emergency calls received by the Force during the performance plan year, approximately 89% were answered within 10 seconds. Sussex Police was also the best performing police force in England and Wales in terms of 999 call handling performance in December 2023, and January and March 2024, with 97% of the 85,259 emergency calls received by the Force during this quarter answered within 10 seconds.

These improvements in performance were directly attributed to the introduction of a new telephony platform in November 2023 – as part of the Joint Force Contact and Telephony Programme – which has transformed the way that the Force is able to operate within the Force Contact, Command and Control Department (FCCCD). This has enabled contact handlers to automatically flex between emergency and non-emergency calls in an agile manner according to demand which has created omnicompetence amongst the workforce in the contact centre and maximises the number of individuals available to respond to incoming calls at any one time.

This enhanced ability to record, allocate and deploy resources to these different calls for service has been supported by the implementation of a new workforce management system which uses data as a forecasting tool to ensure that appropriate staffing levels are in place to respond to periods of peak demand. This approach has ensured that supervisors are now spending less time on duty planning and rostering which has enabled them to better support the contact handlers with the calls for service they are responding to.

Non-emergency calls also increased by 16% across 2023/24 with an additional 34,609 more 101 calls received across the year. This increase was in direct contrast to the year-on-year reducing trend in non-emergency calls received that has been apparent since 2015/16, despite the greater availability of alternative channels through which members of the public can now contact the police.

An average wait time of 4 minutes and 10 seconds was recorded for the 256,441 non-emergency calls received during 2023/24, with the number of abandoned calls also reducing to 12% across the year, with continued and sustained improvements in performance demonstrated in this area from November 2023 onwards. This represented a reduction of 4 minutes and 27 seconds from 2022/23 and was directly attributed to the introduction of a new telephony platform, supported by a revised operating model. This continues to represent significant progress compared to the average wait time of 14 minutes and 16 seconds per call recorded in 2018/19, prior to the commencement of the Contact Transformation Programme.

The introduction of QueueBuster – a call back service that provides members of the public calling 101 with a more convenient option to avoid having to wait on hold by creating a 'virtual position' for them in the queue – was also recognised to be positively contributing towards the reductions in the number of abandoned calls recorded.

The Force also recorded a 1% increase in the number of webforms submitted to Sussex Police through the SOH across 2023/24. This equated to an additional 470 webforms received and is directly attributed to a channel shift after Sussex Police removed the ability for members of the public to email the FCCCD in August 2022.

SOH provides a nationally approved and structured capability to facilitate the more efficient and effective reporting of incidents and crimes through a dedicated webpage. Each of these webforms is triaged and graded to determine the most appropriate policing response and ensure that any potential risks or vulnerabilities are identified and prioritised.

LOOKING AHEAD: In 2024/25, Sussex Police will use the 'Click, Call, Connect' campaign to reduce the demand on the non-emergency number further by educating members of the public around when to contact the Force and encouraging the greater use of online webform reporting. This will include raising awareness of the campaign and greater promotion of the key messages contained within it to redirect the public online.

Road Safety

Making the roads in Sussex safer: The PCC has continued to encourage communities, road users and partners to play a full and active part in making the roads of Sussex safer, working in partnership with the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership, Operation Crackdown and Community Speed Watch groups to achieve this.

In 2023/24, there were 421 fewer collisions recorded in Sussex [14,795] which represented a 3% reduction on the 15,216 collisions recorded in 2022/23. The reduced number of collisions also contributed towards a 6% reduction in the number of individuals killed and/or seriously (KSIs) injured on the roads in Sussex [379], compared to the 403 recorded across the same period last year – this equated to a reduction of 24 individuals KSIs.

Sussex Police has sustained the two Force-wide operations – Operation Downsway and Operation Ride – established previously to target those using the roads irresponsibly in Sussex, including speeding and anti-social driving/motorbike riding. These initiatives focus on the provision of education and enforcement activity at locations identified by communities as having concerns for road safety with two main aims: to target offenders and to keep everyone safe on the roads of Sussex.

The Force has continued to tackle the most serious, organised and persistent criminals by targeting the road networks in Sussex. The Specialist Enforcement Unit (SEU) – launched in January 2021 – has carried out proactive countywide disruption and enforcement operations on the roads across the county. The SEU targets individuals using the road network for criminality, focusing on combatting organised acquisitive crime and providing dedicated resources to reduce those killed or seriously injured on the roads in Sussex.

Rural Crime

Maintained the Rural Crime Team – The PCC has continued to support the Chief Constable to maintain a Rural Crime Team (RCT) in Sussex. The team was launched in 2020/21 and remains dedicated to protecting rural communities, their livelihoods and the unique challenges faced by those living and working in rural and isolated communities.

The RCT is committed to reducing crime and the fear of crime in rural areas, building strong relationships with local communities and proactively tackling emerging rural crime trends. The team strive to provide a comprehensive and responsive approach to rural crime by tackling the unlawful and offending behaviour affecting these rural communities and providing greater protection from, and swifter outcomes to, rural crimes and incidents.

The RCT consists of 22 individuals: two sergeants; 12 police constables; six PCSOs and two special constables operating out of bases at Heathfield (East Sussex) and Midhurst (West Sussex). The team provide specialist knowledge, engagement, intelligence gathering and enforcement activity across the county. The support and reassurance provided to individuals, rural communities and businesses is demonstrated through an increased visible policing presence, including a combination of officers and PCSOs targeting the crimes and offences that are either prevalent or a concern in these areas and generating community intelligence through proactive policing patrols.

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Since its establishment, the team has created links and developed relationships with rural communities, businesses and other stakeholders to generate a collaborative approach towards information sharing, improving communication networks and working together to reduce rural crime. The RCT response also consists of a pursue element which includes proactive, targeted and intelligence-led policing. The use of technology and equipment has further assisted the Force to modernise its approach to rural policing through the provision of heightened response, search and prevention capabilities.

During 2023/24, the RCT has demonstrated significant operational activity and continued to provide a visible policing presence, tangible deterrence and reassurance to rural areas affected most by theft, poaching, hare coursing and livestock worrying. The team also conducted 15 community engagement events across various rural locations throughout the year [including marking more than 800 items of property] and undertook several joint operations with the rural teams in Hampshire and Kent, alongside collaboration with the local authorities and Environment Agency to target the illegal dumping of waste.

All operational activity around rural crimes, incidents and offences is recorded and collated by Sussex Police through a marker called Operation Tracker. The RCT attended almost 1,500 calls for service generated by computer aided dispatch (CAD) through this marker to speak to victims, offer advice and respond to the matters reported, together with a further 400 CADs that were not included within the marker but still within the remit of the team to address. The RCT demonstrated a solved rate of 10% for all rural crimes in 2023/24, with positive outcomes also achieved for other instances where the offences were non-notifiable [including livestock worrying].

LOOKING AHEAD: In 2024/25, the RCT will seek to strengthen further its proactive approach to rural crime prevention through increased communication and engagement with rural communities and the delivery of enhanced collaboration with farmers, landowners, regional police force areas and other stakeholders, alongside the greater investment in equipment and technology to modernise the response, search and prevention capabilities provided for rural policing.

South East Partnership Against Rural Crime launched – In April 2023, the South East Partnership Against Rural Crime (SEPARC) was launched by the police forces in Sussex, Surrey, Hampshire, Kent and Thames Valley to protect better rural communities and to make the region a more hostile environment for countryside offenders.

The partnership held its inaugural meeting in April 2023, where stakeholders from various agencies convened to establish and agree the framework and terms of reference for the group. This included the formation of a Tactical Delivery Group which serves as a conduit for operational insights and ensures alignment with strategic goals by recognising the importance of coordination and information sharing and bringing together representatives from the police and relevant partner agencies.

In February 2024, the SEPARC coordinated its first collaborative operation – led by local police forces operating within the partnership – to target specific crime trends, disrupt wildlife, environmental, heritage and agricultural criminals and enhance community safety across the region.

Business and Retail Crime

Dedicated Business Crime Team established – In November 2021, Sussex Police launched a Business Crime Team (BCT) to tackle business and retail crime, identify prolific offenders and provide support to business communities in Sussex.

The team supports the business community by working closely with partners, businesses and customers to generate better intelligence and ensure that a more focused police response is provided to reports of business crime. The BCT comprises one police sergeant and 9 specialist investigators (SPOCS) dedicated to responding to crime across three specific areas [Brighton & Hove and Crawley, East Sussex and West Sussex]. This approach means that the SPOCS can quickly identify any repeat and/or prolific offenders and patterns of criminality.

The SPOCS have effective working relationships with local businesses and Business Crime Reduction Partnerships (BCRPs) in Sussex and are responsible for investigating almost 60% of all retail crime reported to Sussex Police, with more than 1,300 crimes passed to policing districts for successful prosecutions. Operation Apprentice brings together the BCT and districts to ensure that the most prolific retail crime offenders are targeted for investigation, prosecution and civil orders.

Sussex Police has created new platforms and expanded existing channels of reporting through the introduction of 'One Touch Reporting' and the increased use of DISC – the cloud-based crime management system empowering communities to self-manage low level crime and anti-social behaviour. This platform enables better engagement between policing teams, businesses and local authorities to support messaging, identification of suspects and awareness raising of the civil orders available to influence changes in offender behaviour, whilst improving the confidence of local communities in the policing response.

During 2023/24, access to DISC was extended to Horsham, Mid Sussex and Wealden districts which cumulatively contributed to nearly 300,000 logins to the platform, >6,000 crimes reported to Sussex Police, >5,000 news and alerts published, and >4,000 individuals identified by Sussex Police. Sussex Police will continue to seek an increase the reporting of business crimes through One Touch Reporting and the expansion of access to DISC, with plans to expand the use of this reporting platform to Lewes and Rother in 2024/25.

During 2023/24, the Force has continued to deliver a pilot which makes the reporting of business crime easier, in conjunction with National Business Crime Solution (NBCS) and Co-op, a supermarket which is campaigning and working for greater safety and protection for frontline shopworkers and communities. This pilot – working with 22 Co-op stores – has increased the volume of shoplifting offences reported to the police, the identification of prolific offenders and 'hot spot' locations and the greater collation of evidence which has contributed to improved arrest, charge and conviction rates. The solved rate for these offences handled by the BCT increased from 11% in 2021/22, to 14% in 2022/23 and 15% in 2023/24. These detection rates are anticipated to increase further still in 2024/25.

The BCT will continue to work more smartly to investigate business crimes, improve partnership working and tackle this criminality through a more innovative use of technology. This will include the use of facial recognition and piloting more efficient reporting processes and technology which allows digital evidence, such as CCTV footage, to be shared with the Force directly for immediate access to evidence. The process will enable staff to continue serving customers, rather than waiting to talk to the police.

This approach will also include bringing together intelligence from across the county to provide crime prevention advice and catch the criminals who are targeting and affecting businesses large and small, leading to more positive outcomes and increased business confidence in police.

LOOKING AHEAD: In 2024/25, Sussex Police will develop a Business Crime Strategy and Operational Delivery Plan that will drive activity across the thematic areas identified within the national Retail Crime Action Plan. This approach will seek to improve further the solved rates demonstrated previously for business crime, with a specific focus on commercial robbery, violence against shop workers and theft from shops.

Combining law enforcement with industry knowledge to tackle serious organised retail crime – In October 2023, with the support and endorsement of the Policing Minister and the Home Office, the PCC convened a business and police partnership called Pegasus.

The initiative will radically improve the way retailers are able to share intelligence with policing, to better understand the tactics used by organised retail crime gangs and identify more offenders. This will include development of a new information sharing platform and training for retailers.

Financial contributions have already been received from 14 major retailers to fund a new dedicated team of specialist police officers and analysts to work within OPAL – a national policing team that oversees serious organised acquisitive crime. The team will seek to build a comprehensive intelligence picture of the organised crime gangs that are responsible for many shoplifting incidents across the country, to help target and dismantle them.

Burglary

Risk of being burgled continues to remain low – The PCC and Sussex Police have continued to raise awareness of the significant impact that burglaries can have on victims, encourage members of the public to protect their homes from the threat of intruders and to detect these crimes by proactively targeting the offenders responsible.

There was a 14% increase in the number of recorded residential burglaries in Sussex in 2023/24. This equated to 418 more burglary crimes recorded compared to the 2,901 offences recorded the year before, with these increases apparent across each of the three policing divisions.

Of the total burglaries recorded, there was a 3% reduction in the recorded number of non-residential burglaries [including business premises] across the same period. These recorded offences reduced from 2,263 to 2,184 offences – a reduction of 79 non-residential burglaries compared to 2022/23. Again, these reductions were apparent across each of the three policing divisions.

Despite the overall increases recorded, the risk of being burgled in Sussex continues to remain low, with the Force positioned 13th lowest out of 43 police force areas in England and Wales and 2nd in their Most Similar Group (MSG) of 8 forces, in terms of the risk of burglary per 1,000 population [March 2024]. Operation Magpie – the dedicated Force response to burglary crimes – delivers crime prevention initiatives throughout the year to ensure that the risk of crime remains low.

Sussex recorded a 6.7% solved rate for burglary in Sussex during 2023/24. This equated to 99 more burglary crimes solved [338] compared to the 239 offences solved the year before [5%], with these increases apparent across each of the three policing divisions. The low solved rate was recognised to be consistent with the trends recorded by all police forces in England and Wales, with the absence of available witnesses, CCTV footage and/or forensic evidence attributed to the difficulties and challenges in solving these crimes. Sussex Police was positioned 39th out of 43 police forces, and 7th within their MSG, in terms of the solved rate for burglary crimes [March 2024].

LOOKING AHEAD: Burglary continues to remain an important area of policing for Sussex Police to improve on during 2024/25 and beyond.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Tackling ASB through mediation: The PCC has continued to fund the Sussex Mediation Alliance (SMA) to provide consistent mediation services in Sussex across two service providers: Brighton & Hove Independent Mediation Service and Mediation Plus.

The OSPCC has introduced effective monitoring arrangements around the service provided in Sussex which have contributed towards positive improvements for service users and reduced demand for Sussex Police. Consequently, the provision of this service was moved to a three-year contract and, following a successful tender process, SMA will continue to deliver this service in Sussex until 31 March 2026.

