

Notes of Basildon Public Meeting

8th February 2013

Speakers:

- Nick Alston (PCC) – Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex
- Bala Mahendran (BM) – Chief Executive Basildon Council & Chair of Basildon CSP
- Chief Inspector Glen Pavelin (GP) – Basildon District Commander
- Paula Mason (PM) – Basildon Borough Council - Community Safety Unit
- Councillor Malcolm Buckley (MB) – Basildon Borough Council
- Gerry Levelle – Head of Executive Support
- Robin Brenham – Essex Probation
- John Baron (JB) – Local MP
- Stephen Metcalf – Local MP

PCC gave welcome and introduction to the meeting. To discuss the facts of crime reduction in Basildon, the community's local concerns and what we are going to do about it and who will take forward those actions.

GP provided an outline of the policing area in Basildon

The PCC highlighted the points of focus as:

- **Dwelling Burglary & Vehicle Crime**
- **Drug Dealing**
- **Felmores Probation 'Approved Premises'**
- **Police and Crime Plan**

Basildon Council

BM gave an overview of the Community Safety Partnership which is an intelligence led approach. Basildon Council recently held a Young People's Alcohol conference targeting 13 year olds on the abuse, damage and perception of alcohol and drugs. BM outlined a few events to include 'The Community Safety Action Day' on 28th February and the road show on 25th July.

Dwelling Burglary

GP briefly outlined Operation Nemesis, a force-wide anti- burglary operation which is target offender driven and based on intelligence. Operation Bright Shadow consists of overt surveillance on identified individuals who are believed to be active dwelling burglary offenders. Surveillance is undertaken on identified individuals who are believed to be active dwelling burglary offenders.

Q1. Bob Hackett, Scheme Co-ordinator from Neighbourhood Watch raised a concern on resourcing issues with a PCSO. For 18 months, they had a dedicated PCSO who shared

information at Neighbourhood Action Panel (NAP) but due to sickness no replacement had been sought. What can the PCC and Essex Police do to combat this?

A1. GP reiterated the value of community based support at NAP. NA also added that Essex Police are in their 3rd year of a 4 year cost cutting and savings programme. The PCC have sought a 3.5% increase in council tax which equates for a council tax band D approximately £4.77 per year. GP asked members of the public to alert him directly if officers were not attending NAP.

Vehicle Crime

GP explained there are 3 types of vehicle crime:

- Stolen Vehicle
- Interfered with a vehicle
- Theft from Motor Vehicle

Proactive operations are undertaken during the night. Community intelligence is lacking in this area.

Q2. Councillor John Schofield asked how members of the local community can get information to the police?.

A2. PCC urged members of the public to use the non-police emergency number 101, speak to partner agencies, via their local neighbourhood watch teams, crime stoppers and to engage with local police.

Q3. A local resident asked if there was an upward trend in fuel theft ?

A3. GP responded that the trend was predominately in metallic theft.

Q4. The question was raised as to whether the police inform insurance companies of minor vehicle crime?

A4. GP stated that Essex Police cannot deploy resources without a crime being reported by the victim. The police do not contact insurance companies.

Q5. Members of the public do not always get a consistent, cohesive response from the police. What more can be done to ensure the public get a good response?

A5. The PCC will hold the police to account. If the public are dissatisfied with the service they receive, they should inform their local district commander. Local MP's requested that they are included in any correspondence with the police to ensure they can monitor the case.

Drug Dealing

GP stated that Essex Police are working with local media to follow up enforcement activity. Preventative measures are undertaken in key areas through visible policing within the community to watch activities and engage with partner agencies.

Q6. A resident asked if outcomes of perpetrators would be published on the police website.

A7. PCC is exploring options for publishing data on the outcome and results of perpetrators who have been successfully convicted.

Felmores Probation 'Approved Premises'

A brief overview of Felmores approved premises given by GP. There is proactive policing to deal with any protests around the vicinity and to deal with community concern. Essex Police engage on a regular basis with the residents of Felmores.

