

COMMISSIONER'S QUESTION TIME**SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS****Question 1** **Cllr Witham**

With regard to a possible expansion of the PCCs remit to include control of the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, would the Police Commissioner please indicate:

- **What is your motivation for initiating a review?**
- **How much will this cost, and how can the cost and time involved be justified?**
- **Is the Commissioner aware of just how much has been achieved by SF&R in the last 5 years and how would this performance demonstrate that a change in governance could benefit Surrey Fire and Rescue Service in any way at all?**

PCC RESPONSE:

Members may recall the discussion at the February Panel meeting concerning my review of fire, which was prompted by the publication of my decision notice on the subject. By way of context, the Home Office published a White Paper consultation document in May 2022, which sets out a number of proposed reforms to fire and rescue services, making clear the Government view that oversight of fire needs to change. Its preferred governance model is one where there is an individual (ideally directly-elected) who is accountable for the fire service, rather than governance by committee. The consultation highlighted the benefits of such a change, including improved accountability, more transparency, faster decision-making and a clear mandate for those charged with fire governance. Having seen first-hand the benefits to policing of a truly accountable individual who can provide strong, robust governance and oversight and drive improvements on behalf of the public, I wish to explore whether these principles may also hold true for fire and rescue, hence my initiating this review.

Since 2017, Police & Crime Commissioners have been able to take on governance of fire and rescue services in their area where a business case can be made for improved efficiency, effectiveness, governance or public safety. Four PCCs have gone on to become Police, Fire & Crime Commissioners and more have explored this possibility. My predecessor in Surrey was among them, and an options analysis report was commissioned to examine the case for change in 2017. This independent report for Surrey, prepared by KPMG, is now over five years old and my review seeks to establish whether there have been any significant changes since then.

As matters currently stand, any proposal to take on responsibility for the governance of Surrey Fire & Rescue Service would require the preparation of a full business case that would need to be subject to extensive consultation prior to being submitted to the Home Office for approval. To embark on such a piece of work at this juncture would, of course, be premature. But I would respectfully suggest a review to allow me (as the only directly-elected individual to whom fire governance could transfer under the White Paper proposals) an up-to-date understanding of the picture in Surrey is entirely prudent. This is particularly so given that one of the options mooted by the Home Office is to mandate the transfer of fire to Police & Crime Commissioners. Many of my PCC colleagues have lobbied the Policing & Fire Minister for this option, given it would negate the need for protracted and costly local negotiations where there are differences of opinion.

My review will provide me with an independent and evidence-based appraisal to help me establish whether the policy steer set out by Government may hold benefits for Surrey. In the absence of the outcome of the White Paper consultation (with there being 'no timescale' for its publication at present) and with the last significant piece of work on this issue now out-of-date, this work is to my mind, a worthwhile investment. The exact cost of the work has yet to be determined, but I have allocated £12,000 for this purpose from within my existing consultancy budget.

I am aware of the progress made by Surrey Fire & Rescue, as demonstrated in its latest HMICFRS report (2021/22) where HMI Matt Parr describes the service as being in 'much better shape' than at the time of the previous inspection of 2018/19. Without wishing to detract from this progress, it should also be noted that the service received scores of 'requires improvement' across the board for 'Efficiency', 'Effectiveness' and 'People'. Simplifying and strengthening governance for fire services is, in my view - and that of the Government - critical to unlocking the wider reforms and benefits required.

I have written to the Leader of Surrey County Council to advise him of this work, however the County Council wish to play no active part in it. I have also written to all Surrey MPs.

Question 2 **Cllr Nicholson**

I applaud the intent of Surrey Police, to reduce the instance of burglaries across Surrey, I wonder however if the PCC shares my concerns about the data protection implications of Surrey Police's initiative asking residents to submit any personal video footage, such as CCTV, dashcam or smart doorbell footage are to be commended in their initiatives and action to reduce burglaries across Surrey.