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is understood to be a 'crime of confidence', whereby the more confident members of the public are about the ability of the police to respond, the more likely they are to report incidents to the police. Sussex Police has continued to encourage members of the public to report any incidents and offences to develop information and intelligence regarding repeat offenders, times and locations which can then be used to plan, target and deploy police resources. The early identification of ASB is recognised to be fundamental to prevent conflict from escalating further and to decrease community tensions.

In 2023/24, the SMA received 143 referrals directly from Sussex Police for resolution through mediation to prevent the conflict from escalating any further, distributed across Sussex as follows: 37 in Brighton & Hove, 77 in East Sussex and 29 in West Sussex. Anti-social behaviour was the most common type of dispute and accounted for 56 cases [and 39%], followed by noise and neighbour disputes [45 cases and 32%] and property disputes [24 cases and 17%]. The services also saw referrals around vehicle parking, property-related issues and family relationship breakdowns.

The service has managed to secure engagement from both parties to attempt to find a resolution in around two-thirds of all cases, with every positive outcome – including successful mediation, conflict resolution coaching and/or improved communication skills [for either party] – reducing the demand placed on Sussex Police.

The PCC has continued to encourage Sussex Police to work with schools and other educational establishments to engage with children and young people to build confidence in policing, promote positive behaviours and educate them about the impact their actions and behaviours can have on others within the local community, without unnecessarily criminalising them. This work is routinely undertaken by the Neighbourhood Policing Teams and Neighbourhood Youth Officers, supported by youth services within local authorities.

INFOGRAPHIC: 152 referrals for mediation services.

Reduction in Anti-Social Behaviour Case Reviews – There was a 17% reduction in the number of anti-social behaviour (ASB) case reviews received in Sussex in 2023/24, in comparison to the year before – this equated to nine fewer activations received [44].

Year	Case Reviews	Adur & Worthing	Arun	Brighton & Hove	Chichester	Crawley	Eastbourne	Hastings	Horsham	Lewes	Mid Sussex	Rother	Wealden	Sussex
2022/23	Received	1	1	14	3	4	1	4	14	3	4	3	1	53
	Met threshold	0	0	4	2	2	0	4	10	2	2	3	0	25
2023/24	Received	1	0	7	2	12	2	4	5	1	6	4	0	44
	Met threshold	0	0	4	1	7	0	2	5	0	3	2	0	24

A case review [formally known as a Community Trigger] empowers repeat victims of ASB to request a review of the actions partner agencies have taken to resolve their concerns with the aim of finding a solution to the core problems causing the anti-social behaviour.

Of the case reviews received, 55% of these [24] met the threshold for activation in 2023/24 – with three separate incidents of ASB experienced and reported in the last six months. This represented an 8-percentage point increase from the 47% of case reviews which met the threshold in 2022/23, despite there being one fewer activation [25].

Technology

Increased capabilities for frontline officers – The PCC has ensured that Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs), otherwise known as smartphones, have continued to be provided to all frontline police officers, staff and PCSOs to increase mobility, responsiveness and provide greater operational capabilities to fight crime. The Pronto platform maximises productivity and efficiency gains for policing by providing users with the ability to receive, retrieve, update and process greater information and intelligence straight from the MDT without the constraint of having to be at a single physical location.

During 2023/24, the capability and functionality of the MDTs was further enhanced. This included implementation of the International Law Enforcement Alerts Platform (iLEAP) for vehicles and stolen travel documents to build on the success of the nominal capability introduced in 2022 which provides officers with access to international Interpol data for vehicles and stolen travel documents at the roadside.

Other functionality added to the MDTs across the year included a new module which enables police officers to record every vehicle stop where individual driver details are requested [ensuring ongoing compliance with national reporting requirements], alongside a dispersal order module which allows inspectors to create orders at specified locations which can alert police officers using geolocations, allowing them to deal with individuals engaging in anti-social behaviour or crime and disorder through a dispersal order more effectively.

LOOKING AHEAD: In 2024/25, Sussex Police will seek to enhance the functionality of the MDTs further still by making significant changes to the safeguarding information captured by frontline officers for vulnerable children and adults, enabling officers to book seized and evidential property into the system remotely and undertaking other changes to existing modules to streamline current processes and ensure that only data required is captured.

Continued investment in Body Worn Video – The PCC has continued to invest in the use of Body Worn Video (BWV) technology to ensure that all frontline officers and staff are equipped with personal-issue cameras. The BWV cameras are an established way of capturing and securing real-time evidence in an easy to use and accessible digital format. Further enhancements to the system are being planned to reduce the time it takes police officers to categorise and upload the footage.

During 2023/24, Sussex Police completed a battery refresh for BWV technology to ensure that all cameras had a new battery installed which will enable the devices to be used by frontline officers for longer before they required charging. This technology is particularly useful for increasing the number of convictions for domestic abuse crimes [including victimless prosecutions where the victim does not want to support a prosecution] by using the evidence captured through BWV. This platform also ensures that interactions with members of the public remain professional and accountable and helps to safeguard officers and staff by reducing the number of assaults against them.

In August 2023, Sussex Police and Surrey Police increased the length of pre-recording time for all BWV users to 30 seconds in line with the national guidance issued. This is the length of video that is saved before the user activates the recording via the record button.

LOOKING AHEAD: During 2024/25, the Force will seek to renegotiate the contract for BWV in Sussex, which will include looking at the potential to upgrade the devices to a newer camera model.

Successful implementation of the Digital Evidence Management System – Sussex Police and Surrey Police implemented a Digital Evidence Management System (DEMS) during 2020/21 that enables both forces to ingest and share video captured through BWV more efficiently, effectively and securely – removing the need for portable digital media. The new solution was successfully integrated throughout the police estate in 2021/22.

During 2022/23, 50 DEMS kiosks were deployed across the two police force areas to enable officers and staff to securely view digital material and upload directly onto the system. This was supported by the implementation and integration of a new Digital Interview Recording System (DIRS) to support deployment across both forces.

Alongside this enhancement, a further online service was deployed to enable members of the public to submit dashcam footage to support the investigation of potential driving offences. DEMS has continued to evolve during 2023/24 with further improvements delivered for managing evidence items for larger cases and the provision of enhanced redaction capabilities.

LOOKING AHEAD: During 2024/25, DEMS will be developed further through integration with Pronto and GoodSAM, enabling digital evidence to be automatically ingested into DEMS from both platforms. Sussex Police will also be exploring greater integration with online services to enable digital evidence to be uploaded by members of the public when online crime reports are submitted.

Sussex Police Estate

Continued investment in the police estate – A total of £2.6m was invested in the Sussex Police estate in 2023/24. The PCC has continued to ensure that the property used for policing is in the right place, is fit for purpose and is efficient. This approach means that no police facility with a public reception will be removed until a suitable local alternative is identified, examining options for sharing with partners and disposal for redevelopment wherever the police estate is under-used.

The PCC is responsible for the Sussex Police estate and, as the landlord, is currently in the process of developing an Estates Strategy 2024/28 to enable the effective governance of all land and property. This strategy will be published in autumn 2024. The land and sites were valued at £175.2m on 31 March 2024.

During 2023/24, further improvements were made to Brighton Police Station through the completion of works to reduce water ingress into the locker areas and underground car parks and workplace areas. Other delivery highlights from this investment throughout the year included: the installation of enhanced CCTV; intercom; gates/barriers; other security improvements across the police estate; replacement of mechanical and electrical assets across various sites and ongoing improvement works to welfare areas within Crawley, Haywards Heath and Horsham. Sussex Police also commenced works to redevelop Centenary House [Brighton] and completed a collaborative project with partners at Beachy Head, alongside the sale and disposal of the [former] police houses at Midhurst and Storrington.

Plans have also been approved for further investment in structural repairs to the car parks at Sussex Police Headquarters [Lewes], with the sale and disposal of facilities at Astley House [Lewes], Polegate and East Court [East Grinstead], police house in Pulborough and fields in Chichester remain ongoing and are anticipated to be completed during 2024/25.

The Force has also used Operation Safeguard funding – received from the Home Office for the potential use of Sussex Police custody cells to temporarily hold prisoners who cannot be accommodated in the prison establishment – to make further investments in the police estate. In 2023/24, this equated to £36,000 to commence work on a small number of projects, with a further £146,000 set to be carried forward to 2024/25 to complete approved projects at Crawley Police Station, Sussex Police Headquarters [Lewes] and Horsham Occupational Health.

The PCC also worked closely with the Estates Team for Sussex Police to secure an additional £50,000 from district and borough councils across Sussex through Section 106 Agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). This funding was used to support further investment and improvements in the Sussex Police estate and existing policing infrastructure. In total, £2.454m has been secured for Sussex Police through Section 106 Agreements and CILs since 2017/18.

Sussex Police have also continued to work with the National Police Estates Group to ensure that the police and other emergency services are a primary consideration within the existing planning system for any new developments throughout the country.

LOOKING AHEAD: In April 2024, a Sussex Estates Strategy Programme Director commenced in post to provide a greater focus on the police estate.

INFOGRAPHIC: £50,000 secured from new developments.

Climate Change

Reducing energy usage and changing practice through Project Polar Bear – Sussex Police has continued to use Project Polar Bear to deliver a renewed approach to energy usage and change working practices across the entire police estate.

Sussex Police launched Project Polar Bear in 2022/23 in response to the global energy crisis. This initiative aimed to reduce energy consumption and associated costs across the police estate. Through the introduction of simple measures and guidance, and a large-scale shift to more energy-efficient lighting by replacing every old florescent light unit with more efficient Light Emitting Diode (LEDs) fittings, Sussex Police achieved a 10% reduction in energy usage across 2023/24.

Project Polar Bear has also been extended by the Force to raise awareness of and communicate different ways to save energy [and money] through the initiation of a physical switch off campaign. This approach has been supported by consistent communications encouraging individuals to turn off computers and lights and engaging further with officers and staff in energy saving practices, alongside other campaigns to promote behavioural change and improve recycling.

Working towards the Government net zero target by 2050 – Sussex Police has commissioned Ricardo to look at the greenhouse gas emissions created by the police estate [as per the Greenhouse Gas Protocol] to develop strategies for reduction and a plan to deliver the Government net zero emissions target by 2050.

The report has separated the Sussex Police emissions into three separate areas:

Scope 1 – covers emissions from owned and/or controlled sources, including fleet and heating, which currently accounts for 22% of Force emissions.

Scope 2 – encompasses indirect emissions from purchased electricity which currently accounts for 6% of all Sussex Police emissions.

Scope 3 – covers value chain emissions, including all indirect emissions that are associated with the supply chain, which currently contribute towards 72% of the total emissions for the Force.

The plan also seeks to provide decarbonisation strategies, sustainable procurement and an approach to transition to an electric vehicle fleet.

Development of an Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy – Sussex Police share a Joint Transport Service (JTS) with Surrey Police and has developed an electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure strategy for the two forces to support this collaboration.

The JTS currently consists of a fleet of 1,935 vehicles comprising several different vehicle types, although only 4% of these vehicles are either electric vehicles [65], hybrid vehicles [15] or hydrogen vehicles [6], with the rest of the fleet comprising 1,717 diesel-powered vehicles [89%] and 132 vehicles running on petrol [7%]. Given this distribution, it is imperative that Sussex Police prioritise the transition to an EV dominant fleet moving forwards.

Pick Everard – a national multi-disciplinary consultancy working within the property, infrastructure and construction industry – has been tasked with assessing the electrical capacity throughout the police estate and developing an EV solution. The consultants are currently in discussions with UK Power Networks (UKPN) to obtain cost estimates and establish procedures for enhancing the power supply available.

There is also an ongoing project aimed at expanding the solar capacity across the Sussex estate, which will better enable the transition to an EV dominant fleet in the future and support the Force to work towards achieving net zero emissions by 2050.

LOOKING AHEAD: Sussex Police will continue to look at the cost and practicalities of transitioning to a fleet of electric and/or hydrogen vehicles to work towards delivering the net zero emission target from 2050.

Partnership Activity to Reduce Crime

Funding protected for Community Safety Partnerships – In 2023/24, the PCC protected community safety funding in Sussex for the 11th year running and allocated £1.215m to Brighton & Hove City Council, East Sussex County Council and West Sussex County Council and each of the 12 District and Borough Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs).

The PCC continues to support fully the CSPs to address crime and anti-social behaviour at a district level, respond dynamically to emerging threats and issues, and implement local activity in line with their strategic objectives as required. Many of the CSPs continued to explore opportunities to work more collaboratively during the year and it is evident that strong relationships exist with wider partnership members and the local communities.

INFOGRAPHIC: £1.215m in community safety funding allocated throughout Sussex.

LOOKING AHEAD: The PCC has made a further commitment to protect community safety funding again in 2024/25.

Ongoing support for the Sussex Restorative Justice Partnership – The Sussex Restorative Justice Partnership (SRJP) continued to provide ongoing support to victims of crime seeking restitution, rather than a criminal justice outcome, by confronting perpetrators and describing the impact of the crime upon them and their families.

Restorative justice brings those harmed by crime and those responsible for the harm into communication with each other, enabling all parties affected by an incident to find a positive way forward and repair the harm caused. The SRJP comprises more than 20 statutory and voluntary sector organisations across Sussex and continues to be recognised as good practice nationally.

The PCC established the SRJP in 2014 and remains committed to embedding restorative justice and delivering restorative practice within Sussex Police and the wider partnership. The service has a dedicated Services Delivery Manager to ensure that the restorative practice in Sussex supports the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime, processes are streamlined to make it easier for partners and volunteers to access and that best practice is achieved.

The PCC has continued to work with Sussex Police to develop the range of out-of-court-disposal options available in Sussex to divert individuals away from the criminal justice system by considering alternative approaches to prosecution. This included referrals to a range of services that tackle substance misuse, anger management, and hate crime, together with activities focused on acquisitive crime, fraud, fire safety and wildlife crime.

Many perpetrators were also offered the opportunity to attend victim awareness programmes supported by the CSPs. The Restorative Justice Team have also supported the OSPCC with the implementation and delivery of an Immediate Justice programme as a complementary out-of-court-disposal.

