

PFCC Decision Report

Please ensure all sections below are completed

Report reference number: 001 - 20
Classification (e.g. Not protectively marked/restricted): Not protectively marked
Title of report: CRIME AGAINST BUSINESS STRATEGY
Area of county / stakeholders affected: Countywide
Report by : Darren Horsman
Date of report: 02.01.2020
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1. Purpose of the report

To gain agreement for the Crime Against Business Strategy 2020-2024.

2. Recommendations

That the PFCC agrees the draft Crime Against Business Strategy 2020-2024

3. Benefits of the proposal

Businesses are a vital part of our communities in Essex. By providing goods and services, offering employment and generating wealth they add life and vibrancy to our local communities.

The NPCC definition of business crime is: *"any criminal offence that is committed against a person or property that is associated by the connection of that person or property to a commercial business."*

Essex Police records approximately 24,000 offences against businesses each year. These commercial crime offences make up 17-20% of all recorded crime in Essex. Retail crime (mainly shoplifting) accounts for approximately 40% of commercial crime. The remainder are a variety of offences including fraud, damage and other theft offences (which, together with shoplifting, make up approximately 80% of all commercial crime).

The Crime Against Business Strategy has been developed with businesses and will replace the previous business crime strategy which was published in 2013. The Strategy will increase the focus on preventing crime, helping businesses support each

other and will enable stronger, more structured relationships between the police and businesses at a local, strategic and sector specific level.

If the proposal is agreed, it will deliver a number of objectives including:

- Increased reporting of business crime
- Increasing the confidence of businesses
- Improving crime prevention and helping businesses to help themselves
- Strengthening partnership working

4. Background and proposal

The PFCC in the 2016 Police and Crime Plan committed to “strengthening engagement with local businesses to prevent crime and to help the local economy to thrive”.

To deliver against this commitment, the Commissioner and his team established and developed a number of key strategic relationships with businesses and business representation groups, including the Essex Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses.

This led to the development in 2018 of the Business Crime Strategic Board, chaired by the Essex Chamber of Commerce, with membership drawn from anchor businesses from across Essex, and also including Essex Police, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and the Federation of Small Businesses.

This development coincided with the decision to establish a Business Crime Team as part of the uplift in officers recruited through the 2019/2020 precept increase. In order to maximise the strategic value of this new team, it was agreed that a refreshed Business Crime Strategy would be developed with the input of the Business Crime Strategic Board.

Working in partnership with the Chamber and Essex Police the following strategy development process has been followed:

- Business Crime Strategic Board workshop
- Business Crime Survey (business to business (B2B) promotion)
- Survey results analysed and fed back to the Board
- Draft priorities agreed
- Business Crime Strategy drafted
- Business Crime Strategy designed

Once the strategy has been agreed by the Commissioner, the Chief Constable and Business Crime Strategic Board, a launch event will be organised.

5. Alternative options considered and rejected

We did consider continuing with the existing Essex Police Business Crime Strategy or developing a new strategy without engagement with businesses. However, these two options were rejected as the existing Strategy did not reflect the current operating environment, or highlight the additional resources allocated to business crime. At the same time, it was recognised that with the increased engagement with the business

community over the last few years we had a good opportunity to use that engagement to develop a much more effective strategy, owned and implemented by businesses, the PFCC and Essex Police.

6. Police and Crime Plan

As mentioned above, the development of the strategy and engagement with businesses directly deliver against a specific commitment in the Police and Crime Plan 2016-2020.

7. Police operational implications

The development process will help to inform the activities undertaken by the Business Crime Team.

8. Financial implications

The financial costs of developing the Crime Against Business Strategy were set out and agreed in decision report 131- 2019 (Business Crime Strategy Development).

9. Legal implications

There are no additional legal implications.

10. Staffing implications

There are no direct staff implications involved in this proposal.

11. Equality and Diversity implications

There are no direct additional Equality and Diversity implications, though efforts were made to encourage the involvement of businesses from a wide range of communities across Essex.

While running the survey, measures were also put in place to ensure our responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 were met.

12. Risks

This is a new strategy so does create some risks in terms of implementation and how this will fit within the existing Essex Police operating environment. These have been considered by Essex Police as part of the planning for the new Business Crime Team and feature in how the business crime team will operate.

Maintaining business confidence is also key for the success of the strategy and losing this is a risk to the Strategy's successful implementation. Essex Police's decision to include business representatives within the recruitment panel for the business crime team will mitigate this risk as will the strong ongoing relationships between the PFCC's office and the wider business community.

13. Governance Boards

This decision has been discussed at the Business Crime Strategic Board, Essex Police Chief Officer Group and PFCC's Senior Management Team Meeting.

14. Background papers

Business Crime Survey Report 2019
Business Crime Strategy Development (Decision Sheet 131-2019)

Report Approval

The report will be signed off by the OPFCC Chief Executive and Treasurer prior to review and sign off by the PFCC / DPFCC.

Chief Executive / M.O.

Sign: 

Print: P. Scott-Brewer

Date: 9 March 2020

Chief Finance Officer / Treasurer

Sign: N/A - No financial implications

Print:

Date:

Publication

Is the report for publication?

YES

NO

If 'NO', please give reasons for non-publication (Where relevant, cite the security classification of the document(s). State 'None' if applicable)

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..... N/A

If the report is not for publication, the Chief Executive will decide if and how the public can be informed of the decision.

Redaction

If the report is for publication, is redaction required:

1. Of Decision Sheet? YES
NO

2. Of Appendix? YES
NO

If 'YES', please provide details of required redaction:

.....
..... N/A

Date redaction carried out:

Treasurer / Chief Executive Sign Off – for Redactions only

If redaction is required, the Treasurer or Chief Executive is to sign off that redaction has been completed.

Sign:

Print:

Chief Executive/Treasurer

Decision and Final Sign Off

I agree the recommendations to this report:

Sign:

Print:

PFCC/Deputy PFCC

Date signed:

I do not agree the recommendations to this report because:

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Sign:

Print:

PFCC/Deputy PFCC

Date signed:

