



## Southend Public Meeting Notes

26<sup>th</sup> June 2019

Leigh Community Centre

Elm Road

Leigh-on-Sea

Essex

### Panel Members

Dep/Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner(DPFCC) Jane Gardner,

Ch/Insp Neil Pudney

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS) Area Manager Dave Barnard

Southend Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Manager Simon Ford

### Introduction from Cllr Carole Mulroney

DPFCC Jane Gardner gave an overview of the role of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and the high-level priorities that are the focus of both the Police Service and the Fire and Rescue Service.

Ch/Insp Neil Pudney spoke about the work being done in the district to help drive down issues such as burglary, car theft and ASB. He also spoke about the uplift in police numbers.

Dave Barnard focused on how they are working closely with the police in preventative and operational perspective. ECFRS will be launching a consultation on how they deliver the priorities in the Fire and Rescue Plan. ECFRS are hosting open days throughout the summer so please do pop along and see the work.

Simon Ford, Southend Community Partnership Manager works closely with police and also received funding for community safety from the Council. They employ a group of security officers that work closely with police. He also has oversight of the borough CCTV which is in the process of an overhaul and expansion.

Questions from the audience	Panel answers
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An audience member had a question about police resourcing. He stated there were a number of inconsiderate cyclists who are causing an issue in the town, as they ride on pavements putting pedestrians at risk. He has seen some results from Insp Hughes and his team, but feels overall the public are paying more for policing but receiving less service.

He also believed that the justice system is failing and that the Crown Prosecution Service were not backing up police in the way they should by bringing cases to court.

Dep/PFCC Jane Gardner advised that while the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner (PFCC) has a part to play in the justice system he has no influence once the cases go to court or how the judiciary manage the ones that get to court as the judiciary are completely independent of police. However, she took on board the issues around the number of cases being brought to court and would feedback this back to the Criminal Justice Board which includes representatives of the CPS and which is chaired by the PFCC.

In respect of police giving value for money, the service is growing for the first time in years. The 150 new officers who were taken on through last year's precept rise, landed in their new roles in March this year. The 215 officers recruited in this year's precept are going through the training and recruitment stage and will be on the streets by April 2020. The perception may be therefore that the public are not getting value for money but this will change over time. Essex Police have also independently been found to offer good value for money by the inspectorate.

Ch/Insp Pudney added that in the last 12 months the district had seen a 12% drop in ASB, as there has been a concentrated effort to tackle the issue. Those results were only achievable by working alongside partners, using their skills and all available legislation. He added that the nature of crime is changing with 40% of police time taken up with mental health issues. Force control rooms throughout the country report that 80% of calls are not crime related.

Other teams within the district include a local policing team who react quickly and deal with ongoing and current issues, an Op Raptor team which tackles gangs, and a new town centre team which is being phased in over the next few weeks. The town centre team will target areas where there are issues and the community is suffering as a consequence. The force have now gone above 3000 officers and have the second largest and fastest growing Special Constabulary in the country. There are also over 100 active citizens who also help with crime prevention activities.

	<p>Dave Barnard, South East Area Manager ECFRS, added that the fire and rescue service has a successful youth scheme called Firebreak, which engages with a wide range of people from troubled backgrounds and those who have come out of prison. He believes the service is a leader around the country in this role and they have seen many positive outcomes from the scheme. Though they are a different service to police, they can provide support through youth schemes such as Firebreak and school visits. They are also engaging with communities to encourage people to join up as on call firefighters. He added if there were members of the audience who have a friend or family member who might be interested in becoming an on call firefighter then direct them to the ECFRS website <a href="https://join.essex-fire.gov.uk/">https://join.essex-fire.gov.uk/</a>.</p>
<p>A member of the audience had a car broken into but police could not attend as they were dealing with other incidents. The victim had CCTV evidence which they sent to police, but then received an answer phone message to say police couldn't do anything with the footage. What was the point in having CCTV if police would not act upon it?</p> <p>Conversely, another member of the audience had a positive outcome with her CCTV as the police had used it as evidence following a crime.</p>	<p>Ch/Insp Pudney was not aware personally of the case and asked to speak with the audience member after the meeting to take details so he could look into the case further.</p>
<p>The panel were asked if they believed there should be more youth clubs and services for people who suffer from mental health issues.</p>	<p>The Dep/PFCC believed engaging with young people to find out what they want as an activity was important. Not all young people want to visit youth clubs, which was why a range of activities should be offered. It was also important to engage with young people who have fallen into crime to find out why.</p> <p>Ch/Insp Pudney advised if someone is suffering a mental health crisis it isn't necessarily a police matter alone. The service looked at what could be done in tandem with the NHS and they developed the Mental Health Triage Service where a mental health practitioner travels out with police officers and go to those people experiencing a mental health crisis and help them rather than</p>