The SRJP continues to support the disposals delivered through the Community Remedy process, with 470 cases resolved through this option during the year – this represented a 32% reduction compared to 2022/23. In addition, 410 referrals were made to the SRJP and taken forward by the three Restorative Justice Hubs in Sussex during 2023/24, with a further 698 referrals also received through the Youth Offending Service (YOS). This is a notable increase in both demand for service and delivery compared to the previous year.

The Hub delivered 362 restorative outcomes throughout the financial year, with the YOS contributing a further 172 outcomes. Across the SRJP, there were 47 direct and 315 indirect outcomes delivered through shuttle mediation and the exchange of letters between victims and offenders – with satisfaction levels remaining at 100% throughout.

INFOGRAPHIC: 410 referrals made to the Sussex Restorative Justice Partnership.

Immediate Justice programme implemented – In 2023/24, the PCC secured £1m of funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) to develop and deliver an Immediate Justice pilot programme in Sussex – one of only 10 ‘trailblazer’ police force areas in England and Wales to have secured this extra funding.

The programme has been implemented to ensure that those committing anti-social behaviour take accountability for their actions, whilst providing victims and communities with a voice in how they would like offenders to make amends for their behaviour, utilising out of court resolutions through the Community Remedy document. The initiative is targeted at children and young people aged between 12 – 17 years old through an out-of-court-disposal, although the scheme is available to adult offenders too.

The types of offences suitable for Immediate Justice in Sussex are any offences that can be considered anti-social and could directly impact on a victim and/or the wider community. These can include criminal damage; common assault and/or battery; possession of drugs; drunk and disorderly; harassment [without violence]; public order and theft [including shoplifting].

Through undertaking visible, practical and meaningful activities, offenders will pay back to the community through unpaid work and swiftly repair any harm and damage they may have caused to victims and communities. This includes gardening, litter picking, maintaining public spaces and the removal of graffiti.

The successful delivery of Immediate Justice in Sussex will see a reduction in incidents of anti-social behaviour, increased confidence in reporting and appropriate action being taken, with an increased sense of community and social cohesion.

Between 1 July 2023 and 31 March 2024, Sussex Police managed 132 Immediate Justice cases, with 118 of these relating to children and young people [89%] and 14 relating to adults [11%]. Of those cases, 103 have been fully processed, with the remaining 29 cases set to be delivered in 2024/25. From the 103 cases fully processed, 77% of individuals have completed their reparative activity, 5% remain in progress and 18% have failed to engage with the programme and will not be eligible to take part in this initiative again.

LOOKING AHEAD: During 2024/25, the PCC appointed Red Snapper Managed Services to assist with adult referrals in East and West Sussex to enhance the services available across the county, strengthening the programme further still.

Improved information sharing via ECINS – The PCC continued to jointly fund the Empowering Communities Inclusion & Neighbourhood management System (ECINS) with Sussex Police through 2023/24.

ECINS is a multi-agency case management system which facilitates real-time information sharing between police and local authority partners in a secure and General Data Protection Regulation compliant way. ECINS provides a central hub where practitioners can task and inform one another, dramatically speeding up processes and enabling support to be quickly and effectively offered to victims.

LOOKING AHEAD: From 2024/25, Sussex Police will introduce a new comprehensive restorative justice platform called ‘myRJ’ which will replace ECINS. This is a dedicated and secure case management system designed by restorative justice practitioners that will underpin the delivery of restorative justice in Sussex moving forward.

Continued funding for the Sussex Hate Incident Support Service – The PCC has continued to encourage and enable victims and witnesses to report hate crime and ensure that offenders are brought to justice.

During 2023/24, the Sussex Hate Incident Support Service [delivered by Victim Support] supported more than 1,000 complex, high-risk and vulnerable victims of hate crime in Sussex through the provision of immediate emotional support, advice and coordination with partner agencies. These victims were targeted because of a prejudice towards their disability, gender identity, race or ethnicity, religion or belief and/or sexual orientation.

INFOGRAPHIC: More than 1,000 victims supported by the Sussex Hate Incident Support Service

Further funding awarded through the Safer in Sussex Community Fund – The PCC allocated £166,160 from the Safer in Sussex Community Fund (SiSCF) in 2023/24 to support 46 local projects across Sussex to tackle crime and improve community safety.

The SiSCF provides financial support [grant awards up to £5,000] to a diverse range of local organisations and community projects that aim to reduce crime and improve community safety.

In total, £2.291m has been allocated to support 532 community projects since the SiSCF was created. This has included support for young and older people, homelessness, scams and fraud awareness and businesses affected by crime. A list of each of the successful applications to the SiSCF can be viewed through the following link:

<https://www.sussex-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/apply-for-funding/>

INFOGRAPHIC: £2.291m for 532 community projects.

Coordinated the activity of the Sussex Criminal Justice Board – The PCC continued to chair the Sussex Criminal Justice Board (SCJB) to coordinate the activity of local agencies in providing an efficient and effective criminal justice system for Sussex. The SCJB has two overarching priorities: (i) improving justice outcomes for victims, witnesses, suspects and offenders, and (ii) reducing re-offending and transforming rehabilitation.

The SCJB remains focused on improving conviction rates across the criminal justice system, with a specific focus on improving how the police investigate rape and better support victims of domestic abuse, rape and sexual assault.

In July 2023, it was confirmed that all 43 police forces in England and Wales had signed up to Operation Soteria – a transformational approach between the police and Crown Prosecution Service to improve outcomes for rape and sexual offence cases. As one of the 14 pathfinder forces to join the expansion programme for Operation Soteria Bluestone [in October 2022], Sussex Police were well-positioned to embed the new national operating model developed by the programme to ensure that a more consistent approach exists to all rape and serious sexual offences (RASSO) investigations that are victim-centred, suspect-focused and context-led, regardless of the police force area.

Sussex Police demonstrated modest increases in the number of solved outcomes and detections [for these offences] across the year with further improvements anticipated to be realised during 2024/25. The PCC will continue to monitor Force performance in this important area through the SCJB and her monthly webcast Performance & Accountability Meetings.

Public Engagement

Understanding priorities and concerns through #TalkSussex – In 2023/24, the PCC's extensive public engagement programme – #TalkSussex – included attendance at various events and locations in Sussex throughout the year.

In person engagement took place in countywide locations including Bognor Regis, Brighton, Chichester, Crawley, Eastbourne, Hastings, Haywards Heath, Heathfield, Lewes and Worthing. Engagement with more than 800 individuals took place at these events throughout the year, with this information used by the PCC to make decisions around policing priorities and budgets.

The #TalkSussex campaign was also used to highlight community safety initiatives funded by the PCC, particularly at the events aimed at students, including distributing anti-spiking drink covers known as StopTopps, to keep people safe when they go out.

Measuring public confidence through the #TalkSussex survey – To support the #TalkSussex campaign, the PCC launched an online and print survey which was promoted and distributed at engagement events to measure public confidence in Sussex.

The survey was distributed at these engagement events, published online through the PCC website and social media channels, and was shared with local partners in Sussex, including the NHS, town, district and borough councils, Neighbourhood Watch and local pharmacies.

The survey received nearly 4,000 responses [comprising both digital and printed responses] between June and October 2023. The survey found that anti-social behaviour and road safety were the two areas that affected Sussex residents the most in terms of experiencing crime and feeling unsafe in their communities. Increased visible policing patrols and tougher sentencing for offenders were highlighted as the two top measures that were recognised to make respondents feel safer.

The PCC also commissioned a further consultation with the residents of Sussex – created by utilising the findings from the #TalkSussex survey – which asked residents to share their views on feelings of safety, awareness of local support services and questions around police funding. The survey received more than 2,150 responses during the year.

A further survey was conducted as part of the Immediate Justice programme, funded through the Government's Anti-social Behaviour Action Plan which is currently being delivered by the Office of the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner (OSPCC). This survey asked residents to highlight how offenders should make amends for any harm or damage that they had caused and received more than 850 responses, with repairing damage to public property acknowledged to be the greatest priority for residents.

LOOKING AHEAD: In 2024/25, the PCC will further strengthen her consultation and engagement with Sussex residents through the dissemination of another survey – both online and at all engagement events.

Better understanding of local issues through focus groups – In 2023/24, the OSPCC carried out two separate rounds of focus groups across the county in conjunction with the Sussex Association of Local Councils. The discussions were held in May and November 2023 and continued to provide a direct channel for feedback from town and parish councils about contact with Sussex Police and community satisfaction with the policing response provided.

More than 100 town and parish councils in Sussex were invited to attend these focus groups, with elected members from 91 councils participating in the discussions – this represented approximately 650,000 Sussex residents from the following areas:

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East Sussex

Lewes – including Kingston Parish Council, Lewes Town Council, Newhaven Town Council, Newick Parish Council, Peacehaven Town Council, Ringmer Parish Council, Seaford Town Council, South Highton Parish Council, Telscombe Town Council, Westmeston Parish Council and Wivelsfield Parish Council.

Rother – including Battle Town Council, Brede Parish Council, Brightling Parish Council, Burwash Parish Council, Camber Parish Council, Crowhurst Parish Council, Etchingham Parish Council, Iden Parish Council, Rother District Council, Rye Town Council, Salehurst & Robertsbridge Parish Council, Sedlescombe Parish Council and Ticehurst Parish Council.

Wealden – including Alfriston Parish Council, Crowborough Town Council, East Hoathly Parish Council, Fletching Parish Council, Hadlow Down Parish Council, Hailsham Town Council, Herstmonceux Parish Council, Mayfield Parish Council, Pevensey Parish Council, Polegate Town Council, Uckfield Town Council, Wealden District Council, Westham Parish Council and Withyham Parish Council.

West Sussex

Adur – including Adur & Worthing District Council, Lancing Parish Council and Sompting Parish Council.

Arun – including Angmering Parish Council, Arundel Town Council, Bersted Parish Council, Bognor Regis Town Council, Clapham Parish Council, East Preston Parish Council, Littlehampton Town Council, Pagham Parish Council, Rustington Parish Council and Slindon Parish Council.

Chichester – including Chichester City Council, Cocking Parish Council, East Wittering & Bracklesham Parish Council, Harting Parish Council, Lodsworth Parish Council, Lynchmere Parish Council, Midhurst Town Council, Northchapel Parish Council, North Mundham Parish Council, Petworth Town Council, Selsey Town Council, Southbourne Parish Council, Westbourne Parish Council and West Wittering Parish Council.

Horsham – including Billingshurst Parish Council, Bramber Parish Council, Broadbridge Heath Parish Council, Colgate Parish Council, Forest Neighbourhood Council, Horsham Denne Neighbourhood Council, Horsham Trafalgar Neighbourhood Council, Itchingfield Parish Council, North Horsham Parish Council, Rusper Parish Council, Shipley Parish Council, Southwater Parish Council and Storrington & Sullington Parish Council.

Mid Sussex – including Ashurst Wood Parish Council, Burgess Hill Town Council, Cuckfield Parish Council, East Grinstead Town Council, Fulking Parish Council, Haywards Heath Town Council, Hurstpierpoint Parish Council, Mid Sussex District Council, Turners Hill Parish Council, West Hoathly Parish Council and Worth Parish Council.

The sessions in May 2023 focussed on the #TalkSussex survey and asked local councils what issues affect their communities the most and what would make residents feel safer in these communities. A key issue identified throughout the discussions was road safety, with the sessions in November 2023 providing a dedicated focus around this topic with input provided from the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership. The recommendations emanating from all the focus groups have since been shared with Sussex Police for progression.

Discussions were also held with residents in Brighton & Hove, Crawley and Hastings to discuss the same issues. To extend the reach of the consultation, additional sessions were held involving people with disabilities, interfaith communities and a local group representing the Armed Forces and veterans.

LOOKING AHEAD: During 2024/25, the PCC will continue to consult and engage with members of the public and will seek to broaden and expand this engagement to include a specific focus on youth and elder audiences.

INFOGRAPHIC: 91 councils participated in focus groups held countywide – representing 650,000 Sussex residents.

[Holding the Chief Constable to Account](#)

PEEL Assessment of Sussex Police – In 2023/24, His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) published the findings from their ‘Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy’ (PEEL) assessment of Sussex Police in 2021/22.

The report praised Sussex Police for ‘preventing crime and anti-social behaviour’ and ‘engaging with and treating the public with fairness and respect’, including efforts to engage with hard-to-reach groups. The report also recognised the immense contribution made by Neighbourhood Policing Teams and highlighted the Force’s innovative and important work on using data analytics to properly understand its demand and where resources can be deployed to greatest effect.

HMICFRS also highlighted areas where change and improvement were much needed, especially in supporting people who are vulnerable. These areas include ‘investigating crime’, ‘recording data about crime’ and ‘responding to the public’ via emergency and non-emergency telephone calls. Sussex Police has undertaken extensive work to quickly implement and bring about improvements in these important areas to address positively the ‘inadequate’ areas identified in the report.

The PCC has a statutory role to scrutinise the performance of Sussex Police. The HMICFRS reports provide an independent, objective, and external view of the Force’s performance to support the ongoing, extensive and robust challenge and scrutiny. This includes ensuring that Sussex Police has the necessary tools and support required to address the changes, improvements and recommendations needed to serve the residents of Sussex most effectively.

Regular scrutiny at the Performance & Accountability Meetings – The PCC continued to use publicly webcast monthly Performance & Accountability Meetings (PAMs) to hold the Chief Constable to account for the performance of Sussex Police.

The PAMs provide scrutiny and transparency over a broad range of policing functions, decisions and operational activity, alongside any inspection reports published by HMICFRS.

In 2023/24, the PAMs included challenges around the police response to: domestic abuse; burglary; road safety [including drink-and-drug-driving]; firearms licensing; policing and mental health [including Right Care, Right Person Scheme]; anti-social behaviour; Code of Practice for Victims of Crime; business crime [including shoplifting]; stop and search powers; call handling times and digital contact; Code of Practice for Ethical Policing; Disclosure and Barring Service checks; scams and fraud, and police officer recruitment.

