

Minutes of the meeting of the Essex Police and Crime Panel, held in Committee Room 1 County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex on Thursday, 16 February 2017

Present:

Councillor

Andrew Gordon
Wendy Schmitt
Godfrey Isaacs
Ian Wright
Gary Waller
John Jowers
Penny Channer
June Lumley
Trevor Byford
Carlo Guglielmi
Joycelyn Redsell
John Gili-Ross
Kay Odysseos

Representing

Basildon Borough Council
Braintree District Council (Vice-Chairman)
Castle Point Borough Council
Chelmsford City Council
Epping Forest District Council
Essex County Council (Chairman)
Maldon District Council
Rochford District Council
Southend Borough Council
Tendring District Council
Thurrock Borough Council
Independent Member
Independent Member

Apologies for Absence

Gavin Callaghan with	Basildon Borough Council
Andrew Gordon as his substitute	
Paul Barrell	Brentwood Borough Council
Bob Shepherd with	Chelmsford City Council
Ian Wright as his substitute	
Mike Lilley	Colchester Borough Council
Tony Durcan	Harlow District Council
Mark Flewitt with	Southend Borough Council
Trevor Byford as his substitute	
Jim Gordon	Uttlesford District Council

The following Officers were in attendance throughout the meeting:

Anna Hook	Head of Commissioning Growing Essex Communities
Colin Ismay	Council and Member Support Manager, Essex County Council, and Secretary to the Panel
Fiona Lancaster	Committee Officer, Essex County Council

Roger Hirst, Essex Police and Crime Commissioner, was in attendance throughout and supported by Jane Gardner, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, Susannah Hancock, Chief Executive and Charles Garbett, Treasurer.

1 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Carlo Guglielmi declared an interest as a member of the Essex Fire Authority.

3 Questions to the Chairman from Members of the Public

Councillor Michael Mackrory asked for clarification on the bid process relating to the disposal of Essex Police property, and particularly in relation to a claim that a lower bid may have been selected. The Commissioner undertook to respond to the enquiry outside of the meeting.

The Chairman responded that as Councillor Mackrory's second question related to operational matters in the Springfield area of Chelmsford, the Commissioner would feed back the concerns to the Divisional Commander who would be asked to provide a response. Councillor Mackrory was advised that concerns could be raised through the Local Community Safety Partnership.

4 Police and Crime Panel Performance Measures

The Panel considered report EPCP/04/17 by the Commissioner presenting the proposed set of Police and Crime Plan performance measures which would be reported to the Panel on a quarterly basis.

The following points were made during the ensuing discussion.

- The Commissioner's preference was for Essex Police not to be driven by a target culture, and instead to focus on fewer substantive measures and look at the direction of travel for areas such as the all crime trend, public confidence and victim satisfaction.
- The Panel commented that it would be difficult to scrutinise discretionary targets whilst fulfilling its role as the Commissioner's 'critical friend'. The Panel questioned how the Commissioner intended to measure success without a set of performance targets and be able to demonstrate to residents the success or otherwise of what was being achieved.
- The Panel indicated that it would be helpful to see how data sharing would be monitored.
- The Panel wished to receive additional information on the impact of dealing with mental health incidents.
- The Panel asked how improvements in police collaboration with other partners would be measured.

- The Panel questioned whether the cost of the ECM communication method was beneficial.
- The Panel sought clarification about the new public survey and asked how comparisons would be made, and how the public would be engaged. In response, the Chief Executive reported that an external company had been commissioned to carry out the survey and to report back each quarter. A copy of the survey specification was available on request.
- The Panel sought clarification on whether the hours of service provided by Special Constables were at the time and place they were needed, and which areas they were operating from. Details of how they were engaging with local watch schemes would be helpful.
- The Panel indicated that in the absence of performance measures some form of Trend Analysis was required so that failures and successes in performance could be identified. Benchmarking information against other Forces would also be useful.
- The Panel welcomed the offer from the Chief Executive to provide specific reports, for example on Special Constables and mental health incidents.

DECIDED:

That the content of the report be **noted**, and the proposed set of performance measures be **accepted**, subject to the points outlined during the discussion and as set out above.

5 Essex Police Public Contact and Engagement with Local Communities

The Panel considered two reports EPCP/05/17 (6a and 6b) setting out the work by Essex Police in relation to public contact, including work to improve the non-emergency telephone contact (101), and engagement with local communities.

Claire Heath, Head of Customer Service, and Gareth Nicholson, Head of Media, Essex Police, were in attendance to introduce the reports and answer questions.

The following points were made during the ensuing discussion on public contact.

- Callers to 101 pay 15p for the entire length of their calls, and the longest wait times to access the service were reviewed daily. Claire Heath undertook to follow up specific concerns expressed by Councillor Redsell about 101 call handling outside of the meeting.
- The Panel sought clarification on some of the jargon, models and incidents referred to in the report and suggested that this be avoided, or an explanation/glossary provided.
- That "double-keying" with the online service still existed as an interim

measure until the website was fully integrated with Athena.

