

Report title: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel Annual Report 2022/23	
Report to: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	
Report author: Sophie Campion, Secretary to the Panel	
Date: 15 June 2023	For: Noting and Consideration
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County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of Report

This report provides an overview of the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel's (the Panel) activities during the 2022/23 municipal year.

2. Recommendation

1. That the Panel receive and note the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel Annual Report for 2022/23.
2. That the Panel review the Forward Work Plan and identify any other business it would like to consider.

3. Background

- 3.1 In July 2012 a shadow Panel was formed, with the Essex Police and Crime Panel subsequently being established in 2013 in compliance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and following the Police, Crime and Fire Commissioner for Essex (Fire and Rescue Authority) Order 2017, the Panel became known as the Police, Fire and Crime Panel.
- 3.2 The Panel maintains a 'check and balance' on the performance of the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) in regard to his strategic actions and decisions. The Panel plays a vital role in holding the PFCC to account and support him in the effective exercise of his duties.
- 3.3 The key functions of the Panel are to:
 - a) review the draft Police and Crime Plan and the Fire and Rescue Plan and any proposed changes to them;
 - b) review the Annual Report and the Fire and Rescue Statement;
 - c) review of the proposed senior appointments of;
 - i) the Deputy PFCC,
 - ii) the PFCC's Chief Executive,
 - iii) the PFCC's Chief Finance Officers;
 - iv) the Chief Constable; and

v) the Chief Fire Officer.

- d) suspend the PFCC in specific circumstances;
- e) appoint an acting PFCC in specific circumstances;
- f) review the precept which the PFCC is proposing to issue for both the Police and the Fire and Rescue Service, for each financial year with the power to veto the precept;
- g) deal with certain complaints against the PFCC or Deputy PFCC.

3.4 The Panel comprises fifteen elected members of local authorities across Essex plus two independent co-opted members. The two co-opted independent members were appointed by the Panel at its meeting on the 4 June 2020, from the 1 August 2020 for a term of four years until 2024.

At its Annual meeting in June 2022, the Panel agreed to co-opt an additional two members in order to better achieve political balance.

The membership of the Panel for 2022/23 following the additional co-options was as below:

Membership

Councillor D Dadds
Councillor F Ricci
Councillor K Barber
Councillor R Savage
Councillor J Lager
Councillor M Lilley
Councillor P Stalker
Councillor R Playle
Councillor M Garnett
Councillor M Heard
Councillor A Williams
Councillor I Shead
Councillor L McWilliams
Councillor G Collins
Councillor M Sutton
John Gili-Ross
Sheila Murphy
Councillor J Deakin
Councillor A McGurran

Representing

Basildon Borough Council
Braintree District Council
Brentwood Borough Council
Castle Point Borough Council
Chelmsford City Council
Colchester City Council
Epping Forest District Council
Essex County Council
Harlow District Council
Maldon District Council
Rochford District Council
Southend-on-Sea City Council
Tendring District Council
Thurrock Council
Uttlesford District Council
Independent Member
Independent Member
Co-opted Member for Balanced Appointment
Co-opted Member for Balanced Appointment

At the Panel's Annual Meeting in June 2022 John Gili-Ross was appointed as the Chairman of the Essex Police Fire and Crime Panel for a second year.

Cllr David Dadds and Cllr Frankie Ricci were appointed as Vice Chairmen of the Essex Police Fire and Crime Panel at its Annual meeting.

John Gili-Ross is also Chairman of the National Association of Police Fire and Crime Panels.

- 3.5 Officer support to the Panel is provided by the host authority, Essex County Council, on behalf of all the Essex Local Authorities. The costs incurred in supporting the Police, Fire and Crime Panel are funded from a Home Office grant made available for this purpose.

