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Update from Surrey Police Chief Constable Lynne Owens



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Since my last update to you we have seen the tragic and shocking terrorist events that have unfolded in Paris, and later in Mali. The devastation for the victims and their families is hard to comprehend. Amongst this terrible loss I have found the personal resilience and strength demonstrated by the survivors' stories in the face of such atrocity an inspiring confirmation that terrorists will ultimately never win.

I have also been reflecting with admiration about the police officers and security services who responded in the most challenging of circumstances. We must stand together in the face of extremism and terrorism.

The terrorist threat to this country has not changed. However, in the aftermath of Paris we, like all the UK police forces, have been reviewing our plans. At a national level we are examining our capability and capacity in the light of these incidents (as we had already done post Paris last year and other international events before that). This is a priority for us locally and with our contribution nationally too.

Equally, the partnerships we have across the county are vital in helping us – you can assist by doing everything you can to ensure your staff and communities continue to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity or concerns about extremism immediately to us.

Lynne Owens

New challenges need a different policing response

The evolving nature of terrorism is just one example of the changing nature of crime.

In the last two bulletins I have written on this topic which, when coupled with austerity-driven budget cuts, necessitates us making savings of a further £25m over the next four years, requiring a rebalancing of our policing model. You will also know from my previous updates how we are making savings through our collaborations (with Sussex Police, other forces in the region and other partners such as emergency services) and making non-frontline efficiencies too.

To give you some further context:

- In the last three years there has been a 153% increase in reports of rape, a 122% increase in reports of sexual offences, and reports of domestic abuse are up by 75%.
- In addition, offences like child sexual exploitation, domestic abuse and cybercrime are often complex and require specialised investigative officers.
- In the same time period, reports of house burglaries have fallen by 24%, while reports of car thefts are down by 32%.
- We are catching more offenders. In this year to date, we have brought to justice 26 more offenders for sexual offending than the same period last year. We have also seen our number of domestic violence cases solved increase by 393 from 2013/14 to 2014/15, meaning 393 more offenders brought to justice.
- 50-60% of crimes involve a vulnerable victim, witness or offender.
- Incidents classified as public safety/welfare make up 27% of all incidents we deal with. This is higher than crime (12%) and anti-social behaviour (10%) incidents put together.
- 44% of custody detainees report mental health issues. Of these, 6% require constant observation by police officers to ensure their safety which takes them off the streets where you, and we, like to see them visible.
- In 12 months, 20,813 safeguarding referrals were made to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (this is a unit that assesses risk to vulnerable children and adults). This equates to around 57 referrals every day - every one of those decisions about risk being key to the safety of an individual.

Change of this scale means we need to fundamentally rebalance our policing services to meet the challenges presented. We are calling this new model for policing in Surrey 'Policing in Your Neighbourhood' (PIYN).

I am conscious that some of you, whose own organisations deliver services in close partnership with us, will have already received information about our PIYN plans so over the next few months we can develop them further with you. However, I want to ensure that all of you, as important stakeholders with an interest in policing, have the details of our plans.

What do our changes mean for local policing?

We have already been increasing our response to domestic abuse, sexual offences, child abuse and online crimes, but despite the very best efforts of many officers and staff, it has been extremely challenging to keep up with the increases I have outlined above. Detailed reports to us of these types of crimes and concerns continue to grow significantly and as a result our response has not always been as good as we need it to be.

Therefore, we are increasing the size of the teams that protect the vulnerable by 34% as this is where the greatest threat and risk is. We are also increasing supervision and training to keep pace with the size and scale of the challenge.

At the same time, we are keeping our much valued local policing at the heart of the Surrey Police model. Our local policing teams will be bigger overall as we will have more officers working for a specific borough or district, tackling local problems and supporting smaller, but still dedicated, Safer Neighbourhood Teams.

There will continue to be dedicated borough-based Neighbourhood Inspectors and Police Community Support Officers who will work with partners to make communities safer. Their focus

will be on solving the chronic problems that blight local communities.

The public will see us as new technology means officers do not need to go back to base to find out information and fill out forms. Furthermore, when we need to send an officer in most instances they will be able to deal the case from start to finish, providing a better service for victims and a better investigation.

