



SUSSEX POLICE & CRIME PANEL

Sussex Police and Crime Panel

26 June 2020

Complaints about the Police and Crime Commissioner

Report by The Clerk to Sussex Police and Crime Panel

Focus for Scrutiny

That the Panel considers the complaints against the Commissioner, and any action that the Panel might take in respect of these.

1. Background

- 1.1 In accordance with the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2011, Sussex Police & Crime Panel (PCP) is responsible for the initial handling of complaints against Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC).
- 1.2 At its meeting of 26 November 2012 the Panel decided to delegate its initial handling duties to the Clerk to Sussex Police and Crime Panel, and to consider a report of the complaints received, quarterly.
- 1.3 Serious complaints (those alleging criminal conduct) are referred automatically to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC). Regarding non-serious complaints, a sub-committee can meet to consider any of these which in the Panel's view require informal resolution.

2. Correspondence Received from 20 January 2020 to 12 June 2020.

- 2.1 The Panel takes the view that all correspondence raising issues with policing in Sussex should be recorded, whether or not the issues fall within the Panel's statutory remit.
- 2.2 During the subject period, eight people contacted the Panel to raise new matters (either directly, referred via the IOPC, or referred by the Office of Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner (OSPCC)).

Complaints

- 2.3 During the subject period one person raised issues which constituted a serious complaint, as defined by the Regulations (see 1.3 and 2.4.1).

Correspondence Recorded, but not Considered by the Clerk to be a Complaint within the Panel's Remit:

- 2.3.1 Three people contacted the Panel to complain that their correspondence to the Commissioner had gone unanswered. In two of these cases no trace of any correspondence could be found. In the third case the response was expedited.
- 2.3.2 Two people contacted the Panel to complain about operational policing issues. Both were signposted to Sussex Police's provision for reporting complaints about Sussex Police officers.
- 2.3.3 Two people contacted the Panel to complain about operational policing issues involving Kent Police officers. Both were signposted to Kent Police's provision for reporting complaints about Kent Police officers.

Correspondence Recorded, and Considered by the Clerk to be a Non-Serious Complaint within the Panel's Remit:

- 2.4 Nothing received.

Serious Complaints (allegations of criminal conduct)

- 2.4.1 A serious complaint was received, alleging that the Commissioner initiated a criminal inquiry against the complainant at the behest of Mr Andrew Stansfeld, Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley. The Clerk to the Panel considered that this constituted a serious complaint, and it was referred to the IOPC on 29 April.
- 2.4.2 The IOPC wrote back to the Panel on 9 June, finding that, upon review of the complaint, it was not considered that the allegations were supported, and that there was no indication that Mrs Bourne had committed a criminal offence. Consequently, having no remit in respect of the matter, the complaint was returned to the Panel, to be dealt with in accordance with Part 4 of the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulation 2012. Options include entering a process known as "informal resolution", and taking no further action.
- 2.4.3 To inform the Panel's decision on how best it might proceed in respect of the Regulation, the Clerk wrote to the OSPCC on 10 June, seeking the Commissioner's comment on the complaint. Progress will be reported to the next meeting of the Panel.

3. Resource Implications and Value for Money

- 3.1 The cost of handling complaints is met from the funds provided by the Home Office for the operation and administration of Sussex Police and Crime Panel.

4. Risk Management Implications

- 4.1 It is important that residents can have confidence in the integrity of the system for handling complaints against the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner and their Deputy (where one has been appointed).

5. **Other Considerations – Equality – Crime Reduction – Human Rights**

5.1 Not applicable

Tony Kershaw

Clerk to Sussex Police and Crime Panel

Contact:

Ninesh Edwards

(T) 0330 222 2542

(E) ninesh.edwards@westsussex.gov.uk