

## **Easy to read version**

### **Public consultation**

## **Essex Police and Essex County Fire & Rescue Service – a common-sense approach to joint governance**

### **What is governance?**

It is the process for making and acting upon decisions, taking responsibility and making sure things are run effectively and efficiently.

Good governance has a positive effect on spending decisions, policies, practices and procedures, quality of service, leadership and behaviour.

### **Who currently governs Essex County Fire & Rescue Service?**

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service is currently governed by the Essex Fire Authority. There are 25 elected members of the authority, nominated by Essex County Council, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council and Thurrock Council.

## **A message from Roger Hirst, Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex**

“Back in May 2016, I was publically elected as Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex. Since then I have listened to residents, to the public and to partners about how Essex ensures that it continues to have efficient and effective emergency services.

For me, safe and secure communities are the bedrock on which we build well-being and prosperity for all. And that means communities which are well policed; and receive effective emergency services when called upon.

We have dedicated individuals in both our police and fire services. However, I believe that closer working between the Police and the Fire & Rescue Service can unlock significant resources to deliver better emergency services in Essex. The potential for better joint working between the Police and Fire & Rescue is substantial.

The new Police and Crime Act 2017 allows Police and crime commissioners to govern fire and rescue services as well as police.

Together with partners, I have developed a local case for change in the way Essex Police and Essex County Fire & Rescue are governed in the future. Before I send this report to the Home Secretary, I would like to find out what you

think. **Please consider the options and complete the short survey.**”

Roger Hirst, Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex Police

### **About the consultation**

The public consultation runs for 12 weeks and closes on 10 May 2017. The proposal for Essex will be sent to the Home Secretary in May 2017. This will include a summary of the responses to our questionnaire. The Home Secretary will make a decision in June 2017. All information about the consultation and the outcome will be available on the website at [www.essex.pcc.police.uk/LocalCaseForChange](http://www.essex.pcc.police.uk/LocalCaseForChange).

### **Roger Hirst, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex Police:**

- is elected by the residents of Essex and is accountable to them for the performance of the police force;
- provides the local link between the police and communities;
- sets the strategy for policing, crime reduction and disorder through the Police and Crime Plan;
- looks for better, cost-effective ways of improving policing and crime prevention; and

- proposes the policing element of the council tax precept. This means that the Police and Crime Commissioner decides the amount of funding that needs to be raised through the council tax you pay.

### **Essex is a large and diverse county**

- There are around 1.7 million people living in Essex.
- Essex has over 5,000 miles of road.
- There are two international airports.
- Essex borders with London.
- Essex has large urban and rural communities.

The emergency services need to meet the demands of Essex and be managed in the best way possible to keep the public safe.

### **Why change?**

Here are three main reasons for changing the governance of the Essex County Fire & Rescue Service.

1. To improve effectiveness.
2. To improve the governance of the Essex County Fire & Rescue Service.
3. To make savings which can be reinvested back into front-line police and fire services.

## **Opportunity to do more and be better together**

By bringing the police service and the fire and rescue service together under the same governance, we can improve things for everyone by:

- sharing knowledge and best-practice;
- sharing support and services;
- making better use of buildings and other resources;
- buying equipment together; and
- improving our combined ability to plan for and respond to Essex communities.

We are looking at the following three governance options.

### **The representation model**

- The Police and Crime Commissioner becomes the 26th voting member of the Essex Fire Authority.
- The Police and Crime Commissioner continues to govern Essex Police.

This option:

- is easy to put into practice;
- will make a limited improvement to public safety;

but:

- the estimated financial savings are only about a quarter of what could be achieved by other options.

### **The governance model**

- The Police and Crime Commissioner takes on the role of the Essex Fire Authority, becoming the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.
- Each service remains separate with its own chief officer.
- The Police and Crime Commissioner will oversee budgets and strategy decisions, while holding both chief officers to account.

This option:

- is likely to be more effective and improve public safety;
- is easy to put into practice; and
- offers clear cost benefits.

### **The single-employer model**

- The Police and Crime Commissioner takes on the role of the Essex Fire Authority, becoming the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.

- One chief officer is appointed and leads both Essex Police and Essex County Fire & Rescue Service.
- The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner will bring the services together.

This option:

- Is likely to improve public safety, effectiveness and cost efficiency;

but:

- the process of putting it into practice will be lengthy and challenging.

### **The role of front-line officers will not change**

A change in governance will maintain the professional identities of each emergency service and will not blur the roles between police officers and fire officers.

### **Give us your views**

Please click [here](#) to fill in the short questionnaire and give us your views.

Contact us

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