



Councillor Andrei Czolak

Chair

Sussex Police and Crime Panel

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Date: 3 July 2024

Dear Commissioner Bourne,

Thank you for attending the Panel's annual meeting on 28 June, at which statutory scrutiny of your Annual Report 2023/24 was undertaken.

In particular, I would like to highlight two recommendations to which the Panel would like you to have due regard when finalising your Annual Report.

- 1) That consideration be given to adding hyperlinks to allow readers to access further information throughout the report.
- 2) That data is added throughout the report to provide evidence of achievement, strengthening the qualitative messaging.

The Panel raised a number of issues, which will be set out in due course in the draft minutes and action list. For the purposes of this report, I would like to particularly highlight the Panel's observations and suggestions below:

- Panel members acknowledged the small reduction in the number of people killed and seriously injured on Sussex roads, but sought the Commissioner's assurance that the Force's operational approach to tackling road safety is effective and that the issue is being resourced sufficiently.
- Concerns were expressed regarding the marginal improvement of the conviction rate for sexual offences and officer welfare, since the previous Annual Report. The Panel welcomed news that the Force has introduced a new unit, dedicated to progressing cases and improving conviction rates.
- It was suggested that going forwards, the Annual Report reflects on the performance of the Digital Investigation Support Unit in order to help quantify its impact, in recognition of the increasing importance of its work in solving crime.
- Panel members raised the issue regarding the high demand for and backlog of DBS checks, as well as the length of time taken by the Force to complete them. It was acknowledged that the Chief Constable has been challenged on this and that it is an ongoing issue nationwide.

I would be grateful if I could receive your response to this letter by Friday 9 August 2024. Your response will be published on the Panel's website and included with the papers for the Panel's September meeting. If you have any queries, do please contact me.

On a personal note, thank you for your warm wishes following my election as Chair. I look forward to working closely with you in the coming year as we serve the residents of Sussex.

Yours sincerely,

Andrei Czolak

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Chair of Sussex Police and Crime Panel