

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ESSEX POLICE AND CRIME PANEL HELD
AT COUNTY HALL, CHELMSFORD, ON 29 OCTOBER 2014**

Present:

Councillor

John Newberry
Bob Shepherd
Tim Young
John Jowers
Mike Danvers
Penny Channer
Jo McPherson
Mike Assenheim
Lynda McWilliams
Robert Chambers
John Gili-Ross
Kay Odysseos

Representing

Brentwood Borough Council
Chelmsford City Council
Colchester Borough Council
Essex County Council (Chairman)
Harlow District Council
Maldon District Council
Rochford District Council (Vice-Chairman)
Southend Borough Council
Tendring District Council
Uttlesford District Council
Independent Member
Independent Member

Apologies for Absence

Tony Hedley	Basildon Borough Council
Graham Butland	Braintree District Council
Godfrey Isaacs with Bill Sharp as his substitute	Castle Point Borough Council
Bill Sharp	Castle Point Borough Council
Gary Waller	Epping Forest District Council
Mick Page with Lynda McWilliams as his substitute	Tendring District Council
Phil Smith	Thurrock Borough Council
Ann Haigh	Co-opted Member

Councillor Stephen Savage, Maldon District Council, was also in attendance.

The following Officers were in attendance throughout the meeting:
Colin Ismay, Council and Member Support Manager, Essex County Council,
Secretary to the Panel
Fiona Lancaster, Committee Officer, Essex County Council

Nick Alston, the Essex Police and Crime Commissioner, and Lindsay
Whitehouse, Deputy Commissioner, were in attendance throughout supported
by the following officers:
Susannah Hancock, Executive Director
Charles Garbett, Treasurer
Carly Fry, Assistant Director for Performance and Scrutiny
Gwanwyn Mason, Assistant Director for Public Engagement

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Assenheim to his first meeting of the Panel.

At the Secretary's request, the Panel approved Ann Haigh's failure to attend the meeting due to her Court commitments.

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2014 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2. Matters Arising

In relation to resolution (ii) of minute 7 (The Work of the Police and Crime Panel), the Secretary to the Panel reported that a successful review and planning event had taken place on 18 September. The Panel agreed that a further training event on financial scrutiny would be held before the January 2015 meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest

Councillors McPherson and McWilliams declared a personal interest as members of Safer Essex in agenda item 6(b), PCC Finance Update report, and the allocation of Community Safety Grants. Councillor Jowers declared a personal interest as a member of the Essex Fire Authority.

Councillor Channer declared a personal interest in agenda item 6(d), Hidden Harm and Safeguarding issues, as a member of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

4. Questions to the Chairman from Members of the Public

There were no questions.

5. Actions arising from the last meeting

The Panel received report EPCP/036/14 by the Secretary to the Panel highlighting the matters raised during the previous meeting that required further action and indicating the action taken.

In relation to minute 7(d), the Secretary to the Panel confirmed that he would progress the development of the web pages with John Gili-Ross.

6. Reports from the Police and Crime Commissioner

(a) Annual Report

The Panel considered report EPCP/037/14 by the Commissioner presenting his draft Annual Report for 2013/14.

The following points were made during the ensuing discussion.

- The Annual Report format had been changed to make it more accessible and engaging to the public. It was designed to be printer and website friendly, although there was no intention to produce large numbers of hard copies.
- With reference to page 4, and the bullet relating to the recruitment of new police officers, the Panel indicated that the information was misleading

when there had been a net decrease in the number of police officers. The Commissioner agreed to look again at this.

- The use of colour and design made the report easy to understand and navigate. It was clear, concise and well presented.
- The Commissioner continued to publicise the work of the community speed watch volunteers, and indicated that he had helped to fund one struggling community programme in the past year.
- There was no reference to Pub Watch on page 17.
- The successes of the New Initiatives Fund (NIF) would be updated on the Commissioner's website, together with decisions and information about unsuccessful bids.
- The Deputy Commissioner informed the Panel of the date/venue of the PCC's Annual Conference, which would be held on Wednesday 14 January 2015, at the Community Stadium in Colchester.
- The Deputy Commissioner was examining the results of the Firebreak pilot programmes to see how much money would be saved by reducing the youth re-offending rate.
- There is no correlation between an increase in road deaths and a reduction in the traffic division. There are approximately 80 police officers in the traffic division, and it is one of the largest divisions in the country.