4. Panel Activities in 2022/23

- 4.1 During 2022/23, the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel held six formal Panel meetings. Details of the formal meetings and the agendas and papers for these meetings are available online at:
https://cmis.essex.gov.uk/essexcmis5/Committees/tabid/161/ctl/ViewCMIS_CommitteeDetails/mid/679/id/127/Default.aspx
- 4.2 The Work Programme for 2022/23 clearly reflected the Panel's statutory functions and responsibilities, and the Commissioners' priorities (as defined in his Police and Crime Plan and Fire and Rescue Plan).
- 4.3 The Panel has taken the opportunity to examine decisions which the Commissioner has made during the year. This has involved the inclusion of an item on each Panel agenda to list decisions which have been published by the Commissioner. The Panel has taken the opportunity to satisfy itself that the Commissioner's actions/decisions are contributing to the effective achievement of his Plan.
- 4.4 Under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Panel has a statutory duty to hold a public meeting to consider the contents of the Commissioner's Annual Report and respond formally to it. At its September 2022 meeting the Panel considered the Annual Report of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. The Panel noted the report and provided feedback to the Commissioner which he considered for inclusion in the final version of the report, which was provided to members of the Panel prior to publication. Also at the September meeting, the Panel considered and noted the Fire and Rescue Service Annual Report and Statement of Assurance and provided feedback to the Commissioner.
- 4.5 The Panel has continued its performance monitoring, receiving quarterly performance reports in July 2022 and March 2023 on the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's (ECFRS's) progress in delivering the priorities set out in the Fire and Rescue Plan 2019 – 2024 and the Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020-2024. The Panel took the opportunity to ask a number of questions and seek clarification on a number of key issues including false alarms, special services, total pumping appliance availability, recruitment, response times and road safety. At its December 2022 meeting, the Panel considered a report on the HMICFRS Inspection of the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and progress made by the Service.
- 4.6 The Panel received update reports on Essex Police's progress in delivering the priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024. The Panel asked a number of questions relating to issues arising from the report and related to progress against the priorities and made a number of suggestions for the Commissioner's consideration. At its December 2022 meeting, the Panel considered a closure report which provided a review of the delivery of the priorities in the 'Police and Crime Plan 2016 to 2020' and the 'Police and Crime Plan 2020 to

2021 Extension'. The Panel had participated in a workshop to discuss the content of the report and receive an overview of the report findings. The workshop had also provided an opportunity for the Commissioner to explain how the previous Police and Crime Plan priorities had fed into the new Plan priorities and the linkages between them.

- 4.7 In line with its statutory responsibility, the Panel formally considered the Commissioner's precept proposal at its meeting on 7 February 2023 and supported without qualification or comment, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's proposed increase of the Fire and Rescue element of the precept by £4.95 (6.57%) for the 2023-24 financial year for a property in Band D. The Panel also supported without qualification or comment, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's proposed precept increase of 6.84%, equivalent to an increase of £14.94 a year, from £218.52 to £233.46 for a Band D property. In carrying out this responsibility, a Working Group of four members of the Panel was established which met three times in October 2022, November 2022 and January 2023. The purpose of the Working Group was to gain a more in depth understanding of the key issues and assumptions in setting the budget and reviewing the budget updates and the Medium Term Financial Strategies for both Essex Police and the Essex Fire and Rescue.
- 4.8 The Panel received its annual report on Complaints at its meeting in March 2023, providing an update on the handling of complaints made against the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) during the period 1 October 2021 – 30 September 2022.
- 4.9 In June 2022 the Panel agreed to add an item to its Forward Work Plan for a focused look at performance against Priority 1 – More Local, Visible and Accessible Policing from the Police and Crime Plan as extended to 2021. A programme of various workstreams was planned to address what was understood to be the key areas of Member interest;
- Visits were arranged to the Force Control Room and Resolution Centre to assist Members in understanding the incident management work and how it fits with Essex Police's Command and Control of Incidents Policy.
 - A workshop session was arranged to give Members an opportunity for early sight of the closure report for the previous Police and Crime Plan 2016-2020 as extended to 2021 (which included the priority on Local, Visible and Accessible Policing). The workshop also incorporated a session on how those priorities fed into the new priorities in the current Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024, the areas of progress and the areas of future focus.
 - A report was brought to the Panel in December on Essex Police's policy and performance in relation to deployment to incidents. This focused on clarifying the policy on deployment to incidents, emergency response grading and how Essex Police performs against the policy and performance indicators with regard to high harm incidents.
- 4.10 The Panel received regular updates from the Commissioner on any ongoing issues at each meeting. The Panel also received an update from the Chairman of the National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels as a standing item and continued the practice of allowing members of the public to ask of the Chairman questions relevant to the business of the Panel.

