



Panel Questions to the Commissioner

9 October 2026

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.

1. Written questions from Cllr Paul Keene, Lewes District Council.

'What assurance has the Commissioner sought and received from the Chief Constable on Sussex Police's preparedness for coordinated protest and disorder at Sussex ports and on the open coast, and whether the Sussex Resilience Forum holds a specific plan for Newhaven and Shoreham?'

Thank you for your questions.

Sussex Police hold a weekly Events and Protest Intelligence Meeting where any notable events and/or protests from the previous week are discussed, reviewed and evaluated, alongside any intelligence that may have been received regarding planned events and/or protests in the future. Any policing response that is, subsequently, provided will be scaled dynamically based on the threat, risk and harm identified, and the immediate needs of an incident. As such, this could range from local policing activity through to a coordinated multi-agency response through to large-scale public order operation.

This process is complemented by the availability of a public order commander who is on call 24/7 and can plan, organise and oversee any police response that may be required to manage a spontaneous protest and/or assess any protest intelligence received outside of this weekly meeting.

Sussex Police have also established effective working relationships with the ports, harbours and marinas along the 137 miles of Sussex coastline through the Sussex Resilience Forum where information and intelligence can be shared and/or a response to any incidents can be coordinated. This includes a mass rescue operation plan for Newhaven Port which has been developed to manage major maritime emergencies where the number of casualties exceeds the local, immediate capacity of standard search and rescue responders, and a general response plan for spontaneous protest, disorder and/or other maritime incidents affecting the ports, harbours and marinas across Sussex which incorporates site specific information to better inform any policing and/or multi-agency partnership response that may be required.

I discussed this area of policing with Chief Constable Shiner at my monthly webcast Performance & Accountability Meeting (PAM) last month [17 September 2026]. I was reassured to note that Sussex Police is well-prepared for any coordinated protests and/or disorder that may be planned at Sussex ports, harbours, marinas or along the open coastline following the large-scale anti-migrant protests which have taken place in Dover and Portsmouth in recent weeks.

The Chief Constable confirmed that Sussex Police is working with Kent Police, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary and other national leads – including the National Police Chiefs' Council and National Police Coordination Centre – to ensure that it remains well-practiced, prepared and in a state of readiness to respond to any incidents in Sussex. The Force is also seeking to raise awareness amongst police officers and staff and encourage members of the public to report any criminal and/or suspicious activity witnessed along the coastline. This session and the summary notes from the meeting can be viewed on my website through the following link:

<https://www.sussex-pcc.gov.uk/about/how-we-work/watch-live/>

'Is the PCC satisfied that Sussex Police has assessed the westward shift in crossing routes evidenced by the Baie de Seine launch of 06 September, what maritime awareness activity is current at Newhaven, at Shoreham, and along the open coast, and what arrangements exist with Border Force and the port authorities?'

The Border Security Command – responsible for prioritising a coordinated approach to disrupting organised immigration crime [including the networks facilitating illegal migration through small boat crossings] in the United Kingdom – share information, intelligence and assessment with Sussex Police regarding the likelihood of cross channel journeys which is reviewed and considered as part of the weekly Events and Protest Intelligence Meeting referred to above.

Alongside the effective working relationships the Force has established with the ports, harbours, marinas and local partners through the Sussex Resilience Forum, collaborative partnership working also exists with the South East Regional Organised Crime Unit (SEROUC), National Crime Agency (NCA) and Home Office [including Border Force, Border Security Command and Immigration Enforcement] to ensure that a coordinated response exists to any organised immigration crime and/or activity that may occur along the Sussex coastline.

In the event of any activity along the Sussex coastline, Sussex Police would follow the national maritime response plan which directs policing activity and engagement with responsible multi-agency partners, including Border Force. Training is provided to all public order commanders and frontline police officers and staff in Sussex to ensure that a capable and consistent response could be delivered as required.

I am also reassured to note that the prospect of migrants attempting to land on a beach in Sussex is unlikely because the distance from France is almost twice as far as it is to the beaches in Kent, together with the presence of prevailing winds and currents which makes this a more difficult option. This position is ratified further by confirmation that there have been no reports of this type of landing on any of the beaches in Sussex in recent years.

'Can the PCC reassure the Panel around what mutual aid and national mobilisation arrangements Sussex Police can call upon, and within what timeframe, in the light of the inspectorate's finding of 18 December 2024 that national mobilisation was activated four days too late in the summer of 2024?'

The Police Act 1996 sets out the legal basis for which police forces in England and Wales provide mutual aid support to each other during pre-planned events, major incidents and/or widespread public disorder.

The national mobilisation plan provides the framework by which police forces share specialist officers, equipment and operational resources across force boundaries to meet local, regional and national operational requirements. This plan is based on a three-tier response, as follows:

- Tier 3 – National level [i.e. all other police forces in England and Wales]
- Tier 2 – Regional level [i.e. South East: Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary, Kent Police, Surrey Police and Thames Valley Police]
- Tier 1 – Local level [i.e. Sussex Police and Surrey Police]

The plan is aligned to the authorised professional practice (APP) for mobilisation [created by the College of Policing] and is an important part of the collective police service response to the Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) and the National Policing Requirement (NPR). The SPR sets out the seven national threats which all police force areas in England and Wales must demonstrate that they have the plans and capability to respond to [in addition to regular policing requirements] whilst the NPR outlines the operational capacity, skills and planning assumptions that must be developed by all police forces to collectively meet those strategic threats.

