



## PFCC Colchester Public Meeting Thursday October 11, 2018

### Panel Members

PFCC - Roger Hirst

Dep PFCC – Jane Gardner

Ch/Insp Shaun Kane - Colchester District Commander

Greg Keys - ECFRS North East Region

Mel Rundle – Colchester Community Safety Partnership

**Roger Hirst, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC)** - I am the elected representative for the people of Essex. I have three main responsibilities are these are:

1. To appoint and dismiss Chief Constables and Chief Fire Officers for both services – I have appointed Jo Turton as ECFRS’s Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive and Ben-Julian Harrington as the new Chief Constable of Essex Police. Mr Harrington took over on October 4 and I would like to publically thank Stephen Kavanagh who retired for his service to Essex and its people.
2. I set strategy for both services. I do it through the Police and Crime Plan for policing and I am now doing the same thing by drawing up a Fire and Rescue Plan for the Fire and Rescue Service. I will be carrying out a public survey on the plan soon.
3. I set the Council Tax precept – I raised the Council Tax precept by £12 for a Band D home this year. The equivalent for the Fire and Rescue Service was already in place at an increase of £1.40 per Band D property, an increase of 2 per cent. This allowed Essex Police to recruit 150 extra officers. They are being recruited and trained and are now landing in the local areas and means we are now to get back ahead of the crime prevention agenda. Budget cuts have really hurt over the past five years and the bit that suffered the most was local policing but now

we are seeing officers back out on patrol. We are investing in new technology. Using handheld devices is increasing officers' time by 20 minutes per shift as well new body worn video cameras which allows them to collect the best possible evidence. More officers and more time for the officers means they are able to more of what they want to do and less paperwork. It's not going to be enough and we need to do more to recruit more officers. We know crimes have been rising partly because of new types of crime and more reporting of crime.

**Ch/Insp Kane** – I have been in Colchester for 14 months and it's an absolute privilege. I am really pleased to work and to support the teams here. In terms of overview, Colchester is one of the fastest growing populations outside London – keeping up can be a real challenge. There are lots of things I can say around successes. For me I encourage and set a vision for my officers and staff that we put the people of our community at the heart of everything we do. I really do care about reducing crime, anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe. There are various initiatives and things I can say about how we are being proactive. I have a number of visions that I'm looking at would love to see a neighbourhood watcher in every single street in Colchester. I want criminals to fear coming to Colchester. We need to protect people and focus on those who are coming to our town to commit crime.

Colchester is one of the fastest growing crime areas in the county but there is context to that. There have been Home Office changes of recording crime. There are more ways to report crime we have seen a downward trend in all crime which is encouraging and we are focusing on those issues that are important to local people. As a district commander it is really important for me to listen to complaints but it is important to manage expectations. Working with our partners there is still more to be done, we are encouraging people to report any concerns that they have got so we can understand more about the landscape of crime and antisocial behaviour.

**Greg Keys – ECFRS** - I look after 15 stations in the North East group. We continue our work to drive down risk and the stations are high performing stations. The biggest challenge is to deliver more local fire prevention activities and getting local firefighters out in their communities. We are looking to set up focus groups and I'm really pleased to hear views and thoughts around the fire service tonight.

Questions/Issues	Answers
<p><b>Anti-social Behaviour</b> - ASB is still a problem because people are worried about reporting it. We help the Neighbourhood Watch run fun days and we always ask police and fire to come along but they are too</p>	<p>C/Insp Kane – the council has invested a significant amount of money to have more Street Weeks and we will be having them every month. In terms of ASB it is absolutely essential that people are able to go about</p>

