

County Council Meeting – 14 June 2011

To: SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL
Date: 14th June 2011
By: Alison Bolton, Chief Executive of Surrey Police Authority
Title: REPORT FROM SURREY POLICE AUTHORITY

Purpose of Report/Issue:

To inform members of the work of Surrey Police Authority since the last Council meeting in May 2011.

New Police Authority Member

The Police Authority welcomed Geoff Marlow to his first meeting of the full Authority on 19 May following the Council's annual appointments.

Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Peter Williams was elected Chairman of the Surrey Police Authority and Lynn Hawkins JP was elected as Vice-Chairman for the 2011/12 municipal year.

End of Year Performance

The Force has achieved exceptional performance in this challenging year by meeting all but one of the stretching local policing plan targets set. This is particularly impressive considering the Force's new policing model was only implemented 12 months ago and demonstrates how much the 'One Team Surrey' approach has achieved in such a short space of time. For instance, the detection, reduction and Anti Social Behaviour satisfaction targets have been met as a result of a concerted and focused effort by many teams across the Force. Public confidence is notably above the end of year target, with a final quarter result of 90.1%, the highest quarterly performance on record.

The Force has also managed to maintain low levels of serious crime with an end of year total of 13.5 serious crimes per 1,000 population (equating to 15,014 crimes). This level of crime met the end of year target 13.6 per 1,000 pop (15,062 crimes). Another notable achievement is the year on year reduction in vehicle crime of 5.5% (359 crimes).

The one target the Force failed to achieve was charging or cautioning 170 persons for the Supply of Class A Drugs. However, it is worth noting that the Force has managed to charge or caution 153 persons and a decision was taken to delay Operation Glacial which ended in April. Had this operation not been delayed then it is likely the Force would have met or exceeded its target in this regard.

In 2011-12 the Force will continue to target those people who sell illegal drugs, in particular Class A drugs such as heroin and cocaine. In addition it will target

Supply of Class B drugs in recognition of concerns over the serious health and social impact of Class B drugs (especially on young people) and recognition that organised crime groups are increasingly moving into cannabis supply. This is reflected in the new local policing plan target for the year ahead which is to achieve 450 charges/ cautions of Class A and B drugs supply offences.

Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill

The House of Lords has now begun its clause by clause consideration of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill. On 11 May, Peers backed an amendment tabled by Baroness Harris of Richmond (Liberal Democrat, and Vice President of the Association of Police Authorities) to scrap plans for directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners. On 24 May, Peers confirmed that they intended them to be replaced with a collegiate 'Commission' comprising the police and crime panel and a Commissioner appointed by the panel. This realigns the Government's proposed model, affirming the Lords' view that the panel and Commissioner should not be separate. The Government maintains that, in spite of the Lords' vote, it intends to proceed with its original plans and will seek to 'redress' this situation in the Commons in due course.

The remaining two days of Lords' committee stage on the police parts of the Bill will take place on 6 and 9 June, with two further committee days to discuss other parts of the Bill following this.

Surrey and Sussex Collaboration

Following the approval of the Surrey and Sussex Police Authority meetings, plans will now be finalised for the forces to jointly provide major crime investigation, forensic and scientific services, and tactical firearms. Both authorities emphasised the importance of ensuring the needs of local people are at the centre of the changes, made clear this decision is not a precursor to a merger and reflected on similar successful arrangements in nearby areas such as Kent/Essex and Bedfordshire/Hertfordshire.

Chief Officers are committed to delivering excellent policing to people in Surrey and Sussex and are convinced collaborating in these areas will provide significant benefits for both forces and the communities they serve. Collaboration will create more capacity and resilience in areas of reactive policing that happen less-frequently but are incredibly important and resource-intensive, such as firearms incidents and murder investigations. It will also allow the forces to align operating procedures so they can work seamlessly together during larger incidents.

In addition, the change will help make savings and is being considered alongside other work each force is doing to meet the public sector spending challenge. Annual savings of at least £3.46 million in total for the two forces are estimated when the changes are fully implemented.

The work will be staged to ensure there is no impact on public service in these vital areas of policing and implementation is planned to take place over the next

year. No immediate changes are planned and further information will be released when the plans are completed.

Salfords Public Inquiry

At its meeting on 10 December 2009, the Authority received a business case setting out details of a proposed new custody facility for East Surrey. The Authority had, for some considerable time prior to this point, taken a keen interest in the issue of insufficient police custody provision across Surrey and had been involved in the detailed consideration of a range of options to remedy the situation.

However, the planning application was turned down by the Reigate & Banstead Planning Committee on 16 June 2010, on the basis that the development would result in the loss of employment use at the industrial estate thus undermining the local economy; fear of crime would have a significant adverse impact on local residents; and increased parking and vehicles would clutter the appearance of the site.

After careful and detailed consideration, the conclusion reached by the Force and Authority was that the East Surrey custody suite is operationally vital and that there is no other viable alternative that meets the Force's requirements. An appeal was therefore lodged on 16 December 2010, together with some minor amendments to the original application to reduce the number of cells from 30 to 24 and make changes to parking arrangements. The appeal documentation contested the grounds for refusal and also reiterated the overriding need for the proposed custody centre, which is deemed to be in the wider public interest.

The appeal will now be considered at a Public Inquiry in the first week of June. The Chairman of the Authority has submitted a Proof of Evidence which sets out the Authority's support for the Force in providing additional custody facilities, as well as the Authority's own long and detailed involvement in the search for suitable solutions to the shortfall in custody provision.

Proofs of Evidence have also been submitted by the Chief Constable and Assistant Chief Constable, who explain the 'urgent and compelling need' to provide additional custody at the Salfords site in order to protect the public. Their proofs also highlight the inadequacies of the existing facilities at Reigate and address the implications for the local community.

Following the Inquiry, it is expected that the Planning Inspector will reach a decision within around six to eight weeks.

Planning for the Olympics

The Force continues to work very closely with Surrey County Council and other agencies to ensure the success of the Roads Cycling Event and the safety and security of the Olympic Village at Royal Holloway University of London in Egham. The Authority will be considering the Force's strategy for the Olympics at a meeting in June and we will include a more detailed update on planning and preparation for the Olympics in a future report.

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