

EPHING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee: Safer, Cleaner, Greener Scrutiny **Date:** Tuesday, 30 October 2012
Standing Panel

Place: Committee Room 2, Civic Offices, **Time:** 7.30 - 9.26 pm
High Street, Epping

Members Present: Mrs J Lea (Chairman), Mrs M Sartin (Vice-Chairman), K Avey,
Mrs T Cochrane, L Girling, Ms Y Knight, G Mohindra, S Murray and
P Spencer

Other Councillors: W Breare-Hall, G Waller and J M Whitehouse

Apologies: Mrs H Brady

Officers Present: J Gilbert (Director of Environment and Street Scene), J Nolan (Assistant
Director (Environment & Neighbourhoods)), C Wiggins (Safer Communities
Manager) and A Hendry (Democratic Services Officer)

Also in attendance: Supt L Collison

16. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

The Panel noted there were no substitute members.

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Sartin declared a non pecuniary interest in agenda item 6 on the Essex police as she was a member of the shadow police and Crime Commissioner Panel. She declared that she would remain in the meeting for the discussion of the item.

18. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The notes of the 10 July 2012 meeting were agreed as a correct record.

19. ESSEX POLICE

The Panel welcomed Acting Chief Superintendant Luke Collison of the West Local Policing Area. The Panel noted that ACS Collison has been in charge of neighbourhood policing for the last six months and that the crime as well as the anti social behaviour figures had continued to fall. The Police were still able to respond well to the public's needs and that have a functional model of policing that works.

They were now reviewing their Policing Blueprint, looking at the investigations of crimes and at neighbourhood policing. These two policing areas will be joined to make a larger team, who would help raise our performance in the investigations of crime. Another change would be the re-joining of the two parts of the CID teams which would be based at Loughton Police Station.

The future still looked challenging with the government cuts but it was important to keep the plan moving forward and put in place future proofing against the austerity

measures. They would hope to keep the officer numbers that they have at present. They will still retain the local special police constables, but the nine community officers will be reduced. With additional officers working, the public should not notice any difference. They had tough choices to make that were based on community priorities.

Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) numbers were to remain unchanged at present but are charged to a government grant for 2013/14, but this will not be ring-fenced around the PCSOs only.

Councillor Spencer asked if there was policy in place for moving officers around on a regular basis. He was told that there was no such policy in place. It was important to build up relationships in the community.

Councillor Girling asked about the Neighbourhood Action Panels (NAP) and that Debden had not had a meeting for some time. Local councillors thought them important to enable them to engage with their local communities. He was assured that NAPs were key to the Police's engagement strategy. ACS Collison was not sure why a meeting had not been held, he would find out. Councillor Cochrane added that two future meetings were now listed on the website.

Councillor Girling then asked about incidents that had been reported to the 101 non-emergency number and he was now finding it difficult to get information. How did the reporting system work. He was told that the reports went to a central Command and Control Centre, where the data was gathered and logged onto their computer system. Relevant information was then given to local officers for them to action. The public can call local officers on their mobile phone or can help by keeping diaries of incidents etc. as for repeated incidents. When they get to a certain level they would put resources into these incidents and target them in a proactive way. He stated that he would look into why any background information on this was not available.

Councillor Waller the Portfolio Holder for Safer, Greener and Highways commented that the overall figures for crime in our area was encouragingly low, even though they were merged with those of Brentwood. Next year, hopefully, the figures would be only for the Epping Forest District. However, he would like to know why the detection rate figures were not as good. He was told that it had always been a challenging target for this district. Partly because a lot of the offenders do not live in this area, as we are so close to the Metropolitan Area plus the fact we have a number of tube stations to enable a quick getaway. There was also the size and geography of the district, with a lot of towns in a lot of countryside. This made it difficult to identify offenders. By bringing together the neighbourhood and the detection teams it enabled the detection rate to go up (so far by 1.5%) and will hopefully continue to rise. He wanted to harness the community spirit, to empower them to help the police. They worked closely with the Metropolitan Police as well as the British Transport Police and had started a series of joint patrols around our border regions, sharing information and intelligence. They also had links with the Hertfordshire Police, but there was not that much crime flowing across this border.

