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**PFCC Public Meeting Notes**

**South Woodham Ferrers Public Meeting**

**Tuesday 24th October 2017**

Champions Manor Hall Community Centre,

94-104 Hullbridge Road

South Woodham Ferrers

18.30 – 20.00

Roger Hirst – Police Fire and Crime Commissioner

Jane Gardner – Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

Matt Furbar – Essex Fire and Rescue Service

Insp Andy Sawyer – Essex Police

The DPFCC opened the meeting and welcomed all present. The PFCC had recently taken on fire governance to further enhance greater collaboration between the emergency services. At the start of the meeting the PFCC was on his way back from Westminster having been speaking to MPs about more funding for policing. It was vital to get more police officers and Specials to enable more visible policing. While solving crime was important, the police had to get ahead for crime and prevent it happening in the first place. Many new crime types have emerged over recent years with officers necessarily being deployed into tackling cybercrime, child sexual exploitation, gangs, organised crime and terrorism.

As with policing the fire service is facing austere times and has to make the best use of funds available and respond to the priorities that needed to be delivered. There will be a budget for police and a budget for fire but it was important to think about how the services can better collaborate to ensure that the public get the best possible service in the future.

**Questions from the audience**

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| Q. What is the reasoning for SWF fire station becoming an on-call station as the public did not want this? | A. Recent public consultation showed the option favoured by the public showed the preferred option was to change from day crewed to on call. Decisions had to considered at county level and others stations had far higher levels of activity and therefore needed more resourcing. |
| Q – A freedom of information request showed that the other local fire station Burnham-on-Crouch was unavailable 30% of the time. The facts point to South Woodham Ferrers needing to be a full time Station as it was the last one serving the Dengie. If they needed to rely on Burnham that would increase response times. | A – The fire service is confident it can meet the needs of the county. |
| Q – Fire Service - if there is multiple fire emergencies across the area there won’t be the cover. A member of the public had facts and figures and over 2000 signatures and asked if the PFCC would look at the figures again. | A – The PFCC agreed to take a look at all the figures and asked if he could speak with the member of the public after the meeting. |
| Q – Why has Essex Fire and Rescue service followed a similar model to Kent of downgrading and halving the cover locally when Kent is now finding that they cannot provide enough cover. No robust risk assessment has been produced or presented to residents of SWF. Some full time stations are required otherwise there isn’t going to be enough cover. | A – It was acknowledged there were questions and concerns and that the PFCC would review the figures and decisions around SWF fire station. |
| Q –Since a resident moved to the area ten years ago there has been a significant population increase in the Dengie peninsular - so why are police station and fire stations being closed? Surely there is a need for a full time service. | A –There has been significant changes in types of crime over the past 10 to 15 years. Cybercrime alone is up 245 %. This has resulted in resources being taken from the front line, In order to provide more visible policing, and to help use local intelligence any additional funding received will have two thirds spent on more visible policing. It is also vital that the public report crime so that resources can be allocated where needed. |
| Q – With respect to the previous question how will this affect the fire service? | A – The 2020 programme was widely consulted on, but the PFCC will be scrutinising it closely. |
| Q – Every police officer would like to say cuts have consequences and PCCs need to say to we need more funding. | A – The PFCC agrees there has to be more funding and he is actively pursuing every channel available to secure more money. |
| Q- How does the present OPFCC compare with the former Police Authority in respect of cost effectiveness and has he had a pay increase since taking on the fire governance? | A – The PFCC has had no pay increase.The OPFCC is more cost effective than the Police Authority by several hundred thousand pounds. Strategic decisions are being made far more quickly – if things are not working out the OFPCC has the ability to change decisions more quickly. In short the OPFCC is cheaper, more efficient and more effective. |
| Q – Trespass as a criminal offence – where does the PFCC stand? | A – The PFCC has always believed trespass should be a crime but he was concerned about the extra burden this would put on an already stretched police force. However, as we are increasing policing he believes we can support it, has he has spoken to Chief Constable to see if there are the resources to police it. |
