



Mr M Ellis
Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

(By e mail)

Councillor Stephen Sweeney
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My Ref: SS/JP

Your Ref:

Date: 7 April 2020

Dear Mr Ellis

Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel – 10 February 2020 - Consideration of Annual Report 2019/20

As required under Section 28(4)(d) of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 the Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel views on your Annual Report for 2019/20 are detailed below.

At our meeting on 10 February 2020 you submitted your Draft report as that was our last meeting before you were due to stand down from office in early May 2020. You explained that your report was intended to be a summary of the delivery of the Safer, Fairer, United Communities for Staffordshire during your two terms of office. At that time I was authorised to submit comments on your final version of the report, taking account of comments made by members on 10 February 2020.

I received a copy of your final version of the report on 10 March 2020. Your period of office has since been extended until May 2021 due to the COVID 19 emergency. The Panel understands the unique position in which you find yourself and will continue to work with you throughout the forthcoming year. In the meantime, I note that no major changes have been made for the final version of your Report and therefore I detail below the main points of interest to, and discussed by, the Panel on your draft version:

Changes to the approach to supporting individuals with Mental Health Issues –we have charted the progress of changes made by the Staffordshire Force in the ways in which it supports individuals with mental health issues. You have overseen the introduction of mental health nurse support to officers attending incidents where mental health has been a feature and Staffordshire has been at the forefront of moves away from using Cells to detain people with mental health issues. Your Report highlighted the progress made in this area both nationally and locally and we commend the improvements made.

Combatting Serious Violence – we particularly sought information on how you were fulfilling your responsibility to lead on the local delivery of the Home Office strategy to combat serious violence. Whilst emphasising that in comparison to the major conurbations, Staffordshire is fortunate to not experience wide spread serious violence, you acknowledged that there were pockets of activity throughout the County and referred to your work as the lead of a multi agency Serious Violence Board which had recently been formed.

Youth Engagement/Early Intervention – You reported particular satisfaction at the success of work on engaging young people in order to reduce crime in the longer term. Most notable were the Cadets and SPACE schemes.

You reported that a total of around 6000 young people had completed the Cadet programmes, either at senior or junior level and cited instances of where the scheme had changed the attitudes of some young people whose circumstances might otherwise have led to them entering the Criminal Justice System in the future. You suggested that the Fire and Rescue Service Cadet Scheme had the potential to be developed in the future to further engage young people.

Take up of the SPACE scheme was reported to have increased year on year with around 4000 participating during Summer 2019. That summer saw a 50% reduction in anti social behaviour, justifying your call for your successor to continue and expand on that scheme.

We acknowledged the success of both initiatives in providing diversionary activities for young people.

Victim Support – You highlighted the work of your Deputy Commissioner (Mrs Arnold) in leading on the development of victim support services, commenting that as victims now had the confidence to seek support, previously unknown demand could now be identified.

Offender Management - the provision of Probation and After Care Services had been re-modelled nationally however the Service was now under further review as its disjointed structure, combining public and private sector providers, was failing to meet demand/requirements.

You briefly mentioned discussions on the Prison Service and shared your own observations on the organisation and effectiveness of that Service, particularly your views on the counter-

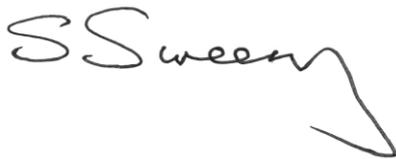
productive nature of short term sentences. We highlighted our concerns at mental health issues within Prisons.

Police Service and Fire and Rescue Service Collaboration – The formal change in governance arrangements has been in place for 18 months and attention has focussed on back-office collaboration and estate rationalisation. We have monitored the progress of projects being pursued and will continue to do so.

To conclude – we are satisfied that your Annual Report reflects the work undertaken to deliver your Strategy both during 2019/20 and more generally since you were first elected as Commissioner.

This letter will be published on the websites of local authorities represented on the Panel. You are requested to publish it on your website alongside your Annual Report.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S Sweeney". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail that extends downwards and to the right.

Stephen Sweeney
Chairman – Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel