



**Harlow Public Meeting
3rd July 2019
Latton Bush Centre, Harlow**

**Panel Meeting
Act Ch/Insp Russ Welch - Essex Police
Insp Tony Walker – Essex Police
Terry Povey NW Area Manager ECFRS**

Audience questions	Panel answers
<p>Why is it necessary for Harlow Council to get a protection order to prevent cycling in the town centre when there are signs stating it is prohibited. A resident was in the town centre recently, where several youths were riding up and down the square and some police who were present did nothing to challenge it.</p>	<p>The council went through a long process to get this in place and it gives the council and police in the town centre more empowerment to take action and stop inconsiderate cyclists breaking the law. The officers the audience member spoke to should have prevented those</p>
<p>A member of NHW asked a question around high-rise blocks being converted from business to residential flats. He understood the Fire & Rescue Service aerial ladder has been based elsewhere. If Harlow needed an aerial ladder it now has to come from Chelmsford which could take too long and put lives at risk.</p>	<p>Terry Povey advised the Fire & Rescue Service did have a ladder in Harlow, but the kind of high-rise buildings in the district would not benefit from an aerial ladder as they are designed to firefight from within. Grenfell was an exceptional case due to the cladding and there is only one building in Harlow with that cladding, and no one lives in there. The fire and rescue service have been out to all of the buildings</p>

	<p>and assessed them for fire safety. They have also knocked on the residents doors and spoken to them about fire safety.</p>
<p>The Fire Service tell residents to stay in their flats but many of them have changed their front doors, so is it safe for them to be in there if there's a fire?</p>	<p>The Fire & Rescue Service have assessed the doors and deemed them safe. However if the member of the public has any specific issues then Terry Povey requested they remain afterwards to give more details so it can be investigated further.</p> <p>PFCC Hirst added another big issue with the flats were the families that have been moved out of London. The police work closely with the council to try and identify vulnerable families and targeted criminality.</p>
<p>A residents partner was run over by a taxi driver and the taxi driver claimed she had fallen from the car. The resident had CCTV footage of the incident but nothing has been done. They put a complaint in but nothing was upheld and they could not understand why the taxi driver had not been brought to account. Police have advised her that the separate claim they were currently making against the police should be enough financially, but the victim wanted the driver brought to justice too.</p>	<p>As this was an ongoing complaint against the police, they could not deal with it at the meeting.</p>
<p>A local councillor was grateful there were more police, but there was still an issue around Terminus House and local businesses are seeing all kinds of crimes taking place, from assaults to drug dealing and she hopes that when the town centre police come into play this will make a difference to how residents and business owners feel unsafe.</p> <p>She has also has seen a lot of motorcycle riders and pillion raiders who ride with no crash helmets and are riding on paths and it is only a matter of time before someone is seriously hurt.</p>	<p>The police have done quite a bit of work in the town centre which generated 54 arrests. The challenge is when they put uniforms in the town centre the crowds disperse. They tried plain clothes instead and managed four arrests in one day, so police are looking at varying ways of tackling this issue. Intelligence gathered before Christmas resulted in several drug raids and they are continuing to follow up and make it an unattractive place to commit crime.</p> <p>Motor bikes are an issue and they have seized 6 bikes in the last month. They are looking at ways to tackling them such as smartwater</p>

<p>She asked if police were aware just how many of the residents in Terminus House were on licence, as perhaps they should check up.</p>	<p>Police have a good relationship with the manager of Terminus House but the issue is that the London boroughs who are transferring the families don't always give intel on those being placed.</p>
<p>A youth worker expressed his concern around ASB and young people in the Stow and Bush Row.</p>	<p>Ch/Insp Welch thanked the Cllr and said he has a really good team in that area with some sterling work being done with local agencies and charities. The Ch/Insp has met with children who were misbehaving in Bush Row, but more work will be done in the Stow as police now have officers dedicated to their own beats.</p>
<p>There are a lot more high-rise buildings in the area and the resident also had reservations about there not being an aerial ladder in the district. He also heard one aerial ladder had been got rid of.</p>	<p>Terry Povey confirmed they did lose one ALP as it was at the end of its usable life. To replace would have cost £600k and would have cost £1m to crew but they constantly review this and will be consulting with this against in September.</p> <p>ALPS don't necessarily do what people think they do as they don't go up very high. Also getting the ALP near to high-rise flats in Harlow is challenging, as the parking is so bad can't get it in place. They also work closely cross border with other firefighters.</p>
<p>Police cadet asked with the increase in police will there be cap on current recruitment and will it affect his chance of becoming a police officer?</p>	<p>The PFCC advised although EP are hiring 215 additional officers to keep the numbers up, they have to recruit around a thousand extra due to retirements and departures. He would also like to see a position where we have even more officers as crime is creeping up, due to new types of crimes and new ways of committing crimes. We are seeing an increase of violence with injury with the advent of gangs and county lines. Crime recording has also changed such as the new category of stalking and harassment, which accounts for another 700 cases per year.</p>

