
Minutes of the meeting of the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel, held in Committee Room 1, County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH on Thursday, 24 October 2019

Present:

Councillor	Representing
Aidan McGurran	Basildon Borough Council
Maria Pearson	Brentwood District Council
Godfrey Isaacs	Castle Point Borough Council
Jeremy Lager	Chelmsford City Council
Nigel Bedford	Epping Forest District Council
Michael Helm	Maldon District Council
Lesley Butcher	Rochford District Council
Ian Shead	Southend-on-Sea Borough Council
Joycelyn Redsell	Thurrock Council
Colin Day	Uttlesford District Council

Co-opted Independent Member

John Gili-Ross

Also in attendance

Roger Hirst	Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Pippa Brent-Isherwood	Chief Executive, Office of the Essex PFCC
Jo Turton	Chief Fire Officer
Jane Gardner	Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Paul Turner	Director, Legal and Assurance
Emma Tombs	Democratic Services Manager
Victoria Freeman	Secretary to the Panel
Matthew Waldie	Democratic Services Officer

1 Election of Chairman of Meeting

In the absence of both the Chairman and Vice Chairman, the Secretary to the Panel took the chair and asked for nominations for a chairman for the meeting. Cllr Isaacs, having been proposed, seconded and duly elected unopposed, took over the chair and welcomed all to the meeting.

2 Container Tragedy at Purfleet

The Chairman expressed his condolences for those 39 people who had been found dead in a container lorry in Purfleet. Both the Chairman and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner asked members to remember the families of those who had died, and those emergency services personnel whose duty had been to assist at the scene. The meeting observed a period of silence.

3 Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

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

1. The following apologies were noted:
 Councillor Wendy Schmitt, Braintree DC
 Councillor Chris Hossack, Brentwood DC (substituted by Councillor Pearson)
 Councillor Mike Lilley, Colchester BC
 Councillor Malcolm Maddocks, Essex CC
 Councillor Frances Mason, Harlow DC
 Councillor Mike Webb, Rochford DC (substituted by Councillor Butcher)
 Lynda McWilliams, Tendring DC
 Kay Odysseos, Independent Member
2. Councillors' declared Code Interests were noted, as follows, and all members participated fully in the meeting:

Name	Nature of Interest
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 Safety Partnership
Ian Shead	In receipt of an Essex Police Pension
Lesley Butcher	In receipt of an Essex Police Pension

4 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5 Questions from members of the public

There were none.

6 Essex County Fire and Rescue Service Quarter 1 Performance Report 2019/20

The Panel received report EPFCP/26/19, setting out the performance of the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service for the first quarter of 2019/20, against a number of key metrics aligned to the Fire and Rescue Plan.

Introducing the item, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner pointed out that the performance metrics were now fully aligned with those used in the Plan. He drew attention to certain areas that had shown improvement and confirmed that efforts were being made to address those that had not done so. He felt that the cultural changes they had initiated were now becoming embedded within the Service, which was having a major impact.

The Chief Fire Officer added that particular efforts had been made to present information clearly and in a transparent manner, for the benefit of the Panel, the Public and those working within the Service.

Members then asked some questions about the report, relating to a number of issues, including home safety visits, relaying of information, availability of appliances, the role of call support managers, the amount of sickness absence and progress being made in matters of gender equality and diversity.

In response to requests from members, the Chief Fire Officer **AGREED** to supply further specific information on:

- when the next Fire and Rescue courses would be run and
- how Essex compared with other Fire and Rescue Services, with regard to the number of female staff employed, particularly in relation to crews.

The report was noted.

7 **PFCC Annual Report 2018/19**

Members received report EPFCP/27/19, including the draft PFCC Annual Report for 2018/19.

The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner reminded Members that he is obliged, under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, to produce an annual report. It is aimed at the public, and he has expanded it, to make it more accessible and to give a better indication of what has been done. The circulated copy was intended as a final draft and he sought final approval from the Panel.

The Panel noted its statutory obligation to review and report on the Report. Several points were raised across a range of issues. These included consideration of the new approach to targeted recruitment, approaches taken to reducing levels of domestic and child abuse, various funding concerns, number of special constables, the vetting process and the Athena case management platform.

It was **AGREED** that the next edition of the Report should include:

- an Equality Statement
- reference to the considerable activity on social media
- an appendix, listing the community grant recipients for the year.

The Panel noted and **AGREED** the report, subject to changing the reference to 37 speed watch groups on page 34 to 87 and some minor typographical changes.

8 Fire and Rescue Statement and Annual Report 2018/19

The Panel received report EPFCP/28/19 providing the draft Fire and Rescue Statement and Annual Report 2018/19. The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner pointed out that the production of an annual report was a statutory requirement. He sought the Panel's approval of the circulated version.

The Panel reviewed the information provided and raised points for clarification in respect of the target percentages of schools receiving safety messages and of homes being fitted with smoke alarms.

It was **AGREED** that for the next edition of the Report:

- consideration should be given to whether these targets should be 100%
- an Equality Statement should be included

It was **AGREED** that the section on *Firebreak* (p18 of the report, p114 of the agenda pack) should be expanded on this occasion, to give more detail on the range of cohorts that have taken part and partners engaged.

The Panel noted the report.

9 PFCC Decisions Report

The Panel received report EPFCP/29/19 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 in respect of a number of the decisions taken. These included the Control Systems Strategic Review, the Children at Risk of Exploitation project, the capital budget underspend relating to Fire Service vehicles, and the restructuring of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's office.

Cllr Shead left the meeting during this item.

The Panel noted the report.

10 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.

Firefighter recruitment: Ongoing, including the use of outdoor advertising; three groups of 18 firefighters would be starting their training in October, February and April.

Budget setting: The working party is in place; residents of Essex would be consulted about next year's precept. They should be feeling the difference

that their increased contribution has made. Once the process has been completed, a proposal will be brought to the Panel for scrutiny.

Make a Difference engagement programme – Helping to raise residents' awareness of what is being done.

Restructuring of the Commissioner's Office - The Commissioner **AGREED** to provide a table showing the new structure for Panel members, once it is in place.

Paul Turner, Director, Legal & Assurance, Essex County Council, joined the meeting at this point.

11 Police, Fire and Crime Panel's role in complaints

The Panel received report EPFCP/30/19, which provided an update on the Complaints Procedure adopted by the Panel in 2016 as well as a copy of the revised procedure, as attached at appendix 1 to the report.

There being no questions following Mr Turner's introduction, the Panel

1. **ADOPTED** the revised policy and procedure; and
2. **AGREED** that an annual report be brought to the Panel on complaints.

12 Update on the Integrated Risk Management Plan

In the absence of Cllr Maddocks, who chairs the Integrated Risk Management Plan working group, Cllr Isaacs gave a brief update, noting a good response rate so far; that the consultation period would end on 13 December 2019 and the implementation was 1 June 2020.

13 National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels (NAPFCP) update

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

The Association would meet in November and intended to introduce a subscription free membership for Panels.

14 Forward Look

The Panel received report EPFCP/31/19, setting out the business proposed to be taken to meetings up to February 2020.

The Panel noted the report.

15 Dates of future meetings

The Panel received report EPFCP/32/19, setting out the proposed Panel meeting dates for 2020.

The Panel noted the report.

16 Date of Next Meeting

The Panel will next meet at 2.00pm on Thursday, 5 December 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 4.23 pm.

Chairman
24 October 2019