Other topics, including the HMICFRS inspection reports into the Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) of Sussex Police, online sexual abuse and exploitation of children, and how effective police forces are in the deployment of firearms were also raised at the PAMs across the year.

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The findings from the Baroness Casey Review [into the standards of behaviour and internal culture of the Metropolitan Police Service] has also been used at these meetings to understand better how Sussex Police has sought to use the finds to improve its own standards of behaviour and internal culture, including participation in the national data wash exercise to identify any intelligence and/or allegations from the Police National Database that required further investigation.

The PAMs continue to be recognised as good practice nationally by both the Home Secretary and the Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire. Each of the PAM sessions are archived and, together with the summary minutes from the meetings, can be viewed through the following link: <https://www.sussex-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/watch-live/>

Review of police complaints – Between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024, the OSPCC received 229 reviews following complaints made about Sussex Police, with 219 of these reviews assessed as valid [96%].

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 introduced a significant change to the police complaints system, building on the previous reforms to both the complaint and conduct systems, and expanding the role of PCCs in this process. The complaint reviews are undertaken by the OSPCC – on behalf of the PCC – in accordance with the Independent Office for Police Conduct Statutory Guidance and consider whether the outcome of the handling of the initial complaint by Sussex Police was reasonable and proportionate.

Each of the reviews received by the OSPCC during 2023/24 was acknowledged and progressed, with 199 of these reviews completed throughout the year and the remaining 20 reviews already underway. Of the reviews completed, 172 reviews were not upheld by the OSPCC [86%] and 27 reviews were upheld [14%].

The most common themes of the complaints made against the Force related to delivery of duties and service [including police action following contact and general level of service], police powers, policies and procedures [including power of arrest and detain, use of force and detention in police custody] and individual behaviours [including impolite language and tone]. The OSPCC routinely identifies recommendations and organisational learning through the review process for Sussex Police to address.

2b. Public Priority 2 – Relentless disruption of serious and organised crime

Homicide, Serious Violence and Knife Crime

Consistently low homicides recorded – The PCC has continued to support all available measures introduced by police and partners to reduce the number of people killed by homicide in Sussex.

The number of recorded homicides in Sussex remained consistently low in 2023/24, with 10 homicides recorded across the year. This was one fewer homicide recorded compared to 2022/23 [11].

More than £1.546m funding secured to tackle serious violence – The PCC was successful in securing funding worth more than £1.546m during 2023/24 to tackle serious violence in Sussex, including:

[SUBHEADING] GRIP funding of £488,828 secured – The PCC successfully secured 'GRIP funding' of £488,828 from the Serious Violence Fund to tackle serious violence and knife crime in Sussex, alongside an additional 30% of match funding from Sussex Police. This represented the fifth consecutive year that repeat funding was received from the Home Office to support, maintain and enhance the operational capacity and capability of Sussex Police in this important area.

This funding was used to enhance the operational policing response to incidents of violence across the county, after Sussex was one of 18 police force areas in England and Wales identified as having an increased risk of serious violence. These funds supported proactive police deployments, insight work [to understand better the root causes of the problems relating to serious violence in Sussex] and increased support for investigations activity to ensure crime reports were progressed to positive outcomes. All activity in this area was recorded as part of Operation Safety, to better monitor the progress made and achievements realised.

During 2023/24, this activity equated to almost 1,000 days of policing in Sussex, including more than 250 days of overtime, and the successful delivery of nearly 800 different police operations. The following outcomes were demonstrated through this proactive activity:

- Operation Safety engagement vehicle deployed >90 times within local communities.
- >140 knife crime education lessons delivered to schools, colleges and other educational establishments in Sussex, representing engagement with almost 11,000 students.
- >3,300 knives [and >125 other weapons] surrendered through the sustained provision of amnesty bins.
- More than 50 uniformed and plain clothed proactive police patrols to 'hotspot' locations which contributed to: >90 stop and searches undertaken, >65 intelligence logs submitted, >45 arrests made, and >30 weapons seized.
- >30 separate premises were visited to undertake test purchases, with advice and enforcement activity delivered as required.
- More than 60 knife sweeps of public places completed, with knife arches used on 15 occasions including partnership operations with British Transport Police.
- the introduction of Night Marshals delivered >9,100 hours of safeguarding activity within high-harm areas, including attendance at almost 4,000 incidents [with more than 1,000 of these relating to support for vulnerable women and girls].

INFOGRAPHIC 1: £488,828 to support enforcement activity in Sussex.

INFOGRAPHIC 2: >90 stop and searches, >45 arrests and >3,300 knives surrendered.

[SUBHEADING] Maintained support for the Violence Reduction Unit – The PCC secured a further £1.058m from the Home Office to continue to maintain and support a Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) in Sussex, supported by Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) on each of the three policing divisions [Brighton & Hove, East Sussex and West Sussex].

The Sussex VRP was established in July 2019 to bring together specialists from police, local government, health, probation services and community organisations to tackle serious violence and the underlying causes of violent crime. The VRUs are responsible for coordinating the work, activities and interventions delivered in this area to reduce the risks to individuals and communities throughout Sussex.

The Sussex VRP defines serious violence as crime types that cause or are intended to cause serious injury, covering homicide, knife crime [including knife possession], personal robbery and gun crime, where these occur in a public place. The partnership focuses on activity that seeks to prevent serious violence and building connectivity between aligned workstreams such as domestic abuse, exploitation and violence against women and girls. This includes understanding and addressing the needs of both victims and perpetrators of serious violence.

During 2023/24, there was a 16% increase in serious violence [public place and non-domestic] recorded in Sussex, equating to 265 more serious violent crimes recorded compared to the 1,636 offences recorded across 2022/23. This comprised increases recorded for knife crime offences [+11% and 64 more offences], robbery [+15% and 129 more offences] and grievous bodily harm and wounding [+21% and 126 more offences].

There was also a 15% increase in the number of possession of weapons offences [public place and non-domestic] recorded in Sussex across the financial year, which equated to 170 more offences in comparison to the 1,123 recorded in 2022/23. This comprised increases recorded for possession of bladed and/or sharp instruments [+17% and 119 more offences], possession of other weapons [+8% and 31 more offences] and possession of firearms [+25% and 33 more offences] across the same period.

There was also a 3% reduction in serious violence recorded in Sussex [and 60 fewer offences] when compared to the baseline figures before VRP funded activity was fully established [December 2019]. This included three fewer public place and non-domestic-related homicides recorded in 2023/24 compared to the previous year. The reduction recorded in serious violence in Sussex continue to be attributed to the success of the VRP and the three VRUs that support them.

The risk of 'violence with injury' in Sussex continues to remain low, with the Force positioned 17th out of 43 police force areas in England and Wales, and 5th in their MSG, in terms of the risk of violence per 1,000 population.

Early intervention and preventative work are recognised to be fundamental to violence reduction. Throughout the year, Sussex Police has continued to work with partners to deter young people away from serious violence and knife crime. During 2023/24, more than 8,000 children and young people engaged in intervention activity across Sussex, with training provided to more than 140 professionals across the same period.

The Serious Violence Executive Board continues to meet regularly to oversee the work of Sussex Police and partners in this important area, which now includes implementation of the Serious Violence Duty and encouraging the wider participation of responsible authorities throughout Sussex.

LOOKING AHEAD: The current funding for the VRP remains in place until March 2025. This will enable Sussex Police to continue the work to tackle serious violence and to reduce further the risks to individuals and communities throughout Sussex.

INFOGRAPHIC: £1.058m to maintain a Violence Reduction Partnership.

Maintained the Specialist Enforcement Unit and Tactical Enforcement Units – The PCC has continued to provide the Chief Constable with resources to reinforce the local capacity and national capability of Sussex Police to carry out high-profile disruptions and enforcement activities targeting serious and organised criminals.

The Force has sought to tackle the most serious, organised and persistent criminals who target the road networks in Sussex. The Specialist Enforcement Unit (SEU) – launched in January 2021 – has carried out proactive countywide disruption and enforcement operations on roads across the county. The SEU is comprised of specially trained officers who target individuals who are using the road network for criminality, focusing on combatting organised acquisitive crime and providing dedicated resources to reduce those killed or seriously injured on the roads in Sussex.

The SEU consists of two uniformed operational teams made up of 30 police constables and three sergeants, led by one Inspector. The unit is tasked by the Tactical Tasking and Coordinating Group based on information and intelligence received. This extends to the 'real-time' deployment of resources through the Force Contact Command and Control Department to provide a fast-time response to any crimes in action on the road network in Sussex.

The individuals within the SEU have advanced driving skills and safe stop tactics [such as tactical pursuit and containment] to support existing teams across the Force, with support from the Dog Unit utilised as required. The unit also has the ability and capability to move to locations based on threat, risk, and harm and to provide enhanced visibility on the roads, targeting those offenders using them for criminality.

During 2023/24, the SEU undertook proactive policing activity and interventions throughout Sussex to deliver >300 stop and searches and make arrests relating to 900 offences, including >100 arrests for traffic related cases [including drink-and-drug driving and disqualified/uninsured drivers] and other non-crime matters, such as immigration offences. The unit also generated >390 intelligence reports and submitted >480 referrals to safeguard vulnerable individuals through proactive policing patrols, alongside the seizure of significant amounts of commodities [including drugs, cash and weapons] to further reduce the risk to members of the public and increasing investigative opportunities.

The SEU also supported national campaigns and operations, working with partner forces and agencies to disrupt criminal activity. This included support for Operation Pandilla – a cross border operation into the disruption of serious organised acquisitive crime on the road network led by Thames Valley Police.

INFOGRAPHIC: SEU made >300 stop and searches and made arrests relating to >900 offences.

Drugs and County Lines

Investment in a dedicated County Lines Team – The PCC has continued to ensure that the Chief Constable has resources to tackle and disrupt organised crime groups responsible for county lines drug gang activity in Sussex.

A dedicated County Lines Team – known as Centurion – was established in September 2020 to target individuals operating county drug lines, working collaboratively with other police forces, to arrest and convict those responsible, prevent and detect the serious violence that is associated with this criminality, and safeguard exploited and vulnerable individuals including juveniles. During 2023/24, the team successfully disrupted and/or dismantled more than 130 county drug lines known to be operating across Surrey and Sussex.

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The Neighbourhood Policing Teams within each policing district in Sussex undertake regular visits to identified properties to safeguard and support vulnerable adults and tackle 'cuckooing' – a term used to describe the action of organised crime groups, gangs or other criminals taking over the property of a vulnerable adult with the sole purpose of using it for criminal activity.

Sussex Police has also continued to work closely with and provide support to the Metropolitan Police Service to target offenders and offending behaviour impacting communities in Sussex through Operation Centurion – an operation to share intelligence and investigate county lines and the dealing of controlled substances.

This collaborative approach enables the swift sharing of intelligence, early identification of telephone lines presenting the greatest risk, and the prompt intervention of those dealing in controlled substances. This response aims to bring offenders to justice, whilst safeguarding vulnerable persons and those being exploited by this crime type.

The exploitation of children and young people in relation to drugs and county lines and the inherent challenges associated with identifying and safeguarding those most at risk as part of the policing response provided, are recognised by the Force. This is because the crime, by its very nature, is often hidden, with victims unable to recognise and/or report the harm to which they are subject.

Sussex Police has taken a multi-layered approach to overcome these challenges at a strategic, tactical and operational level and has invested £165,000 in a permanent Exploitation Team which supports the police and partner response to all forms of exploitation, including drugs and county lines. There is one Exploitation Manager post and three Exploitation Coordinator posts within the team [all police staff], with one coordinator based on each of the three policing divisions in Sussex responsible for holding a specific area of exploitation as their tactical area for advice.

The Force has also embedded a series of multi-agency meetings – led by senior detectives – to review all exploitation-related intelligence received with partners to maximise the effectiveness of the response provided and ensure that no opportunities are missed to safeguard victims and/or target perpetrators.

The Force has also sought to improve police officer and staff recognition of exploitation, improve the effectiveness of the policing response provided, and to adopt any learning, tactics and best practice identified locally, regionally and nationally to tackle county lines drug supply and activity. Technology is now being used to support operational policing in this area, with guidance developed around a range of exploitation-related scenarios that is now accessible to police officers via their handheld Mobile Data Terminals.

Sussex Police has also worked with partner agencies to raise awareness of this type of criminality and share information more effectively to strengthen the response provided to victims and survivors. The Force is also in the process of creating a dashboard to identify those individuals most at risk of exploitation and those suspected of exploiting others, with a view to sharing this information with partners to develop further the collective response in this area and protect better the communities of Sussex.

Maintained drug intervention funding – The PCC maintained the drug intervention funding in Sussex at £312,948 during 2023/24. This represented the 11th consecutive year that this funding has been maintained locally, despite continued reductions in community safety grant funding from central Government. The PCC has made more than £3.4m available for drug interventions in Sussex across this period.

In 2022/23, each local authority area within Sussex formed a Combatting Drugs Partnership and has worked locally with key partners on the development of strategic plans to help reduce the supply and demand for drugs and to deliver a high-quality treatment and recovery system.

The partnerships meet regularly and have clear aims and objectives, underpinned by action plans. There is a clear understanding of service provision in their areas and some delivery partners working across local authority boundaries continue to support countywide best practice. The work of these partnerships is underpinned by the Government's drug strategy – 'From Harm to Hope' – a 10-year plan to cut crime and save lives by reducing the supply and demand for drugs and delivering a high-quality treatment and recovery system.

During 2023/24, the PCC has continued to work closely with these partnerships to support delivery of those plans because of the strong links between drug use and crime. The partnerships have also recognised the harm caused by and the need for alcohol dependency [and wider related harms] to be included within this area of work too.

LOOKING AHEAD: The PCC will maintain drug intervention funding for Sussex at the same level in 2024/25.

Further criminal assets recovered – Sussex Police secured a further £255.6K from the Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) 2002 during 2023/24.

POCA is an asset recovery scheme to deny criminals the use of their assets, recover the proceeds of crime and disrupt and deter further criminality. A total of £3.38m has been secured by Sussex Police through this mechanism since 2013/14.

