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13 MAY 2015

Giles York
Chief Constable

Our Ref: CC/GY/VLF

8th May 2015

Michael Burgess
Assistant Coroner for West Sussex
Coroner's Office
West Sussex Record Office
Orchard Street
Chichester
West Sussex
PO19 1DD

Dear Sir,

Re: Inquest into the death of Alasdair Neal PENNY – 16th and 17th March 2015-05-08

I write in response to your formal report under Regulation 28: Report to Prevent Future Deaths.

The concern around the bridge was raised in 2013 through the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Joint Action Group (NJAG). This was following the suicide of William Rayner in February 2011 and a further incident in which a member of the public was pulled back from the wrong side of the bridge in June 2013.

The group consisted of representatives from the local police team, town council and West Sussex County Council (WSSCC).

Over the period between June 2013 and the suicide of Alasdair Penny, numerous recommendations were made by the NJAG which included -

- Raising the parapets of the bridge.
- Consideration of a designated zone for memorial flowers.
- Cut back the vegetation on the banks to reveal the true nature of the drop.
- Implementation of signposting for Samaritans etc on the bridge.
- No stopping on Bridge signs.
- Patrol activity from the local EG Street Pastors.
- Continued Police patrols of the area.


... cont/d

The NJAG group was able to implement 6 Samaritans signs on the bridge which are still currently in place and the Street Pastors continue to patrol the bridge, as do the local police team.

The raising of the parapets, which was the partners preferred recommendation, was referred to WSCC and was discussed at the County Local Committee meeting in late 2014. WSCC reported that the vegetation could not be cut back and a report was being prepared as to the reasons why.

The potential alterations to the bridge are being managed by WSCC and an update meeting is planned between Peter Lawrence (WSCC), Julie Holden (EGTC) and PS Graeme Prentice (Sussex Police) on the 20th May 2015.

Yours sincerely,



Giles York
Chief Constable