

Minutes of the meeting of the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel, held in Committee Room 1, County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH on Thursday, 25 July 2019

**Present:**

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Aidan McGurran	Basildon Borough Council
Wendy Schmitt	Braintree District Council (Chairman)
Chris Hossack	Brentwood District Council
Godfrey Isaacs	Castle Point Borough Council
Jeremy Lager	Chelmsford City Council
Nigel Bedford	Epping Forest District Council
Malcolm Maddocks	Essex County Council (Vice Chairman)
Frances Mason	Harlow District Council
Michael Helm	Maldon District Council
Lesley Butcher	Rochford District Council
Ian Shead	Southend-on-Sea Borough Council
Lynda McWilliams	Tendring District Council
Joycelyn Redsell	Thurrock Council

**Co-opted Independent Members**

John Gili-Ross  
Kay Odysseos

**Also in attendance**

Roger Hirst	Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Pippa Brent-Isherwood	Chief Executive, Office of the Essex PFCC
Jane Gardner	Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Rick Hylton	Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Essex CFRS
Paul Turner	Director, Legal and Assurance
Emma Tombs	Democratic Services Manager
Matthew Waldie	Democratic Services Officer
Councillor Colin Day	Uttlesford District Council (observer)

**1 Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest**

The report of the Membership, Apologies and Declarations was received.

1. The following apologies were noted:  
Councillor Mike Webb (substituted by Councillor Butcher),  
Rochford District Council,  
Councillor Mike Lilley, Colchester Borough Council  
Councillor Garry LeCount, Uttlesford District Council.

2. Councillors declared Code Interests as follows and participated fully in the meeting:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Nature of Interest</b>
Wendy Schmitt	Chairman of the Braintree Community Safety Partnership
Nigel Bedford	Serving member of the London Fire Brigade
Godfrey Isaacs	Chairman of the Castle Point and Rochford Community Safety Partnership
Joycelyn Redsell	Member of Thurrock Community
Ian Shead	In receipt of an Essex Police Pension
Malcolm Maddocks	In receipt of an Essex Police Pension
Lynda McWilliams	Chairman of the Tendring District Council Community Safety Partnership
Chris Hossack	Chairman of the Brentwood Community Safety Partnership
Frances Mason	Member of the Harlow Community Safety Partnership and in receipt of a National Probation Service Pension
Lesley Butcher	In receipt of an Essex Police Pension

## 2 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## 3 Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

It was proposed by Councillor Helm and seconded by Councillor Shead that Councillor Schmitt be elected as Chairman for the remainder of the period to the next Annual General Meeting. Councillor Schmitt was duly elected.

It was proposed by Councillor Schmitt and seconded by Councillor Isaacs that Councillor Maddocks be elected as Vice Chairman for the remainder of the period to the next Annual General Meeting. Councillor Maddocks was duly elected.

## 4 Questions from members of the public

There were none.

## 5 Introduction to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel

The Panel received a report providing a short introduction to the work of the Panel and how it operated. It was noted that a training session had been arranged for 6 August 2019, intended for both new and longer serving members of the Panel. It was further noted that the LGA had recently produced a guidance document for Panels, which had been circulated for information, and provided useful further background and information.

It was agreed that the membership of the Complaints Sub-Committee, which met the Panel's statutory function in respect of dealing with complaints about the Commissioner and Vice Commissioner, would be Councillors Helms, Schmitt, Maddocks and John Gili-Ross.

The Panel noted the report.

**6 The PFCC's approach to engaging with the public in relation to policing issues**

The Panel received a report providing an update on the Commissioner's approach to engaging with the public in relation to policing issues. The report had been previously requested by the Panel, and there was a brief discussion regarding its scope and content.

The Panel reviewed the information provided in respect of the range of face-to-face and digital activity undertaken. The Chairman noted the importance of ensuring that Panel members and Division / Ward Councillors were kept advised of any meetings or engagement activities taking place within their areas, so that they had the opportunity to attend or contribute. It was also noted that some members of the community had limited digital access; the Commissioner confirmed that this was taken into account when communication activity was being planned.

The report was noted.

**7 Essex County Fire and Rescue Service End of Year Performance Report 2018/19**

Members received report EPCP/19/19, setting out the performance of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS) against a number of key metrics for the 2018/19 financial year and comparing this to performance during the 2017/18 financial year.

The Panel reviewed the information provided, and raised a number of points for clarification or comment. These included management of false alarms, on call availability criteria, and the continuing success of the Firebreak programme.

The Panel noted the report.

**8 The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to update the Panel on any ongoing issues**

The Panel received report EPCP/20/19 providing information on financial and strategic decisions made by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner since the last PFCC Panel meeting submission deadline.

The Panel reviewed the information provided, and raised a number of points for clarification or comment respect of a number of the decisions taken. These included the design and supply of a containerised data centre, the objectives in recording interviews with sexual abuse survivors and the progress made in establishing the "single online home" platform.

It was **AGREED** that the Commissioner's office would provide further information on the position regarding future funding of the Bar 'n' Bus initiative in Rochford, or a suitable alternative, and in respect of the additional partners contributing the 'safe house' facility for victims of modern slavery.