My concerns relate to data protection in line within the Data Protection Act 2018. The DPA itself outlines there is stronger legal protection for biometrics data, which arguably this video data can be considered part of. No obvious information on the portal of how long the video data may be held, how and when it will be disposed of with no obvious link to the forces data protection policies and date impact assessments.

There is no reference to how people identified in footage, may be informed that they have been identified. No obvious recourse for complaints procedure on the portal.

Could I therefore ask the Police and Crime Commissioner how they intend to hold the Chief Constable and therefore the Surrey Police, accountable to ensure that this initiative does not wrongly place suspicion on residents who may be visiting a property, delivering a parcel, free post etc, unsure of where a front door may be? Will they set a defined time frame with clear reporting metrics to be presented by the Chief Constable to the PCC and subsequently a report to the PCC Panel?

PCC RESPONSE:

In January 2023, Surrey Police ran a pilot - initially in Elmbridge before being extended to Spelthorne and Runnymede - enabling members of the public to send us their video footage from home security cameras and smart doorbells that had captured suspicious activity.

We know that in this digital era many Surrey residents have private CCTV and smart doorbells, so Surrey Police wanted to create an easy way for them to send any private CCTV that may have captured suspicious activity relating to burglary and wider serious

acquisitive crime (SAC). Panel members will be aware that quite often this sort of footage is uploaded onto social media without ever coming to police attention. Burglary and SAC are national priorities, and this type of offending has a significant impact on the public. The force is therefore looking at innovative ways of targeting these crime types, to help provide reassurance and protection to Surrey residents, and to maximise positive outcomes for victims of crime.

All footage received via the Portal is reviewed daily by divisional Proactive Investigation Teams (PITs). Once the relevant footage has been reviewed, the relevant PIT will action it as appropriate. This may include transferring footage relating to an existing crime into the correct casefile, tasking SNT/NPT for a substantive offence that needs to be created and investigated, or creating a suspicious activity occurrence.

Any data captured via the Suspicious Activity Portal is stored and processed in the same manner as any other data obtained by Surrey Police as part of evidential collection processes. A complete summary of how Surrey Police processes personal data, including subject access rights, can be found on the Surrey Police website:

<https://www.surrey.police.uk/about-us/your-right-to-information/information-about-us/privacy/>

It's worth flagging that since taking office I have increased my office's oversight of our professional standards functions, and we now hold regular meetings with the Head of Professional Standards and the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) to better monitor emerging complaint and misconduct data. My team also now have direct access to complaint management databases, allowing us to conduct regular dip checks on cases and monitor developing trends. If the Suspicious Activity Portal was generating concern amongst residents, I believe we are in a good position to recognise these issues.

I will also as part of my ongoing performance monitoring meetings with the Force have the opportunity to receive regular updates on the impact of the new portal and I am happy to provide the Panel with a fuller update in due course.

Question 3 **Cllr Nicholson**

Within Woking there have been a number of changes of Borough commander over recent years. The latest has left after less than one year in post to be replaced by an interim replacement for a number of months and a further interim replacement in the Autumn.

There have been an increasing number of ASB incidences in Woking of late, can the PCC assure Woking residents that in her discussions with the Chief Constable, she will prioritise continuity and stability of Borough Commanders to ensure that safe and effective policing continues across the Borough of Woking

PCC RESPONSE:

I have a Resource and Efficiency meeting scheduled with the Chief Constable and Deputy Chief Constable on 3 July, and I will relay these concerns. However, whilst recognising the desire for stability, it is important to recognise that Surrey Police maintain operational independence, and it would therefore not be appropriate for me dictate posting decisions.

I understand Inspector Paul Edwards is due to take over the role in September and, with a strong background in neighbourhood policing, I have no doubt that he will be well-placed to tackle any emerging issues.

It's also worth flagging that in March I launched a county-wide survey in Surrey to better understand the impact and experiences of anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the county. The survey is an essential component of our Anti-Social Behaviour Plan, which prioritises the views of residents and uses their feedback to improve services. The initial data is being used to support resident focus groups and to identify areas of focus for policing.

