



## Update from Surrey Police Chief Constable Lynne Owens



**Issue 35: May 2015**

Every June we successfully police one of the country's largest sporting events – the Derby Festival at Epsom Downs. Over 100,000 people will join members of the Royal Family to enjoy two days of horse racing and side-line attractions. This June, our plans are more significant still as we are putting the finishing touches to our safety and security operation for two further major events taking place during the month.

The Derby and Oaks race days will be swiftly followed by the celebratory events in Runnymede on 15 June, commemorating 800 years since the Magna Carta was sealed. The main spectacle is by invitation only and will be extremely high profile due to this very important anniversary combining with the attendance of members of the Royal Family, national and international politicians, dignitaries and other guests. We then have a brief respite before Guildford hosts the national Armed Forces Day celebrations on 27 June.

We are not the event organisers but, given the high number of VIPs and members of public expected to attend these three events, set against the national threat level, our policing and security plans are an integral part of them.

With the current constraints upon our budget it is important to mention that this provision of police officers and staff such as planners, commanders and 'feet on the ground' does incur extra cost. Where appropriate and in line with national guidance, we do negotiate a charge for these additional services so that the policing of your communities can continue as normal. However, any fees we can recover by law are minimal.

Our successful involvement also necessitates flexibility from my own officers and staff, for which I am extremely grateful. In the absence of a standing army of officers ready to police events of this size, we will be using a mixture of long hours, cancelled weekends and leave, alongside specialist help from other forces to ensure appropriate policing levels. In most instances we have to pay for this support too but our collaborative work with Sussex Police sees them sharing their officers without additional charge and this is a sometimes unrecognised benefit of our negotiated arrangement.

Lynne Owens

### **Funding for mental health practitioners**

In previous bulletins I have talked about the importance of ensuring those in mental health crisis get the right response from the right agency, making sure that they receive the most appropriate support and that both they and the public are kept safe.

I am therefore delighted to report that we have been successful in our bid for Home Office Police Innovation Funding to pay for mental health practitioners from the Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SABP) to work with our staff in the Contact Centre from 5pm to midnight seven days a week for this financial year and next. (At this point I should perhaps remind readers that this fund is not 'new money'. Our Government grant was top sliced to create the pot but I am grateful that we were able to re-secure the funds due to the quality of our bid).

The bid was strengthened on the evidence of an initial four-month pilot, launched in December 2014, where mental health specialists from SABP covered two evening shifts a week to help us deal more effectively with calls with a mental health element. In a single month of the pilot out of 46 calls that needed support from a mental health practitioner, 10 incidents avoided police deployment because the specialist was able to provide a better response by making the necessary referrals or diverting calls to a more appropriate service.

This is part of a wider piece of work to ensure that those suffering from mental health crisis do not find themselves in police custody when they should be in the care of health and social care professionals to receive appropriate treatment and support. This is progressing well and in the last two months no-one detained under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act has gone into police custody.

In addition, the South East Coast Ambulance service has formally committed to responding to and transporting people who are suffering from mental health issues, recognising that these are medical not criminal episodes. A police van is no place for a person with a health crisis.

### **Disciplinary proceedings now held in public**

We are making plans to hold future gross misconduct disciplinary hearings in public following new legislation that came into effect at the beginning of this month aimed at increasing openness and transparency.

Police officers hold a position of trust within society and it is therefore extremely important that the public have confidence both in the people who work in these roles and the process by which they are held to account. I expect the highest standards of behaviour at all times from all my staff.

There are no hearings at present in Surrey, but details of future hearings and how to attend them will be made available on the 'Published Information' section of our website at: [www.surrey.police.uk/About-Us/Your-right-to-information](http://www.surrey.police.uk/About-Us/Your-right-to-information). Here you will be able to access not only updates on disciplinary hearings when available, but also find a range of information about the Force and how it is run. As with other similar proceedings, such as court hearings and tribunals, those attending will be allowed to observe but will not be involved in the decision making process which remains with the conduct panel.

To further enhance openness and transparency more legislation comes into effect in January 2016 which will mean that a legally qualified independent person will chair any hearings, rather than a senior police officer as is currently the case. This is clearly an additional cost to the Force which will have to be built into our budget.

### **Operational Successes**

I always like this section as the examples hopefully give you reassurance that we are working in many ways to keep Surrey's communities safe.

- A closure order has been obtained on a property in Tadworth after numerous reports of anti-social behaviour which was blighting the lives of local people. The property will be sealed for three months, providing much-needed respite for the community. Meanwhile, the landlord, Raven Housing Trust, is in the process of repossessing the property and if it is successful the tenant will be permanently excluded from the property.
  - In another case of tackling anti-social behaviour we have worked in partnership with
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Paragon Housing to close down and successfully gain a repossession order on a property in Weybridge. Other residents living in the road had suffered from persistent noise, parties, drug use, domestic incidents, dogs barking and excessive littering in the property's front garden.

- Thanks to the tenacity and hard work of officers in our Economic Crime Unit, convicted criminals have been forced to pay back over £1.6m this year following successful orders made under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002. These orders are often the final piece in the jigsaw following a conviction, and mean that the victims are compensated in part for their losses.
- The Elmbridge community's response to a local leaflet drop played a key role in our investigation into a series of burglaries in the area. Their feedback helped the Staines investigation team build up a pattern of offending – ultimately leading to bringing window cleaner Ben Crittenden to justice. He has been jailed for eight years for stealing sentimental jewellery from elderly victims.
- A London gang has been sentenced to more than 13 years in prison for courier fraud offences across Surrey and the south east. The fraudsters phoned elderly victims claiming to be a police officer saying their bank card had been used by a person held in custody and asking victims to phone their bank to withdraw money, which they claimed could be used for forensic analysis. They would then send a courier to collect the money.
- A carer from Camberley, who used her position as a care manager to gain the trust of a vulnerable elderly woman to steal thousands of pounds from her, has been sentenced to two years in prison.
- A 17-year-old boy and a 22-year-old woman were arrested for drugs offences en route to HMP High Down as part of an operation in partnership with the prison. The pair, both from London, were arrested on suspicion of possession with intent to supply a class A drug and on suspicion of conspiracy to bring a prohibited article into a prison.
- Our Runnymede Safer Neighbourhood Team is delighted to have helped Royal Holloway, University of London scoop an award naming Egham the safest university town in the country. The accolade, awarded as a result of research by Stu.Rents.com, showed that students in Egham were exposed to the least crime after details of more than 535,000 crimes in university towns across 64 areas were analysed. This great result is a testament to all the hard work put in by members of the Safer Neighbourhood Team, working in partnership with the university and Runnymede Borough Council.
- A 49-year-old Guildford man has been issued with a Criminal Behaviour Order to address his anti-social behaviour in the town. The Order excludes Kevin Stuart Tippett from Guildford Town Centre, Stoke and Stocton Parks and from acting in an anti-social manner in the Borough of Guildford until 10 May 2017.

## Key diary dates

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

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