RB from Probation summarised the background of the approved premises. He also outlined the license conditions and curfew to alleviate some of the public perception. Felmores is used as a bridge between prison and the community by working with tactical groups.

Q8. A resident raised the issue about the current location as being inappropriate.

A8. Councillor Buckley reassured the public that the premises are secure and public protection is a key priority.

Police and Crime Plan

PCC informed the public that the Police and Crime Plan out for consultation, members of the public were encouraged to comment and feedback either by email or writing to the PCC.

Numerical targets have been taken out of the plan. The challenge for the PCC and Chief Constable is to reduce crime across the board in all categories.

The Year Ahead

PCC outlined the priorities for the year ahead as:

- Youth offending – to stop young people falling into the criminal system
- Alcohol and drugs – preventative measures to help reduce crime by working with related agencies
- Mental health challenges
- Roads policing – seriously injured or killed on local roads, figures have increased since the previous year

Open Questions

Q9. ASB is a concern to the local community. What is being done to tackle this?

A9. PCC responded that ASB includes a wide range of activities as noted in the plan and would like to clarify what we mean by this. GP added that ASB usually included vehicle theft, drugs and alcohol. The police and the community safety partnership are working closely together on a range of programmes such as dedicated neighbourhood constables to deal with repeat crime in the local area. The Council also added that there is a team that specifically deal with all ASB by issuing warnings and tackle effective action as deemed necessary.

Q10. Are there mechanisms to deal with neighbours causing problems?

A10. The ASB team in the council have mediation agreement tools to encourage parties to discuss and resolve their issues and concerns. This mechanism has so far proved to be successful.

Q11. Councillor John Schofield asked about public engagement activities taking place?

A11. PCC responded that he has committed to twice yearly meetings in each district. The return visit towards the later part of the year will focus on what the public perception is since the last visit and what action has been taken.

Q12. Councillor Phil Rackley acknowledged that the Plan was not target drive, but asked how this fitted in with operational policing?

A12. PCC outlined that operational policing was under the direction of the Chief Constable and it is the PCC's role to hold the Chief Constable account for performance.

Q13. A resident made a reference to business crime and the impact it has on the local economy and wider community group and asked what was being done to tackle this?

A13. To help focus on some of the issues affecting the county, the PCC outlined that there will be a series of forums to hold bodies to account to reflect some of the broader concerns of the people of Essex which includes business crime. A meeting was held in December 2012 to discuss specific issues related to business crime. A further meeting is scheduled to take place in May.

Q14. Road collision was highlighted to be another problem which impacted local businesses.

A14. GP clarified that police officers have to ensure the safety and well-being of road users as well as to ensure that an appropriate investigation to the road traffic accident is conducted. Money is being invested into technology to capture and evidence road safety.

Q15. A resident highlighted the frustration in lack of consistency of police personnel as a result of promotion or officers moving around the force.

A15. GP stated that Essex Police has undergone a Force adaptation structure 'Blueprint' to deliver the best policing model for the community. There are 3 local policing areas which is headed up by a Chief Superintendent and Superintendent who are supported by district commanders (Chief Inspectors). As a result of cutbacks this has affected resources and reduction in officers to meet the cost cutting. There should now be stability of officers in Neighbourhood Policing posts since January 2013.

Q16. A resident pointed out the time of the public meeting taking place when a lot of interested people who would like to attend are at work and asked if meetings could be scheduled at later?

A16. PCC responded that these events are taking place at different times to include evenings to assess what times works well.

Q17. Should the police be transparent with the complaints process?

A17. PCC responded that complaints against the police can indicate a serious behaviour performance issue. PCC will be looking to appoint someone to set up a framework to look at scrutinising complaints within the police.

Q18. Will the PCC be looking to privatise the back office?

Q19. PCC stated there are no plans to do so.

PCC requested feedback from the audience with regard to their opinions of this meeting.

GP advised that local neighbourhood officers were present and available to speak to after the meeting.