

## **PUBLIC MEETING**

**11 DECEMBER 2013**

**LONG MEADOWS COMMUNITY CENTRE, HARWICH**

**4.00 – 6.00PM**

### **SPEAKERS**

Nick Alston (PCC) – Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex  
Chief Insp Cat Barrie - Local District Commander  
Insp Chris Willis – Neighbourhood Inspector  
Supt Carl O'Malley -  
Cllr Lynda McWilliams – Community Safety Partnership Chair  
Leanne Thornton – Community Safety Partnership Manager

### **AGENDA ITEMS**

1. Crime data for Tendring
2. All Burglary
3. Visibility and Neighbourhood Policing
4. Knife Crime
5. (Topics for discussion raised by the audience)

### **HIGHLIGHTS OF PRESENTATION**

#### **ALL CRIME**

Comparing reports for 1<sup>st</sup> November 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2013 with those from the previous year 2011/ 2012 the areas of note are as follows:

- All crime has increased by 4.3% (364 more offences)
- Criminal damage has reduced by 9.0% (136 less offences)
- Theft and taking of motor vehicles has reduced by 13.7% (22 less offences)
- Robbery has increased by 36.4% (32 more offences)
- Shoplifting has increased by 20.6% (157 more offences)
- Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents have reduced by 4.9% (264 less incidents)
- Serious Violent Crime has decreased by 26.6% (25 less offences)
- Racially Aggravated Crime has increased by 63.2% (24 more offences);
- Other Violence Against the Person has increased by 13.9% (267 more offences).

#### **ALL BURGLARY**

- Comparing reports for 1st November 2012 to 31st October 2013 with those from 1st November 2011 to 31st October 2012, house burglary in particular in the Tendring district has increased by 6.6% (39 more offences). Burglary other than in a house (burglary of sheds, outbuildings and commercial premises) has increased by 1.2% (9 more offences).

## **KNIFE CRIME**

There have been a number of high profile incidents involving knives in the county in recent years.

Essex Police has taken strong proactive action, including an increased use of Stop and Search powers.

The local policing team and partners continue with the engagement activity around knife crime which includes:

- Crimestoppers campaign – a media campaign offering a reward for intelligence on knives
- Publicity through local and regional media.
- Twitter accounts have been created by Tendring police officers to update the public in live-time and links also created to Facebook via Tendring Community Safety page.

A bespoke anti-knife production has been delivered by a group of drama students across schools in Clacton and Colchester in conjunction with the 'Only Cowards Carry' campaign which is led by Caroline Shearer.

The on-going knife crime education programme includes a poster campaign in retail outlets and licensed premises through using Tenbac (Tendring business against crime) partners and licensing officers, an intense ten-week 'Borderline' programme which has been delivered to 30 disaffected teenagers to equip them to make positive lifestyle choices and Crucial Crew sessions delivered over a two-week period in November 2013 to over 1300 children from 35 schools within Tendring.

Essex Police is committed to continuing to tackle knife crime robustly and proactively, and we are very grateful for the ongoing support of the community in tackling this challenge

### **1. ALL BURGLARY**

**Q.1 A resident of Harwich reported suspicion of burglary, which was recorded on CCTV to the 101 non- emergency phone number - why was this not followed up by Essex Police?**

**A.1** The PCC said that he has been made aware of the issues public face when contacting the 101 number and is currently working with the Head of Customer Service to make improvements. Residents were advised to dial 999 should they have any serious concerns.

Insp Willis apologised that the reported incident had not been followed up and agreed to take the details and follow up asap

Residents were advised to take responsibility for their property by always ensuring windows and doors are locked when not at home. Residents were also advised to contact their local neighbourhood watch regarding any concerns or suspicions.

## **2. VISIBILITY AND NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING**

### **Q.1 Why are there not enough police to patrol and why do residents pay the same rate of Council Tax as those in Clacton, when there are less resources based in Harwich?**

**A.1** The PCC outlined the complex funding situation, including the portion of council tax which is used to support policing – known as the Precept.

Chief Insp Barrie said that there are more resources in Clacton; however additional resources can be applied to alternative areas as and when required. There are often covert operations taking place, so you may not be able to see police presence but they are there.

### **Q.2 Will PCSO numbers increase in Harwich?**

**A.2** There are 50 members of staff covering Tendring in total. 36 cover Harwich and work on a 24/7 shift pattern and are supported by the Response and Patrol Team.

The PCC reported that Essex Police are required to make savings of £36m over the next three years primarily due to a reduction in central government funding. As around 85 per cent of the policing budget is spent on officer and staff salaries, it is likely that there will be a reduction in police officer, PCSO and police staff numbers.

It was confirmed that there is currently a freeze on PCSO recruitment and it is unlikely that current PCSO vacancies will be filled. All resources are currently being reviewed as part of the Essex Police Evolve programme. Local councils will be offered the opportunity to fully fund PCSOs from the next financial year.

### **Q.3 Can you confirm the opening times of Harwich and Clacton Police Stations?**

**A.3** Harwich front desk is open 7 days a week from 12pm to 6pm. There are Police Officers and Staff working in the Police Station 24/7.