- The Live Chat pilot on the website was being tested to see if this could help residents who wished to make a complaint, to gauge the extent of its usage and to learn how reports could be extracted.
- The Panel welcomed the recent introduction of Essex Police Twitter accounts. Essex Police indicated that they had the appropriate IT security systems in place to handle new channels of engagement.
- The Panel indicated that it would like to receive updates on the joint Kent and Essex Contact Management Command Review (CMCR), and comparative/trend information compared to other Forces.

DECIDED:

That the report on Essex Police and Public Contact be **noted**.

The following points were then made during the ensuing discussion on engagement with local communities.

- The intervals between Local Community Meetings could sometimes be more than six weeks, and as a result, Essex Police were looking at other ways to develop their engagement and reach out to different audiences, including the young and elderly.
- The Panel commented on the difference between rural and urban contact, and commended the Tendring Community Safety Hub which was working well.
- The Panel acknowledged the fast pace at which online engagement had increased.
- Members indicated that a more consistent approach to social media was needed which should include a response structure. There were valuable opportunities to promote positive corporate messages through Twitter and Facebook channels.
- The Panel welcomed the 'coffee with a cop' initiative helping the police engage with the public in a friendly way.
- Police Officers were becoming more confident in using social media and sharing their successes.
- The Panel acknowledged that the Essex Police Museum engaged with young children, and that the Police Cadets were engaged in operational safety work. The Force recognised that more engagement with schools was needed and this was being pursued in conjunction with the Fire and Rescue Service.

- The Panel commented that local volunteer groups presented an opportunity to engage with hard to reach groups.
- Training sessions with local Divisional Commanders and Inspectors were planned concerning the best ways to engage in their local communities.

DECIDED:

That the report on Essex Police Engagement with Local Communities be **noted**.

6 Police and Fire Collaboration - Local Business Case

The Panel considered report EPCP/06/17 by the Commissioner setting out the Local Business Case for joint governance between the Police and Fire and Rescue Services in Essex.

The following points were made during the ensuing discussion.

- The Commissioner undertook to circulate the link to a short film, which was shown at the previous day's Essex Fire Authority meeting and was available on the Crime Commissioner's website, in relation to the 12-week public consultation on joint governance options. The Panel noted that the consultation would close on 10 May, and, subject to the feedback received, a Local Business Case would be submitted to the Secretary of State on 19 May. The Commissioner did not envisage hostility to the options.
- The Commissioner reported that the Essex Fire Authority had voted to support the formal consultation on the Local Business Case.
- The Panel expressed concern regarding the capacity and timeline set to achieve an October commencement date. In response, the Commissioner commented that both Services were in agreement on the direction of travel towards greater collaboration, and in his view he had the capacity to meet the timeline. The Panel noted that £100,000 had been set aside to cover the transition to joint governance work, and £900,000 had been budgeted for the next three years to drive the collaboration programme forward.
- The Commissioner was questioned about the directorship of the transition programme and what needed to be actioned after the commencement date.
- In response to a question regarding the concerns raised by front-line firefighters, the Commissioner commented that these related to a potential blurring of roles - they did not want to be enforcers, their terms and conditions of employment, whether there would be more station closures, and their involvement and 'voice' within the collaboration programme.
- The consultation would be publicised as widely as possible, through

libraries, councils, websites, station front counters, social media and TV news channels. The Commissioner indicated that he would like to have a good response, although acknowledged the Panel's concern that the public may not respond as the options were not controversial. The Panel noted that some areas of the country may find collaboration more difficult.

- The Commissioner undertook to provide an update on the progress with the Local Business Case at the Panel's meeting in June.

DECISION:

That the report be **noted**.

7 Forward Look

The Panel considered report EPCP/07/17 by the Secretary to the Panel concerning the planning of the Panel's business.

The Panel **agreed** to the suggestions to add Mental Health incidents, Specials and Police and Fire Collaboration to the business plan, and that the Secretary to the Panel and Susannah Hancock, Chief Executive, should prepare a Forward Look on its behalf.

Susannah Hancock indicated that she would welcome the Panel's help to scrutinise the consultation responses on the Crime Commissioner's local business case for joint governance of the Fire and Police services in Essex. It was **agreed** that the Task and Finish Group already engaged with the Local Business Case would undertake this.

The report was otherwise **agreed**.

8 The Police and Crime Commissioner to update the Panel on On-going issues

The Commissioner reminded the Panel that the Chief Constable, Stephen Kavanagh, had been short-listed as a candidate for the Metropolitan Police Commissioner role. He would update the Panel when he had further news.

9 Date of Next Meeting

The Panel **noted** that the next meeting would take place at 2.30 pm on Thursday 1 June 2017, in Committee Room 1, County Hall, and that this would be preceded by a private pre-meeting starting at 1.45 pm.

Chairman