Councillor Girling asked if there were still officers working with schools. He was told that they had three officers tasked with working with schools.

Councillor Girling then asked how they informed the public about all the successful work that they undertook. ACS Collison said that they use the website, Facebook and Twitter. They also inform the local newspapers every week of their good news stories as well as using the Parish and Town Council's newsletters.

Councillor Knight was worried that Nazeing village seemed to be on its own out in the sticks, with very slow response times. Could anything be done about it? She was told that if 999 was called then it would go out to their central control room in Chelmsford who would send it to the nearest and most appropriate unit. He recognised that they had problems in the past but, they have a borderless approach nowadays to reduce their response time. Hopefully she would now see the difference.

Councillor Knight said she understood that local officers did a lot of hard work, have a massive workload and have a lot of local intelligence. Were they listened too? She was told that that they were supervised by a sergeant who managed their work and co-ordinated their workload.

Councillor Jon Whitehouse asked what priorities were attached to traffic policing. He was told that they were governed by KSI statistics (Killed or Seriously Injured) and are deployed to these identified hotspots. The Traffic Police are also there to fight crime and not just for traffic offences. They also carry out a road safety educational programme across Essex.

The Chairman thanked ACS Collison for his update of the Policing Blueprint for our district.

John Gilbert representing the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) briefed the Panel on the work that they did. The Panel noted that the CSP brought together various key partner organisations with the district to deal with crime and disorder matters within the district. The partnership consists of the following organisations:

Epping Forest District Council;
Essex County Council;
Essex Police Service;
Essex Fire and Rescue Service;
NHS West Essex;
Essex Probation Service;
Voluntary Action Epping Forest.

The CSP produced an annual assessment of its area in February, looked at its strategy and if it had met its targets once the statistics were known. The CSP also has statutory responsibilities one of which was to do with reoffending. They had a remit to deal this as well as the Police. They also have a statutory responsibility for undertaking domestic homicide review taking place, looking at death in domestic situations. He reported that unfortunately one review was currently underway. The CSP's role was to go back to basics, talk to all organisations involved to find out why this had occurred, should things have been picked up, should things have been done differently etc. But, the CSP have to fund these reviews.

Asked if we had to look after re-offenders that lived outside the district Mr Gilbert said that if they lived outside our district, then the authorities in their area had to take responsibility for them. We were only responsible for offenders who lived in our area. We have specialist officers to help with this, which is new for us. We have only been responsible for this for the last six or seven months.

The Chairman then asked ACS Luke Collison to update the Panel on the upcoming Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) elections and matters surrounding this. The Panel noted that the elections were on 15 November and that the successful candidate would take up post on 26 November, when the current Police Authority would cease to exist. The PCC would have the power to hold the Chief Constable to

account and would be responsible for the policing budget and the Community Safety budget; a lot of money to be responsible for.

However, a Police and Crime Panel (PCP) had been established to oversee the PCC and hold him to account.

This was a significant change to the way policing was delivered across the country.

Councillor Mohindra asked that with a 100 days to set the budget, how flexible were the police in the setting of the budget if the PCC did not agree with their proposals. He was told that this was very difficult to answer as they would be in uncharted territory. However, they were working closely with the Police Authority to ensure a smooth transition.

Councillor Sartin remarked that the Police and Crime Panel had the ability to veto the budget but the PCC could ignore this. It was also pointed out that the PCC would not have operational control of the police and would not be able to dictate their operational policy.

Councillor Murray commented that he had asked 40 people about the PCC elections and 35 did not know anything about them and 5 knew about them but not who the candidates were. Caroline Wiggins remarked that there had been an advertising campaign on television and also that information leaflets had been sent out. Mr Gilbert said that local government had lobbied as hard as it could to increase public awareness of the elections. It would be interesting to see the governments reaction if the turnout was less than 20%.

Mr Gilbert added that officers were hoping to get the new PCC to come and talk to the Panel in the new year. There would be a different relationship to the PCC than we had with the Police Authority. He noted that the PCP would scrutinise the budget proposals of the PCC. Mrs Wiggins added that it would probably not be a matter of spending more but spending the existing budget differently, depending on their priorities.

The Chairman thanked ACS Collison for attending the meeting and bringing the Panel up to date on Policing matters.

20. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Panel reviewed their Terms of Reference and their work programme.

They noted that their work programme for the year and noted that they would hope to invite the new PCC to their February 2013 meeting.

21. POLICE RESOURCE AND THE OLYMPIC GAMES

The Director of Environment and Street Scene, John Gilbert introduced the report updating the Panel on the recent Olympic Games and the police resources used. In the run up to the Games members had expressed concern that Police resources would be drawn away from the District, resulting in reduced resources and the possibility of extra crime. The Panel noted that in the event that there were no adverse effects to policing matters during the course of the Games. It proved to be a successful period, with no cause for concerns and policing matters around the District were unaffected.

RESOLVED:

The Panel noted that the Policing of the Olympic Torch Relay and the main Games were undertaken without adverse affect upon the District's policing.

22. SAFER CLEANER GREENER STRATEGY ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

The Panel noted the six monthly report on the Safer Cleaner Greener enforcement activities from 1 April to 30 September 2012. They noted that:

- the stop and search could not be carried out because of the Olympic Games;
- the Taxi licensing enforcement carried out in September; and
- the details of recent prosecution/caution details.

Councillor Girling asked if there was a time restriction on the speed of response for fly-tipping incidents. He was told that officers acted as quickly as they could, where they would try and gather evidence on who was responsible and look to use CCTV to help track the offenders.

Asked if CCTV cameras could help with fly-tipping in Nazeing, Mr Gilbert said that they did not have enough CCTV cameras to cover all the fly-tipping hotspots and as for the use Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras, they would still need evidence to say that the vehicle dumped the rubbish. The Council just did not have the resources to do this. We have also explicitly excluded the use of dummy cameras in our CCTV policy. The costs of landfill tax had gone up significantly recently contributing to the increase in fly-tipping.

Councillor Girling then asked if we liaised with retailers to make them collect their waste by trade waste companies. He was told that officers would advise them and would fine them if they did not comply.

Councillor Girling asked about taxi licensing enforcement, did we monitor the standards of the Licensing holders; and can their speed be checked. He was told that officers did not do secret shopper type checks, but the taxis are checked a couple of times a year, as part of their licensing agreement. As for speed checks, that was not in our powers do anything about. If caught by the Police then we could take the licence away if they accumulate more than 10 points on their licence.

23. DRAFT MINUTES - WASTE MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP BOARD

The Panel noted the draft waste management partnership board minutes for 3 September 2012.

They wanted to know where the Council was on the new waste management depot. They were told that we were no longer looking at North Weald Airfield and are currently looking at other areas to find a suitable site.

24. BOBBINGWORTH FORMER LANDFILL SITE LOCAL LIAISON GROUP - 26 SEPTEMBER 2012

The Panel noted the draft Bobbingworth Former Landfill Site Liaison Group minutes of 26 September 2012.

25. NORTH ESSEX PARKING PARTNERSHIP MINUTES - MINUTES

The Panel noted the minutes of the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) Joint Committee for on Street Parking for 21 June and 12 July 2012.

Councillor Sartin asked how close were we to getting CCTV outside schools. Councillor Waller said that a decision had been made in principle to have a CCTV car and to provide the NEPP with appropriate evidence. It would be up to NEPP to decide to impose a fixed penalty. This would be happening sometime next year.

Any income generated would go back into the NEPP corporate pot to enable them to continue functioning once other grants from government have gone.

Councillor Jon Whitehouse wanted to know if they could still report highway obstructions as they used to do to the Highways office. He was told that NEPP had its own protocol on obstructions. They can only enforce this when there was a traffic order in place. If there is not one in place then the police would have to enforce.

The public would be able to find contact details for NEPP by visiting our website which would redirect them.

26. SLM CONTRACT MONITORING BOARD MINUTES OF 16 JULY 2012

The Panel noted the minutes of the SLM Contract Monitoring Board Minutes of 16 July 2012.

27. LOCAL HIGHWAYS PANEL MEETING MINUTES

The Panel noted the Local Highways Panel meeting minutes of 6 September, 18 September and 2 October 2012.

28. REPORTS TO BE MADE TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no particular items to be submitted to the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.

29. FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates of future meetings of the Panel were noted.