It was confirmed that front desk staff are not trained to take statements but should always take necessary details from a member of the public.

### **Q.4 What are the local policing team doing to combat drug crime?**

**A.4** Essex Police regularly carry out Stop and Search checks on members of the public. Specialist teams are working behind the scenes to target organised crime groups. Police Officers regularly run specialist operations and use under cover tactics to catch drug dealers. Work is also on-going with partners to prevent re-offending.

**Q.5 Why are the local policing team not responding to reported incidents of drug crime in cars in Gravel Hill Way?**

**A.5** Residents were advised to contact their local PCSO to report any suspicious activity; providing as much detail as possible, including an index number and description of the vehicle.

**Local PCSO contact details can be found via:**

[http://www.essex.police.uk/my\\_neighbourhood/tendring\\_district/harwich/harwich.aspx](http://www.essex.police.uk/my_neighbourhood/tendring_district/harwich/harwich.aspx)

**Q.6 What are the local policing team doing to combat speeding in Low Road?**

**A.6** Essex Police focus on specific areas where there are a high number of road collisions resulting death or serious injury. Essex Police are committed to making roads safer and any reported speeding problem will be addressed. Insp Willis agreed to speak to the concerned resident after the meeting and pass on details of the Community Speed watch Scheme.

**3. KNIFE CRIME**

There were no questions raised under this item.

**4. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION RAISED BY AUDIENCE**

**Q.1 What is the role of the PCC?**

**A.1** The PCC was elected by the public in November 2012 in place of Essex Police Authority. It is the responsibility of the PCC to be the voice of the people of Essex and hold the Chief Constable to account making the police answerable to the people they serve. The PCC holds weekly scrutiny meetings with the Chief Constable to look through crime figures etc. There are also regular meetings held in public, called the Essex Police Challenge, where the PCC holds the Chief Constable to account by asking him questions on behalf of the people of Essex. Members of the public can also ask questions directly themselves, at this event created by the PCC.

The PCC is responsible for securing an efficient and effective police force. The PCC brings together key agencies to guarantee a joint response to Community Safety

The PCC is currently in the process of recruiting an Assistant Director of Commissioning, of Performance and Scrutiny, and of Public Engagement, to assist with the scrutiny process and to ensure that money is well spent throughout the force.

The PCC regularly engages with local businesses and key partners through Business, Victims and Rural Crime Forums.

Further details on the role of the PCC can be found on the Home Office Website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-and-crime-commissioners-publications>

**Q.2 Do you follow up all incidents reported to Crimestoppers?**

**A.2** All information given to Crimestoppers is passed to the Essex Police intelligence system for Essex Police to follow up.

**Q.3 How are police responding to the Council's decision to switch off the street lights?**

**A.3** Essex County Council consulted with Essex Police regarding this matter. At present there is no evidence that crime has increased as a result of the light switch off. There has actually been a decrease in the number of reported ASB incidents. Chief Insp Cat Barrie assured residents that this matter is being carefully monitored and should the police have any concerns, they can request for the lights to be switched back on.

**Q.4 Why did it take 4 calls to the police before they attended a major car accident where a car tipped over and a fire broke out?**

**A.4** Residents were advised to contact Insp Chris Willis if they are unhappy with the service received from Essex Police or a local officer.

**Q.5 What are the local policing team doing in relation to the increased street mugging incidents involving young people?**

**A.5** The local policing team are aware of the issue. Youth Officers are working with local schools to raise awareness and encourage young people to be smart with their belongings by not displaying high value items.

The PCC has also contributed funding towards 'The Borderline Project' in Jaywick, an early intervention scheme which teaches young people about personal safety and the consequences of crime.

**Q.6 How much is being spent on the PCC Office?**

**A.6** The PCC Office costs £1.1m a year to run, which is less than was previously spent on the Essex Police Authority.

**Q.7 Why are there separate Neighbourhood Watch Schemes being run in Harwich, Dovercourt and Clacton? Why are there 6 schemes alone in Harwich?**

**A.7** It was agreed that the Neighbourhood Watch County Organiser, Alan Johnson would make contact with the Neighbourhood Watch Schemes in Tendring to assist with this matter.

**Q.8 What action is being taking to protect local businesses from crime?**

**A.8** Essex Police work in close partnership with Tendring Business against Crime (TENBAC) to help reduce business crime in the District. TENBAC shares information with local businesses provides photos of persistent offenders and the methods they use to commit crime. TENBAC also provides training and best practice advice to local businesses. There is a membership fee of £50 per year for this service.

## **ACTIONS OR PRIORITIES AGREED BY PCC**

Insp Willis to speak to resident with concerns regarding speeding in Low Road. Leanne Thornton, CSP Manager to provide resident with details of Community Speed watch.

Insp Willis to follow up reported incident of attempted burglary which was recorded on CCTV.

Alan Johnson, Neighbourhood Watch County Organiser to contact Tendring Neighbourhood Watch Schemes to assist with coordinating groups in Harwich, Clacton and Dovercourt.