In 2023/24, the PCC and Sussex Police agreed to continue the joint funding of posts in the Economic Crime Unit, including a further two Financial Intelligence Officer posts [in addition to the 8.5 FTE Financial Investigators also funded through POCA] and invested a further £15,591 into community-based initiatives. These included:

- Equipment for the Rural Crime Team to assist them with talking hare coursing.
- Further expansion of the online [DISC] crime reporting system for businesses across Sussex through which to share information and intelligence.

Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Increased awareness of criminal exploitation – The PCC has continued to work with Sussex Police and other partner agencies to protect children from criminal exploitation by raising awareness and increasing the reporting of these offences against children.

In 2021/22, Operation Makesafe was launched to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation. This provided businesses with information, advice and guidance to assist them in identifying the signs of exploitation of children and young people, and the relevant contact details to report any suspicious circumstances and/or concerns identified. This included the provision of multi-agency briefings and training events to business leads, managers and employees within these organisations.

There was a 2.6% increase in the number of offences involving child sexual exploitation in Sussex during 2023/24. This equated to an additional 87 offences recorded compared to the 3,367 recorded the year before. This increase in reported crime is attributed to an improvement in the identification of exploitation in all its forms and the more accurate recording of offences, rather than an actual increase in offending.

Throughout the year, the PCC has continued to ensure that child victims receive the support they need and that more offenders are brought to justice. This has included commissioning Barnardo's and YMCA DownsLink Group to provide a service to children who have been sexually exploited in Sussex, and Survivors' Network to provide a Children's Independent Sexual Violence Advocacy Service to support children and young people [and their families] who have been raped or sexually abused. This provision includes dedicated one-to-one support to assist individuals with any journey through the criminal justice system and beyond as part of their ongoing recovery.

Fraud and Cyber-Crime

Maintained the Digital Investigation Support Unit – In January 2022, the Digital Investigation Support Unit (DISU) was launched across Sussex Police and Surrey Police to support investigations where physical and/or online digital evidence is involved.

The DISU – established following investment from the precept in 2021/22 – is delivered in partnership with Surrey Police – comprises 14 police officers and staff to support frontline officers and investigative staff to obtain evidence that may have been beyond their capabilities previously.

The unit was maintained across both police force areas during 2022/23 and has continued to have a positive impact on crime investigation outcomes, including supporting serious criminal investigations to identify offenders and locating missing high-risk and vulnerable children and young people.

Last year, the team received an internationally recognised award for 'Advancing the Field of Digital Investigations' after designing, creating and implementing a device that identifies spyware and tracking equipment installed on electronic devices. Sussex Police and Surrey Police are continuing to work with women's aid support groups to assist them with improving the safeguarding arrangements of their clients.

Modern Slavery

Protecting vulnerable people – The PCC has continued to work with law enforcement agencies, local authorities, non-governmental organisations and charities to coordinate the local, regional and national response to modern slavery through the National Anti-Trafficking and Modern Slavery Network (NATMSN).

NATMSN brings together PCCs from across England and Wales, the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and the Modern Slavery Unit within the Home Office to understand, improve and deliver a more cohesive response to all forms of modern slavery.

During 2023/24, Sussex Police has continued to enhance its operational policing response to this complex area of criminality in line with the updated policing standards set by the NPCC, strategic priorities of the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner and the national Strategic Policing Requirement. This has included the provision of integrated training for police officers and investigators to improve their knowledge and understanding.

The PCC continued to support the Sussex Anti-Slavery Network, comprising key stakeholders, to ensure that victims are identified, offences are reported, and that enforcement activity is provided as part of any response, wherever appropriate. In 2023/24, the Network has continued to invest in training for its members to improve the capacity, capability, and inter-operability of all partner agencies to respond.

Throughout the year, Sussex Police undertook the following policing activity in respect of modern slavery:

- ✓ charges brought against suspects of modern slavery.
- ✓ convictions of modern slavery for cases relating to domestic servitude and drug supply.
- ✓ several Slavery and Trafficking Risk Orders and Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Orders were obtained for modern slavery.
- ✓ regular operations with the Specialist Enforcement Unit on the road network in Sussex to prevent, target and disrupt organised immigration crime.
- ✓ further enhancements made to the policing response plans for organised immigration crime, including both inland and maritime offences.
- ✓ continued work on a Sussex Modern Slavery Profile to understand better the scale and complexity of offending behaviour that will be used to inform future prevention, engagement and partnership activity.

- ✓ undertaken a Victim Service Assessment Audit into child exploitation in Sussex and an external peer review of the Force response to organised immigration crime.
- ✓ investment in specialist training and continuous professional development around modern slavery and organised immigration crime – for critical incident managers, response and investigations teams, and police officers and staff working within the Force Contact Command & Control Department.
- ✓ continued support provided to the national Modern Slavery and Organised Immigration Crime Operational Policing Team.
- ✓ participation in national campaigns and intensification periods for domestic servitude, labour exploitation, sexual exploitation, child exploitation and criminal finances, including a range of operational, engagement and prevention activity with partners.
- ✓ obtained funding to support the recruitment of a Victim Navigator and a Serious Organised Crime Community Coordinator.
- ✓ created a specific operation to respond to reports of missing unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, working with the Tackling Organised Exploitation Team within the South East Regional Organised Crime Unit.
- ✓ recruited an Exploitation Manager and three Exploitation Coordinators to support the Sussex Police response to modern slavery.

2c. Public Priority 3 – Support and safeguard victims and tackle violence against women and girls

Domestic Abuse

Co-Commissioned Services – In 2023/24, the PCC provided funding to the three upper-tier local authority areas of Brighton & Hove City Council, East Sussex County Council and West Sussex County Council to co-commission services for victims of domestic abuse and support the local authorities to deliver their statutory duty to provide support to victims of domestic abuse under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

The PCC also directly commissions a range of additional services to support victims of domestic abuse in Sussex.

Maintained Victim Hubs – The provision of victim services in Sussex is supported by multi-agency victim hubs comprising of police officers, staff and partners from support service providers. This enables the Force to tailor support to victims who are entitled to an enhanced service in a more efficient and effective manner.

The hubs aim to reduce duplication and provide an enhanced experience through the provision of a more coordinated and co-located approach to victim support. Throughout the year, almost 15,000 victims of domestic abuse were offered support from services directly commissioned by the PCC.

In 2023/24, the teams within the victim hubs worked together to manage the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme to ensure that those at risk from domestic abuse were safeguarded at the earliest possible opportunity. Sussex Police received nearly 1,800 requests throughout the year – comprising 'right to ask' [60%] and 'right to know' [40%] applications – with the hubs working alongside partners to ensure that timely disclosures were made within the national target of 28 calendar days.

Stalking and Harassment

Increased reporting of stalking and harassment – The PCC has continued to ensure that Sussex Police remains funded, equipped, and trained to recognise and respond to stalking and harassment.

As a result of this additional investment, the Force has seen a 284% increase in reports of stalking and harassment since 2015/16 – with more than 14,000 reports received in 2023/24. There was also a 17% increase in the number of solved crimes across the year, with 909 of these crimes solved by Sussex Police, compared to 777 in 2022/23.

The PCC has continued to fund a local, specialist advocacy service – Veritas Justice – to assist victims of stalking through the criminal justice process in Sussex. This service also provides safeguarding advice for victims of cyber-enabled stalking and supports individuals through the criminal justice system and as part of their recovery.

In 2023/24, Veritas Justice provided intervention and support to 780 victims of stalking. This included advice and guidance about keeping safe online, safety planning and ongoing support through police investigations and during court appearances.

INFOGRAPHIC: 780 victims of stalking supported by Veritas Justice.

Prevention and Perpetrator Programmes

Maintained Perpetrator Programmes – In 2023/24, the PCC successfully secured further funding of £667,387 from the Home Office Domestic Abuse and Stalking Perpetrator Fund to maintain the prevention and perpetrator programmes previously established in Sussex across the performance plan year.

[SUBHEADING] Complex Domestic Abuse and Stalking Unit – The Complex Domestic Abuse and Stalking Unit (CDASU) was established in 2021/2022 to provide a tailored intervention for persistent domestic abuse and stalking perpetrators with multiple and complex needs by supporting them to recognise and address their abusive behaviours.

The CDASU work with a cohort of the most active and high-harm domestic abuse perpetrators in Sussex. The multi-agency team comprises Police Offender Managers, Independent Domestic Violence Advisors, a Substance Misuse Worker, a Psychotherapist and a mental health worker.

The unit worked with 104 perpetrators across the performance plan year, following its continuation in July 2023. The programme is voluntary and, should any of the individuals identified for participation decide not to engage, Sussex Police will continue to use the robust disruption opportunities available to them.

The CDASU is also supported by intensive behaviour change programmes delivered by Interventions Alliance. During 2023/24, these programmes were delivered to 36 perpetrators.

[SUBHEADING] High Harm Perpetrator Programme – The programme provides a tailored intervention for persistent perpetrators of domestic abuse and stalking, with multiple and complex needs, by supporting them to recognise and address their abusive behaviours through the Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Intervention Programme and Compulsive and Obsessive Behaviour Interventions (COBI). During 2023/24, the high harm perpetrator programme worked with more than 100 complex offenders and COBI were delivered to 28 perpetrators across the same 12-month period.

[SUBHEADING] Stalking Clinic and Stalking Protection Orders – The Stalking Clinic was launched in January 2022 and comprises multi-agency representatives from Sussex Police, Crown Prosecution Service, Probation Service and Veritas Justice Stalking Advocacy Service, alongside specialist information technology teams for cyber stalking. The clinic meets monthly to assess and provide specialist advice to officers investigating high-risk cases of stalking. During 2023/24, the Stalking Clinic discussed more than 50 high-risk cases in Sussex. The creation of a new Stalking Protection Order (SPO) Coordinator Role [within the clinic] also contributed to almost 60 successful applications for SPOs being granted across the year, helping to further safeguard victims.

Rape and Serious Sexual Offences

Continued investment in rape, sexual violence and exploitation – During 2023/24, the PCC continued to invest in several organisations throughout Sussex to assist victims and survivors with their recoveries from rape, sexual violence and exploitation.

Survivors' Network is responsible for delivering the advice and counselling service provided for survivors of rape, sexual violence and abuse across Sussex. This service is co-commissioned in conjunction with the three local authorities [Brighton & Hove City Council, East Sussex County Council and West Sussex County Council], with the PCC retaining overall responsibility as the lead commissioner.

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During 2023/24, Survivors' Network received more than 4,800 referrals and supported over 2,800 survivors [58%]. The provision of a Children's Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ChISVA) also ensured that nearly 100 children, young people and their families received enhanced support throughout police investigations, court appearances and beyond to assist them in their recoveries.

The PCC funded several other organisations and Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) who support victims and survivors of rape, sexual abuse and exploitation across the year too. These organisations collectively received more than 5,200 referrals during 2023/24, with support provided to over 3,100 of these victims and survivors [60%].

INFOGRAPHIC: Almost 6,000 adult victims of rape, sexual abuse and exploitation and 100 children and young people supported.

Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls

Further funding secured through Safer Streets 5 – The PCC successfully secured £813,449 of extra funding over two years [£461,945.85 in 2023/24 and a further £351,503 in 2024/25] from the Home Office to provide interventions aimed at reducing neighbourhood crime [domestic burglary, robbery, theft from person and vehicle crime], tackling anti-social behaviour and reducing Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in public spaces.

In 2023/24, this funding was used to fund the following three projects in Sussex:

Project Fides: This project has created eight Victim Co-ordinator posts to act as a point of contact for female victims of rape in a public place. These individuals have sought to build rapport with victims of these crimes and to gain a better understanding of the barriers that may have stopped them from supporting a prosecution previously, including specific support for almost 130 cases across the year.

The Victim Co-ordinators also contacted nearly 250 victims during 2023/24 who had previously disengaged from the criminal justice system process. These individuals have also sought to ensure that the right support services have been offered to meet the needs of the victims, alongside the provision of regular updates as the investigations progress.

Upgrading public facing CCTV: This project has upgraded the circa. 500 public facing CCTV in Sussex from a standalone hard-wired system to a wireless, cloud-based system. The technology is cheaper and more cost-efficient to run compared with the former solution and is anticipated to save police and partners an average of 40% a year on previous running costs.

Night Safety Marshals in Brighton & Hove, Crawley and Eastbourne: This project provided Security Industry Authority (SIA) licensed night safety marshals [specifically trained in vulnerability awareness, suicide prevention, medical first aid and mental health first aid] and deployed these individuals in key locations throughout Brighton & Hove, Crawley and Eastbourne. The Night Safety Marshals conducted almost 2,800 hours of high visibility patrols and engaged with nearly 400 vulnerable people across 2023/24.

Elder Abuse

Continued investment in dedicated fraud caseworkers – The PCC has continued to provide funding to support dedicated fraud caseworkers to tackle the financial, physical, psychological and sexual abuse of older people. These individuals provide one-to-one tailored support to those identified as being most vulnerable to repeat fraud – a demographic that includes older people.

This approach supports and raises awareness of Operation Signature – the nationally adopted Sussex Police campaign to identify and support vulnerable victims of fraud – to recognise victims of all types of fraud as victims of crime and to provide preventative measures to support and protect them from further targeting.

The Sussex Fraud Case Workers received more than 1,300 referrals during the year and supported almost 1,000 victims [72%], many of whom had experienced substantial financial loss and have additional needs – such as physical frailties and adult social care issues – which make them more vulnerable to becoming repeat victims. During 2023/24, the caseworkers also supported victims of fraud to recover more than £335,000 from banking institutions across the year.

INFOGRAPHIC 1: Sussex Fraud Case Workers supported almost 1,000 victims

INFOGRAPHIC 2: £350,000 recovered from banking institutions on behalf of fraud victims

Quality Victim Support Services

Range of services commissioned to support victims – The PCC has a statutory responsibility to provide victim support services in Sussex and continued to commission a range of services to support victims throughout the county.

In 2023/24, almost 60,000 victims were referred to these commissioned support services in Sussex, with almost 18,000 individuals [30%] representing new cases [not known to the service already] and requiring one-to-one support.