**9 The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to update the Panel on any ongoing issues**

The Commissioner gave a brief verbal update on some ongoing issues:

The Commissioner had recently met with the new Prime Minister and Home Secretary and had been assured of their firm commitment to law and order. He had also met with Esther McVey MP who was promoting a new Policing Covenant to be established in a similar format to the Armed Forces Covenant. There was a commitment to provide 20,000 additional officers, which presented some challenges alongside the Policing Education and Qualification Framework which sought to bring police qualifications to degree level. This may result in the current training framework being run concurrently with the new framework for an initial period, rather than the latter immediately replacing the former. There had been a pledge of an additional £1.1bn of funding, in respect of the additional officers, support staff and associated training.

The Commissioner also advised that recruitment of Specials was ahead of target at 513. As previously advised, the required evidence had been provided to HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services; it was recognised that further work was required and was currently continuing in order to bring the service up to a 'good' rating. Investment in the Violence and Vulnerability Framework was progressing well, with an additional £1.16m being secured from the last round of government funding allocations.

**10 Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority Integrated Risk Management Plan Development**

The Panel received report EPCP/21/19 which provided an overview of the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) development process, and were asked to consider how best to engage with the IRMP team throughout the process.

After discussion it was **AGREED** to establish a working group of Panel members in order to contribute to this work. Members wishing to serve on this group were asked to contact the Panel Secretary.

**11 2020/21 Budget Setting Process**

The Panel received report EPFCP/22/19, which provided an outline of the 2020/21 budget setting process for the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (PFCCFRA) and the Police, Fire and Commissioner (PFCC) (Essex), and invited the Panel to consider establishing a working group in order to participate in the process.

After discussion it was **AGREED** to establish a working group of Panel members in order to contribute to this work. Members wishing to serve on this group were asked to contact the Panel Secretary.

## **12 National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels (NAPFCP) update**

Mr Gili-Ross provided an update on the activities of the NAPFCP

A good number of panels were represented at the LGA Annual Workshop held in London in July. Speakers included representative of the Home Office, the Centre for Public Scrutiny and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, and the workshop saw the formal launch of the "Policing and Fire Governance - Guidance for police and crime panels" document commissioned by the LGA.

Following the LGA Workshop the NAPFCP had held an Executive Committee meeting. The May 2019 elections had led to the Executive Committee having 5 vacancies that included both the vice chairman roles, and these roles were appointed to at the meeting.

All Panels had been contacted to determine the effect of the May 2019 elections on Panel memberships. Enquiries were also made regarding whether or not allowances were paid to members. Twenty three responses (from a total of forty panels) were received. Where elections had taken place, most Panels had seen changes of between 2 and 8 Panel members, equating to new appointments between 16% to 70%, representing a significant loss of experience for some Panels. Regarding allowances, of the responses received 57% of Panels paid allowances, 21% of these only paid the Co-opted members an allowance, 30% paid the Chairman / Vice Chairman an SRA.

The NAPFCP AGM would take place on 19 November 2019 prior to the Frontline Consulting Annual PCP Conference, Scarman House, Warwick Conference Centre.

## **13 Adoption of Scheme of Members allowances**

The Panel considered report EPFCP/23/19, advising that in May 2019 the Panel had adopted a scheme of allowances on an interim basis to allow the immediate payment of allowances. This was on an interim basis pending receipt of further clarification from the Home Office and a Member workshop to explore some matters of detail. As a result, a revised scheme was put forward for adoption.

After discussion it was **AGREED** to adopt the scheme of allowances as set out in Appendix 1 of the report with effect from 1 April 2019 and that the scheme shall have effect until further decision of the Panel.

**14 Process for Appointing Independent Members**

The Panel considered report EPFCP/24/19 providing an update to a previous decision in respect of the appointment of independent members and requesting approval of the related recommendations.

On discussing the recommendations the Panel were advised that Mr Gili-Ross had proposed extending the appointment of the current independent members to 31 July 2020, rather than 31 December 2019 as set out in the report. This would allow further time to undertake the appointment process, and provide some security when undertaking his duties as Chairman of the NAPFCP. Mr Turner advised that such an extension would be acceptable, but should not be for a longer period, or left open ended, as this would be in conflict with the Panel arrangements.

It was **AGREED** -

- i. That the appointment of the current independent members be extended until 31 July 2020;
- ii. That the eligibility criteria attached at Appendix 2 of the report are agreed;
- iii. That the activities to deliver the selection process for the appointment of Independent Members of the Panel be agreed as set out in paragraph 2.4 of the report;
- iv. That the third member of the Appointments Sub-Committee be appointed at the recommendation of the Chairman.

**15 Forward Look**

The Panel received report EPFCP/25/19, setting out the business proposed to be taken to meetings up to February 2020.

The Panel noted the report.

**16 Date of Next Meeting**

The Panel will next meet at 2.00pm on Thursday, 24 October 2019 in Committee Room 1, County Hall. There will be a pre-meeting for Panel Members only, commencing at 1.00pm.

With no urgent business, the meeting closed at 4.37pm.

**Chairman**  
24 October 2019