

Lewes Bonfire Celebrations – Monday 5th November 2018

Superintendent Howard Hodges (Police Silver
Commander and Tactical Coordination Group
(TCG) Chair)



Surrey & Sussex
Policing Together

- Introductions
- Purpose
- Engagement – public safety is paramount
- 2017 “difficult and pragmatic decisions have been made for the sake of public safety”

- Lewes Bonfire Celebrations are one of the largest in Europe
- Includes the Bonfire Societies' processions around Lewes and the bonfires / firework displays at their respective fire sites
- From a partnership perspective it is primarily a public safety event
- Range of partners include the railways, BTP, SECAMB, East Sussex Highways, East Sussex County Council, ESFRS, Lewes District Council and Southern (and many others)

Year	Attendance	Injuries	% of Attendees Injured
▪ 2017 (Sat)	60,000 (30)	92	0.15% (0.30%)
▪ 2016 (Sat)	40,000	86	0.22%
▪ 2015 (Thurs)	20,000	66	0.30%
▪ 2014 (Weds)	40,000	82	0.21%
▪ 2013 (Tues)	35,000	114	0.33%
▪ 2012 (Mon)	30,000	82	0.27%
▪ 2011 (Sat)	60,000	170	0.28%
▪ 2010 (Fri)	40,000	126	0.32%

- 2017 - 92 people injured; 1/3 on procession routes and 1/5 by bangers or fireworks
- 2018.....?

- A crowd safety review was commissioned and carried out during the 2016 event by Gention Events
- The reports identified a number of detailed issues and its eventual judgement was:-

“Overall I consider that left unchanged, there is a very high likelihood of an incident occurring that could result in serious injury or death to one or more people in this event.”

- It is important to note that this assessment was based on observation of the 2016 event, i.e. despite the fact that the numbers attending were reduced by the train strike

- In 2016 a rail strike occurred on 5 November
- The A26 through Lewes was closed as mitigation against any potential terror attack
- These factors are thought to have reduced significantly the numbers who would otherwise have attended from outside Lewes
- Also meant there were no figures available for numbers arriving by train which have previously been used as a basis for estimating overall numbers
- The assessment of numbers attending was estimated by at 40 – 45,000
- Arrived from a range of access points and spread the crowds

- In 2017 rail services were suspended replicating the strikes from the previous year
- The A26 through Lewes was once again closed as mitigation against any potential terror attack and to assist with public safety
- These factors are believed to have reduced significantly the numbers who would otherwise have attended from outside Lewes
- The assessment of numbers attending was estimated at between 25 - 30,000 and 60,000
- Bonfire Societies donations increased
- “Local event for local people”

- There is no clearly defined organiser of the Lewes Bonfire Celebrations
- Partnership plans and responses have evolved over time
- Clear responsibility exists to coordinate a partnership response to keep people safe
- Each Bonfire Society is requested to produce an event plan for their sites and submit it to the Safety Advisory Group
- None of the societies at the Bonfire Safety Group meeting have indicated an intention to make any significant changes from previous years plans
- The various agencies involved coordinate their planning through various multi-agency meetings and written plans
- Tactical Coordination Group chaired by myself pulls this together
- Travel and Transport, Comms and Crowd Management sub groups chaired by Bernie Gorringer, Elizabeth Curtis and Ed Hele

- Chief officer / Chief Executive level representatives in key agencies have been consulted on the overall approach to planning bonfire
- Supported:-
 - restricting numbers from outside Lewes attending
 - revising the planning structure
 - working closer with societies in the overall event planning to increase public safety

- Key sources of risk for the event (in addition to those inherent in any event with fire, fireworks and crowds in close proximity) are:-
 - that Lewes town centre is not well suited to the volume of people who come to watch
 - that there is no single organiser for the event (this is especially relevant to the management of the public who attend, and the coordination of the procession routes and timings of the societies)
 - continuing concerns about the throwing of or dropping down of rook scarers ('rookies') into and amongst the crowds and processions

- The lack of a single organiser is due to there being multiple Bonfire Societies
- Bonfire Societies take responsibility for safely managing their fire sites and their actual processions (including the conduct of their society members)
- However they maintain that they are not responsible, individually or collectively, for the management or safety of the overall event or the public who come to watch