As one of the commissioned support services, Victim Support holds the contract for providing multi-crime support in Sussex. During 2023/24, Victim Support received almost 34,000 referrals and contacted nearly 31,000 of the aforementioned victims of crime to offer them support following referrals [91%].

Of those victims contacted, more than 30,000 individuals engaged with the service and a further 5,000+ victims are still receiving ongoing emotional support for what they have experienced. Each of the other victims were referred to local specialist service providers to receive enhanced support, including victims of domestic abuse, stalking and sexual violence.

The PCC also supported 170 young people attending court this year, either as victims of crime or witnesses to it, through the Young Witness Service [delivered by Victim Support]. This represented a 150% increase in the number of young people supported by the service compared to 2022/23 [68].

INFOGRAPHIC 1: 34,000 referrals received and 31,000 victims contacted [91%].

INFOGRAPHIC 2: Young Witness Service supported 170 victims and witnesses.

Maintained standards through the Safe Space Sussex Funding Network – The PCC continued to invest in funding projects to support some of the most vulnerable victims as part of an ongoing commitment to develop a diverse landscape of support services in Sussex.

During 2023/24, £5.2m was invested into victim support services in Sussex. This included a further £250,600 provided to specialist support services through the Safe Space Sussex Funding Network – a competitive funding tranche.

The Safe Space Sussex Funding Network was launched in 2017/18 and continues to grow and develop. There are currently 40 'approved' providers of specialist support services within the Funding Network which have each been able to successfully demonstrate the high levels of quality standards and assurance required. Further information about the Funding Network can be viewed through the following link: www.sussex-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/apply-for-funding/safe-space-sussex-funding-network/

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INFOGRAPHIC 1: £250,600 invested in the Safe Space Sussex Funding Network.
INFOGRAPHIC 2: £5.2m invested in victim support services in Sussex.

Safeguard the Vulnerable

Enhancements to the Safe Space Sussex online directory – The PCC has continued to develop and enhance Safe Space Sussex – the online directory of victim support services available throughout Sussex – to enable victims to find the most relevant support service through a safe and confidential route.

Safe Space Sussex provides a mechanism for Sussex residents to seek help and guidance and supports the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime which entitles all victims to receive appropriate support, regardless of whether they choose to report to the police.

The online directory was redeveloped during the year following feedback received from victims and partner agencies to improve the user journey. This included adding the Safe Space Sussex Scheme – which allows members of the public to locate designated safe spaces near to their current location, should they feel unsafe – directly to the site which has streamlined further access to victim support services in Sussex.

In 2023/24, the site received more than 5,000 new visitors. The most visited pages on the site included the search function to find a service, information about different types of crime and specific pages for support service providers.

INFOGRAPHIC: More than 5,000 new visitors to Safe Space Sussex.

Continued delivery of the Safe Space Sussex Scheme – In March 2022, the PCC created a Safe Space Sussex Scheme to allow members of the public to locate designated safe spaces near to their current location, should they feel unsafe using funding secured from the Home Office – Science, Technology and Research (STAR) Fund.

There are currently more than 270 safe space locations throughout Sussex where individuals can access trained support when they are feeling vulnerable. In 2023/24, the Safe Space Sussex App – which hosts the information about the individual locations and provides directions to these – was accessed more than 3,500 times.

The app allowed users to send an automatic text to a named contact to alert them that the sender does not feel safe, together with their current GPS and What3words location. The app also provided individuals with the facility to report non-emergency incidents to Sussex Police online and the ability to automatically turn on the camera and microphone to record, should this be required in an emergency, to capture evidence which is then stored securely within the device.

During 2023/24, the app migrated onto the Safe Space Sussex website to provide better usability and enhanced accessibility. Further information can be viewed through the following link: <https://www.safespacesussex.org.uk/>

INFOGRAPHIC: Safe Space Sussex App used more than 3,500 times.

Improve Access to Justice

Maintained a 'Platinum' status Independent Custody Visiting Scheme – The PCC has continued to oversee an established and effective Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) Scheme in Sussex. The Scheme has 45 dedicated volunteers who make unannounced visits to independently monitor and observe the care and dignity of people detained in each of the five police custody centres in Sussex: Brighton, Crawley, Eastbourne, Hastings and Worthing. This service has also been extended to include independent monitoring of the custody centre at Gatwick Airport.

There was a 52% increase in the number of custody visits made by the ICVs in 2023/24, in comparison to the year before. This equated to 82 more visits compared to the 157 visits completed during 2022/23, with these visits undertaken at a range of different times during a 24-hour period, before inspection reports were submitted to the ICV Scheme Manager for review and action as appropriate. Of those unannounced visits made, more than 728 detained persons accepted a visit with the ICVs to discuss their welfare, rights, entitlements and dignity in police custody. This represented a 56% increase from the 466 accepted visits in 2022/23.

The ICVs have been empowered to go above and beyond police custody legislation and guidelines to introduce new standards for detainee dignity and wellbeing. These have included adjustments made to night-time lighting levels in custody cells to promote better rest and sleep, enhanced access to self-care items and personal hygiene products, provision of distraction items to assist the detainees with their mental wellbeing and to manage the time whilst investigation processes are completed, and the introduction of decaffeinated drinks to assist with calming anxiety and stress during the custody process.

Throughout the year, the scheme introduced additional oversight and scrutiny around other custody processes, including the monthly audit into adult and juvenile detainee strip searches. The independent reviews scrutinise the strip search processes to ensure that the process is compliant with the requirements of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 for children and young people and adults, alongside accurate recording practices. This approach seeks to ensure that Sussex Police are compliant with the law and regulations, whilst maintaining and upholding the dignity and human rights of the detainees.

The scheme has recommenced the quarterly panel meetings at each of the five custody centres to review performance statistics, areas for improvement and to share good practice identified by the ICVs. Alongside this, a new recruitment, training and continuous professional development strategy has been introduced to optimise the personal development of the ICVs and performance of the scheme. In addition, more information has been made available through a range of public meetings, events and online resources.

During 2023/24, Sussex Police formally introduced several changes to the operating model for police custody to improve the effectiveness of the detention provision in Sussex. This included an uplift in police officer and staff numbers in custody, the introduction of detention officers [to replace custody assistants and detention supervisors] and the formation of a Central Support Team to expedite the journey through the custody process in the interests of efficiency and timeliness of police investigations.

The ICVs played an essential role in monitoring the implementation of this change programme through the independent monitoring review and inspection process to ensure that these changes were embedded expeditiously, whilst maintaining and upholding the high levels of safeguarding, dignity and welfare standards demonstrated previously for people detained in police custody.

In 2023/24, the ICV Scheme successfully achieved the highest possible 'Platinum' status for its Quality Assurance Framework awarded by the Independent Custody Visiting Association – one of only six schemes in England and Wales to secure this status which demonstrates "*an outstanding level of custody visiting and volunteer management*" across the Scheme. Sussex was also one of two schemes to have achieved this status twice, having first been awarded this status in May 2019.

Several positive changes to detainee care were introduced by the scheme during the year, including: additional resources to help those detained in police custody to manage best their time, including the introduction of new reading books [in a range of different languages], newspapers and magazines; development of monitoring records for food hygiene checks and the availability of digital food temperature probes, and greater accessibility to personal care products, including face and body wipes.

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The ICVs also led on a national project to establish a new referral pathway to provide support for those experiencing menopause symptoms whilst in police custody in England & Wales. This healthcare screening process was introduced in recognition of the complex needs of women in police custody which is recognised to be different from the requirements of men who are detained.

INFOGRAPHIC: Awarded 'Platinum' status by ICVA.

3. Strategic Policing Requirement

The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) sets out those threats which the Home Secretary has determined are the biggest threat to public safety and must be given due regard by PCCs when issuing and varying Police & Crime Plans.

The SPR supports PCCs, as well as Chief Constables, to plan, prepare and respond to these threats by clearly linking the local response to the national, highlighting the capabilities and partnerships that policing needs to ensure it can fulfil its national responsibilities.

The SPR contains seven national threats, as follows:

- Violence against women and girls.
- Terrorism.
- Serious and organised crime.
- National cyber incidents.
- Child sexual abuse.
- Public disorder.
- Civil emergencies.

The SPR provides details of the action required from policing at local and regional level to the critical national threats.

The PCC has given due regard to each of the seven threat areas identified in the SPR within her Sussex Police & Crime Plan and as part of her statutory role of holding the Chief Constable to account during 2023/24. This area was raised at the Performance & Accountability Meeting on 15 March 2024 – further information can be viewed through the following link: <https://www.sussex-pcc.gov.uk/about/how-we-work/watch-live/>

4. Managing Resources

4a. Summary of financial context 2023/24

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 created two separate corporations' sole: the PCC and the Chief Constable.

The PCC is responsible for: receiving all income and funding; making all payments from the overall Police Fund and control of all assets, liabilities and reserves.

The functions of the Chief Constable are fulfilled under this Act. The annual budget is set by the PCC in consultation with the Chief Constable. A scheme of delegation is in operation between the two bodies determining their respective responsibilities, as well as local arrangements in respect of the use of the PCC's assets and staff.

Financial planning sits at the heart of good public financial management. Alongside budget preparation, performance management and reporting, the ability to look strategically beyond the current budget period is a crucial process to support the PCC's resilience and long-term financial sustainability.

The four-year strategic financial planning tool – the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) – is one of the key planning tools helping to identify available resources and options for delivering the three Public Priorities within the PCC's Police & Crime Plan and the national Strategic Policing Requirements.

2023/24 Budget

The PCC worked closely with the Chief Constable and her senior team to understand the operational needs of Sussex Police for the financial year 2023/24 and the financial pressures on the Force.

The PCC considered the financial and other implications of precept funding levels, use of reserves, inflation and other cost pressures against several budget scenarios as part of the financial planning process. The level of cost increase from inflation of £20m when set against a £15.3m grant and precept increase requires cost reductions to balance the budget.

The PCC, alongside Sussex Police, reviewed all budgets in detail during 2022/23 in collaboration with the Service Transformation Programme to highlight options for identifying and delivering efficiency savings and/or generating income, with the aim of setting a balanced budget.

A £15 precept uplift in 2023/24 would enable Sussex Police to meet the increased costs whilst preserving the improvements in operational capacity and capability made through investment in previous years. It would also support the cost of delivering the change required to ensure they have the most efficient policing model possible, building on the investment already made in innovation such as digital support for investigation and analytics to deliver smarter evidence-based policing.

The PCC and the public [as we know from our survey and consultation results] wanted to maintain the investment that had been made to date – the police officers, police staff, PCSOs and smart systems and capabilities. Yet, even with a £15 increase in the precept and use of other resources, including COVID-19 reserves and an underspend from 2022/23, it was not enough to balance the budget and offset the large cost increases that were anticipated, leaving the requirement to make £0.9m of savings to balance the budget for 2023/24.

The decision to increase the police precept to fund operational policing was also based on the results of substantial public consultation including focus groups with parish, town and district councillors and a Police Budget and Priorities Survey in which residents gave their views.

The £15 a year increase per Band D property was supported and endorsed by the Police & Crime Panel at their meeting in January 2023.

The 2023/24 net revenue budget was approved by the PCC in February 2023 at £362.7m. This consisted of the following:

- Government grant for Sussex in 2023/24 of £207.05m.
- The precept was increased by £15 to £239.91 for a Band D property, generating £155.6m.
- Provision for increases in pay and prices, including growth, inflation and cost pressures of £19.5m.
- The requirement to make a further £0.9m of savings.
- The PCC delegated a budget of £357.4m to the Chief Constable for 2023/24 to enable the discharge of operational activities under police direction and control.

The budget was then increased by £7m to £369.7m following the receipt of additional government grant in quarter 3 that contributed towards the pay increase for 2024/25.

Revenue Budget	2023/24 Revised £m
Sussex Police Operational Delivery Budget	359.922
Office of the Sussex PCC	1.877
PCC	0.123
Community Safety	1.771
Victim Support & Restorative Justice	0.565
Other OPCC financing budgets including reserves transfers	5.503
Total Net Budget	369.761

The capital and investment budget, which funds the purchase, enhancement and replacement of long-term asset, was approved by the PCC in February 2023 at £12.6m and subsequently uplifted for slippage from 2022/23 to £20.1m.

The 2023/24 revenue and capital budget, including funding details and assumptions, can be viewed in the MTFs 2023/27 through the following link:

www.sussex-pcc.gov.uk/media/7207/005-report-sussex-pcc-mtfs-23-27-final-08022023.pdf

Throughout the year, the PCC has closely scrutinised the spending of the budget, delivery of the policing investment and performance. Scrutiny has been provided through a variety of publicly webcast Performance & Accountability Meetings, monthly Local Policing Accountability Board meetings, internal financial monitoring meetings and other monitoring within the scheme of governance.

4b. Summary of financial performance 2023/24

Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner Direct Operating Costs		Cost £	Total Cost £
Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner Direct Operating and Commissioning Costs	Democratic representation - <i>PCC salary and oncosts</i> Community Safety Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan Victim Support & Restorative Justice Violence Reduction Programme Safer Streets Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner <i>Less Grant funding & External Income</i> Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan Grant Victims & Restorative Justice Grant Violence Reduction Programme Grant Safer Streets Grant	0.1m 1.8m 0.4m 5.7m 1.3m 1.1m 1.9m <i>(0.4m)</i> <i>(5.4m)</i> <i>(1.4m)</i> <i>(1.1m)</i>	<hr/> 4.0m
Policing services provided by Sussex Police	Police Officers Police Staff (including PCSOs) Other Employee Costs* Buildings Transport Supplies & Services Third Party Payments** <i>less Sussex Police income</i>	205.0m 109.9m 7.9m 14.3m 6.6m 46.1m 3.8m <i>(42.7m)</i>	<hr/> 350.9m
Capital Financing	Capital financing costs <i>Less interest income on balances</i>	7.9m <i>(3.9m)</i>	<hr/> 4.0m
Planned transfers to/(from) reserves			8.0m
Total Cost of Services			367.0m
Funded by	Funding from Government Council Tax Total funding	<i>(216.4m)</i> <i>(155.6m)</i> <i>(372.0m)</i>	<hr/> <i>(372.0m)</i>
Net revenue (surplus)/deficit			<i>(5.1m)</i>

* Includes ill health pension payments, employee expenses, training and restructure costs

** Includes third party payments to other government bodies, partnerships and external initiatives

The figures shown in the above table are as per the draft Statement of Accounts 2023/24. They include all office costs and services commissioned by the PCC and the cost of all activities carried out by Sussex Police.