(b) PCC Finance Update

The Panel considered report EPCP/038/14 by the Treasurer to the Commissioner's Office which provided the Panel with:

- i) a financial summary of the final 2013/14 revenue outturn;
- ii) a commentary on the progress to date in delivering the 2014/15 financial plans; and
- iii) an update on the progress made in allocating Community Safety Grant (CSG) monies for 2014/15.

The following points were made during the ensuing discussion.

- The Statement of Accounts for the Commissioner's Office and the Police Force were given an unqualified audit opinion on 30 September 2014, and that the revenue surplus for 2013/14 was £3.7m.
- The figure relating to police officer overtime on page 44 should be shown as an over spend, and the brackets removed from around the figure of £1.4m.

- The over spend on police officer overtime had resulted from the operational demands of two murder enquiries and will be financed from reserves.
- The expenditure relating to the Commissioner's Office showed an under spend, but this was expected to be closer to budget by year end.
- The Capital expenditure looked low in some cases, but the Treasurer expected the majority of spending to take place in the second half of the year with the level of activity regarding contracts accelerating.
- The Southend Police premises project had been delayed by three months to ensure the specification was right and this would affect the profile of spending, moving more costs into 2015. The extra cost of using alternative stations during the upgrade of the Southend site had been taken into account in the revenue budget.
- The Treasurer expected capital receipts of £0.49m to be improved with the increased activity of property being sold.
- The general reserve of £12m was required to meet short term needs and avoid costly short term borrowing, and include an element of unplanned contingency. This will be addressed as part of the budget papers in January. Some comparator information would be helpful.
- The Treasurer highlighted the progress in allocating community safety funding and reported that the auditors were satisfied with the process and control of this area.
- The Deputy Commissioner explained the work done by the Chelsea Football Club Foundation. It was a well-run scheme, with sustainability an integral part to the funding.
- A glossary of acronyms in relation to the list of community safety grant monies would be helpful.
- A report on the outcomes arising from commissioning activity should be made available.

(c) Public Engagement Programme

The Panel considered report EPCP/039/14 by the Assistant Director for Public Engagement on the structure and plans for the Commissioner's public engagement programme and progress to date.

The following points were made during the ensuing discussion:

- The Panel considered the Engagement Programme to be a very good document.

- The Commissioner has a mandate to engage with the people of Essex, and the increase in correspondence demonstrates that local communities are getting involved.
- The move to accommodating public meetings within the Essex Police structure means that duplication of meetings can be avoided.
- The Assistant Director for Public Engagement had met with CSP managers and local community groups, and was developing a database of contacts and local organisations. She noted the Panel's suggestion to engage with Hospital Trusts, Clinical Commissioning Groups, and local Health and Wellbeing Boards.
- The Assistant Director for Public Engagement explained that she was a member on the Strengthening Communities Board which gave her insight into the 'hidden' communities.
- The first PCC Youth Conference was cited as an example of targeted engagement with young people. A Youth Forum had been created out of the event, with a rolling membership, and had produced a film on Safety. An extract of the film was shown during the meeting, and has been used to work in partnership with schools and the police.
- Some concern was expressed by the Panel regarding the removal of Neighbourhood Action Partnerships (NAPs) and the ability of the police to run the local meetings. The resource and actual costs of arranging and hosting the meetings would now fall to the police. The Commissioner encouraged members to attend and provide feedback on the new police meetings. He also undertook to pass on the Panel's concerns to the Chief Constable.

(d) Hidden Harm and Safeguarding issues

The Panel considered report EPCP/040/14 by the Assistant Director for Performance and Scrutiny which provided the Panel with an update on the Commissioner's work on hidden harm.

The Commissioner would be working with and through local partners to raise awareness of hidden harm in Essex, and helping to raise victims' awareness on how to report harm and the support available to them.

The Panel welcomed the news that Chelmsford City Council would be a Hate Incident Reporting Centre (HIRC), and that four members of staff had been trained to recognise a hate crime and to provide advice and support.

The Panel noted that a commissioning programme would be required, and that a meeting had already been held with school governors to discuss ways of developing school programmes.

The Panel welcomed the report.

7. The payment of an allowance to the Independent and Co-opted members

The Panel considered report EPCP/041/14 by the Secretary to the Panel on the appropriateness of paying an allowance to the independent and co-opted members.

The two independent members on the Panel indicated that they were content to continue in their roles without receiving an allowance, but acknowledged that this might prevent other volunteers from coming forward if they could not afford to give their time freely.

Resolved:

That approval be given to the payment of an allowance of £500 to the Independent and Co-opted members of the Essex Police and Crime Panel and to the Panel's arrangements being amended accordingly.

8. Draft Complaints Policy

The Panel considered report EPCP/042/14 by the Secretary to the Panel setting out the arrangements needed to fulfil the Panel's statutory requirement to have in place a procedure for handling complaints against the Commissioner and his Deputy.

The Panel noted the proposal that Terry Osborne, Director for Corporate Law & Assurance and Essex County Council's Monitoring Officer, would act as Governance Officer in any complaint matters. The Panel supported the suggestion that Councillors Jowers, McPherson and Young be called upon to act as a complaints sub-committee.

The Panel agreed that it would be useful to receive regular information on complaints received.

Resolved:

That the procedure for handling complaints against the Commissioner and his Deputy as outlined in report EPCP/042/14 be adopted and kept under review.

9. Report of the September Training Session

The Panel received report EPCP/043/14 by the Secretary to the Panel outlining some of the key points arising from the training session. The Panel noted the report and indicated that the Secretary should follow up on the suggestions wherever practicable.

10. Local policing – accountability, leadership and ethics: an inquiry by the Committee on Standards in Public Life

The Panel received report EPCP/044/14 by the Secretary to the Panel outlining the background and role of The Committee on Standards in Public Life, and its

review of how ethical standards are being addressed in the police accountability landscape.

The Panel was asked to indicate whether it wanted to contribute to the inquiry, and what further information it required to be able to respond.

The Panel agreed that it would be useful to be involved with the inquiry and noted that there would be time for the Secretary to the Panel to bring a draft response for approval to the Panel's November meeting.

The Chairman reported that the Chairman of the Committee had indicated that he would like to visit Essex as part of evidence gathering for its review.

11. Forward Look

The Panel considered report EPCP/045/14 by the Secretary to the Panel concerning the planning of the Panel's business.

The Panel agreed the business proposed for the meetings currently scheduled, and for the meetings proposed for 2015.

12. Items for information:

(a) Overview of The Essex Compact

The Panel noted report EPCP/046/14 by the Secretary to the Panel providing an overview of The Essex Compact which sets out principles and rules for a fair and fruitful relationship between the voluntary and statutory sectors in Essex.

(b) Response to HMIC's consultation on Inspections

The Panel noted report EPCP/047/14 by the Secretary to the Panel setting out the Panel's response to the consultation on the proposed PEEL (police efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy) assessments.

13. Update on On-going issues

The Commissioner reported that it was a particularly busy time for his Office, and reminded the Panel of the uncertainty regarding the continuation of the Police and Crime Commissioner role.

14. Dates of Future Meetings

The Panel agreed the meetings scheduled for 14:30, on the following dates in 2015: 29 January, 19 February, 25 June, 29 October and 26 November.

29 October 2014

The Panel also agreed to hold private pre-meetings starting at 14:00. This would enable the Panel to plan for the meetings and develop their key lines of enquiry. It was left for the Panel to decide if it wanted to hold further meetings during the year.

Chairman
27 November 2014