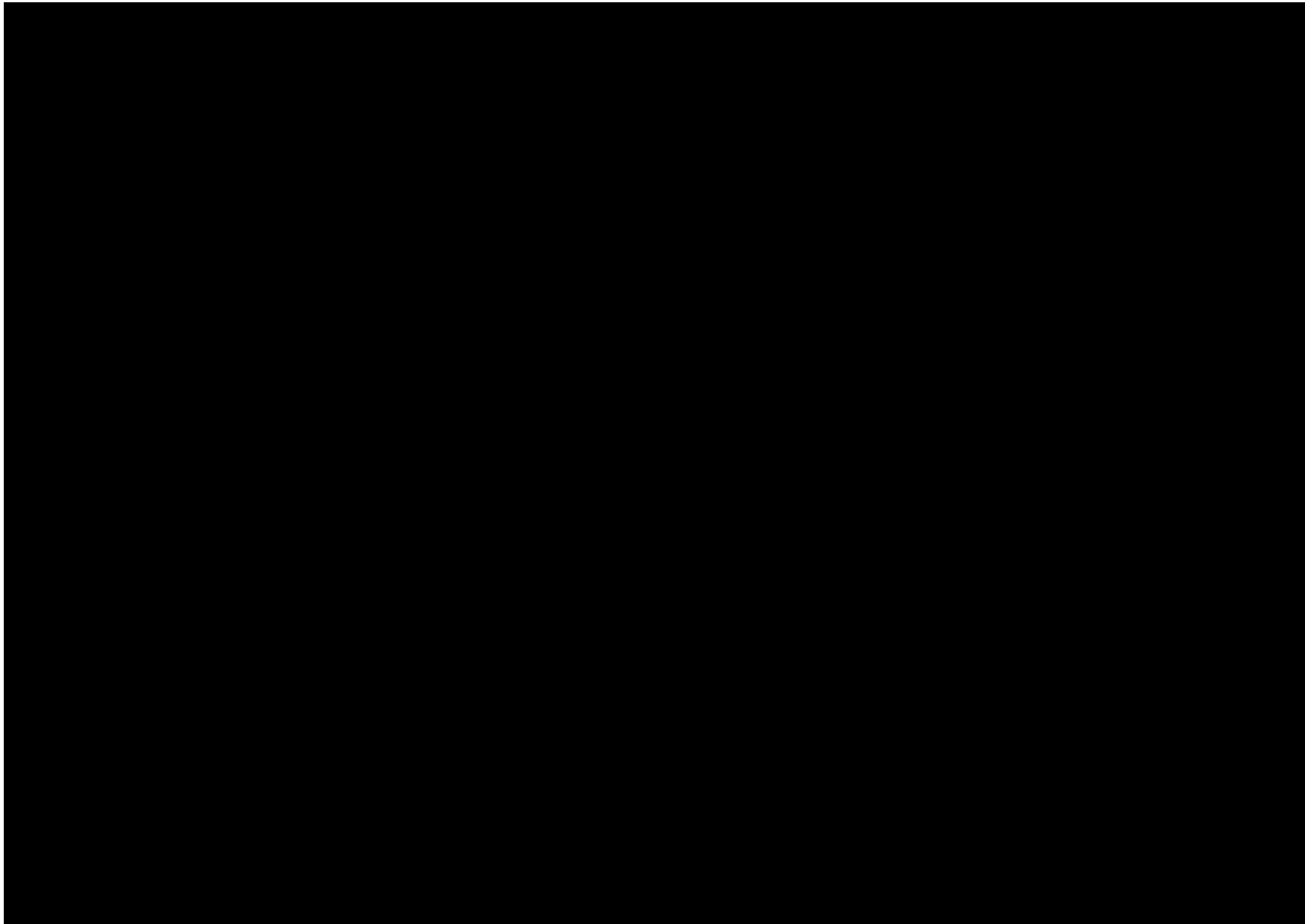
- No intelligence per se
- Assessment was based on information from previous years' events, on reasonable assumptions about the forthcoming event based on what was known about planning decisions and approaches at the time of writing
- Subject to dynamic review

