**Performance and Resources Scrutiny Programme 2017/18**

**Report to: the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex**

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| **Title of Report:** | **Citizens in Policing Volunteer Police Cadets, Active Citizen and Essex Watch Delivery Plan** |
| **Chief Officer** | **ACC Andy Prophet** |
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| **Report from:**  | **Essex Police** |
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| **Author on behalf of Chief Officer:** | **Jenny Brouard Citizens in Policing Manager** |
| **Date of Approval:** | **17.7.18** |

1. **Purpose of Report**

This paper highlights the current status and direction of the Volunteer Police Cadets Programme, the Active Citizens Scheme, Police Support Volunteers Scheme and the various Essex Watch groups.

1. **Recommendations**

There are no specific recommendations but the board is asked to note~~,~~ and comment upon the content.

1. **Executive Summary**

The purpose of this paper is to introduce the development and progression plans for

* Volunteer Police Cadets
* Active Citizens
* Essex Watch Groups

The paper highlights the core elements of the Extended Policing Family as stated in

the Police and Crime Plan 2016-2020:

“Boost community volunteering, encourage the Active Citizen Programme and grow

the police family – doubling the Special Constabulary, with a Special Constable in

every community” (N.B; this paper does not refer to the Special Constabulary who sit

under a different command and will be subject to a separate report).

**4.0 Introduction/Background**

The national **Volunteer Police Cadet** (VPC) Scheme is a uniformed voluntary youth organisation for young people aged 13 -18 irrespective of their background or financial circumstances, especially those vulnerable to crime or social exclusion.

It aims to reduce youth offending and vulnerability to crime via effective police-led diversion and engagement.

Access to the VPC scheme is prioritised to young people who have previously offended, through partner agency referrals.

The Essex scheme has been in place since 2016 and is referred to elsewhere in this paper.

**Police Support Volunteers** (PSV) is a College of Policing led scheme whereby volunteers work with the Police to provide a deterrent, raise crime prevention awareness and reduce the fear of crime.

They provide a link between the police and the public, interacting with members of the community and enabling more active participation.

The nature of PSV roles attracts a certain demographic and requires a detailed vetting process which can deter people from volunteering.

To counter this, Essex Police, via the LPSU, created the **Active Citizen Scheme** whereby the public can play a more active role within their communities, assisting the police with high visibility community reassurance.

The scheme requires a lower standard of security checks and more mobile activity.

Essex Watch has been in existence since 2010 when 10 0.5 FTE posts were created (1 per district) to administer the growth of Watch Schemes across the county.

**5.0 Current Work and Performance**

The HMIC report in May 2018 highlighted the contribution that Active Citizens and Volunteer Police Cadets (VPCs) bring to the community by encouraging community cohesion.

Although there is no national performance framework for Active Citizens and Volunteer Police Cadets, Essex is the lead force and host for Regional Meetings regarding Cadets and Volunteers.

We have worked with counterparts in the Eastern Policing Region to amend the format of these meetings to reflect the wider portfolio of the Citizens in Policing Team (and equivalent teams in regional forces) by combining the Police Support Volunteers and Volunteer Police Cadets meetings into a one day, quarterly meeting where best practice, national input and legislation changes are covered. The Regional meetings are supported by ACC Rachel Kearton, National Police Chiefs Council Lead for Volunteers

There is currently one VPC unit in each District Policing Area (10) with 310 Volunteer Police Cadets and 45 core Volunteer Cadet Leaders. VPCs work closely with their local Community Policing Teams CPTS) on crime prevention activities (for example; Street Meet) and are integral to community events such as Remembrance Parades around the county.

In June 2018, the VPC took part in the first PFCC Cadet Games, held in Basildon where they competed against, and engaged in activities with, their counterparts from Essex County Fire and Rescue.The event was held by all involved to be a resounding success, both in terms of engagement and grass-roots collaboration.

The National College of Policing has produced a paper around the success of the Essex Police Active Citizen Scheme which they will circulate to other forces as an example of Best Practice.

The College of Policing were impressed with the level of training our Active Citizens had received in areas such as; crime prevention, fraud and scams in addition to their involvement in local community events providing guidance and support to their local communities.

Our Active Citizens scheme links in with the Home Office Serious Violence Strategy which reiterates that law enforcement alone is not enough to prevent crimes of violence and that partner agencies and community cohesion has a vital part to play.

The Home Office Serious Violence Strategy emphasises 2 key themes which Active Citizens play a part;

1. Early intervention and prevention
2. Supporting communities and partnerships

There are currently 130 Active Citizens who are primarily used for crime prevention messages, visiting local communities to provide reassurance and low level crime prevention advice regarding home and vehicle security.

They also take part in activity such as Coffee With Cops where they engage with their communities to understand the key issues/concerns in the local area, providing advice and solutions where applicable. 50 Active Citizens have received training in General Crime Prevention, Fraud and Scams and Modern Day Slavery.

Although not requested as part of this report, it should be noted that the Citizens in Policing portfolio in Essex is completed by the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS).

The scheme allows Chief Constables to designate certain powers to deal with low-level crime and ASB to organisations who meet set criteria.

Although Accredited Persons are therefore employees of their organisation, their membership of the Scheme is entirely voluntary.

Essex remains the largest Community Safety Accreditation Scheme in England and Wales with, currently, 56 Accredited Organisations and 570 Accredited Persons, including 13 of the 14 Local/ Unitary authorities in the Greater Essex area (see Section 9; Future Work).

