



Saffron Walden Public Meeting
Thursday, January 23rd, 2020
Town Hall, Market Square, Saffron Walden
Panel Members: PFCC Roger Hirst
Ch/Insp Janette Rawlingson
NE Area Manager Terry Povey ECFRS

Update from Roger Hirst, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex

PFCC Roger Hirst gave an overview of some of the strategic aspects of his role. He has been making a case to the Home Office on both a local and national level and last year got permission to raise the Council Tax to pay for policing with the Government agreeing to match fund. Over the past two years, the public have paid on average an extra £36 or £3 per month and Essex Police will have 368 officers by the end of March. He explained that Essex Police is now doing more in partnership, more in prevention and crime is starting to come down across the county. Levels of burglary are falling and along with ASB and theft. There is however, more to be done.

He said that Essex Police now has dedicated Town Centre Teams and there is one working in Saffron Walden. Now Essex Police will be focussing on building its investigative capacity and bringing people to justice with the next funding investments going into investigative officers. He explained that there is about to be a Royal Commission into the criminal justice system which is massively stretched. He added that there needs to be better victim support. There are more people coming forward to report crime, but we need to get better at successfully prosecuting cases. If there is investment in more investigative officers, this can be taken forward.

PFCC Roger Hirst is also making sure Essex gets its fair share of the 20,000 officers promised recently by the Government. He also said that £15.8m of Government money will also be coming to Essex. By March next year there will be 500 more officers than Essex Police had in 2016. Within the next three years with the continued programme of growth Essex Police will be as large as it has ever been and has improved technology so officers and staff can be more efficient. He explained that the benefits are starting to be seen from the investments being made.

In terms of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, PFCC Roger Hirst said that the first ever Fire and Rescue Plan was published on March 1st last year. Finances for fire in Essex were robust and improvements are being made to training. He said that the service had started hiring again and investing in the recruitment and retention of on-call firefighters who do a great job. He also said there would be further investment in fire safety and protection.

Update from Chief Inspector Janette Rawlingson, District Commander, Essex Police

C/Insp Janette Rawlingson explained that she had been district commander now for 18 months and has lots of good news to share. There is a great deal of police work going on locally but at the heart of policing in Uttlesford is visibility. Uttlesford has been given its own identity away from Braintree, has its own dedicated community policing team with its own sergeant who works in Uttlesford. There is joint working with partners and other emergency services, showing that the community is stronger if it is together. She said that Saffron Walden has a fantastic town team which is dedicated and out working in all conditions.

C/Insp Rawlingson did explain that there has been an increase in crime, but it is because Essex Police is better at recording crime, more use of stop and search powers and there are more proactive operations being carried out. The Lodge has been refurbished with the help of the Council and officer morale has improved. The Special Constabulary has increased, the Uttlesford Council Offices police front counter has been moved to the front of the building and a new Volunteer Police Cadet Unit has been introduced which has grown from strength to strength. She explained that the volunteers help police in several ways from providing reassurance to crime prevention advice and the young people learn valuable social skills at the same time.

Uttlesford also has more officers working with young people, the Community Safety Partnership has funded bicycles to help officers get around the area off from the main routes to provide visibility. Essex Police’s Rural Engagement Team also carry out a number of patrols and targeted operations. C/Insp Rawlingson also thanked Essex County Fire and Rescue Service for carrying out Safe Well and Secure days in Thaxted, Dunmow and Stansted.

Update from Terry Povey, Group Manager North West, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service

Terry explained that he is responsible for 14 fire stations and 13 of them are on-call. The service covers three areas: protection, prevention and response. The service carries out home fire safety visits which are now known as safe and well visits. These visits cover fire safety as well as looking at things like crime prevention as well as offering advice on trips and fall hazards. He said they use firefighters to carry out home safety visits, they give advice on how to make work places safe as well as gathering information about risks in the area. Even in rural locations there can be a significant amount of risks, but firefighters carry out site visits and have full tactical fire plans in place.

He said that the team at Saffron Walden fire station reach 95% of calls within five minutes. Operationally Newport fire station co-responds with the ambulance service in terms of cardiac emergencies, resulting in people getting there quicker to perform life saving actions. Terry also advised that there are Fire Cadet units in the area and the service has also run some very successful Firebreak schemes with young people.

