

Brentwood Public Meeting

20th February 2018

18.30.20.00

Panel Members

Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner Roger Hirst

DPFCC Jane Gardner

CI Lewis Basford Essex Police

Area Manager Tony Clark ECFRS

Brentwood CSP – Dan Cannon

Introduction: The PFCC welcomed all present. As Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner he has had governance responsibility for policing since 2016 and fire and rescue since Oct 2017. He has replaced the Fire Authority and intends to be more accountable for the governance of the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service. As the PFCC he is held to account by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel.

He explained he has three principal duties. These are:

1. Appointing the Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer – he was very lucky to have retained Stephen Kavanagh who is an outstanding CC. Adam Eckley, the Chief Fire Officer, is due to take retirement on March 31st. The PFCC explained that he had implemented a competitive process to find his replacement and that Jo Turton had been appointed to the role of Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive. He will also be making sure that he has the right brigade manager in place alongside Jo.
2. Setting the strategy for the police. The Police and Crime Plan sets out the seven key priorities for policing and this was out together following consultation with the public and other partners. Copies of the plan and details of the priorities are available from the PFCC website. Mr Hirst explained that he would also have to set up a similar plan for fire and rescue and would be making sure the current Fire and Rescue Plan continues to be fit for purpose going forward.
3. Setting the policing budget and fire budget. Mr Hirst explained he had been working hard along with APCCs and Chief Constables to lobby for 6000 extra police officers across the country. The Home Office had agreed £450 million for 2018. Part of this will come from The Council Tax Precept increase of around £1 per household per month. This will equate to an additional 150 officers across the county.

Mr Hirst also pointed out that Essex Police is the most tightly funded force in England and Wales and its officers and staff do an amazing job given the resources they have.

Chief Inspector Lewis Basford then gave an overview of policing in the Brentwood District. He explained that he was appointed as temporary district commander in early 2017 and was made substantive in April. The police station in Brentwood had closed as part of the wider Essex Police estates programme. All of the teams who were based in the previous station have moved to the much better, more central, location at the council offices. This was working well and they were more accessible to the public working in better facilities.

It had been a busy few months in the area and Chief Inspector Basford outlined the work that had been undertaken in relation to unauthorised encampments. Last year the average time of an encampment was 10.6 days, now thanks to some great partnership working and the help of the GTRET team and use of Section 61 powers, this figure had gone down to 1.2 days.

The policing team now sit with the Community Safety Partnership and are making better use of Criminal Behaviour Orders as well as taking a proactive approach to dealing with moped enabled crime and ASB on motorcycles that had spilled over from the Met.

Tackling burglaries had also been a priority and Chief Inspector Basford gave some details of how his team were proactively using ANPR cameras and covert and overt policing tactics.

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| **Question** | **Answer** | **You Said – We Did** |
| 1. What is being done about parking on the pavements – double strollers can’t get by. –Another question was also raised later in the meeting about mobility scooters not being able to use the pavements because of the parking issues. | PFCC – Unless there is damage to the pavements it is not a criminal issue. However there can be plenty achieved by joint working and RH detailed how Council Officers in Maldon have been given enforcement powers as part of a trial scheme. | Chief Insp – Police would liaise with the council and the parking partnerships to see what could be done but residents have to mindful of the time capacity officers have to deal with these types of issues. |
| 1. It took four phone calls and two web reports to report a road rage incident. | PFCC – The issues with the 101 and online reporting was being addressed. | More investment in 101 call handlers and improvements to Do It Online reporting. |
| 1. Neighbourhood Watch Alerts – we get lots of reports of bad news but no good news updates such as good arrests/convictions etc. | Chief Insp – Essex Police has social media channels and is really committed to promoting the good results. He is also looking a producing a newsletters and putting out messages via the schools network. | Good results to be fed back to NHW coordinators. |
| 1. Where can we dispose of old knives safely? There is no knife amnesty bin in Brentwood. | Chief Insp – A knife bin has been ordered and will be in place soon. | New knife bin will be in a suitable place at the new policing base. |
| 1. Why has the police station closed? | Chief Insp – It is not closed it has been relocated and has all of the same teams and services. |  |
| 1. People don’t know that the police station has moved. Can we have an ECM about it? | PFCC – We discussed it a public meeting, there has been press releases, social media stories and photocalls with the local media. | We will ask Essex Police to issue an ECM and we will look at putting the blue light from the old police station at the new location. |
| 1. Where is the nearest place you can hand in lost property now the police station is closed? I called 101 and was told I had to go to Grays. |  | Dan Cannon – we are looking at having a place for people to leave lost property at the council front desk. |
| 1. Where do people get taken when they have been arrested? Have been watching The Force and sometimes officers spend 40 to 50 minutes transporting prisoners because there is no room in custody. | Chief Insp – Brentwood Custody closed 7 to 8 years ago. Nearest facilities are Basildon and Grays. We have good facilities and don’t have a problem with custody.  PFCC – Some of the cells do need an upgrade but facilities are generally good. We are doing more work with health partners and now have a mental health triage team working with officers to stop people who need help having to go to custody. |  |
| 1. What are your plans for the fire service? | PFCC – I put a business case together and details have been made public. We are looking at lots of opportunities including how we can get the best out of collaboration to improve the services to benefit the people of Essex.  Tony Clark – we have three priorities – response, protection and prevention. Last year alone we visited around 140,000 school children, engaging with them and teaching them fire prevention and how to be safe, the number of fire incidents are declining. |  |
| 1. What are children being taught in school? | Tony Clark – we see children three times during their school lives. They learn valuable techniques and they are teaching their parents.  Jane Gardner – we are working closely with our partners to encourage young people to have healthy relationships, learn how to put out fires and how not to become involved in gangs. | Dan Cannon – Brentwood Council is committed to funding the Firebreak scheme in Brentwood and will be rolling it out across all schools in the area. |
| 1. Can residents buy their own CCTV? Have been told we can’t. | Chief Inspector – you can buy CCTV and use it to protect your property, however, you can not purposefully use it to record public spaces such as streets. If public spaces are covered while you are focused on your private space that is normally okay. Legally it is about what you intent is.. There are public privacy laws. | Dan Cannon – we can look at deploying our mobile cameras in hotspot areas.  PFCC – through collaboration we can improve and co-ordinate home visits so people can get the best crime prevention and home safety advice. |
| 1. What does the fire service do to show people what happens at crashes and the results of dangerous driving. | Tony Clark – we have a road traffic reduction team, a fire bike and high profile vehicles that we use to engage with and educate young people. |  |
| 1. I tried using the Do It Online service but it didn’t work. | PFCC – we will look into why it didn’t work but this is the first time I have heard a this and normally the feedback we get about the service is very positive. Please use the online system for non-emergency calls. |  |
| 1. There is a lack of visible police officers on the street at night. | PFCC – There are officers working very hard across the county and with their new mobile devices it means they can spend more time out and about. |  |
| 1. Will there be a public desk at the Brentwood police base? | PFCC – the Brentwood police station front counter had only 10 visits per month from the public and was closed before the station moved. At the old station there was a telephone at the front door we have a similar process at the new office. People can make an appointment to see a police officer at the new policing base but it is not viable to employ somebody to keep the desk open for 10 visitors per month. |  |
| 1. Is there a Neighbourhood Watch scheme in Hutton? |  | Dan Cannon – we can set one up by speaking to Peter who is at this meeting. |