Question 4 **Cllr Nicholson**

Following the recent accident earlier in June between a motorcycle and a van on Smarts Heath Rd, Woking, where sadly the motorcyclist lost his life, can I ask the PCC to raise the Woking residents' requests with the Chief Constable to reconsider the need for enforceable speed limits in both the 40mph and 30mph sections and/or a speed camera on this stretch of road, or other traffic calming measures that may need to be considered.

I am sure the PCC will wish to also join me in sending condolences to the bereaved family and friends of the motorcyclist.

PCC RESPONSE:

Any death on our roads is of course a great tragedy, and my thoughts are very much with the friends and family of the deceased.

The Panel will understand that as there remains an open investigation into this specific incident it would not, at this point, be appropriate for me to comment any further.

However, Surrey Police work closely with Surrey County Council to develop local speed management plans for each of Surrey's eleven Districts or Boroughs, with officers periodically meeting with the County Council's road safety specialists to discuss and agree which sites need the most attention, and to identify the most appropriate intervention. I understand that Surrey County Council intends to wait for the outcome of the Police's investigation and then consult accordingly.

Question 5 **Cllr Kennedy**

The attachment to the minutes of the last meeting indicates that as at 31 March 2023 Surrey Police has an FTE establishment of 131 staff working in People Services, 106 staff working in Corporate Development and 113 staff working in Finance, as well as over 20 non-establishment staff working in the Commissioner's own office.

But Surrey Police's FTE establishment for Mole Valley includes just 4 PCSOs which if implemented would mean losing a further 2 PCSOs.

Given the Commissioner's responsibility for securing an efficient and effective police force, will the Commissioner please work with the Chief Constable to ensure that Surrey Police's staff establishment prioritises frontline policing and in particular that there are sufficient PCSOs to support the community in addressing local concerns like antisocial behaviour, both in Mole Valley and across Surrey?

PCC RESPONSE:

I was overjoyed that we were able to announce that Surrey Police managed to exceed its target for extra police officers under the Government's three-year uplift programme to recruit 20,000 officers across the country.

This means that since 2019 an extra 395 officers have been added to its ranks - 136 more than the target the government had set for Surrey. This makes Surrey Police the biggest it's ever been which is fantastic news for residents and puts us in a much stronger position to address resident concerns.

Whilst a lot of focus has quite rightly been on the recruitment of Police Officers, Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) remain a key part of our policing teams, working closely with the local community and helping to tackle the issues affecting them.

Surrey Police is in fact currently hiring new PCSOs to fill vacancies in the following boroughs:

- North Division - Spelthorne and Elmbridge
- West Division - Guildford, Surrey Heath, Woking and Waverley

However, whilst recognising the immense value of our officers and PCSOs, it's important that we don't lose sight of the huge contribution our so-called 'back-office' staff make to policing. These individuals form the backbone of the organisation and provide services such as forensics, investigative support, and victim contact – all of which greatly supports frontline officers in their work. Likewise, whilst careful balancing and ongoing review is naturally required, an organisation of the size of Surrey Police requires a well-functioning administrative back-office, which our colleagues in Finance, People Services and Corporate Development provide, ensuring that our workforce is properly supported and remunerated.

It's also important to note that high-level department names often hide a wide range of roles and functions. The table below demonstrates the breadth of work undertaken by the teams referenced in the question:

Corporate Development	People Services	Finance
Information Managements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Bureau and DBS • FOI and Subject Access • Data Protection • Force Crime and Incident Registrar • Information Governance 	Shared Business Services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance Operations: • Accounts and Purchasing • Careers • HR Desk • Payroll • Pensions • Attraction & Recruitment Team 	Joint Finance Service Team: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic finance • Medium term financial planning • High level budget setting • Corporate reporting Business Partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local budget setting, • budget control management and forecasting, • year end • project support, investment appraisal, • business development, internal consulting, advice and guidance
Service Improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Intelligence • Insights 	HR Service Delivery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Partners • Equality, Diversity, Inclusion Team 	Joint Corporate Finance Team: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory reporting

