

Essex Countywide Traveller Unit Joint Committee

10:00	Thursday, 23 January 2014	Essex County Fire and Rescue Service HQ,
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Membership:

Chief Fire Officer David Johnson
Chief Inspector Glen Pavelin
Cllr Richard Moore
Cllr Angie Gaywood
Cllr Frank Delderfield
Cllr John Jowers (Chairman)
Cllr Keith Hudson
Cllr Martin Hunt
Cllr Paul Honeywood
Cllr Richard Bassett
Cllr Susan Barker
Mike Gogarty

For information about the meeting please ask for:

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The agenda is also available on the Essex County Council website, www.essex.gov.uk. From the Home Page, click on 'Your Council', then on 'Meetings and Agendas'. Finally, select the relevant committee from the calendar of meetings.

Please note that an audio recording may be made of the meeting – at the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being recorded.

Part 1

(During consideration of these items the meeting is likely to be open to the press and public)

		Pages
1	Apologies and Substitution Notices The Committee Officer to report receipt (if any)	
2	Declarations of Interest To note any declarations of interest to be made by Members	
4	Minutes To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2013	5 - 10
3	Identification of Items Involving Public Speaking To note where members of the public are speaking on an agenda item. These items may be brought forward on the agenda.	
5	Business Update To receive an interim verbal update from Stephen Andrews, Essex Countywide Traveller Unit Manager, ECC, outlining the current business of the Essex Countywide Traveller Unit	
6	Financial Report and External Audit Sign-Off - to be tabled at the meeting To receive the latest Financial Report from David Poole, Senior Financial Analyst, ECC, and approve sign off of the External Audit for 2012/13.	
7	Joint Committee Review To receive a written report from Anna Lambert, Head of Delivery Transitions, ECC, on a review of the Joint Committee arrangements	11 - 12
8	Unauthorised Encampments To discuss the process for dealing with unauthorised encampments. A representative from Essex Legal Services will be in attendance to answer any questions.	
9	Urgent Business To consider any matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered in public by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.	

- 10** **Date of Next Meeting**
To be advised

Exempt Items

(During consideration of these items the meeting is not likely to be open to the press and public)

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of an agenda item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 or it being confidential for the purposes of Section 100A(2) of that Act.

In each case, Members are asked to decide whether, in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption (and discussing the matter in private) outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

- 11** **Urgent Exempt Business**
To consider in private any other matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ESSEX COUNTYWIDE TRAVELLER UNIT
COMMITTEE HELD AT ESSEX FIRE AND RESCUE HEADQUARTERS, RIVENHALL
AT 10:00 AM ON 22 OCTOBER 2013**

Members of the Committee present:

Cllr Susan Barker	Uttlesford District Council
Cllr Frank Delderfield	Maldon District Council
Cllr Angie Gaywood	Thurrock Unitary Authority
Cllr Anthony Hedley	Essex Fire Authority Chairman
Cllr Keith Hudson	Rochford District Council
Cllr Paul Honeywood	Tendring District Council
Cllr John Jowers	Essex County Council
Cllr Richard Moore	Basildon Borough Council
Chief Fire Officer David Johnson	
Chief Inspector Jason Scrivener	

Substitutes and other Members present:

Cllr Richard Bassett - Epping Forest District Council

Also present was:

Stephen	Andrews - ECC
Colin	Batchelor - BDC
Alec	Baker – ECC
Adam	Bradley - ECC
Nigel	Brown - UDC
Nikki	Coates - ECC
Mike	Gogarty - ECC
Ian	Haines - MDC
Paul	Hill – EFRS
Tony	Howard - EFS
Simon	Humby - BBC
Anna	Lambert - ECC
David	McCulloch - TDC
David	Poole - ECC
Malcolm	Sach - MDC
Shaun	Scrutton - RDC
Belinda	Silkstone - CBC
Sgt Tanya	Steele - Essex Police
Lance	Wosko - ECC

1. Apologies and Substitution Notices

Apologies were received from Councillor Martin Hunt of Colchester Borough Council.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 May 2013 were approved as a correct record subject to an amendment to show Councillor Paul Honeywood in attendance.

4. Identification of Items Involving Public Speaking

There were none identified.