| Q – if the law can prevent travellers illegally getting on to land in the first place surely that must be better. | A – Lots of work is being done around the illegal encampment issue and there has been a substantial reduction on the amount of time it takes to remove them. There is a joint protocol in place since May and this is being reviewed about how it is working and what more we can do and be more robust about pushing people on quicker if they are behaving illegally. We are also looking at a transit site to reinvigorate debate but there has to be some alternative options. The OFPCC is working closely with the ECTU & GTRET in how to best manage unlawful incursions. |
| Q –How much does new technology costs, how much has been raised from sale of properties and how many stations are left and how many will we have, how many front line officers do we have. How much do you get paid? | A – New technology has cost around 13 million which includes IT, phones, Athena reporting model (which is a multi-year contract) and the SAP system. The value of disposals around £50 million and the total capital spend was £73 million. All the figures are available on-line at <http://www.essex.pfcc.police.uk/finance/>. |
| A resident from Aveley had a number of questions.  1) In Aveley there has been an increase in crime in their local area including groups of youths jumping on roofs, smashing up cars, taking so called legal highs, carrying concealed weapons as well as burglaries, car crime through the roof.  2) ECM (electronic community messaging) was not being used effectively and the NAP meetings had ceased.  3) When will officers pursue youths on mopeds which they refuse to do at present.  4) Currently Traveller incursions are not being dealt with quickly enough. | A - the PFCC committed to holding a public meeting in Aveley to hear residents’ concerns first hand.  A - A new public contact programme was being rolled out across the county to look at what forms of communication works for communities.  A - Young people die when be pursued on mopeds by police and he did not believe MPs would back a change in law.  A – A new joint Gypsy and Traveller protocol had been rolled out across Essex which had made it much clearer to authorities how illegal incursions should be dealt with by all agencies involved. |
| Q – South Hanningfield had experienced 10 break-ins in the last two weeks including a member of the audience’s shed. Officers had attended but had to be brought in from Colchester which in his view was unacceptable.  Q - There had also been incidents of travellers illegally; trotting along a road by the reservoir and nothing was being done. | A - The south Hanningfield burglaries have been reviewed and there has been a small spike in the crime. Some investigation has been undertaken but as they were garages and sheds with limited evidential opportunities and no suspects were crime assessed and desk based investigation is taking place.  A – The roads team has been previously made aware of this highly organised activity although when deployed to Middlemead the perpetrators have already left. Unfortunately this kind of behaviour also takes place frequently on the strategic road network namely the A127 or A13 at weekends and very often once we arrive on scene everything has disappeared. These events are highly organised and executed. The A130 has in place a permanent Traffic regulation order prohibiting horse and traps (you will note the signs as you access the A130 Howe Green > A13). The issue will remain on the police radar with on - going deployments being considered and made as is appropriate and required. |
| Q – How about using resources on SWF and not on cyber-crime? | A – Cybercrime is one of the fastest growth areas of crime and includes on-line fraud which is the key area of acquisitive crime overtaking car crime, shoplifting and burglary. It is vital we invest resources to tackle it. |
| Q – Cuts are false economy as a member of the audience recently had traveller incursion that cost them £50k to get them off their land. The situation is untenable and shouldn’t be allowed. | A – This kind of situation at this is unacceptable and still needs improvement. Need to get better and do the maximum we can with what we have. |
| Q – Could a school pastor scheme be encouraged by the PFCC? It would help with drug dealing, bullying etc… | A – Street pastors are invaluable and what you are suggesting is really powerful tool in helping vulnerable young people. We will certainly look at the potential for this. |
| Q – The Metropolitan police does not act on small crime – what is Essex response? | A – We have asked the views of the public and it is agreed that small crime leads to big crime and we can’t let petty crime thrive – we need to disrupt it on the ground. |
| Q – There used to have a police presence at the Town Council meeting for an hour and a half every two months and it would be useful if it could happen again. | A – Insp Sawyer said he would take this discussion forward at the close of the meeting. |