- 4.11 The Ethics and Integrity Sub-Committee met twice in 2022/23, to consider items including the monitoring of behaviours within the Essex Police Service and the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service People Strategy. Consideration of these issues was timely given the issues raised nationally and the subsequent HMICFRS report on 'An inspection of vetting, misconduct, and misogyny in the police service'.
- 4.12 Informal Panel pre-meetings were held throughout the year with a focus primarily on scoping the key lines of enquiry and areas of interest for the upcoming Panel meeting, briefing members on the subject matter to assist in their preparation, and highlighting any key points to bring to the attention of the PFCC's Office prior to the meeting.
- 4.13 The Panel was provided with a tailored induction and training session in September 2022 following the changes in membership at the Annual meeting. This provided an opportunity to understand the framework within which the panels operate, their core functions and working arrangements and to discuss best practice. The session was open to new and returning members to attend to develop their skills and knowledge to undertake the functions of the Panel.
- 4.14 Panel members and the support officers have also attended national and regional conferences and network meetings. These have provided an opportunity to share best practice with other Panels and to increase knowledge and understanding of key issues and developments.
- 4.15 The Chairman, one Panel Member and the support officers attended the National Conference for Police (Fire) and Crime Panels. The conference included an opening plenary session on Changing Culture - Moving things forward and a number of breakout sessions on issues of good practice and panel development.
- 4.16 The Chairman and PFCC held 1:1 monthly meetings during the year with the OPFCC CEO and the Panel's Support Officer in attendance. These sessions being used to discuss local and national PFCP/PFCC developments that may influence the work or engagement of the Essex Panel.
- 4.17 The Panel responds to relevant consultations issued by the Home Office, LGA or other relevant bodies. During the year the following EPFCP consultation responses were submitted:
- Home Office - Reforming our Fire and Rescue Service Consultation
 - College of Policing – Consultation on the Code of Ethics Framework
- 4.18 The Panel has monitored the Host Authority's expenditure against the Home Office grant awarded to support the Panel's activities. The Panel received a half year monitoring report at its meeting on the 8 December 2022 and will receive the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel Budget Forecast Outturn Report 2022/23 at its annual meeting in June 2023.
- 4.19 A session to review the Panel's activity over the 2022-23 municipal year is scheduled for June. Any outcomes from that session will be used to inform and improve the working arrangements of the Panel and feed into the work programme.

5.0 Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel 2023/24

5.1 The schedule of Panel meetings for 2023/24 are set out below:-

- 15 June 2023
- 20 July 2023
- 28 September 2023
- 7 December 2023
- 1 February 2024 (Precept meeting)
- 15 February 2024 (Reserve date if required)

5.2 The work programme for 2023/24 is set out below:

Provisional Date	Topic Title	Lead Contact	Purpose and Target Outcomes
15 June 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman Appointment of Members to Ethics & Integrity Sub-Committee Complaints Sub-Committee membership Review of Balanced Appointment Objective Essex PFCP Grant Claim and Outturn Report – 2021/22 Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel Annual Report Police and Crime Plan Performance Measures – Quarter 4 Budget-setting Process 	Senior Democratic Services Officer SDSO SDSO SDSO Democratic Services SDSO OPFCC OPFCC	Annual meeting Annual meeting Annual Meeting Annual meeting To note To provide an overview of the Panel's activities during the 2021/22 municipal year Statutory Duty to review the Police and Crime Plan and monitor performance To receive a report to the budget-setting process and appoint a working group
20 July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire and Rescue Plan Quarterly Performance Update Review of Balanced Appointment Objective 	OPFCC SDSO	Statutory Duty to review the Fire and Rescue Plan and monitor performance Follow up report
28 September 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECFRS Annual Report and Statement of Assurance PFCC Annual Report 	OPFCC OPFCC	Statutory Duty to review the Annual Report and Statement of Assurance Statutory Duty to review the Annual Report

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Scene-Setting 	OPFCC	Update on the Budget-Setting process
7 December 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essex PFCP Budget Half Year Outturn Report Police and Crime Plan Performance Measures (Quarter 2 2021/22) Fire and Rescue Plan Quarterly Performance Update Budget Update Report on Annual Complaints 2022-23 	SDSO OPFCC OPFCC OPFCC SDSO	To note Statutory Duty to review the Police and Crime Plan and monitor performance Statutory Duty to review the Fire and Rescue Plan and monitor performance Update on Budget-Setting process To note
1 February 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed Fire and Rescue Precept Proposed Police Precept 	OPFCC OPFCC	Statutory Duty to review the proposed precepts
Future work Date TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review of the issues relating to E-Scooters 	TBC	As agreed at the Panel's meeting on 22 March 2022