Sussex Police Threat Assessment - 2017

Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Threat
Firework discharge and fire/firework related injuries during processions	Major	High	High
Crowd collapse or crushing due to density or movement or people.	Disaster	Medium	High
Significant public disorder/assaults/ criminal damage	Noticeable	Medium	Medium
Injury or harm to children or other vulnerable person.	Major	Medium	Medium
Impeded emergency service response to Fire / Medical / Police incident.	Noticeable	Medium	Medium
Injury to police staff deployed	Noticeable	Medium	Medium
Threat to continuing confidence in Sussex Police	Major	Medium	Medium
Injury or damage caused by fire or firework storage / carriage / use including within processions	Noticeable	Low	Low
Crime	Noticeable	Low	Low
Terrorist attack	Disaster	Low	Medium
Major disruption/serious safety issues on main roads	Noticeable	High	Medium







- The overall aim of this policing operation is that of public safety
- Our core responsibilities are :-
 - The protection of life and property
 - The prevention and detection of crime
 - Maintenance of the Queens Peace

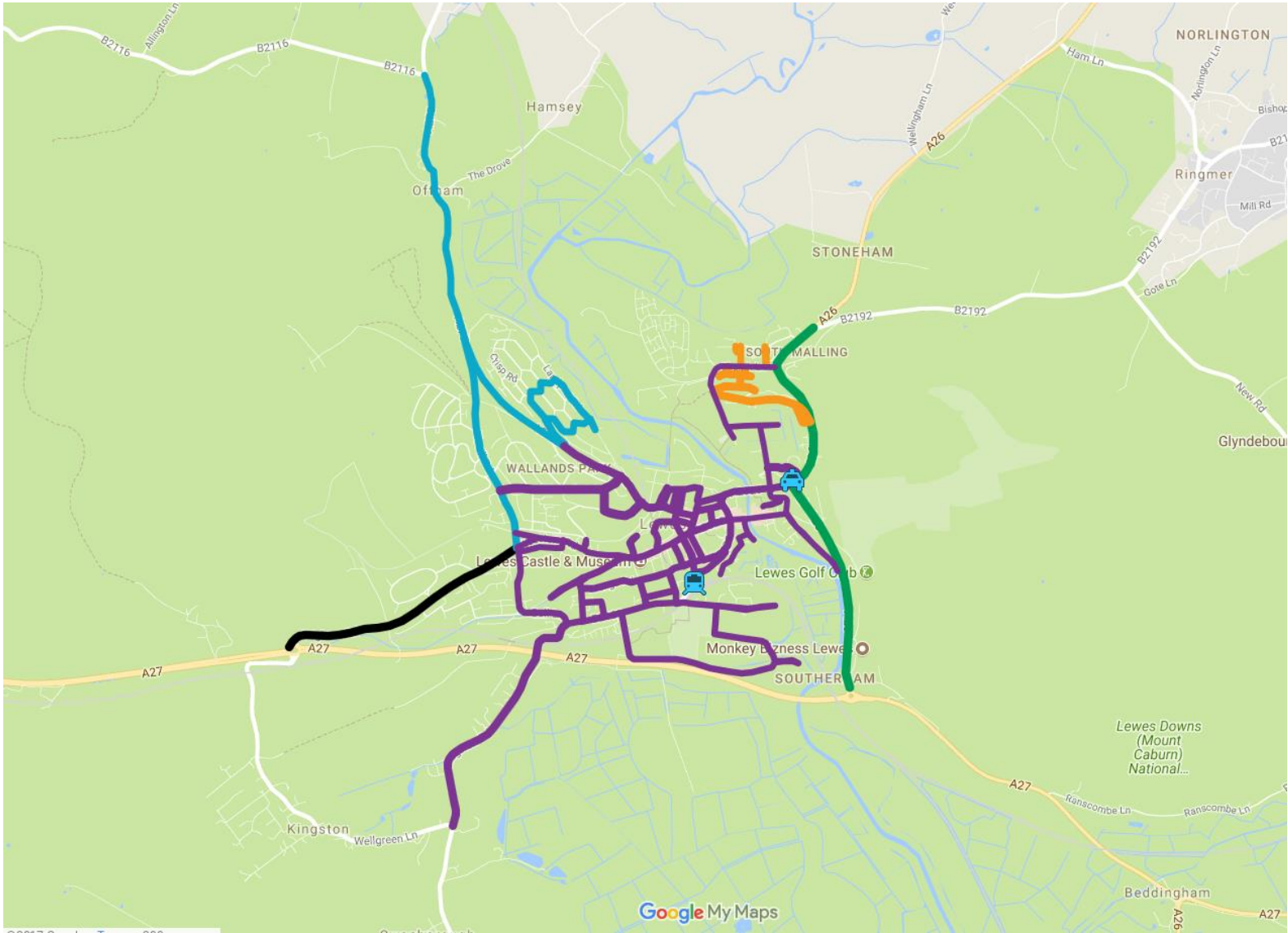
Gold Strategy - 2017 (2)