The National Police Coordination Centre (NPoCC) is responsible for managing mobilisation at a national level [Tier 3]. This response is delivered by:

- ✓ assessing national capacity and contribution in relation to the SPR and NPR
- ✓ establishing and coordinating continuous testing and exercising regimes to ensure effective capability and mobilisation of national assets when required
- ✓ facilitating mutual aid in steady state situations and providing coordination in times of crisis

The South East Region Information Coordination Centre (SERICC) works alongside the NPoCC to manage and mobilise police resources, logistics and operational mutual aid between police forces in the South East of England through a regional mobilisation plan [Tier 2].

There are defined timescales set out within the national and regional mobilisation plans for the deployment of appropriately trained resources, as follows:

- 10% of a regions national requirement mobilised within one hour from the time of request
- 40% of a regions national requirement mobilised within four hours from the time of request
- 60% of a regions national requirement mobilised within eight hours from the time of request

Sussex Police and Surrey Police also collaborate at a local level to support each other through a joint force mobilisation plan which enables the rapid mobilisation of resources across both police force areas [Tier 1].

It is also worth emphasising that I discussed the two His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection reports into the police response to the public disorder in 2024 with Chief Constable Shiner and Deputy Chief Constable McLaren at my PAMs on 20 February 2025 and 19 June 2025. Both sessions and the summary notes from the meetings are available to view on my website through the following link:

<https://www.sussex-pcc.gov.uk/about/how-we-work/watch-live/>

I hope this information is useful to you.

2. Written question from Mrs Karen Pryer of Worthing

'E-bikes and scooters are now presenting a real, and potentially dangerous, problem.

Just one example: walking along the seafront from Perch/Parade in Worthing today, an electric bike, with 2 people on it, shot past us on the cycle lane, at a speed of about 20mph.

Someone inadvertently crossing that lane, e.g. a young child, would not have stood a chance.

Clearly, those riders - that's just one of many examples - do not care that this behaviour is both dangerous and illegal. (This time, the riders were not wearing balaclavas though I have seen quite a few with those on.)

Sadly, we never see police officers around to act as a deterrent to this behaviour, which is on the increase.

Is the Commissioner satisfied that the relevant laws are being enforced in Sussex? Has consideration been given to confiscating these vehicles?'

Thank you for your questions.

I recognise that the increased use of electric bikes (e-bikes) and electric scooters (e-scooters) nationally has created additional challenges for all police forces in England and Wales to manage.

Sussex Police received 2,504 reports of e-bikes and e-scooters being ridden illegally across the rolling year period to 30 June 2026 which represented a 54% increase from the 1,629 reports received in the previous 12 months [+875 offences].

I am pleased to confirm that Sussex Police has launched a new operation dedicated to tackling the illegal use of these micromobility vehicles in Sussex in response to the increased number of reported incidents and the ongoing community concerns expressed throughout the county.

The Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs) across Sussex, working together with the Roads Policing Unit and Fatal Five Unit, will provide education, engagement and enforcement activity around the illegal use of these e-bikes and e-scooters as part of Operation Scramble. Further information about this initiative can be viewed on the Sussex Police website through the following link:

<https://www.sussex.police.uk/news/sussex/news/force-news/new-operation-launched-to-disrupt-illegal-e-bike-and-e-scooter-use/>

As you may already know, many e-bikes can be used on public roads and shared cycle paths, providing that they use pedals to propel them, are within appropriate power and speed ranges and are used legitimately and safely in the same way as pedal cycles. Some e-bikes can, however, exceed legal limits and fall into the legal definition of a motorcycle, rather than a pedal cycle. As such, they are illegal to use on public roads, cycle paths and pavements without the rider holding the correct licence, insurance and necessary safety equipment.

It continues to be a recognised offence to use e-scooters on any public roads, cycle lanes, footpaths and/or pavements outside of the dedicated trials currently taking place in areas across England. The use of e-scooters is only permitted on private land that is not accessible to the public.

I discussed the policing response to e-scooters most recently during my monthly webcast Performance & Accountability Meeting (PAM) with the Chief Constable on 16 July 2026, which included checking whether the enforcement activity in Sussex remains balanced and proportionate. This session and the summary notes from the meeting can be viewed on my website through the following link: <https://www.sussex-pcc.gov.uk/about/how-we-work/watch-live/>

At the PAM, I was reassured to note that guidance has been issued to all police officers and police community support officers (PCSOs) in the NPTs about the use of e-bikes and e-scooters in Sussex to improve their understanding of the police powers and actions that are available to them to tackle their illegal use, alongside the Force policies that exist in respect of seizure, recovery and collection.

Members of the public should report all incidents of illegal e-bike and e-scooter usage to Sussex Police because this approach enables the Force to develop intelligence regarding repeat offenders, times and locations which can be used to plan, target and deploy police resources effectively.

These reports can be made by telephone to the non-emergency number [101], Operation Crackdown [<https://operationcrackdown.org/>] or through the Sussex Police website [<https://www.sussex.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>]. Individuals should telephone the emergency number [999] immediately if there is a crime in action which involves an e-bike or e-scooter.

Sussex Police is currently targeting the 'hotspots' identified through the reports received from members of the public where e-bikes and e-scooters are being illegally used and will provide an escalating response depending on the individual circumstances involved. Where evidence of any anti-social, nuisance or dangerous riding is found, the Force has the power to issue a formal warning or issue a fixed penalty notice, alongside the seizure and destruction of these micromobility vehicles as appropriate.

Further information and advice about the use of e-bikes and e-scooters in Sussex can be viewed on the Sussex Police website through the following link: <https://www.sussex.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/rs/road-safety/advice-escooters/>

I hope this information is useful to you.