

Report to Communities Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 19 March 2024

Portfolio: Regulatory Services (Cllr K Williamson)

Subject: Bi-Annual Report on the work of the Council-funded Police Officers

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Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the Communities Scrutiny Committee receives a six-month report on the work and range of operations of the Council's funded Police team.

Report:

The funded police team continue with the following primary functions:

1. Support functionality of Epping Forest District Council
2. Provide 'added value' to the district in supporting the Community Policing function
3. Targeted action against criminality in the district

By the end of 2023 the police team had accepted and completed 46 tasking requests during that year. For January/February of 2024, ten taskings have been accepted or continued, the tasking log is included in the Appendix but some highlights from the last 6 months are as follows:

- Supported on many warrants, evictions, and visits where without police presence there was the potential of threat, harm and risk to EFDC employees/contractors. Some of these have required ongoing visits to ensure that subjects have not returned to addresses and has even resulted in arrests being made. We also have done many one-off attendances for events/engagement that would have been unlikely to be facilitated by CPT, such as a recent visit to Chigwell Colts Youth Football team where the team stayed for a training session to engage with staff and children. We also covered a range of festive events over the Christmas period to provide high visibility policing for public reassurance and engagement.
- 2 separate Op-Makesafe deployments, April and October. This operation consist of a police officer in plain clothes entering a hotel with a police cadet (under 18 years of age) and trying to book a hotel room, while the cadet shows clear signs of exploitation such as not talking and looking worried and the officer tries to pay in cash and provide no ID. On both occasions 4 hotels were visited, and after the first operation training was provided to the hotels. This resulted in a huge improvement in their response when the second operation was run, with 3 of the 4 hotels completely refusing to allow any booking without identification and one of the hotels even calling police. Further training is being provided in January with CST supporting EFDC on this.
- Targeted patrols at a number of separate locations across the year – Ongar, Waltham Abbey, Debden, Loughton, Buckhurst Hill and more – in relation to specific reports

around anti-social behaviour and crime. These have generally consisted of additional high visibility patrols and using police powers and tactics to disrupt activity. We have also become the main policing team to support and lead on hate crime investigations occurring at our 2 asylum seeker hotels, as well as coordinating public reassurance actions to any reported concerns.

- Conducted a joint operation with EFDC Environmental team to carrying out waste carrier checks on vehicles, targeting 3 static sites across the district which resulted in an estimated 60 vehicles being checked. Outside of this tasking we have conducted a considerable amount of patrol hours to rural locations and fly tipping hotspots to deter offending and reassure residents living in areas outside of our main towns.
- Supported the wider CPT with patrols and engagement at synagogues due to rising tensions in the middle east, and as part of this also attended the holocaust memorial event in Loughton to reassure our Jewish community and prevent an increase in anti-semitic incidents.
- Attended several professionals' meetings and ASB case reviews, providing police information and evidence to help with ongoing cases and concerns and safeguard vulnerable persons. We have also continued to support many other non-frontline work such as evidence preparation of police incidents and crime reports to support an EFDC breach of CBO that is currently at court, and identified police body worn footage that evidenced a breach.
- Attended an EFDC event with other blue light services aimed at encouraging staff to volunteer for Emergency Responder Training to support on major incidents.
- Taken the lead role in planning and deployment of several operations targeting seasonal spikes such as burglary, hot spot trends such as vehicle crime, and even a large deployment involving Essex Operational Support Group and MET Gang Unit to provide additional resourcing for a funeral that was being held in our area for a MET Gang nominal where there was concerns about violence and weapons. Week of 19th Feb was "Op-Stronghold" which is an intensification week around town centres, ASB related to this areas and local crime trends that plague our high streets. PS Fitt did the planning for the week, which utilised all CPT and Town Teams, and consisted of various activities such as high visibility patrols, engagement events, business engagement, etc. Activity also linked in with BTP, who joined us on 3 days across the week to conduct patrols around Debden Broadway and the tube station.
- CST have taken a more local ownership of the Police Op-Dial patrols as well as having a current tasking for issues in Debden. We have ensured that EFDC staff conducting patrols regularly know what days Police are doing patrols and are put in touch with them and arranging for returns to be fed back to EFDC. As part of the work in Debden we have also supported a visit from the PFCC, and arranged for officers to be filmed on patrol for a video produced by the Association of Police Crime Commissioners publicising the ongoing work.

Whilst the priority remains to focus upon the first two primary functions there have been a number of quality 'self-generated' activities in the last 6 months. Some highlights of the pro-active work that has been conducted by the team this year include:

- In one week in October the team assisted in the searching of 4 different high risk missing persons, which ranged from an 8 year old child to an 80 year old man with dementia. Amazingly it was CST that located 3 of those 4 missing persons, 2 of them were in the same day within 2 hours of each other, and without our support these cases all could have had far more serious outcomes.
- We became aware of intel surrounding a motorcycle which had consistently failed to stop for police and was suspected to be involved in criminality. The vehicle was located by PC AMNER whilst single crewed, the suspect attempted to escape, whereby he was tackled from the moving motorcycle by PC AMNER. Once off the bike, the suspect has violently resisted PC AMNER (alone at the time) until he was subdued and arrested for multiple offences. The suspect had been previously unknown and the arrest led to his identification and then linked him to numerous offences.
- During Op-Claymore in November, which is a cross border operation targeting all sorts of criminality, the CST themselves arrested x2 males for dwelling burglary following an ANPR activation, assisted with 3 more arrests for theft of motor vehicle following a pursuit and decamp, on a stop and search of another person an OBD reader and other tools were found and they arrested the male for theft of motor vehicle/going equipped, and ended the night assisting the pursuit of a stolen motorbike which resulted in another arrest.
- The team attended an emergency incident whereby a male was having a suspected heart attack in public, they were the closest unit with a defibrillator. However, the device was ultimately not needed as they started CPR and the male amazingly started to breathe again, and then paramedics took over. The team then went on emergency response to the male's home address to inform his wife as she could not be reached, and then blue lighted her to hospital so she could be with her husband. The male is recovering well in hospital and is expected to make a full recovery, and he would simply not be alive today if not for the actions of officers on scene. Attending officers are receiving awards later in the year for their actions on that day.
- While conducting patrols the CST located two stolen motorbikes, stolen the same day. The bike thief was chased from one of the bikes on foot and caught by the team. Further checks showed this male to be one of the most prolific motorcycle thieves in the area, already wanted for several other offences. The suspect was arrested at the scene and later charged and remanded into custody.
- In the last 6 months the team have identified themselves or assisted on 6 live "chop shops", arrested suspects and recovered hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of vehicles. The 2 funded officers alone have made 21 arrests in the last 6 months for an array of offences from theft to weapons and recovered a significant quantity of stolen vehicles and property.

The Essex Police YTD figures key figures below:

Offence Type	District	Diff	Force	Diff
Theft of Motor Vehicle	-11%	-70	+17.9%	+896
Burglary (residential)	+4.9%	+20	+6.8%	+339
Theft from a Vehicle	+4.5%	+20	-3.5%	-224
Personal Robbery	+0.9%	+1	+0.5%	+7
Anti-social behaviour	-24%	-336	-33%	-7,288
All Crime	-4.8%	-502	-6.4%	-10,569

*Essex Police: Performance Summary to February 2024 – 12 month rolling data

Reason for decision: N/A

Options considered and rejected: N/A

Consultation undertaken: N/A

Resource implications: None

Legal and Governance Implications: N/A

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications: N/A

Consultation Undertaken: N/A

Background Papers: N/A

Impact Assessments: N/A

Risk Management: N/A

Equality: N/A