Questions	Answer
When did the F arrive in PCC?	PFCC – In January 2017 new legislation was passed where PCCs could make a case to replace fire authorities. Essex Fire Authority voted 16 to 2 for me to replace them. I now have governance and accountability for the police and fire services but I am not operational. I have to be a civilian and I represent you. The role

	<p>can be described as similar to the relationship between the chairman of a company board and the chief executive of the company. I appoint and dismiss the chief officers who also have to be responsible to the public. Not many people across the country know who their PCC is but 34 per cent of the people in Essex know who I am which is higher than the national average.</p>
<p>Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and Essex Roads Policing provide a very important service dealing with road accidents, especially on the motorway and there was recently a fatal road crash in Thaxted. More people are likely to be killed on the road than in a fire or murdered. Can you say something about that?</p>	<p>PFCC – That is so correct. The harsh reality is that the four main driving crimes of speeding, drug and drink driving and drivers using mobile phones kill more people than any other crime. These things are more likely to affect our lives as most people know someone who has been killed or injured on our roads. Our roads policing officers do a great job. The Fire and Rescue Service are very often the first on scene and have to cut seriously injured people out of their vehicles. Their emotional resilience in dealing with those situations is phenomenal. The largest number of call outs for the fire and rescue service are false alarms but the service provides amazing response work and powerful prevention work especially in relation to motorbikes. Mainly it is males aged 18 to 25 who are mostly hitting people in their cars. The Safer Essex Roads Partnership is doing a lot of work to try and educate this group of people.</p> <p>C/Insp – In terms of roads policing, we carry out speed checks to try and reduce speeding in the villages, use Tru Cam technology and do 100 checks on cars to see if we can highlight where we have speeders. We also have successful Community Speedwatch schemes. Drug driving is outstripping drink driving and we have got better ways to test for it now. Speeding is a problem for residents. Roads can be described as the arteries of harm and recently we have carried out some really good operations in Dunmow using ANPR and we are trying to tackle as many priorities as we can.</p> <p>Group Manager – Half of our fire appliances are rescue pumps and we now also have heavy rescue pumps including one at Newport for the M11. Firefighters also receive advanced trauma care training.</p>

<p>Congratulations on the success but we need more speed cameras. Tru Cams gives us opportunity of real-life measurement. Can we collectively have more Tru Cams and what are possibilities of civilians being able to use Tru Cams?</p>	<p>C/Insp – Tru Cams are automated and if people are caught speeding it goes through to the ticket office and takes people to court. However, it does fill up court slots. If we have more Tru Cams we won't have enough court slots, so it's a bigger problem than we can solve. We are lucky to have what we do have and combined with the other enforcement we have a bright picture but we can do more.</p>
<p>A few years ago, I was part of a Neighbourhood Watch speed gun campaign, but it died out. My friends and the people who did it were a little disillusioned. The lack of feedback really got to me.</p>	<p>PFCC - I did Community Speedwatch and it was fairly soul destroying but when I got this job, I worked with SERP and the administrator Mary has done an amazing job of bringing it all together again. You do get feedback now and it is a fruitful process. Court slots are part of the problem though. I spoke earlier about the Criminal Justice improvements, so it is being worked on and there is no magic wand. We need to invest in it now to make it work. New technology is also currently being tested that is better than Tru Cam and cheaper.</p>
<p>On Royston roads vehicles are screaming past all the time but I have been told by the police that nothing could be done about it.</p>	<p>C/Insp – We can do something, and I apologise for whoever said that nothing could be done. We will come out and do a 100 check in your area.</p> <p>Action – C/Insp Rawlinsong to follow up with resident directly.</p>
<p>Are we advised to have dash cams in our cars?</p>	<p>PFCC - I think they are excellent. The roads policing team has an Extra Eyes programme and ask people who have dash cams to record appalling driving and then upload to their website. There is a capacity issue but it's working really well, and people are being caught and prosecuted. Stopping someone committing a petty crime on the roads can result in an arrest for something else.</p>
<p>What is your purpose in life? You are a political animal and come between the police and public. We could use the money you spend on your office and there would be less waste. I believe the role is waste of money and a waste of time.</p>	<p>The office costs £1.2m per annum and most of that cost is in staff who work directly for me who commission restorative justice, services for victims as well as sponsoring voluntary organisations across the county who provide support to lots of people. The governance costs are a couple of hundred thousand pounds. I'm like the chairman of a company and someone has to hire or fire the chief constable. I am a bridge between the public and the services. The police authority cost the same in cost terms, but you did not have same transparency or</p>

