

**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