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Governance • Risk Governance • Evidence Based Policing & Innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultants • Employee Relations • Unison • Federation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulatory financial returns • Financial risk and governance framework • Capital programme • Treasury Management • Financial systems - management • Pension funds - oversee the accounting, budgeting and reporting arrangements
<p>Surrey Performance Portal Maintenance</p>	<p>L&PD:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Delivery • Transformation • PEQF implementation 	<p>Joint Insurance Team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated insurance manager and team provides support and advice • Manage insurance renewals • Manage insurance claims, to ensure claims are minimised and claimant are managed in a respectful way • To support the development of insurance best practices across 10 Forces (SEERPIC) • Motor insurance lead for SEERPIC
	<p>Strategy Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reward & Recognition • Workforce Development • Consultants • Awards & Ceremonies 	<p>Joint Procurement Team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement policy and procedures • Support contract and tendering activity • Strategic analysis of Force spend • Work with national and regional Forces, including Blue Light Commercial, to help develop best practices
	<p>Occupational Health & Wellbeing</p>	

Furthermore, some of the above are collaborated teams, where staff are responsible for servicing both Surrey and Sussex Police, with total costs shared.

Nonetheless, with the recent appointment of a new Chief Constable, Surrey's staffing model will continue to be reviewed in order to ensure

Question 6 **Cllr Kennedy**

(Note question 6 & 7 were tabled in April but omitted from inclusion at last Panel meeting due to administrative error)

Rule 163 of the Highway Code requires drivers to give extra space when passing pedestrians, cyclists and horseriders. Given your objective of ensuring safer Surrey roads, how satisfied are you with Surrey Police's performance in monitoring and enforcing this rule, and in responding appropriately to evidence of breaches from members of the public?

Safety on Surrey's roads remains a Force priority. Policing activity includes preventative work through the multi-agency "Safe Drive Stay Alive" campaign, the introduction of a new specialist team dedicated to road safety, and speed limit enforcement through the Surrey Camera Partnership. The Force continues to welcome information from residents in the form of dash cam recordings.

Public footage is valuable and the Force has invested in a digital platform to receive it. It come with challenges and the volume of material is ever expanding, and that requires Surrey Police to take difficult decisions depending on the nature of the offence and the evidence available. However, prosecutions have resulted from these submissions.

Question 7 **Cllr Kennedy**

The previous Commissioner and Chief Constable committed to making Surrey Police (including the OPCC) carbon neutral by 2030. Can you provide a quantitative update on progress in reducing the carbon footprint since then, are you satisfied that this objective is still on track, and how much resource is being committed to achieving this objective?

Surrey Police's Carbon neutral pledge has been embedded within a multitude of different policies, such as the Estates Strategy, Driver and Vehicle Management Strategy and more general directives for teams. At present the PCC generally oversees delivery of these specific strands via different conduits. For example, embedded within the Estates Strategy is the strategic objective to deliver through every project. This includes requirements to ensure projects:

- Deliver an estate which achieves (at minimum), the British Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Model (BREEAM) grading of 'Very Good' for refurbishment projects and 'Excellent' for new build facilities.

- Ensure that the estate, its design, construction, and its long-term use, delivers against the declared climate emergency agenda, reducing the current estate running and maintenance costs, with the ability to flex to accommodate changing business needs at minimal cost.

The PCC receives regular updates on work being undertaken as part of the Estates Strategy, and recent examples of fulfilment of the above requirements include:

- Numerous site visits with engineers to establish a capital costed plan which will include various innovations.
- Ongoing work to look at sites across Surrey and Sussex for a universal EV solution. This is helping the force understand the feasibility for longer term plans around the fleet itself.