

SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – 5 FEBRUARY 2021

PROCEDURAL MATTERS – PANEL MEMBER QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

1. Question submitted by Councillor Hazel Watson (Mole Valley District Council)

During the Summer of 2020 as lockdown measures were lifted in relation to Covid-19, large numbers of visitors visited beauty spots across Surrey. Given that a similar situation of large crowds of visitors visiting Surrey beauty spots is likely to recur during the Summer of 2021, what lessons have been learned by Surrey Police regarding how to tackle this issue and what actions and strategy is planned for this Summer?

Response:

Whilst we hope that the situation is different in the Summer of 2021, we have been able to use the learning from last year as to what locations and behaviours we may see where and when. Working with the various partners and custodians of these beauty spots we are able to proactively attend where appropriate and help set the tone or expectations but also deal with behaviour that is recklessly endangering the wider public health. We do need however to continue to balance this against the communities need for open space and wellbeing and whatever the regulations are at the time.

It is difficult to agree a strategy at this stage as we really don't know what the situation will be.

2. Question submitted by Councillor Hazel Watson (Mole Valley District Council)

How many drones if any do Surrey Police have to assist their work and if they do have drones, for what types of purposes are they used and what plans are there to use drones in the future?

Response:

3 weather resilient drones. Located at Staines, Guildford and Leatherhead – Operated by NPT & SFRS pilots.

2 Smaller drones available for use by TFU (firearms) and RPU (roads policing) at Burpham – Operated primarily by TFU and RPU pilots.

2 weather resilient and 1 small drone operated by Surrey Specials out of Burpham.

Use (Taken from the Surrey Police internet site).

We are using drones to:

- Assist with searches for Missing Persons
- Assist with investigations into Road Traffic Collisions, Major Crime and Industrial Accident investigation.
- Assist with Event Planning and management
- Provide situational awareness to Officers and Commanders in a variety of policing situations.

Our drones are only deployed for specific operational tasks and are not used for general patrol/surveillance i.e. they are not patrolling the skies above Surrey and Sussex on a daily basis.

How do we think drones will help us? (From Surrey Police intranet)

Using drones will help us:

- Use our resources more effectively by having the right resources in the right place at the right time to resolve incidents quickly.
- Enhance the safety of the Public and Emergency Service staff by deploying a drone into situations which would otherwise involve risks to individuals.
- Provide good quality evidence to assist apprehension and prosecution of offenders
- Enhance joint working with other Emergency Services.

Deployments – 331 in 2020

Future uses - Use of drones in support of policing rural crime – Poaching, tackle and farm equipment theft.

3. Question submitted by Councillor David Reeve (Epsom and Ewell Borough Council)

At your regular meetings with the Chief Constable which is reported under Item 13, reference is made to the national position of Surrey Police on various subjects. Could you please provide a full list of all graded topics showing the Surrey Police position nationally?

Response:

There is no full list of topics where national police force positions are shown. The reference made at Item 13 is with regard to File Quality. This is taken from a national data set for Criminal Justice data, which isn't published. This could be requested through the Surrey and Sussex Criminal Justice Partnership for information, if required.

The most comprehensive set of published national information for police forces is published by the HMICFRS in the Value for Money profiles and they can be found here:

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/our-work/article/value-for-money-inspections/value-for-money-profiles/value-for-money-dashboards/>

These do not provide rankings but do show comparative information for a wide range of indicators.

4. Question submitted by Councillor David Reeve (Epsom and Ewell Borough Council)

It has been announced that Sussex Police officers have been vaccinated using up supplies which would not be used in the daily appointments. Have Surrey Police officers been able to similarly make use of these thus ensuring front line officers receive protection?

Response:

From Surrey Police Senior Lead:

I can confirm that where there are vaccines that would otherwise have to be discarded – and that cannot be used for vulnerable people – we have a policy in place that police officers and staff in frontline roles can take them. This is very clear in that it is only where there are vaccines that would otherwise have to be destroyed and that we would never take the place of someone vulnerable.

I can also confirm that as a result a number of Surrey officers and staff have received vaccinations and we continue to work with our health partners to ensure that we maintain our high ethical standards and allow for no vaccinations to be wasted.

There are a number of reasons why vaccinations would have to be discarded – largely due to them not being able to be returned to storage.

In terms of numbers this can vary but generally is a handful at the end of any clinic so is very ad hoc.

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