4c. Summary of financial headlines 2023/24

The 2023/24 net revenue budget was approved by the PCC in February 2023 at £363m. This consisted of the following:

The key financial headlines from the revenue and capital outturn for 2023/24 can be summarised as follows:

- Government grant for Sussex in 2023/24 of £207.05m.
- The precept was increased by £15 to £239.91 for a Band D property, generating £155.6m of additional income.
- Provision for increases in pay and prices, including growth, inflation and cost pressures of £19.5m.
- The requirement to make a further £0.9m of savings.
- The PCC delegated a budget of £361.8m to the Chief Constable for 2023/24 to enable the discharge of operational activities under police direction and control.

The budget was revised during the year to £369.8m to take account of additional grant resources received which increased the budget allocated to the Chief Constable.

The revenue outturn, subject to audit, is as follows:

- £5.1m [1.4%] underspend on the revised revenue budget of £369.8m.
- £8.7m [2.4%] underspend on the operational delivery budget delegated to the Chief Constable.
- An underspend of £0.3m on the OSPCC budget,
- An additional transfer to reserves of £6.2m from revenue.
- General reserves were maintained at 4% in line with the Reserves Strategy.

The capital and investment budget, which funds the purchase, enhancement and replacement of long-term assets, was approved by the PCC in February 2023 at £12.6m and, subsequently, uplifted for slippage from 2022/23 to £20.1m.

The final outturn for the capital and investment programme for the year was an underspend of £4.8m. A case to carry slippage forward was scrutinised and approved.

The PCC's policy on reserves is based on a thorough understanding of the organisation's needs and risks. Part of this process is to give a clear explanation of the existing and proposed use of reserves. The detailed reserves policy can be found in the MTFs, and the balances held can be found in the Statement of Accounts.

Total usable reserves as of 31 March 2024 amounted to £51.4m. This includes general reserves of £15m, equating to 4% of the 2023/24 net budget, plus £35.6m of other reserves earmarked for specific purposes and future commitments.

The summary of the reserves on 31 March 2024 can be found in the Statement of Accounts which also include further details of the financial performance of 2023/24. The draft accounts subject to audit can be viewed here:

<https://www.sussex-pcc.gov.uk/about/financials/accounts/>

4d. Financial outlook for 2024/25 and beyond

The MTFS 2024/25 – 2027/28 continues the investment into the strengthening of Sussex Police that the PCC started in 2018/19 and has maintained to date.

The MTFS addresses the Public Priorities set out in the PCC's Police & Crime Plan 2021/24 and provides further information about the financial context for the revenue budget, capital spending plans and proposed precept decision for 2024/25, alongside estimates for a further three financial years. The MTFS also brings together all resources including grant, precept, fees and charges, income for special policing and use of reserves and capital.

The time horizon of the financial planning is not determined by the time horizon of financial support available from central Government. This is currently only known for the 2024/25 financial year, which is the last year of the Comprehensive Spending Review 2021. The recent announcement of a General Election on 4 July 2024 adds uncertainty and raises further questions about future funding levels, policy changes, employment rights, sustainability, tax and levies, and how each of these may result in changes to current and future plans.

The greater the uncertainty about future central Government policy, the greater the need to demonstrate the PCC entity's long-term financial resilience, given the risks attached to its core funding. The MTFS is prepared on the assumption that the legal entities of the PCC and the Chief Constable are both going concerns, meaning they will continue in operation for the foreseeable future and will be able to realise assets and discharge liabilities in the normal course of operations.

The approach set out in the MTFS is expected to deliver a balanced budget for 2024/25, although the future is more uncertain with a budget shortfall of £16.6m over the remaining period of the strategy. The MTFS also sets out how the general reserve will be resourced up to £16.2m in line with the reserve strategy by the end of 2028.

The management of the 2024/25 budget is planned to be achieved through well-constructed and managed workforce plans; the use of one-off reserves in a managed way; rationalisation of estates; new operating model efficiencies; non-pay savings; and increases to the precept. This will require careful monitoring, scrutiny and commitment to develop realistic and credible savings that will achieve a sustainable budget going forward. The PCC and Chief Constable are fully committed to taking the necessary decisions to achieve this outcome and the budget plans and actions will be closely monitored and scrutinised by both Chief Finance Officers.

The PCC approved an increase to the Band D precept by £13 for 2024/25 from £239.91 to £252.91 which is equivalent to an extra 25p per week / £1.08 per month. For context, 75% of Sussex council taxpayers occupy a Band D property [or below] and will, therefore, pay no more than an additional £1.08 per month per household for the police element.

In 2023/24, the council tax precept for Sussex was one of the lowest – 31 out of 37 – of all policing bodies in England at £239.91 per annum for a Band D property. The median council tax figure was £261.56.

The MTFS will be fully revised in the autumn of 2024 in preparation for the 2025/26 budget planning.

5. National Contribution

In addition to her work in Sussex, the PCC made the following contributions nationally in 2023/24:

- Board member for the Association of Police & Crime Commissioners (APCC).
- PCC representative on the Home Secretary's National Oversight Board for Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment.
- APCC Lead for Business Crime.
- Attends the APCC Criminal Justice System and Victims Standing Group.
- Attends the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) National Stalking and Harassment Offences Working Group.
- Member of the NPCC Audit and Assurance Board.
- Attends His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) strategic briefings following inspections of Sussex Police.
- Group Leader of the Conservative Police & Crime Commissioners.

The PCC also attended the following national events throughout 2023/24:

April 2023: PCC attended a meeting with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DHLUC) to discuss anti-social behaviour.

May 2023: PCC attended a roundtable event held by the Home Office about new knife crime legislation, and took part in a visit to Horsham for Project EDWARD [Every Day Without A Road Death].

June 2023: PCC hosted a DHLUC visit to the OSPCC around the Immediate Justice programme in Sussex.

July 2023: PCC participated in an introductory session with Tesco, and attended the launch event for the Safer Streets Fund – Round 5.

August 2023: PCC delivered an input at the 10 Downing Street Police Uplift Celebration Event, alongside attending the Police Bravery Awards.

September 2023: PCC took part in the Police Digital Summit, and attended the NPCC Serious Organised Acquisitive Crime Conference.

October 2023: PCC attended the Pegasus launch event at 10 Downing Street, provided an input at the Retail Risk Conference 2023 and attended the Association of Convenience Stores – Heart of the Community Conference.

November 2023: PCC attended the Ministerial roundtable event around retail crime for industry and law enforcement.

January 2024: PCC participated in the first APCC Forum to advocate the importance of drug prevention and explore opportunities to prevent further drug-related offending, and spoke at both the National Stalking and Harassment Offences Working Group and National Policing Board.

February 2024: PCC spoke at the National Retail Crime Steering Group and delivered an input at the Restorative Justice for Retail Crime Conference.

March 2024: PCC attended International Women's Day 2024 events in Hastings and Surrey [Evolve Conference 2024], hosted the APCC parliamentary drop-in event to launch the 'Tackling Business and Retail Crime in Focus' report, alongside participation in the APCC Business and Retail Crime Portfolio Meeting.

6. Sussex Police: Workforce Diversity

On 31 March 2024, Sussex Police comprised 3,273 police officers and 2,614 police staff [including 255 PCSOs] – a total workforce of 5,887 individuals [headcount].

Ethnicity

- 121 police officers identified as being from a Black, Asian, mixed heritage or other backgrounds (4%), 2,972 identified as white (91%), 115 preferred not to say (4%) and 65 individuals did not disclose their ethnicity (2%).
- 64 police staff identified as being from a Black, Asian or ethnic minority (2%), 2,365 identified as white (90%), 55 preferred not to say (2%) and 130 individuals did not disclose their ethnicity (5%).

CENSUS 2021: In Sussex, 9% of the population identified their ethnicity as BAME and 91% identified as white.

Sex and Gender

- 1,208 police officers identified as female (37%) and 2,065 identified as male (63%).
- 1,661 police staff identified as female (64%) and 953 identified as male (36%).
- 9 police officers and staff identified their gender identity as trans, six identified as non-binary and 20 identified as other. A further 242 officers and staff preferred not to say and 1,753 individuals did not disclose their gender identity [1,041 not applicable and 712 not disclosed].

CENSUS 2021: In Sussex, 49% of the population identified their gender as female and 45% identified as male. A further 0.17% of the population identified their gender identity as trans, 0.15% identified as non-binary and 0.15% identified as other. A further 5% of the population did not disclose their gender identity.

Religion

- 16 police officers identified as Buddhist (0.5%), 889 as Christian (27%), six as Hindu (0.2%), five as Jewish (0.2%), 14 as Muslim (0.4%), none as Sikh (0%), 56 as other (2%) and 1,607 as none (49%). A further 279 officers (9%) preferred not to say and 401 individuals did not disclose their religion (12%).
- 12 police staff identified as Buddhist (0.5%), 859 as Christian (33%), four as Hindu (0.2%), five as Jewish (0.2%), 18 as Muslim (0.7%), two as Sikh (0.1%), 58 as other (2%) and 1,223 as not having a religion (47%). A further 180 staff preferred not to say (7%) and 253 individuals did not disclose their religion (10%).

CENSUS 2021: In Sussex, 0.5% of the population identified their religion as Buddhist, 45% as Christian, 0.8% as Hindu, 0.3% as Jewish, 2% as Muslim, 0.1% as Sikh, 0.7% as other and 45% as no religion. A further 6% of individuals did not disclose their religion.

Age

- 383 police officers identified as being 16-24 years old (12%), 872 as 25-34 years old (27%), 1,059 as 35-44 years old (32%), 851 as 45-54 years old (26%) and 108 as 55-64 years old (3%). No officers were aged 65 years and over.
- 154 police staff identified as 16-24 years old (6%), 559 as 25-34 years old (21%), 592 as 35-44 years old (23%), 628 as 45-54 years old (24%), 594 as 55-64 years old (23%) and 87 as 65 years and over (3%).

CENSUS 2021: In Sussex, 12% of the population stated their age as 16-24 years old, 14% as 25-34 years old, 15% as 35-44 years old, 17% as 45-54 years old, 16% as 55-64 years old, 14% as 65-74 years old and 13% as 75+ years.

Disability

- 320 police officers identified as having a disability (10%), 2,358 had no disability (72%), 143 preferred not to say (4%) and 452 individuals did not disclose (14%).
- 262 police staff identified as having a disability (10%), 2,008 had no disability (77%), 75 preferred not to say (3%) and 269 individuals did not disclose (10%).

CENSUS 2021: In Sussex, 26% of the population identified as having a disability and 74% did not declare a disability.

Sexual Orientation

- 104 police officers identified as bisexual (3%), 185 as gay or lesbian (6%), 2,381 as heterosexual (73%), six as other (0.2%), 219 preferred not to say (7%) and 378 individuals did not disclose their sexual orientation (12%).
- 58 police staff identified as bisexual (2%), 121 as gay or lesbian (5%), 2,008 as heterosexual (77%), 14 as other (0.5%), 155 preferred not to say (6%) and 258 individuals did not disclose their sexual orientation (10%).

CENSUS 2021: In Sussex, 2% of the population identified their sexual orientation as bisexual, 2% as gay or lesbian, 88% as heterosexual, 0.4% as other and 7% individuals did not disclose their sexual orientation.

7. Summary of Funding Allocated to Victims' Services and Others in Sussex

Ministry of Justice – Funding Allocated to Victims' Services in Sussex

Name of Organisation	Name of Project	Funding
Across Rainbows	LGBTQ+ Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) service	£5,000
Barnardo's	Project SOLAH [Safer Online At Home] uplift	£74,826
Brighton & Hove City Council	Contribution to the specialist domestic abuse service	£80,000
Brighton & Hove City Council	Safe Space Sussex	£15,000
Brighton Women's Centre	Senior Practitioner for Women's Accommodation Support Worker and Trauma Hub	£58,026
Brighton Women's Centre	IDVA and Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (ISVA) for Safe Space Sussex Hubs	£52,079
Brighton Women's Centre	Safe Space Sussex Women's Hub	£40,000
Brighton Women's Centre	Recovery and outreach groups and delivery of 'One Small Thing' training	£20,000
Child and Adolescent to Parent Abuse First Response	Online platform for child to parent abuse support	£8,500
Counselling Plus Community	Domestic abuse and sexual violence counselling	£20,032
Counselling Plus Community	Domestic abuse and sexual violence counselling	£20,000
East Sussex County Council	Contribution to the specialist domestic abuse service	£131,000
Friends, Families & Travellers	Domestic abuse and sexual violence support for Gypsies, Romas and Travellers	£22,857
Hersana	IDVA posts for ethnic minorities	£122,499
Hersana	Counselling for those at risk of harmful practices	£48,230
Home-Start East Sussex	IDVA for children and young people and delivery of the 'Who's in Charge' group sessions	£49,573
Home-Start East Sussex	IDVA and Lotus Programme [domestic abuse recovery programme]	£45,283
Home-Start East Sussex	Lotus Programme [domestic abuse recovery programme] and delivery of the 'Who's in Charge' group sessions	£20,000
Hourglass	IDVA for older people	£89,238
Hourglass	Community response to domestic abuse	£28,072
LGBT Switchboard	IDVA for LGBTQ+ community	£72,068
LGBT Switchboard	IDVA for LGBTQ+ community	£45,849
LGBT Switchboard	Drop in and recovery programme for LGBTQ+ community	£20,000
Lifecentre	Journey to Recovery [trauma informed recovery programme for victims/survivors of sexual violence]	£125,497
Lifecentre	Rape and sexual abuse support funding	£30,370
Lifecentre	Journey to Recovery – Employment [employment programme for victims/survivors of sexual violence]	£20,000
ManKind	Counselling and recovery programme	£106,896
ManKind	ISVA for males	£91,480
ManKind	IDVA for males	£55,006
ManKind	Support for male victims of sexual violence	£23,000
ManKind	Counselling, therapy and psychoeducation group	£10,000
My Sisters' House	DART+ Programme [recovery programme to support women and children who have escaped domestic abuse]	£64,697
My Sisters' House	IDVA for Eastern European community	£51,070
My Sisters' House	IDVA and Domestic Abuse Advocacy Service in West Sussex	£40,000
My Sisters' House	IDVA for Eastern European community	£19,937
Oasis Project	Looking Forward Project [programme for women who have had children permanently removed from their care via family court]	£39,041
Oasis Project	Sex workers outreach programme	£19,111
Oasis Project	Domestic abuse related work and training	£6,417

