

PFCC Decision Report

Report reference number: 091-20

Classification: Not protectively marked

Title of report: Extension to the Police and Crime Plan 2016-2020

Area of county / stakeholders affected: Countywide

Report by: Darren Horsman (Strategic Head of Policy and Public Engagement)

Date of report: 17.07.2020

Enquiries to: Darren.Horsman@essex.police.uk

1. Purpose of the report

To agree the additional commitments and performance measures added to the Police and Crime Plan 2016-2020 as a result of the postponement of the 2020 Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner election due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

2. Recommendations

That the Commissioner agrees the proposed extension to the Police and Crime Plan including the revised performance measures.

3. Benefits of the proposal

The extension to the Police and Crime Plan 2016-2020 will provide clear strategic direction for Essex Police and provide greater clarity for the public and partners about the Commissioner's commitments to improving community safety during the 2020-2021 financial year.

The extension sets out a series of revised commitments against the seven priorities within the original 2016-2020 Plan.

4. Background and proposal

Statutory context

Under section 5(1) of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner is statutorily required to produce a Police and Crime Plan within the financial year in which they are elected. The current Police and Crime Plan

was therefore developed in 2016 and was designed to run until the election originally scheduled for May 2020. The Plan consists of seven priorities and within each of these priorities are several tangible deliverables. These “We Will” statements, or commitments, were designed to focus effort and provide strategic direction during the initial four-year term.

The anticipated elections in May 2020 for Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, along with the local council elections, were postponed for 12 months as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. As a result of this delay the government passed legislation extending the term of the current Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for a further municipal year, with the next elections now scheduled for May 2021.

Under section 7 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, a Police and Crime Plan has effect from the day on which it is issued until the last day of the financial year in which the next ordinary election is expected to take place. The Home Office’s Police and Crime Commissioner Update (April 2020) therefore confirmed that the postponement of the PFCC election means that the Police and Crime Plan 2016-2020 will stay in place till the next ordinary election in 2021.

However, given the 12 month delay in the election and the fact that the original “We Will” statements within the 2016-2020 Plan were designed for a four year term, the Commissioner has taken the decision to extend the current Plan by reviewing the “We Will” statements to account for commitments already delivered and other work planned and ongoing in pursuit of the existing priorities and, where appropriate, adding additional measures to reflect additional commitments. The other elements of the Plan, such as the vision, enablers and broad priority areas will not change.

Development Process

From September 2019 to April 2020 the Commissioner ran a public engagement exercise called *#MakeADifference*. This activity set out the progress that had been achieved over the last three and a half years and asked what respondents wanted to see from the Commissioner and Essex Police in the future. This programme included a range of engagement activity from face-to-face meetings, public meetings and group discussions to an online survey supported by a series of short videos, news articles and social media content. Activity was designed to reach a cross section of the public so, to supplement the survey, which tends to be undertaken by a slightly older demographic, specific engagement was designed with young people and BAME communities. This included a Young Persons Conference focusing on the emergency services developed in partnership with the Essex Young Assembly and the involvement of the Strategic Independent Advisory Group (IAG), Southend Ethnic Minority Forum and the Essex Faith Covenant among others.

This feedback was used as part of our ongoing engagement work and was originally intended to provide a basis for the development of the new Police and Crime Plan from May 2020 onwards. Given the current situation, we have used the feedback to inform the extension of the Plan.

The survey was completed by 730 people and showed a strong preference for more visible policing within communities, a focus on neighbourhood policing, tackling anti-social behaviour and tackling gangs and violent crime. The survey report is attached as Appendix B to this paper.

These high-level results correspond with the feedback we have received through our engagement activity since 2016. As part of the annual Paying for Policing Survey we have included a set question relating to where people would like to see extra investment. Since this has been run, visible policing has been the most requested area for extra investment with anti-social behaviour and neighbourhood policing also being high on the list. One area that we have seen change over the last three years is the public desire for more investment in tackling gangs and violent crime, which has become more important to the public. This has been reflected both in our public surveys and our ongoing engagement programme.

Using this information as our guide, we have worked closely with Essex Police to update and revise the “We Will” commitments within the Plan. We have also had the benefit of face-to-face workshops with the Police, Fire and Crime Panel, Council Leaders, Council Chief Executives, Members of Parliament for Essex and the Strategic Independent Advisory Group (IAG) facilitated by the Police.

To supplement these workshops, we have also engaged with our partners from across Essex to seek their views and input. This has included the Essex Association of Local Councils, Neighbourhood Watch, Community Safety Partnership Managers, representatives from the business community, rural community and voluntary sector as well as several commissioned services.

This feedback has provided reassurance that the 2016-2020 Plan is still very much aligned to the priorities of the public and partners. The range of engagement has also given us the opportunity to refine and redraft many of the “We Will” commitments. While this process has been necessarily quick, it has been productive, and we have been pleased by the level of engagement we have received. Input from the Chief Constable and the Police, Fire and Crime Panel has been incorporated into the attached “We Will” commitments.

