

Motions under Standing Order

16.11.2

1. Proposed Changes to Policing in Essex

Moved by Councillor Mike Mackrory and seconded by Councillor David Kendall

Council notes with dismay the proposals of Essex's Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable to:

- cut the number of Police and Community Support Officer (PCSO) posts in Essex from 250 to 60;
- withdraw from dealing with matters such as long-term neighbourhood disputes, low level anti-social behaviour and parking issues;
- close and sell off 15 Police Stations across Essex without putting in place sufficient alternative local facilities.

Council regrets the absence of discussion and consultation in advance of the changes being announced and condemns the inadequate nature of the feedback questionnaire, which does not address the main concerns arising from the proposed changes.

Council therefore resolves:

- To communicate these concerns to the Chief Constable, the Police and Crime Commissioner, and the Police and Crime Panel;
- To assess what impact the withdrawal of the Police from matters such as long-term neighbourhood disputes, low level anti-social behaviour and parking issues will have on the Council, including the two Essex Parking Partnerships and the Community Safety Partnerships;
- To work constructively with the Police and other local organisations including town, parish, district, borough and the city councils to identify possible alternatives to the closure of local Police Stations (e.g. co-location).

2. Impact of Service Cuts

Moved by Councillor Ivan Henderson and seconded by Councillor Julie Young

We believe that Essex residents have the right to feel safe in their communities. Any programme of cuts that puts spending reductions before public and personal safety should be firmly rejected.

Public services can no longer rely on achieving balanced budgets by cutting back office functions and we are now seeing cuts to frontline and specialist staff across the County leaving residents feeling vulnerable. Hundreds of Police officers and PCSOs are being relieved from duty against the wishes of Essex residents. What the people of Essex want is a visible and reassuring presence provided by neighbourhood Policing Teams.

Port towns, such as Harwich for example, are also feeling the strain. Border force officers are struggling to maintain vital security measures with an increasingly diminishing budget. At a time of uncertainty, where threats across Europe continue to make waves here in the UK, we feel that this authority should be working to insulate vital services from further reductions.

We therefore call upon the leadership of this Council to follow the example of the Leader of Oxfordshire County Council to explain to the Prime Minister and Government that cuts to local government, and the Home Office are putting the safety of Essex residents at risk.

We also call upon the Police and Crime Commissioner to set a budget that delivers increased Police numbers, to ensure that the safety and security of Essex residents is improved.

3. Community Covenant

Moved by Councillor David Finch and seconded by Councillor Derrick Louis:

In November 2012 Essex County Council signed the Essex Community Covenant, in which a commitment was made to support the Armed Forces Community in Essex.

In these challenging times when the security of the nation is once again under threat, this Council reaffirms its commitment to the Community Covenant and will continually strive to ensure that those commitments are translated into action to improve the lives of all those in the Armed Forces Community in Essex.

4. Fair Funding for Community Policing

Moved by Councillor James Abbott and seconded by Councillor Michael Hoy

Council acknowledges the important role of community policing in tackling and deterring crime and the reassurance that the visible presence of police and support officers gives to local communities.

Council notes the reduction in the number of police officers in Essex in recent years and the proposals detailed by the Police and Crime Commissioner in October to reduce the number of PCSOs in Essex from 250 to 60 and to reduce the number of police stations open to the public from 25 to 10.

Council further notes the statement on police funding to the year 2020 by the Chancellor on 25 November in the Spending Review which the Police and Crime Commissioner has stated could allow a review of the extent of the previously announced cuts.

Council calls upon the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable to use this opportunity to establish a fair funding plan for community policing in Essex to the year 2020 that maintains as much of the current service as possible.