	<p>commitment. On your behalf I am holding the services to account. It would be great to have the police engage with the public and not need me, but it doesn't work like that. Organisations need focussed accountability.</p> <p>Kay Odessos PFCC Panel Member – there is a Police, Fire and Crime panel that scrutinises the work of the commissioner. We are volunteers. You can attend the meetings and you can put questions to the panel.</p>
<p>You are like Santa Claus come late! It is fantastic news that we are going to get more police officers but at the moment they are only in the capital city of Saffron Walden. We feel second class in Dunmow as we don't have a dedicated town team. Dunmow has grown dramatically and will grow even further. What I would like to see and for you to consider is bringing town police officers to Great Dunmow. We want town centre officers in Great Dunmow and we will help to house them.</p>	<p>PFCC - There is a large administration office for Essex Police in Dunmow. Dunmow is important and we are rolling out extra officers across the county. We are doing things step by step and Dunmow just missed the cut. The line has to go somewhere, and we will be revisiting it.</p>
<p>This is a question from the press. There are inaccuracies in the press briefings given out by Essex Police like road names and locations.</p>	<p>C/Insp – The partnership document is a document that we create local. It is really important to tell lots of people about what we do. If there are inaccuracies in it we need to deal with this and I will go back to the community policing team. We have just got the quarterly satisfaction results and Uttlesford is top of the county for feeling informed. I do blogs, we do articles, we send information through to the councillors.</p> <p>PFCC - Janette has done an amazing job at communicating. There have been big improvements in the past 18 months.</p>
<p>You make a lot of the internet but a lot of elderly people who can't afford the internet or can't use it. These people are being pushed out</p>	<p>PFCC – we cannot and should not cut off non digital communication, we try very hard to have the whole spread. The internet is really good, but there is a lot of crime on the internet and we have to spend time policing it.</p> <p>C/Insp - you make a good point and this is something I have been trying to look at. We used to do Coffee with Cops events but we have transformed that to Drinks with Community Links and tie up with other agencies. We go out to rural communities in a horsebox and do the events there. The blogs in the newspapers were a conscious decision by me to communicate with people</p>

	who like to read a newspaper, we have local community meetings, and these happen really regularly. We've given geographical ownership to our local policing teams and they are spending more time in the streets in that area.
Social media, it's a waste of time.	PFCC - An awful lot of interaction happens on social media. We need to be able to police that, crimes happen online.
The increase in police officers is great but we have been asked in Wendons Ambo to support a community PCSO. It seems difficult to reconcile the difference.	C/Insp - I met with your local council regarding road and traffic problems and one of the solutions was a suggestion of a PCSO alongside other measures.
It is wonderful to have more police officers, but they need to be properly trained. A number don't have high speed response training and spend time sitting in traffic jams.	C/Insp – I am very conscious of our response and where our urban and rural response teams are, it has been raised through our command team and locally based response training is being rolled out. In short, we are aware of the problem, there is a plan and it is being executed. People are being prioritised and trained.
Is there a 24/ 7 response resource in Uttlesford? People in Thaxted don't think there is any policing going on, so it is important for them to know.	C/Insp - Response teams have six officers per shift working out of Uttlesford. They have a cross section of skills, responding to incidents and are trained with taser. Not all the jobs they go to are 999 calls.
Does Stansted Airport pay for its own policing?	PFCC – The Manchester Airport Group which owns Stansted MAG pay for the policing of Stansted. They have a strong unit and support national units. We do sometimes poach their officers. Group Manager - The airport has its own dedicated fire service there too which they pay for. They attend off site calls as well.

Roger Hirst also updated the audience that the people responsible for the recent ATM thefts had been caught and brought to justice which was an update from the previous meeting.

A member of the public also observed that 6.30pm was a little early to hold a meeting and better provision needed to be made for people who have hearing aids.