

SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – 26 SEPTEMBER 2024

PROCEDURAL MATTERS – PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

1. Question submitted by Cllr Ashley Tilling

Q: The DISC system is a crime and anti-social behaviour reporting tool that many police forces use around the country. There has been a marked increase in theft from shops and more anti-social behaviour being reported in and around our high streets. The reporting system enables retail & hospitality owners to easily log incidents which are then readily available to the police not only to determine action necessary but also to compile a database of offenders for prosecution.

The thirteen Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in Surrey have requested that Surrey Police install a direct reporting link from their DISC systems so that a true level of incidents are reported and readily actioned.

Firstly, are Surrey Police able to commit to meeting this request?

Secondly, in other authorities the PCC has funded DISC to ensure every town and village that experiences crime and ASB can use the system. Will this be funded in Surrey?

Police & Crime Commissioner's Response:

Having checked with Surrey Police, I am informed that this request is currently being progressed and primarily led by the Digital, Data and Technology Team because of the required integration of IT systems.

I do however have some reservations around third-party reporting systems such and would encourage retailers and business owners to continue to use the established reporting channels to report incidents – 101, online or in an emergency, 999 - unless otherwise directed by Surrey Police. This view is based on conversations I've held both with police colleagues and with local businesses, and the need to ensure we are accurately recording incidents of crime.

In terms of funding, my office regularly provides funding to local initiatives and projects via the Community Safety Fund. My team are always happy to receive applications from local borough and district councils, or via Community Safety Partnerships, to support local or pan-Surrey initiatives. Whilst I am not able to commit to funding without a clear business case in place, we would naturally consider such an approach in line with our usual funding criteria. For more information please see: <https://www.surrey-pcc.gov.uk/funding/apply-for-funding/>

2. Question submitted by Cllr Alex Coley

Q: Why have recent reports of notifiable offences been managed as ASB by Surrey Police?

I am concerned that criminal offences are being downgraded as ASB. I have experience of this myself directly when reporting criminality from a group of teenagers in Epsom & Ewell to Surrey Police. Suspected offences referenced by stakeholders include:

- Arson not endangering life

- Making threats and harassment
- Racial aggravated intentional harassment or alarm or distress
- Racially aggravated common assault or beating
- Assault
- Robbery - business
- Theft of vehicle
- Carrying a knife
- Having possession of a controlled drug
- Criminal damage
- Aiding, abetting, causing or permitting dangerous driving

Police and Crime Commissioner's response:

Accurately recording crime is of vital importance, and Surrey Police has numerous processes in place to ensure that Home Office Counting Rules are applied correctly. Significant work has also been carried out since HMICFRS inspected Surrey Police last year, including a problem-solving approach to address hidden crime within ASB.

Training has been provided to all Contact Centre and FCR staff to remind them to identify any potential crime and follow the call script, which prompts them to check for any crime disclosures. Each audit now provides feedback to the supervisor, who addresses staff members not recording information correctly or failing to use the ASB call script. Hidden crime within ASB is now included in all internal ASB training.

Performance is managed through the ASB Performance Board and the Crime Data Integrity Board. Regular audits conducted by the Force Crime and Incident Registrars Team are now in place to inform both boards about compliance.

The latest audits of reports to the police closed as 'ASB Personal' showed that the frequency of missed crime in recorded incidents of ASB has fallen since the previous audit and last year's HMICFRS PEEL inspection. The April 2024 audit found 3.2 missed crimes per 100 recorded ASB incidents, and the latest audit found just 0.6 missed crimes per 100 recorded ASB incidents. This compares against 5 at the time of the January audit, and 18 at the time of the HMICFRS inspection.