The details of CSAS organisations, distribution, key contacts and the powers available to them are circulated to District and LPA Commanders and have been shared as part of the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) to provide for greater resilience during major/ critical incidents. The Home Office regularly cites Essex as the flagship for this scheme, directing other forces to utilise our experience and expertise.

There are currently 4 FTE Essex Watch Liaison Officers (EWLOs) overseeing the Essex Watch Scheme; 1 in each LPA and 1 based within the LPSU at HQ.

Their primary functions are to support the development of Watch Schemes and provide information to and from the public.

All EWLOs are trained to submit Intelligence Reports onto Athena.

The Geographic EWLOs work closely with the Watch Groups listed below;

* Neighbourhood Watch
* Business Watch
* Horse Watch
* Marine Watch
* Pub Watch
* Dog Watch
* Shop Watch
* Farm Watch
* Caravan Watch
* Allotment Watch
* Heritage Watch
* Rural/Farm Watch

The HQ EWLO is the lead for communication with rural communities, and works closely with the Gypsy, Traveller and Rural Engagement Team (GTRET) in support of the Essex Police Rural Crime Prevention Strategy launched in November 2017, which itself serves as Chapter 9 of the Essex Rural Partnership Rural Strategy led by D/PFCC Jane Gardner.

**6.0 Implications (Issues)**

None identified

**6.1 Links to Police and Crime Plan Priorities**

The creation and delivery of the Volunteer Police Cadets Programme, the Active Citizens Scheme, the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme and the various Essex Watch groups contribute to all key areas of the PFCC’s Police and Crime Plan, particularly;

* **Building Block 2:**

**Communications and Engagement;**

Giving the public a voice in local policing so they feel they are heard, feel able to come forward to report crime and anti-social behaviour and have confidence in the way that the police protect them

* **Priority 1 - More Local, Visible and Accessible Policing:**

(b) improve communications and contact between the police and local communities, so the public have access to information and advice on crime and anti-social behaviour in their area.

(c) Boost community volunteering, encourage the Active Citizen Programme and grow the police family…..

(h) Help the rural communities by preventing rural crime, including strengthening Farm Watch, working with the Rural Crime Forum and recruiting more Rural Specials.

(j) Support increased participation in Neighbourhood Watch, Street Pastors, Active Citizens and Volunteer Police Cadets.

* **Priority 2 - Crack down on Anti-Social Behaviour;**

(e) Ensure the public are kept informed about what is being done about anti-social behaviour by local policing teams and community safety partners.

(f) Improve the response of police and partners to anti-social behaviour by listening to local communities and drawing on evidence to increase public confidence.

* **Collaboration**

**6.2 Demand**

N/A

**6.3 Risks/Mitigation**

None Identified

**6.4 Equality and/or Human Rights Implications**

None identified

**6.5 Health and Safety Implications**

None identified

**7.0 Consultation/Engagement**

* LPSU
* OPFCC Stakeholders
* Key Community Safety Partners

**8.0 Actions for Improvement**

The overarching aims for improvement are contained in section 9 below

**9.0 Future Work/Development and Expected Outcome**

Active Citizens are currently receiving training to assist Public Protection Command with Operation Voice of a Child.

This will include Active Citizens attending, by appointment, a vulnerable child’s address in attendance with the parent/guardian permission to complete a survey with the child to ascertain how Essex Police looked after them as a victim of crime.

Active Citizens are also assisting with campaigns for the Special Constabulary including the new Cyber Crime Volunteer/ Special Constable. We have an aspiration to increase the number of Active Citizens in each district and expand their functionality by working with the local Volunteer Centres and Community Partnership Managers who will promote the value of volunteering with Essex Police.

All 10 Volunteer Police Cadet Units are receiving Prevent Training and in September 2018 will receive Crime Prevention Training to support the Essex Police Crime Prevention Strategy 2018-2021. VPCs will attend their third summer camp on Mersea Island in August 13th-17th.

The Annual VPC Parade will be held on 15th September2018 to recognise the work of our cadets (Leaders are acknowledged at the Annual Volunteer Awards) and awards will be presented to the best unit, outstanding cadet etc.

The Citizens in Policing Manager is finalising a 3 Year VPC Plan to develop the scheme, which includes;

This includes:

* Introduction of Junior Volunteer Police Cadets (age 10-13 year old) by early 2019, to be piloted in Castle Point and Rochford district, reviewed after 6 months with a view to force-wide roll out
* Developing a mentor scheme for Cadets who are approaching 18 to encourage Junior Cadets and contribute toward their own Continued Professional Development
* Open 2 new VPC units in Harwich and Brentwood due to overwhelming enquiries for these areas by October 2018

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The EWLO Team are working with current members of all watch schemes to increase membership by promoting the benefits of being part of a valuable scheme.

Farm Watch is currently being reinvigorated to support the Rural Crime Prevention Strategy and expand membership to the wider rural community, this includes consideration of a name change to Rural Watch.

The HQ EWLO is working in partnership with the National Farmers Union and the Essex Rural Partnership on how Essex Police can improve relationships.

This supports the creation of the Gypsy, Traveller and Rural Engagement Team which is attending unauthorised encampments and working with local farmers around other rural issues such as hare coursing.

Business/ Industrial Watch will be reinvigorated and re-launched to support the Business Crime Strategy being developed by the OPFCC, LPSU and Essex Chambers of Commerce. The scheme continues to develop. Uttlesford District Council are the only local authority not part of the scheme but, following a meeting with their Community Safety Partnership Manager, this is now being progressed.

**10.0 Decisions Required by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner**

None

**Appendix A List of Community Safety Accreditation Scheme Organisations**