	<p>Spoke to the two candidates who were vying to be PM – Mr Johnson suggested money should be in the billions not millions.</p>
<p>An audience member was concerned policing numbers were not overplayed, as over 750 officers were axed in 2010, but still have a long way to go to get back number wise to where we were even with increase.</p> <p>Harlow is second only to Southend in crime rates and that raises a question that have we got enough officers to deal with this in Harlow?</p>	<p>PFCC Hirst said he would never meet a senior officer who said they had the right resources and that is completely understandable. As the PFCC he comes from a different angle as he has to tax the public to get more officers. Essex Police does great job with the money they have but compared to other forces they are lower funded so that's why he is always campaigning for more money.</p> <p>The methodology for operational placing of police is decided by the chief constable who looks at population, levels of deprivation and crime and harm of crime by per population and that means in Harlow we gets far more policing compared to other areas.</p> <p>The chief inspector added it was not just about crime it's about harm and looking at Southend and Harlow they have huge urban areas, so don't have a high crime per capita but there is more crime.</p> <p>PFCC Hirst added that the 2010 police officer figures represented a spike and since then crime has changed massively. Also tech has changed which means we need to police differently to how we did.</p> <p>Ch/Insp agreed that the way the force operates now is completely different to nine years ago. They have far better ways in dealing with issues such as DV, gangs etc and there are support staff who do the work that help alleviate the pressure on officers. These efficiencies and dynamism is a good place to be and with the addition of smart phones that allow them to complete reports etc on the road, means officers are out on shift by an average of 20 minutes extra.</p>
<p>Roads Policing have been given an additional 20 officers how does that work in day to day policing?</p>	<p>Putting officers into a specialist team like roads policing means they can take part in special operations such as surround a town where we</p>

	<p>catch a lot of criminals. . Also if they have road traffic collisions where they need to call in specialist officers from roads policing, they can. There is an overlap in how they police roads, as that is the remit of police as a whole but they have the specialist knowledge and they can provide additional support, as well as attending the serious road collisions. They have overall responsibility for reducing death and seriously injured.</p>
<p>Tactical contact with arresting motor cyclists – does Essex Police have specialist trained officers</p>	<p>Met deployed those contacts as they had a huge amount of crime but we don't have that in Essex, and we will not be using it.</p>
<p>A hospital being relocated towards junction 7A of M11 – is there any other plans to move the emergency services to share estates to save money.</p>	<p>The PFCC advised he is having open dialogue with the Fire and Rescue service and will take the suggestion back.</p>
<p>Gatso cameras – has been told that they don't always work due to not being cost effective. Could they be placed somewhere else where there is an issue?</p>	<p>They are placed in area where there have been issues. Used to be switched off as had film but that has changed so now they are digitalised the can run all the time. It would prove difficult to move them as they have a huge amount of infrastructure that needs to be put in place around them.</p>
<p>With the closure of local courts, people were not attending which resulted in police transporting those who have been arrested for not turning up in court. Had the police thought about investing more in video suites to negate those charged having to travel?</p>	<p>Video conference was something that was being considered but courts were not proving keen. When a non attendance at court is arrested and taken into custody, it's SERCO who transport them to court so the actual impact is fairly minimal.</p>
<p>Does Stansted airport impact on local officers?</p>	<p>Police in Stansted is funded by the airport owners and though does require additional police we help each other out. We support Stansted when there are major incidents but Stansted also have a remit to assist Essex Police, so is a symbiotic relationship.</p>
<p>Do we have stats on solved rates?</p>	<p>We have those stats and they are published every month on the police website. In the last few years we have seen the police so busy</p>

	<p>they are not collecting the evidence and the solved rates are going down. It's an area we really need to invest in and the MoJ need to reinvest in the CPS. Rape has a good conviction rate and 100 percent prosecuted are convicted, but we are not seeing nearly enough going through court.</p> <p>Solved rate is 15% this year down from 16% last year.</p>
Is the PFCC going to increase the council tax again?	The PFCC –does not want to raise the council tax next year.