

From: Ann Barnes, Kent Police and Crime Commissioner
 To: Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel
 Subject: Report to the Police and Crime Panel

Summary:

This paper provides an update on items C2 to C5 on the Panel agenda. The Commissioner will also provide an oral update in relation to these items at the meeting.

Item C2 – Progress on recruitment and deployment of officers and PCSOs

1. I speak to the residents of Kent on a continual basis, and I am told time and time again that visible community policing is this county's number one priority. As you know, within my Police and Crime Plan, I therefore pledged to put community policing at the heart of Kent's Policing Model. I also took the difficult decision, based on extensive public consultation, to raise the policing precept to fund 100 additional uniformed officers; 60 PCSOs, 20 police officers and 20 custody officers.
2. I am pleased to announce that the recruitment of the PCSOs and officers is now well underway, and first of these newly trained officers will be in our local communities from July.
3. **Police Officers**
 An intake of 20 new recruits joined the Force on Monday 29th April 2013 and are progressing through their initial training. A further intake of at least 20 is planned for July 2013 and the remaining candidates on hold from the July 2012 assessment process are being progressed to this intake.
4. **Police Community Support Officers**
 The Recruitment for 60 Police Community Support Officers opened on 19th February 2013 externally and a total of 624 applications were received. 20 Police Community Support Officers commenced training on Monday 13th May 2013; a further 22 are cleared to commence training on 10th June 2013, and the remainder will join the 1st July intake.
5. **Detention Officers**
 31 individuals were successful for assessment in March/April 2013. A Detention Officers training course commenced on Monday 29th April 2013, with 12 attendees. A further course is planned for Monday 28th May with 12 new joiners due to commence. All other successful Detention Officer candidates who attended the March 2013 Assessment will be progressed to joining as further vacancies occur.
6. I recognise that members of the public are often unclear as to what powers and duties PCSOs possess in Kent. This can often mean that their role is misunderstood. I have therefore commissioned a video that will explain to the public the vital role that these uniformed officers play as part of the wider policing family. This will include an interview with PCSOs and the Chief Constable, and will be available for view on my website by the end of June
7. I have also recently announced my support for a new recruitment drive for Special Constables. These unpaid officers, who have the same powers and duties as regular constables, are hugely valuable to the Force, and give a significant number of voluntary hours of work each year to the Force. To recognise their contribution I have decided to pay the policing element of council tax for those Special Constables who have given over two years' service.

Item C3 – Community Safety Landscape Update

8. I am firmly committed to engaging with my Community Safety Partners, and whilst I am no longer a statutory partner on Community Safety Partnerships I continue to ensure that I have regard to their priorities. I am currently in the process of visiting every Community Safety Partnership across the county, and have a programme of dates running well into next year. I will also continue to engage with the County Community Safety Partnership, where I am represented on the board.
9. At an officer level, a member of my office is also represented at the Community Safety Managers Meeting, to ensure that there is a two-way dialogue between Community Safety Partners and my office.

Item C5 – Report on SARC Summit

10. I believe it to be totally unacceptable that we do not have a fully-functional 24/7 Sexual Assault Referral Centre in this county. The current SARC, which is located at Darent Valley Hospital, does not even meet the minimum national standards for sexual assault services. I therefore made a pledge within my Police and Crime Plan that I will use all my influence to enhance the current provision in our area.
11. The delivery of such a facility is a partnership issue, and my office and the force are only part of the solution. That is why I called for a SARC summit with key stakeholders to identify both the issues with the current provision and the potential solutions.
12. On Wednesday 17th April, my Acting Chief Executive chaired a SARC Fact Finding meeting that was well attended by those stakeholders involved in the provision and commissioning of a SARC service. This included representatives from Public Health, CPS, NHS Commissioning Board, Kent Police and Family Matters who are commissioned to provide rape crisis workers and Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs). This meeting was extremely positive, and I am reassured that partners are willing to work together to resolve short term funding issues as well as to ensure the sustainability of future provision.
13. As a result of this meeting, short term funding was identified to sustain the current service, provision for dignity material and clothing at the SARC was made, and the stakeholders agreed to co-fund a new SARC Manager post. A work stream to review the clinical governance and provision of Force Medical Examiners (FMEs) was also established. Stakeholders have been extremely positive about the progress being made, and it was agreed that my office will continue to host a SARC Stakeholder Group until such a time as the SARC provision in Kent has been enhanced and is on a stable footing. It was agreed that the Kent and Medway Sexual Assault Strategy Group would be assimilated into this new group.
14. Unfortunately, since the last meeting of the SARC Stakeholder Group, the Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust has announced their intention to withdraw the SARC facility at Darent Valley Hospital due to the relocation of the GUM Clinic to Gravesend Hospital. I am now working with Kent Police and, most critically, our partners in the NHS to identify an alternative site for the SARC that will provide a longer-term solution.
15. I am determined to provide encouragement and leadership for all our relevant partners to deliver a sustainable and modern SARC service in Kent.