



Minutes of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex

Thurrock Online Public Meeting

12<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Panel Members PFCC Roger Hirst, Dep PFCC Jane Gardner, Ch/Insp Richard Melton, Essex Police,  
Mark Diggory, ECFRS Station Manager

Questions	Answers
<p>A member of the public has consistently reported drug dealing taking place next door to them and nothing seems to be done. What was the point in reporting?</p>	<p>Ch/Insp Melton – drug dealing does not have a place in the district. It brings all kinds of other crime with it including turf wars and knife crime. Fortunately, there are not too many rival gangs in Thurrock. The C17 who were operating out of London via county lines in Thurrock has had significant disruption through great activity thanks to the efforts of the Essex Police Op Raptor teams.</p> <p>It is vital people keep reporting in crime as the information is gathered as intelligence and is shared with partners where applicable, to help build a</p>

	<p>case and achieve a significant prosecution rather than a quick win. He requested for the public to keep the information coming through.</p>
<p>How many arrests have been made in Thurrock for public not achieving social distancing compared to reports made by the public?</p>	<p>PFCC – Thurrock FPNs are slightly lower than other areas. Police will only respond to gatherings etc in public areas as they cannot enter homes and gardens without a significant reason. To date there has been around 150 fixed penalty notices and only 18 people arrested county wide. Ch/Insp Melton advised the interaction they have had with the public has been largely positive and often just a case of educating around the lockdown measures.</p>
<p>Chafford Hundred – there are lot of youths hanging around inhaling nitro oxide canisters and speeding. It's getting worse through lockdown.</p>	<p>Ch/Insp Melton – during lockdown there has been less overall demand which meant police can attend illegal gatherings and ASB, and he urged the public to keep the intelligence coming through. There have been some problems around nuisance motor-cycles. While he was not aware of a specific issue in Chafford Hundred he would request an update from his community team and look into the matter.</p>
<p>101 issues – when calling 101 callers often have to wait for 30 minutes or more. This deters people from reporting. What has been done to address this?</p> <p>Also, Crimestoppers don't respond back when crime is reported. Does the PFCC have a view on that?</p>	<p>PFCC – Crimestoppers is a very effective service and they normally give a good response and also pass all information to police, so he would urge people to report via the service.</p> <p>101 is an issue and it would be useful for those who are able to report online to do so as it frees the phone for those unable to report online. 101 waiting times have been halved as a lot of investment has been made to the service. The impact of C-19 means there have been less reports of crime taking place and has also had an impact on calls to 101 as wait times are coming down. It also means there has been a lack of reporting for child exploitation and domestic violence, so may not reflect an accurate picture at present.</p>

<p>Covid 19 has impacted on the reporting of hidden harms such as domestic abuse and child exploitation. Are police and ECFRS equipped to respond to the most vulnerable?</p>	<p>Essex police have a very clear focus on getting the right resources to the people who need it and being visible to the public, helping vulnerable people and engaging where needed throughout Covid-19. ECFRS has seen a dip in calls but although calls are down, response times are good as there is excellent availability of teams and appliances.</p>
<p>A lot of residents have complained about ASB including bad behaviour, speeding, inconsiderate driving and nuisance motorbikes etc. What can residents do to help police tackle the issues in their communities?</p>	<p>ASB is often reported in Thurrock terms of town centres and high streets and that's been a growing trend. However, the new town centre teams has seen an improvement. Visible policing is the best deterrent for ASB. We've also been supported by Thurrock Council with uplift for 4 officers on top of the town centre teams.</p> <p>Another aspect of ASB in the district is motorcycles which plagues all of Thurrock. Essex Police have specific plans to deal with them but we need to have the reports from the public so please keep reporting and as soon as police are able they will attend. There are a number of reports in Chadwell and Tilbury. OP Cesare is a local initiative where officers proactively go out and find offenders and are having some good results. To date officers have seized 24 moto-cycles as well as issuing a number of enforcement notices to fifty plus people.</p>
<p>Following the very tragic deaths of 39 Vietnamese what actions are EP taking to make sure this is not repeated ever again.</p>	<p>From a local perspective there are a number of ports that need to taken into account. Essex Police need a whole system approach to this complex issue. Initiatives include better sharing of information through agencies such as Border Force and the council. Also need to engage better with the port authorities and share intel including where people have come from and give victims the best police response when turning up at incidents. Police also engage and share the information through Ports Watch and treat the ports as a community in their own right and do everything possible to not have a repeat of the awful incident in October.</p>
<p>Why are travellers being treated differently in Covid 19 and being allowed to travel where they like?</p>	<p>Travellers are not being treated differently. If they are travellers and not people who have a home and a caravan they are being asked to remain in one place. The travelling community usually has a large gathering this time of year but this has been cancelled. There has been a fraction of unlawful incursions but the vast majority have complied with restrictions.</p>

<p>Why do you think we are seeing an increase in house fires and what can we do to say safe at home?</p>	<p>The increase in house fires is due to people burning their garden rubbish and bonfires. Message is please don't burn rubbish in the garden and store safely until refuse sites reopen. People can find about more about fire preventions at – <a href="http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk">www.essex-fire.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>The PFCC said we have more officers in Essex but how many will be 'enough'?</p>	<p>PFCC believes the Chief Constable will always ask for more as there is always a good case for more, but have to balance against the burden of taxation. Crime was coming down until 2015 when the increase began, but in order to get back to declining crime we need around the 3,400 figure and we are not far off that figure now. Added to the investment in technology it will give more hours of visible policing.</p>
<p>What are the services doing to look after vulnerable people during Covid 19?</p>	<p>ECFRS – Community Safety Teams are conducting calls to vulnerable people in the community and doing physical visits where needed. Also issuing staff with PPE to protect crews. We are in a good position at the moment to respond to call outs.</p> <p>Essex Police – keeping vulnerable people safe is a core priority of the service. Risks we see are increasing online risk which is an emerging modern crime and we have specifically trained teams to target the vulnerable online. Domestic Violence is also an issue and we have dedicated teams who have specialist training and focus on this area of harm. We have community policing teams that look at specific local issues such as ASB and vulnerable families. We recognise vulnerability and train our officers accordingly.</p>
<p>What would the services say to people who are thinking of a career in the services?</p>	<p>ECFRS – it's an excellent career and the teams are fantastic to work with. The job is tremendously rewarding.</p> <p>EP – can't recommend a career in the emergency services enough. Our doors are open so come along and talk to us about what we do. You can also join the Specials and volunteer as a warranted officer.</p>
<p>In 2016 the PFCC committed to growing the Special Constabulary. How is this going?</p>	<p>Specials are growing really well but had over 160 of them join the regular officers in the last year. We are around 520 at the moment but has gone really well and is the fastest growing in the country and second largest</p>

	behind the Met. They do an amazing job and are volunteering more hours per month year on year.
Will the PFCC launch an emergency fund for vulnerable children affected domestic abuse under Covid 19 and are you providing help for community groups.	PFCC – Yes, we are providing a funding of £150k through the Essex Community Foundation and people can apply through there.