	<p>arrest then. Police are consistently working with health partners to see what more can be done.</p> <p>There was also a pilot scheme in Southend where there will be two mental health practitioners embedded in the Southend hub. They will work with police officers to put together care plans for individuals with complex mental health needs in the community. This will look at high intensity users and hopefully this will be a success and can be replicated across the county.</p> <p>Simon Ford, Southend Community Safety Partnership Manager also agreed that young people may not necessarily respond to youth clubs. He added that there was a huge amount that goes on in the area for young people such as the youth council, various schemes, clubs such as martial arts, football and youth theatres. Southend Council are also looking at a Southend Council Cadet Force that offers activities and he is currently speaking to a range of young people about how they could develop this.</p> <p>Leigh Town Council has an active youth club and will be holding a youth market on the 14<sup>th</sup> July 2019.</p>
<p>A resident in central Southend has suffered an unprovoked attack, which was described as attempted murder. They were in hospital for 3 months and took a long while to recover. The audience member felt that in his view the police did not investigate to his satisfaction and the attackers are still at large, and he has not had closure on this. Since then he had been threatened at other times but again felt he did not receive the kind of support from police he should have.</p>	<p>The Dep PFCC expressed her sympathy for the victim and suggested as this was a personal issue he may wish to take it offline, and discuss after the meeting.</p>
<p>A resident from the Kursaal estate asked what police are doing about ASB in the vicinity?</p>	<p>Ch/Insp Pudney advised he had been really strong on tackling ASB which has reduced in the district by 12%.</p> <p>Education is very important, as making young people understand the consequences of their actions is vital, and under joint teamwork the police and fire &amp; rescue service have reached 400,000 young people.</p>

	<p>There were also a range of enforcement options available to police such as community behaviour orders and curfews, but it was also important to positively influence young people and not criminalise them.</p>
<p>Resident in Leigh reported that a large area of grass and trees that leads down to the station is attracting a number of young people who live in the area, and who drink alcohol in the evening often leaving smashed bottles. This means that during the day dog walkers and young families have to play amid broken glass. There are now homeless people and drug dealers who have taken residence there too and who often have arguments and fights. It makes it really unpleasant for those who want to use the space.</p>	<p>Ch/Insp had spoken to the resident about the issue and requested that residents report what is happening as police cannot deal with it if they don't know ASB is taking place. They can then put in place a multi-agency approach, like they did in Southend High Street which looks at a mixture of enforcement and early intervention work.</p> <p>Cllr Mulronev noted there was a lot posted on Facebook which aren't reported Ch/Insp advised they do monitor Leigh Crimewatch page where they often pick up incidents which aren't reported to police but it is really important to report these incidents to the police.</p>
<p>A member of the audience had suffered a serious car crime and also had a family member who was held up at knife-point the previous week. They asked what CCTV is being put in that might cover more populated areas?</p>	<p>Simon Ford advised that Southend is expanding cameras across the district. Cameras are monitored 365 days a year, 24 hours per day and had been responsible for 50 arrests in the last two weeks. The Council is upgrading all cameras with digital ones and putting them in new places in Leigh and also have mobile cameras where they can target hotspots that arise.</p>
<p>A Cllr asked about county lines and whether the local issues are related to it.</p>	<p>Ch/Insp Pudney advised that County Lines are a huge national issue. In Essex there is a good intelligence network and police know who the County Lines are. Children are being exploited and there is work being done with schools and referral units. The Op Raptor team work closely with Trident and the British Transport Police and the force holds a fortnightly meeting with partners to discuss current trends. Unfortunately, this isn't something that police can arrest their way out of it – it requires a multi-pronged approach including early intervention, making parents aware of the signs of gang grooming, as well as using the community policing team and vulnerability team who link in with children who are in danger of and who are already being exploited. The proactive policing approach is so important. Police recently carried out an</p>

	<p>operation in Southend where they recovered £1m of drugs which the National Crime Agency were also involved in.</p> <p>Dep/PFCC Jane Gardner advised that following funding received from the government the PFCC formed a Violence and Vulnerability Hub to deal with this issue. Essex has already received significant funding both from the government and from ECC. The government has also committed a further £1.1m to help tackle serious crime and knife crime.</p>
<p>A local licensee of more than 30 years felt that Leigh licensees have a duty of care not to serve drunk people but they are doing it regardless resulting in so many drunk people in the town, especially at the weekend. This results in antisocial behaviour and violence.</p>	<p>Carl Robinson, Southend Council Head of Public Protection stated that he is currently reviewing licensing policies and has a draft policy going through that looks at strengthening requirements of licensees around not only inside but outside too, including smoking areas and beer gardens.</p>
<p>An audience member asked how the police and fire service are covered at Southend airport in regards to funding and are the services confident they have the ability to deal with a major incident.</p>	<p>Dave Barnard advised that ECFRS have reviewed the risk and growth of the airport and have put in place the required appliances and specialised services. The airport also have their own fire service and grade the required number of appliances and firefighters 1 to 9 dependent on the size of aircraft due in. If they don't have the requisite staff they have the option to tell the airport not to allow the flight to land.</p> <p>They have worked closely with Stansted airport to learn from them and they also run emergency trials throughout the year for training purposes.</p>
<p>A resident had observed a local drug dealer who was prolific in the area and who had young children running drugs on his behalf. Despite numerous calls to the police and the council, he operated from a car that was parked illegally for almost three weeks and no-one seemed to be doing anything around it. Meanwhile there were needles left in the street and the bowling green.</p>	<p>Ch/Insp Pudney requested to speak to the resident afterwards and take further details. Simon Ford also asked to speak to the resident, as the council should have been more proactive.</p>
<p>A member of the audience was witnessing more and more open drug use. Surely if the police cracked down on this it would have an impact on county lines.</p>	<p>Ch/Insp Pudney agreed this needed to be tackled at all levels and work was being done to inform people who take drugs that they are perpetuating all kinds of vulnerability and violence, so they should spend their money elsewhere. He agreed that more still needed to be done to stop recreational drug use.</p>

Leigh Town Council had money for 5 specials but no-one had taken it up – is this an issue county wide?	Dep OPFCC Jane Gardner advised that it isn't an issue as Essex are the second largest Special Constabulary and the fastest growing in the country.
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