- The purpose of the police operation is to work with partner agencies to support the Lewes Bonfire event organiser in discharging their responsibility for public safety and in order to do so we will;
- Work with the Lewes Bonfire Societies, partners and other statutory agencies to minimise the risk of injury to people attending the Lewes Bonfire event.
- Prepare plans with other statutory agencies and Lewes Bonfire Societies, for any serious or major incidents during Lewes Bonfire and, in the event of an emergency, to co-ordinate the response.
- Minimise the risk of crime and disorder arising from the event, in particular that caused by the misuse of fireworks and alcohol-related violence.
- Maximise the safety of all staff, including those of the event organiser and partner agencies, involved in the event.
- Minimise the disruption to road users and local residents from the event and policing operation.
- To develop intelligence leading up to and during the event that provides the best opportunity to inform threat and risk.
- Maintain the trust and confidence of the public and stakeholders in policing, through the professional discharge of our duties.
- Take reasonable and proportionate measures to deter/prevent a terrorist related attack.

Road Closures and Parking Restrictions - 2017

- Support public safety :-
 - reducing vehicle movement near crowds
 - enabling emergency service response
 - providing the necessary conditions for vehicle-based terrorist attack mitigation
 - restricting the numbers attending thereby limiting overcrowding
 - Safe environment for crowds who accumulate on the streets before the road closures
- ESCC will institute parking restrictions from 1200hrs. Enforcement of these will follow a schedule of:-
 - 1200 onwards: FPNs issued
 - 1500 onwards: vehicles towed to County Hall, under ESCC authority
 - 1630 onwards: vehicles towed under Sussex Police authority (as roads closed from that point)

Road Closures - 2017



- No road closures?
 - Less restrictive road closures?
 - More restrictive road closures?
 - Replicate 2017 road closures?
-
- “Local event for local people”
 - “Difficult and pragmatic decisions have been made for the sake of public safety”

- Replicate 2017 plan
 - Road closures will be implemented from 1645hrs (1700hrs in 2016, 1630hrs in 2017)
 - To create safe working environment and minimise risks to public safety
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- A27 j/w A277 Brighton Road (Ashcombe Roundabout)
 - A27 j/w A26 (Southerham Roundabout)
 - A26 j/w B2192 Ringmer Road (Earwig Corner)
 - C7 Kingston Road j/w C324 Wellgreen Lane
 - A275 Offham Rd j/w B2116 Plumpton Road
 - A27 j/w Southerham Lane (Cliffe Ind. Est.)

- Do nothing and maintain normal service
- Adding capacity in recognition of the event
- Stopping the trains completely
- National context e.g. Notting Hill Carnival tube stations closed, Royal Wedding Windsor Station closed when town became full
- “Local event for local people”
- “Difficult and pragmatic decisions have been made for the sake of public safety”

- Preferred option proposed by Andy Leister, Head of Stations – Southern and supported by Govia Thameslink Railways (GTR) is:-
 - No trains to call at Lewes from 1700hrs - allows school/college kids to get home, plus allows commuters the opportunity to get home albeit earlier than usual
 - No trains to call at Falmer, Glynde, Southease or Cooksbridge from 1700hrs - will prevent people travelling to these stations and walking to Lewes
 - No trains to call at the above stations until the end of service and until the first timetabled trains on the morning of 6th November - as such there will be no option for people to return home from the event by train
 - Contingencies available in light of a major incident to assist with the safe evacuation / egress from the town - likely to be based on the booked timetable at the time and there would be no additional capacity
 - All of the above are subject to approval by the DfT who have been approached for initial comment

- Key decisions need to be signed off
- Now less than 5 months to the event
- Communications and planning need to be focussed and progress
- Views today have been invaluable
- Will take your views into consideration
- Ultimate decisions will be made at a strategic level in the interests of public safety

Any questions?



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