<p>busy to come. I would really appeal to you to get the police to come out to these things. The Street Weeks are brilliant – more of the same please – they are a big success!</p>	<p>their lives without being threatened or intimidated. Our response has been reasonable and proportionate but we need to change the culture. It's really important that we listen to people. I want to reassure you that every piece of info that is reported to the police is kept and listened to. If it's not right trust your instincts and please inform us. Drop an email to the Community Policing Team, call 101 if not an emergency but 999 if it is. Every bit of information we get is crucial. We will not shut the door on any complaint or concern. We will join the dots up and work with our partners. ASB is cultural thing we have to change and we will prosecute people. We are investing heavily in our partnership work with schools and colleges to solve the problems from the beginning.</p>
<p><b>Police Complaints</b> - For two years I have been trying to clear my name against false allegations against me. I'm going through IOPC but I'm not satisfied about the way police treat people when they make a complaint.</p>	<p>Roger Hirst - Thanks for raising this but it sounds like you are following the correct process. We need to get you to a place where you feel your complaint has been listened to fairly. C/Insp Kane - I acknowledge your difficulties, every contact really does count and when information gets fragmented it can get confusing, after this meeting I will sit down with you and go through this with you. <i>ACTION – C/Insp Kane spoke with member of the public after the meeting.</i></p>
<p><b>Domestic abuse</b> – a member of the audience complained about the treatment he had received from police as a male domestic abuse victim. It was a repeated complaint following his address at the previous public meeting in Colchester.</p>	<p>Roger Hirst – My office has met with you to listen and offer support. C/Insp Kane – I'm happy to meet with you again. <i>ACTION – the member of the public was given details of how to contact C/Insp Kane.</i></p>
<p><b>Town Centre Issues</b> - Speaking on behalf of my son who has seen drug deals happening near First Site, there was also a stabbing at the University of Essex, in the High Street at 6pm there are aggressive beggars and people in sleeping bags in the High Street. We don't feel safe in our own town.</p>	<p>C/Insp Kane – I am really sorry to hear that your son and your family feel that way. We have a real focus on the town centre and a focus on aggressive begging. Working with the council and with extra resources from Essex Police we are going to have Team 10 focussing solely on the town centre. It will be an intelligence led approach to deal with drug dealers. We want to look at what success looks like but we want to individuals to get the appropriate help if they are rough sleepers and get</p>

	<p>those who are committing crime going through the judicial system. Drugs underpin everything in terms of crime across the country but what we are doing in Colchester is to have a plan made up of covert and overt officers focusing on Class a drug lines. It really upsets and makes me angry that you don't feel safe and these individuals really need to be dealt with. We need to report back to our communities about the successes we have and we need to do more in the media. One of the biggest nightclubs in the area had a huge event but because of the plan I mentioned we didn't have one complaint from the public but this is about intelligent policing and understanding our communities making sure we report back our successes and achievements. We are going to the barracks tomorrow to sign a memo of understanding with RMP to do proactive policing with the Army. These are changes that are positive and double the efforts of what we are doing.</p> <p>Mel Rundle – CSP – we have a town centre action plan – it's a holistic approach with all partners and we meet every Monday morning and discuss particular people who are causing problems in the town centre. Those who are vulnerable receive support but those who are criminals have an enforced approach. We are working with off licences to encourage them not to sell drink to street drinkers. I wasn't aware First Site was a hot spot area but I will take that information away. We can do regular patrols and place a package of measures in place. <i>ACTION – CSP to look at First Site area in particular.</i></p>
<p><b>Cannabis-</b> Would Essex Police consider decriminalising cannabis?</p>	<p>Roger Hirst – we are not in a position to change the law. We are here to enforce it. Drug dealing is the source of lots of crime and middle class drug users need to realise that the line of cocaine they are taking has cost a lot of blood to get there. Using drugs is not a victim free crime.</p>
<p><b>Cycle Thefts</b> - Is it possible to have a list of the amount of bikes that are generally reported as being stolen. You can get good advice from bike</p>	<p>C/Insp Kane - we do have a focus on theft of pedal cycles and we are working with stores to reduce the costs of locks. I will put you touch with</p>

