

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday 19 March 2024, 7.00 pm - 8.40 pm

Council Chamber - Civic Offices

Members Present:	Councillors A Patel (Chairman), M Markham, C McCann, S Murray, R Brookes, R Sharif, S Yerrell, W Marshall, I Allgood and T Matthews
Members Present (Virtually):	Councillors J Jogia
Other Councillors:	Councillors R Balcombe and K Williamson
Apologies:	Councillor(s) J Lucas and Caroline Pond
Officers In Attendance:	Laura Kirman (Democratic Services Officer), Steven Mitchell (PR Website Editor), Mandy Thompson (Service Director - Regulatory Services), Caroline Wiggins (Directorate Specialist – Technical Services) and Melissa Faux (Senior Crime and ASB Officer)
Officers In Attendance (Virtually):	Jennifer Gould (Strategic Director and Chief Operating Officer) and Matt Picking (Democracy & Elections Apprentice)

[A RECORDING OF THIS MEETING IS AVAILABLE FOR REPEATED VIEWING](#)

39 WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Chairman reminded everyone present that this meeting would be recorded and that the Council had adopted a protocol for the webcasting of its meetings.

40 SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

The Committee noted that:

- Councillor Allgood had been appointed as substitute for Councillor Pond and
- Councillor Matthews had been appointed as substitute for Councillor Lucas.

41 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

42 NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the notes of the Communities Scrutiny Committee held on 5 March 2024 be taken as read and were agreed as a correct record.

43 WORK PROGRAMME

The Communities Scrutiny Committee noted the progress made on the work programme and suggested that work programme for the next municipal year should contain an even distribution of items across the Service Areas within the remit of this Committee.

44 BRIEFING ON SERIOUS VIOLENCE DUTY

James Pearson, Team Manager for Essex Violence and Vulnerability Unit, advised the Committee that a preventative approach based on the public health model was being taken to reduce violence across Essex. The key objectives were to aimed at reduce knife injury, non-domestic homicide and admissions to hospitals due to the use of bladed weapons, in the under 25 age group.

There had been a 40% reduction for knife injuries which had fallen from 34 to 27, and homicides had reduced from 15 to 9. There were clear targets to reduce violence incidents within Essex.

There were five key stands to delivering the strategy; engagement with the community, workforce development, targeted intervention, the use of data and intelligence, and a communication strategy.

The Committee suggested that work with parents was crucial and were advised that work with the family to look at early intervention had been funded.

The unit worked with people from the point of arrest and worked closely with the police. Contact was made within 24 hours of arrest and this had resulted in 72% engagement, and the outcomes were linked to the decrease propensity and desire to reoffend.

The Chairman thanked Mr Pearson for the briefing and his responses to the Committee.

45 PRESENTATION FROM THE DISTRICT COMMANDER FOR EPPING FOREST AND BRENTWOOD

The Acting District Commander for Epping Forest and Brentwood, Chief Inspector Jonathan Main, gave a presentation to the Committee on the following items.

- Policing structure in the district
- The Force Plan 2022/25, which aimed to help people, keep people safe and catch criminals.
- Delivering Community Priorities, with outcomes of specific operations, campaigns and events, in relation to tackling crime, tackling violence against women and girls, vehicle crime, burglary, ASB, domestic abuse, young people, and volume crime with a community impact.
- Partnership working
- Debden Broadway was highlighted as area that had received specific funding to address ASB, which had reduced by 30%
- Community engagement
- Performance of the 12 months to January 2024, and
- Public Perception survey results.

The Committee thanked the Acting District Commander for the presentation and the work carried out by the police across the district.

The Committee were provided with the following responses in relation to the queries raised.

- There was a dedicated rural crime officer and a rural engagement team, which had recently expanded.
- A funding bid had been made to continue the work in the Debden area and allow the patrols to continue. There was a wider partnership approach looking at the built environment. It was acknowledged that there needed to be a long term strategy
- An explanation of criminal behaviour orders
- There was a dedicated Town Centre Officer, businesses should be encouraged to report crimes.
- Councillors could contact the police through neighbourhood policing contacts, the community policing team had a phoneline, and areas team details could be provided. Crimes should be reported in the usual way.
- There were dedicated officers for officers for the Epping Forest District
- Details of the approach to 'cocooning' when crime prevention advice and investigative leads and reassurance were provided to an area post burglary.
- There were 4 x 4 vehicles, the use needed to be balanced between urban and rural areas.
- Police were not involved on parking issues, including pavement parking, unless there was an obstruction, in persistent basis or dangerous cases these could be reported.
- Rural vehicle crime and speeding through villages were an issue, with limited response when reported. Officers would attend Parish Council meetings.

The Chairman thanked Acting Chief Inspector Main for his presentation and answering the queries raised by the Committee.

46 BI-ANNUAL REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL-FUNDED POLICE OFFICERS

The Specialist Technical Services Officer, C Wiggins addressed the Committee on the six-month report on the work and range of operations of the Council's Funded Police team, and highlighted the added value of co-location of the Police and Council Officers

The Committee recognised the value of the partnership approach, and acknowledged that this was a highlight report, and the work carried out had a positive impact on the community.

The Committee suggested that there should be increased awareness and publicity of the work carried out by the team.

The 'Herbert Protocol' was a system to help protect vulnerable individuals with dementia. The police would use social media to raise awareness, and this would be put in the Member's Bulletin.

The Chairman acknowledged the value of the partnership approach and thanked everyone involved for their commitment.

47 EPPING FOREST COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT, ANNUAL REPORT, SAFER STREETS NINEFIELDS END OF PROJECT REPORT AND CSP PLAN ON A PAGE

The Specialist Technical Services Officer, C Wiggins provided an overarching view of the work carried out by the Community Partnership and provided detail on specific operations carried out across the district. The Epping Forest Community Safety Partnership Annual Strategic Assessment, Annual Report, Safer Streets Ninefields End of Project Report, Partnership Plan on a Page and Glossary was considered by the Committee.

The Community Safety Partnership was required to complete an annual Strategic Assessment which was used to direct and guide their activities, under the requirements as responsible authorities, of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

The Committee queried if the Strategic Assessment should be a restricted document and were advised that this had been received from the police as a classified document.

The Committee commented and commended the work of the Community Partnership and requested that projects and outcomes should be more widely publicised.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the Epping Forest Community Safety Partnership Annual Strategic Assessment, Annual Report, Safer Streets Ninefields End of Project Report, Partnership Plan on a Page and Glossary.

Post Meeting update:

Confirmation was received that Essex Police had marked and classified the Strategic Assessment document as 'Official Sensitive',

48 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED:

The committee noted this was the Committee's last meeting of the 2023/24 municipal year.

CHAIRMAN