

**ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL
COUNCILLOR FEEDBACK REPORT FROM OUTSIDE BODIES**

Report to Overview Select Committee – 6 October 2020

Name of Meeting:	Sussex Police & Crime Panel
Date of Meeting:	25 June 2020
Report by:	Councillor Mrs Gill Yeates
Relevant Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing

The meeting of 25 June was an unusual one – divided into 3 separate parts and spread across the day. Part one, the morning session, was the standard one to consider the Police & Crime Commissioner’s Annual Report. However, there was also a section on her role in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (which will be reported on further in next year’s report).

C-19 response. The PCC authorised additional expenditure to secure supplies of PPE for personnel and reviewed contingency stocks available. Working with the Chief Constable, many services were able to move online; revision of Safe: Space Sussex website, leaflets/banners deployed advising of domestic abuse services available, REBOOT, Restorative Justice Partnership, and extension of the Video-Enabled Justice Programme to enable Video Remand Hearings. It is anticipated that additional costs incurred during the emergency are likely to be around £5 million and application for assistance with this has been made to the Home Office.

The Annual Report was available only in text format due to time constraints during the pandemic but will be issued in its usual style shortly. One of the key objectives is to strengthen local policing with continued recruitment of Police Officers, PCSOs and specialist staff, encouraging the reporting of previously under-reported crimes, tackling serious violence and rural crime, REBOOT, etc. The HMICFRS Inspection in 2018/19 judged the Force to the ‘good’ in respect of reducing crime and keeping people safe but ‘requiring improvement’ in operating efficiently. The precept rise enabled more call handlers to be recruited and enabled changes to the digital platform in response to the public’s chosen method to contact the Police online.

The afternoon session was for the Panel to consider the PCC’s recommended candidate to replace the Chief Constable. Whilst the PCC had interviewed several candidates, it is for the PCP to hold a public hearing to review, report and recommend. There is a veto on the appointment subject to a two thirds majority. Whilst part 2 of the meeting to interview the candidate is held in public, part 3 is private for the Panel to deliberate. Following the PCP’s decision, there is an embargo on any discussion before a public announcement at noon the following Tuesday.

The candidate, Jo Shiner, has been Deputy Chief Constable of Sussex since 2018, having previously served in the Kent & Norfolk Forces. She came across as confident and personable, presenting herself and answering questions from Panel Members.

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Part 3 was a session to discuss the proposed appointment in private. Our Chairman called on each Member in alphabetical order to make their comments. Obviously, being almost last, I had heard most of the comments I would have made anyway so I focused on her background in rural/coastal forces which will be a good fit for Sussex and her experience in managing a contact & control room. One of the topics she had mentioned was in seeking feedback and I thought that this bodes well for our area – it is all very well putting in measures, but it is so important to check how the public interact with these. We were using Skype for Business for the virtual meeting so I could only see the last few speakers but there was some fairly vigorous nodding, so I think this point chimed with other Members. I also picked up on the fact that, although relatively new to the Sussex Force, she is a known entity but will bring a freshness to the role as well and this seems an ideal balance. The Panel enthusiastically endorsed the appointment.