<p>stores such as Halfords. There are certain hotspots where bikes get taken – is there something in place that we can do to encourage residents to use proper bike locks?</p>	<p>our CPT and give you that information. <i>ACTION – C/Insp Kane to put resident in touch with CPT.</i></p>
<p><b>Thanks to previous Chief Constable and fire service questions</b> - I would like to say thank you to Chief Constable Stephen Kavanagh but want to ask a fire question. I do not support fire commissioners but do welcome the fire review. Are you going to reduce the number of firefighters and shut Cowdray Avenue fire station. I have concerns over the reduction of firefighters and fire appliances. Up to few months ago every fire appliance had the name of the station on it. Why was that identity taken away and who made that decision? It's a question of local pride and identity and I ask you to bring it back.</p>	<p>Roger Hirst - interesting points raised but I'm not sure people would remember fire authorities or police authorities holding meetings like this. By statue policing is operational dependent from me and there is a constitution in place for fire. I'm not going to tell the service what to call their fire engines. Pride does matter but I can't ever remember seeing a fire engine with a place name written on it. There is no question over the presence of the fire service here in Colchester. Greg Keys – we always look at how communities grow and how road networks change but to my knowledge there are no plans to change Colchester. Place names on appliances goes back two or three years ago, we have now changed it to call signs on appliances, national call signs were introduced and it's easier to recognise them. The benefits are that the plates can be removed and you can change appliances far quicker. Roger Hirst - the plan that was agreed in 2016 was consulted on and is now being implemented. It did involve moving some wholetime to on call, those changes are in train but there are some still changing, we are not changing the stations over until we have recruited the on-call firefighters.</p>
<p><b>Dovercourt Fire Station</b> - My late father was a firefighter and branch secretary of the FBU. I believe Essex does need a full time presence in Dovercourt, particularly if there was a major incident in Harwich. Colchester's population is soaring and it is not the time to be reducing the amount of full time firefighters.</p>	<p>Roger Hirst – two thirds of our county is covered by on call firefighters and they are not less effective than full time firefighters. Amazing prevention work has been carried out by the fire service and incidents are down by 40 per cent and that is keeping people safer and meaning homes are not being destroyed. We need to make sure we have the right needs and are covering risk properly across the county. We need wholetime firefighters to be as busy as they can be and do encourage</p>

	<p>people to read the fire and rescue plan when it comes out and have they say. There is a lot more that can be done to improve the rescue work. I would like to be in a situation where firefighters help police to look for missing people. They can do more rescue, co-responding and first aid and that will give us the justification to retain more whole time firefighters.</p>
<p><b>PFCC Transparency</b> – We have written to you on numerous occasions and you won't help my son.</p>	<p>Roger Hirst – we have had extensive correspondence and we are not the right agency that can help you son.</p>
<p><b>Community Policing</b> – I am a parish clerk in Dedham and as a former police officer I'm fully aware of the pressures. We had a PCSO in Dedham that we part funded but there wasn't the resources to continue. I fully believe that communities have to work together. I am interested in Special Constables working in their communities. There is a pilot being tried in West Bergholt, I would like to find out more. We have not heard of Street Weeks in Dedham but would like one - lets work together.</p>	<p>Roger Hirst - thanks very much and I'm sure we will pick up on that one. Specials are not a replacement of officers, they are in addition.</p> <p><i>ACTION – C/Insp Kane to get in contact about the potential for a Street Week in Dedham.</i></p>
<p><b>Town Centre Issues</b> – I've been a victim of crime several times since March. I have been stabbed, had house broken into, have been assaulted, had drug taking near my property, had people defecating and urinating. There is constant intimidation. There is a huge frustration when you are seeing these things time and time again. There are beautiful parks being taken over by these people. I really feel the frustration, cuts have affected this but when you see things happening but seen Team 10 and it's a like breath of fresh air but it then goes away, whole atmosphere changes, the hearts and minds are being lost. Crouch Street is a complete mess. I've lived in lots of places but this is the worst but why are people are allowed to get away with it? People urinating on grave stones.</p>	<p>C/Insp Kane – thank for what you just said. I see it across Essex we simply can't be everywhere every single second to deal with these issues, it is about changing culture and behaviours. We've got a fantastic CCTV systems across the town centre. We live in a world that is full some evil ugly people that want to hurt others but there is still a percentage of great people. Don't lose faith we will be there. Just because you've not had a follow-up phone call but we are dealing with it. We are empowering communities and making it uncomfortable for people to carry out antisocial behaviour. Don't give up we will be there for you. Get to know your local community team and your council team and what we will continue to do is use dispersal orders if we think someone is going to commit anti-social behaviour. This is about creating safe neighbourhoods but it's really important that people feel safe.</p>

<p><b>Town Centre Crime Displacement</b> – You have been doing a lot of work in the town centre and see people are leaving the town centre but they are now heading towards the residential areas. Are there any plans to tackle crime in the urban areas? Are there going to be more police officers?</p>	<p>C/Insp Kane – there are plans to expand and we are looking at long term problem solving not displacement. We are looking at the rural areas as well. We have 58 Special Constables in Colchester and every ward has a specific plan which we are introducing.</p> <p>Mel Rundle – CSP – we are working on individuals who are moving out of areas using support and enforcement tactics. It's not a quick fix but we are dealing with it.</p> <p>Roger Hirst – We are determined to do more and have 150 more police officers that have joined, trained with most of them passed out and starting to arrive at police stations from November.</p>
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