We also get a large number of calls where we are not always the most appropriate agency to solve the problem. The work we have already started with partners to make sure the right agency resolves the public's problems will continue so that whilst we all face cutbacks the public experience is that we shrink together, rather than apart.

Finally, we have been keen to ensure the public understand the changing nature of crime and demands on us and why we are changing so we have been very actively involved in a social media conversation with them. Most recently, we have launched an interactive game where they can try their hand at being one of our 999 operators experiencing some of the real calls we get and deciding whether to send officers or not. If you would like to take up the challenge please [click here](#) (some organisation's firewalls may block this, but if so you can play the game via your mobile or home computer).

We remain proud that over 90% of the Surrey public have confidence in the service we provide to them and, of course, we want that to continue. It is key to our ability to police with consent.

In other news

You may have heard that it was announced in Parliament on Thursday that I have been appointed by the Home Secretary as the next Director General of the National Crime Agency. This national law enforcement body leads the UK's fight to cut serious and organised crime and my background as a detective made application appealing. Of course I am absolutely delighted but remain committed and focussed here until I take up my new role (the date of which is yet to be determined).

It has been an absolute privilege to be Chief here for four years now and I remain grateful for the support and dedication of my officers, staff, volunteers and our partners. I am sure you will hear from me again before I move on!

Operational successes

This month's round-up of successes illustrates just how the nature of crime is changing, with an increase in reports of cases involving sexual offences and vulnerable members of the community, as well as a breadth of other crime and anti-social behaviour. You will reflect on the national spread of some of the offending and the complexity that creates for our investigators.

- The husband of a high risk elderly missing woman wrote to express his family's "deep gratitude" for the huge team effort which almost certainly saved his wife's life. In addition to the missing person's team, officers involved in the search included those from our response teams, neighbourhoods, a dog handler and the helicopter crew.
- A 79-year-old former music teacher at a school in Shackleford has been sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment for multiple non-recent sex offences against children. He was charged with 26 offences against four boys aged between eight and 13-years-old during a six year period from the mid-1970s.
- A 13-year prison sentence has been handed out to a retired vicar who has been found guilty of 27 counts of non-recent sexual assault offences against four victims. He was also given an indefinite sexual harm prevention order. This lengthy investigation began in

2013 and encompassed offences taking place in Sunbury, London and Leicester.

- In another case involving child sex offences, a 29-year-old man has been jailed for nine years. He was found guilty of a string of sexual offences against a 12-year-old girl in Egham. In addition to the prison sentence he was also given a Sexual Harm Order and will be on the Sex Offenders Register for life.
- A witness appeal featuring CCTV images has led to the arrest of five men from the Redhill area in connection with a burglary at a jewellery shop in Woodhatch.
- The power of witness appeals was further demonstrated when a witness to an attempted sexual assault in Guildford came forward as she had not realised she had seen something that might be relevant until she saw the appeal.
- To deal with a woman responsible for numerous incidents of anti-social behaviour in the Runnymede area, we have obtained a full Anti-Social Behaviour Injunction. This is the first time that we have used this new power. The injunction prohibits her from causing harm, harassment or distress to anyone in the county of Surrey; asking for, demanding or begging for money from members of the public and approaching or contacting named individuals. There is a power of arrest for breaches of all the Injunction's clauses.
- A three year Criminal Behaviour Order has been handed to a Spelthorne man, banning him from entering the towns of Ashford, Staines and Sunbury. We worked with other agencies to put interventions in place to curb the anti-social behaviour, but they proved unsuccessful, leaving no other option but to apply for a CBO.
- Real determination and bravery was shown by officers who chased and caught a man who had attempted to rob a bank in Epsom. When stopped the man threatened officers with a metal pole but he was successfully arrested.
- A classic car with great sentimental value stolen from a secure barn in Lingfield was safely recovered thanks to the relentless determination and painstaking work of the investigating officer.
- A gang involved in a £1m crime spree across the South East of England, which included blowing open cash machines and stealing trophies from the Red Bull Formula 1 team have been jailed for a total of 18 years after an investigation by the Force's Serious Organised Crime Unit.

Key diary dates

Guildford Crime Summit: 2 December - 6.30 – 9pm, G-Live, Guildford, GU1 2AA

For details of Neighbourhood Panel meetings, Police Surgeries and 'Meet the Beat' sessions in your neighbourhood, visit our [website](#)

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