Rise	Group recovery for those victims of domestic abuse	£40,495
Rise	Regroup [recovery and empowerment group for those who are no longer in an abusive relationship]	£20,000
Safe in Sussex	Early intervention and recovery	£110,943
Safe in Sussex	IDVAs for ethnic minorities and LGBTQ+ communities	£67,954
Safe in Sussex	IDVA for women	£39,000
Safe in Sussex	Funding to upskill staff, maintain a high level of knowledge and continue to deliver a high-quality service to victims and survivors of domestic abuse	£10,468
Sussex Community Development Association	IDVA for ethnic minorities	£26,800
Streetlight UK	Frontline support and outreach service for those involved in the sex industry	£32,000
Streetlight UK	Support for individuals who wish to leave the sex industry	£26,882
Streetlight UK	Training and provision of support for those involved in the sex industry	£7,143
Survivors' Network	Sexual abuse specialist	£371,278
Survivors' Network	ISVAs for adults and children and young people	£148,158
Survivors' Network	Complex caseworkers	£135,000
Survivors' Network	Outreach service and group support	£107,520
Survivors' Network	ISVAs for children and young people	£69,070
Survivors' Network	Extension to RASAF	£30,370
Survivors' Network	Peer support and recovery group for older women	£20,000
The Daisy Chain Project	Pro bono legal advice for victims of domestic abuse	£79,500
The Daisy Chain Project	Investment in technology [to expedite the initial response for victims, alongside the submission of protective measures to court]	£10,000
The You Trust	IDVAs for children and young people	£88,950
The You Trust	IDVA post for Worthing	£17,400
Veritas Justice	Stalking Advocacy Service	£210,000
Veritas Justice	IDVA for victims of stalking	£45,920
Veritas Justice	IDVA for victims of stalking	£43,504
Veritas Justice	Volunteering for Change project [improved access to support, alongside raising awareness through the sharing of improved knowledge and expertise for victims of stalking]	£26,313
Veritas Justice	Safety equipment for victims of stalking by strangers	£17,950
Veritas Justice	IDVA for victims of stalking [cost of living uplift]	£13,000
Victim Support	Pan Sussex multi-crime type support provision	£715,657
Victim Support	IDVAs	£162,673
Victim Support	Young Witness Service	£80,000
Victim Support	Domestic abuse helpline	£31,637
Worth Services	IDVA for children and young people	£53,609
Worth Services	IDVAs for children and young people	£40,000
Yada	The Esther Project [specialist support for those in the sex industry]	£11,045
Yada	The Esther Project [specialist support for those in the sex industry]	£10,000
YMCA DownsLink Group	Project SOLAH uplift	£104,500
YMCA DownsLink Group	ISVAs for children and young people	£65,471
YMCA DownsLink Group	Child Exploitation Learning Network [support for child victims of sexual exploitation]	£20,000
Total		£4,900,864

Agenda Item 7
Appendix 2

Home Office – Domestic Abuse and Stalking Perpetrator Fund

Name of Organisation	Name of Project	Funding
High Harm Domestic Abuse Perpetrator		
Brighton Housing Trust	Psychotherapist and Specialist Mental Health Worker	£59,600
Brighton Housing Trust	High Harm Domestic Abuse Perpetrator programme bridge-funding	£7,000
Sussex Police	Sussex Police salary costs	£120,025
West Sussex County Council	IDVA post	£36,000
Worth Services	IDVA post	£20,000
Stalking Clinic and Compulsive and Obsessive Behaviour Interventions		
Centre for Public Innovation	Evaluation	£9,515
Interventions Alliance	Compulsive and Obsessive Behaviour Interventions programme	£249,930
Sussex Police	Sussex Police salary costs	£119,687
Sussex Police	Buddi tags	£13,500
Veritas Justice	Provision of support to the stalking clinic and perpetrator programmes	£32,130
Total		£667,387

Home Office – Safer Streets Fund – Round 5

Name of Organisation	Name of Project	Funding
Brighton Business Crime Reduction Partnership	Provision of street marshals in Brighton & Hove	£112,083
Sussex Police	Project Fides [investment in new victim coordinator roles]	£52,041
Chichester District Council	Upgrades to public facing CCTV cameras	£40,957
Hastings Borough Council		£16,345
Heathfield and Waldron Parish Council		£456
Mid Sussex District Council		£18,562
Polegate Town Council		£1,263
Seaford Town Council		£8,660
Sussex Police		£211,578
Total		



Sussex Police and Crime Panel

28 June 2024

Annual Report from the Host Authority for 2023/24

Report by The Clerk to Sussex Police and Crime Panel

1. Background

1.1 The Panel incurred the costs below in respect of its operation in the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

- £68,318 for administrative expenses.
- £409 for members' expenses.

Total: £68,727

In line with the terms of the grant, the Host Authority (West Sussex County Council) submitted a claim for this amount in late May, ahead of the 30 June deadline.

1.2 The Panel is required to publish a summary of its operating costs every year. A breakdown of expenses can be found on the Panel's webpage:
<https://sussexpcp.gov.uk/about/>

2. Discussion

2.1 The Panel met formally three times in 2023/24. The meetings were held in person, in public, at County Hall, Lewes. The Panel meeting scheduled for 22 September 2023 was cancelled subsequent to papers being dispatched, due to the PCC feeling unwell. All meetings were webcast, with 151 people watching the June meeting online.

2.2 All statutory duties were fulfilled in 23/24, in particular, scrutiny of the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC's) Annual Report in June 2023, and scrutiny of the Commissioner's proposed precept in January 2024. Both are deemed "special functions" within the relevant legislation.

2.3 Scrutiny of the PCC's Annual Report 2023/24 considered performance against the three strands of the Police and Crime Plan 2021/24, and delivery of initiatives funded by previous precept increases.

2.4 The Panel worked with the Commissioner's officers, in two Working Group meetings, to consider development of the 2023/24 budget and precept. On 16 January 2024, the Group held an additional meeting in private to facilitate follow-up discussions in attempt to reach a consensus.

2.4.1 In relation to development of a proposed precept, the Group examined issues including the following:

- How funds raised from previous precept increases had been spent, and the progress in implementing the associated plans/projects.
- The revenue budget shortfall
- 23/24 funding settlement
- Underspend due to unfilled vacancies
- Income generating opportunities
- Progress against recruitment targets.
- Staff attrition rates
- Collaboration with other forces
- Assumptions underlying the Medium-Term Financial Strategy
- Council tax collection fund
- Council tax base
- Budget pressures
- Adequacy of reserves
- Progress against savings plans
- Impact of inflation and rising interest rates
- Precept consultation
- Precept options

2.5 The Group made comments to guide the Commissioner's office in their development of the precept, which were taken up as the work progressed.

2.6 Informed by the Working Group's final report, the Panel reviewed and supported the PCC's proposed precept in January 2024.

2.7 The Panel additionally scrutinised the Commissioner's role in specific areas of interest at its formal meetings. These were:

- The Commissioner's Role as the Review Body for Schedule 3 Policing Complaints, and from the Commissioner's Oversight Duties over Sussex Police's Complaints System More Generally.
- The Role of the Commissioner in Ensuring Sussex Police use Stop and Search Powers Effectively and Appropriately.
- The Commissioner's Response to HMICFRS' Police, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) Assessment of Sussex Police.

- 2.9 A special meeting of the Complaints Sub-Committee was held on 11 April 2024 at County Lewes. The Sub-Committee was required to consider a non-serious complaint against the PCC.
- 2.8 Training was offered to all new members joining the Panel during the year.
- 2.9 The Panel's Senior Advisor virtually attended the 12th Annual Conference for Police Fire and Crime Panels in November 2023.
- 2.10 The Panel's website continues to operate effectively. For example, for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024:
- There were 4,740 (7,849 in 22/23) visits to the site, with pages viewed 7,849 (13.384 in 22/23) times in total.
 - The average visits per day was approx. 13, however there were spikes in traffic coinciding with the publication of agenda papers for upcoming meetings. The biggest spike (approx. 155 visits) coincided with the publication of papers for the January 2024 meeting, at which the proposed precept was scrutinised.
 - The most popular pages remain the homepage, as expected, with the "previous meetings" page the second most popular. This suggests the site is widely used to view archive minutes and webcast recordings, as well as access information on forthcoming meetings including meeting agendas. The third most popular was the page setting out details on the Panel membership.

Funding for 2024/2025

- 2.11 It is assumed that the Home Office funding will remain unchanged for 2024/25, comprising £53,300 for Panel administration costs, and up to £18,400 (20 x £920), available for members' allowable expenses. The two sums are not ring-fenced, giving a total of £71,700 (unchanged since 2012).
- 2.12 The funding is normally paid in arrears, in six-monthly instalments. The PCP must publish details of all Panel expenditure, including administration costs and individual Panel member claims for expenses, on its website. Per para 1.2, the Panel has complied with this requirement for 23/24.
- 2.13 It is anticipated that the staff costs of administering the Panel will be achieved within the envelope of funding provided by the Home Office for the forthcoming year.

3. Resource Implications and Value for Money

- 3.1 The Constitution of Sussex Police and Crime Panel states that its total running costs shall be contained within the funding provided by the Home Office.

4. **Risk Management Implications**

4.1 None

5. **Other Considerations – Equality – Crime Reduction – Human Rights**

5.1 Not applicable

Tony Kershaw

Clerk to Sussex Police and Crime Panel

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Home Office

Rt Hon Chris Philp MP
Minister of State for Crime,
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Councillor Judy Rogers
County Hall
West Street

PO19 1RQ

DECS Reference: MIN/1115464/24

11 April 2024

Dear Councillor Rogers,

Thank you for your letter of 21 March on behalf of the Sussex Police and Crime Panel about the Police Funding Formula Review.

I was pleased to confirm Sussex Police's funding will be up to £394.6 million in 2024/25, an increase of up to £25.7 million when compared to 2023/24.

The Government is clear on the need to review the distribution of funding across forces in England and Wales, which is why we are undertaking a review of the formula. We have engaged closely with the policing sector throughout the review to carry out a robust, evidence-based assessment of policing demand, and this work continues.

The review is rightly considering all aspects of the funding formula, and it will include an evidence-based assessment of the demands facing each police force, as well as the relative impact of local factors on the resource required to meet demand.

Although we are working to introduce new funding arrangements, their quality and longevity is our focus. Our priority is to deliver a robust, future-proofed funding formula that allocates funding in a fair and transparent manner.

I will continue to work closely with sector representatives to assess police force pressures, and I remain committed to ensuring that the police have the resources they need.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Philp'.

Rt Hon Chris Philp MP

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Quarterly Report of Complaints

28 June 2024

Report by The Clerk to Sussex Police and Crime Panel

Focus for Scrutiny

That the Panel considers any complaints against the Commissioner, and any action that the Panel might take in respect of these.

1. Background

- 1.1 In accordance with the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2011, Sussex Police & Crime Panel (PCP) is responsible for the initial handling of complaints against the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC).
- 1.2 At its meeting of 26 November 2012, the Panel decided to delegate its initial handling duties to the Clerk to Sussex Police and Crime Panel, and to consider a report of the complaints received, quarterly.
- 1.3 Complaints deemed to be serious (those alleging criminal conduct) are referred to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC). However, IOPC guidance recommends that a Panel makes an initial assessment of the complaint (before making a referral to the IOPC) to decide whether or not it meets the definition of a "serious complaint".
- 1.4 Regarding non-serious complaints, a sub-committee can meet to consider any of these which in the Panel's view require informal resolution.

2 Correspondence Received from 5 March to 19 June 2024

- 2.1 The Panel takes the view that all correspondence raising issues with policing in Sussex should be recorded, whether or not the issues fall within the Panel's statutory remit.
- 2.2 During the subject period, three people contacted the Panel to raise matters (either directly, referred via the IOPC, or referred by the Office of the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner (OSPCC)). None were within the Panel's remit.

3 Complaints

Correspondence Recorded, but not Considered by the Clerk to be a Complaint within the Panel's Remit:

- 3.1.1 Three people contacted the Panel and raised matters outside the Panel's remit. One requested documentation not held by the Panel and was directed to the Commissioner's office. One concerned the actions and decisions of others, and not of the Commissioner. One was a complaint previously submitted in 2020, where no failing on the part of the Commissioner could be identified.

Correspondence Recorded, and Considered by the Clerk to be a Non-Serious Complaint within the Panel's Remit:

- 3.1.2 None received.

Serious Complaints (allegations of criminal conduct)

- 3.1.3 None received.

Updates from Matters Previously Reported.

- 3.1.4 A complaint related to media statements and interviews given by the Commissioner in summer 2023 was determined by the Clerk to the Panel to be within the Panel's remit. Sussex Police and Crime Panel's Complaints Sub Committee met to resolve the complaint on 11 April 2024. Members considered the complaint and further submissions from the complainant, as well as written and oral representations from the Commissioner, in the context of the Commissioner's statutory responsibilities. The Sub-Committee resolved that the complaint was not upheld, and that no further action be taken in respect of it. The complainant and the Commissioner have been informed of this outcome

4 Resource Implications and Value for Money

- 4.1 The cost of handling complaints is met from the funds provided by the Home Office for the operation and administration of Sussex Police and Crime Panel.

5 Risk Management Implications

- 5.1 It is important that residents can have confidence in the integrity of the system for handling complaints against the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner and their Deputy (where one has been appointed).

6 Other Considerations – Equality – Crime Reduction – Human Rights

- 6.1 Not applicable

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