Revised “We Will” commitments

The revised “We Will” commitments, included as part of the Police and Crime Plan Extension 2020-2021 as attached as Appendix A, are the result of this engagement and have regard to the recommendations received from the Panel. They include a number of “We Will” commitments that were in the original 2016-2020 Plan; a number that have been updated to reflect the specific areas of focus for the next 12 months, and a variety of new commitments that are designed to address the increased concern around gangs and violence and the potential challenges raised by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Performance Measures

To reflect the revised “We Will” commitments, several extra performance measures have been included and a new complete table of performance measures is included. As this is an extended Plan and not a new Plan, we have mainly kept the original key performance measures but have also added several new measures. These new measures take advantage of our improved performance measurement techniques such as the ability to utilise the Crime Severity Harm Score that takes the average sentence for offences to provide a much clearer barometer of the level of harm caused by all crime in Essex.

Given the short-term nature of this extension, these new measures will run side by side with the established measures for the period of the Plan so we can track progress for the full five-year period of the plan and the one-year extension.

5. Alternative options considered and rejected

The option not to develop an extension to the Police and Crime Plan was considered but rejected as this would result in reduced clarity of direction for Essex Police and increase the risk that progress against the seven priorities would slow as many of the existing commitments have been met.

A number of different formats were considered, including a lighter touch document, however it was agreed that the document needed to make sense to members of the public as a stand-alone document so a fuller document based on the 2016-2020 original Plan was developed.

6. Police and Crime Plan

This extension of the Police and Crime Plan will replace the existing Police and Crime Plan, so is the key strategic reference point for all policing activity.

7. Police operational implications

The extension of the Plan was developed in close collaboration with Essex Police's Chief Officer Group (including the Chief Constable) and included input from officers and staff from across the force. The Plan will feed directly into the Force Control Strategy and the Chief Constable's Plan on a Page and so will have significant implications for operational policing.

8. Financial implications

While most of the work was undertaken by our existing communications and engagement team, some additional services were used to develop the plan. To develop, design and host the partner survey we used an external company and to undertake the analysis of the results we also used an external specialist. We also used an external designer to develop the final document.

Itemised costs

Development, design and hosting of Partner Survey	£975
Analysis of partner survey results	£330
Design of the Police and Crime Plan Extension document	£2,025

Total £3,330

Apart from the development costs there are no specific, direct financial implications resulting from the Plan. However, the document does include a page on finance which sets out the income and expenditure plans for Essex Police and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner over this period.

9. Legal implications

The legal context for this extension is set out in the Background section above. There are no additional legal implications beyond this.

10. Staffing implications

There are no direct staffing implications.

11. Equality and Diversity implications

There are significant equality and diversity implications as a result of this Plan and, as such, during the development of the Plan significant work was undertaken with stakeholders, partners and the public to ensure we understood and fully took into account the requirements of different communities and groups across Essex and our own obligations under legislation. Engagement was undertaken with all councils across Essex, and MPs and Council Leaders were also asked for their views. Prior to the development phase, we held a six-month engagement exercise with members of the public asking for the views of different groups across Essex.

We shared a draft of the Plan with police staff and officers and presented the draft to the Essex Police Strategic Independent Advisory Group (IAG). We incorporated feedback from all these engagement activities, and they are reflected in the attached plan extension.

Feedback was received on the commitments being made in relation to domestic abuse, sexual assault and hate crime. All these areas feature within the Plan, with the feedback received being both useful and insightful. We also received feedback about the Commissioner's role in scrutinising Stop and Search data. While this didn't fit directly within the Plan, this feedback was incorporated into the Commissioner's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and within one of the equality objectives contained within this.

12. Risks

The document sets an ambitious plan for the current financial year which presents the risk that it isn't fully achieved within the timeframe. To mitigate this risk, key elements of the Plan have been reflected within the Commissioner's risk register and have been incorporated into the Commissioner's scrutiny programme. These actions will ensure sustained focus is brought on delivering the Plan so that, if delivery does start to be at risk, swift action can be taken.

13. Governance Boards

The extension to the Police and Crime Plan 2016-2020 has been discussed at the Commissioner's Senior Management Team, Strategic Board and at the Police, Fire and Crime Panel. Performance will be tracked through the Performance and Resources Board.

14. Background papers

Annex A – Police and Crime Plan Extension 2020-2021

Annex B – #MakeADifference Evaluation Report

Annex C - Police and Crime Plan Extension 2020-2021 Equality Impact Assessment

Report Approval

The report will be signed off by the PFCC’s Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer prior to review and sign off by the PFCC / DPFC.

Chief Executive / M.O.

Sign:

Print: P. Brent-Isherwood

Date: 1 October 2020

Chief Finance Officer

Sign:

Print: Elizabeth Helm

Date: 5 October 2020

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)

.....
.....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

2. Of Appendix?

YES

NO

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.

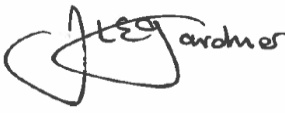
Sign:

Print:

Chief Executive/Treasurer

Decision and Final Sign Off

I agree the recommendations to this report:

Sign: 

Print: Jane Gardner

Deputy PFCC

Date signed: 6 October 2020

I do not agree the recommendations to this report because:

.....
.....
.....

Sign:

Print:

PFCC/Deputy PFCC