5 Business and Performance

The committee received a presentation from Stephen Andrews, Manager of the Essex Countywide Traveller Unit (ECTU) outlining the work of the ECTU and current performance;

Health outreach

- Inoculations and Immunisations
- GP and Dental Registrations
- Long-Term Conditions

- First Aid Training
- National Campaigns
- Drugs and Alcohol Advice
- National Stop Smoking Campaign and
- Health Checks

Education

- Children helped into school and
- Home education data

Fire Safety

- Increases in fire safety checks and
- The targeting of Thurrock in a campaign

Police Report

- Introduction of T/Police Sergeant Steele
- The benefits of working closely with travellers
- Unauthorised encampments
- Local Engagement

General Liaison and Site Management

- Rochford Councillors are due to visit ECC's new site in Severalls Lane to help inform/demonstrate what a well-designed and managed site can be like, to support their own proposed development,
- Horse Issues
- Site Licensing

The work of ECTU Officers

Members of the committee then heard from officers of the Essex Countywide Traveller Unit who described a typical day in the job, the variety and difficulties they encounter, the relationships they forge and the impact that they have upon the travellers and the communities they serve.

After some questioning from the members present and discussion there was unanimous acclaim and recognition of the valued service they provide.

In response to questions and comments members of the committee were advised that:

- proper site management is essential to build confidence in the local community,
- when Irish Travellers and Romany Gypsies share the same site there can be sometimes challenging situations and behaviours that require careful management,
- officers from ECTU are generally well received on the sites, bringing not just enforcement but health, fire-safety and education support,
- education is key to extending the life-expectancy of travellers, some of whom face a life-expectancy of only 40yrs,

- there have been some reported instances of travellers sub-letting their sites to migrant workers.

It was agreed that

- the Norfolk and Suffolk horse policy would be examined to see if there were lessons to be learnt that might be applied in Essex. Essex Police also agreed that there should be joint-working on this matter. It was also requested that the RSPCA be contacted for their views and possible input.

It was requested that

- there be some feedback at a future meeting from Districts as to their view of the ECTU and the benefits of properly run sites,
- as the work of the ECTU is 'good news' there should be an invitation to the press to attend the next meeting and
- there be consideration given to lobby government for more recognition and funding to provide resources.

6 Financial Report

The committee received a presentation by Lance Wosko, Financial Services, Essex County Council.

It was moved by Councillor Delderfield and seconded by Councillor Moore that;

- the Annual Return for the 2012/13 financial year (six months) and for the Annual Return be signed by the Chairman of the Committee,
- the proposed budget for the 2013/14 financial year be approved and
- the indicative budget for 2014/15 and 2015/16 be noted.

Post meeting note: the Annual Return was signed by the Chairman and counter-signed by the clerk to the committee.

- It was agreed that the ECC overpayment be returned.
- It was also agreed that approval for 2014/15 and 2015/16 budgets be brought to a future meeting of the committee for approval.

7 Communications Strategy

The committee received an introduction to the Communications Strategy from Anna Lambert, Head of Delivery Transitions, Essex County Council.

The committee was advised that purpose of the strategy was to show that effective communications will:

- help us achieve the objectives of the ECTU
- engage effectively with stakeholders
- demonstrate the success of our work
- ensure people understand what we do and access our services
- change behaviour and perceptions where necessary.

After some discussion the Communication Strategy was approved.

8 Forward Planning

Item deferred.

9 Date of Next Meeting

To be advised

Chairman

Essex Countywide Traveller Unit Joint Committee

Report on Year 1 Review with Partners

23 January 2014

Report by Anna Lambert, Head of Delivery Transitions

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 On 22 October 2013, the Joint Committee tasked the author to meet with all Essex Countywide Traveller Unit (ECTU) to review the first year of operation of the new arrangements. This included discussion on customer satisfaction to date and possible improvements to the service.

2.0 Progress Report

- 2.1 To date, Anna Lambert and Steve Andrews (Head of ECTU) have met with:

Rochford District Council
Thurrock Council
Essex Police
Essex Fire and Rescue Service
Public Health (now based in Essex County Council)
Colchester Borough Council (telephone conversation)

A meeting with Maldon District Council is planned to take place just prior to this Joint Committee, which will be reported on verbally. The remaining Members of the Joint Committee have declined the offer for the moment.

- 2.2 The interim conclusion following the meetings that have taken place are that all Partners are very satisfied with the service and see that it is an important step towards consistency in matters relating to Gypsies and Travellers across Essex.
- 2.3 One discussion point raised has been the legal timeframe when enforcing under Section 77. This has been put on the 23 January Joint Committee agenda for discussion with Legal colleagues.
- 2.4 Discussion with partners has also highlighted that the ECTU will need to engage with Partners and potential partners to secure funding beyond October 2015 over the next six months to that end, as budget setting will commence in Autumn 2014.

3.0 Conclusion and Next Steps

- 3.1 The results of the first round of meetings indicate that the ECTU are meeting the expectations of Partners; a good start for the first year of operation. The Unit will continue to build on this good work and further strengthen working relationships with all Partners.
- 3.2 The Unit will engage with Operations Board Members to discuss the best approach for budget discussions over the next 6 months and commence that task.

Anna Lambert
13 January 2014