

Uttlesford Online Public Meeting - 13th October 2020
Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, Roger Hirst
Deputy Police, fire and Crime Commissioner, Jane Gardener
Councillor Colin Day - Uttlesford District Council
Inspector Colin Cox
Supt Claire Talbot
Terry Povey

Jane Gardner began the meeting by introducing herself as the Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and explained that she would be the host of the meeting and put forward any questions to the panel. She then began to ask the panel to introduce themselves.

Terry Povey is a group manager for Essex Fire and Rescue Service and is responsible for the North West groups of Essex, covering Uttlesford.

Councillor Colin Day is a cabinet member. He is responsible for community safety. He is also Chair of the Uttlesford Safety Partnership.

Superintendent Claire Talbot is Deputy Head of Contact Management, who is responsible for the force control room.

Inspector Colin Cox is a Community Policing Team Inspector who covers Uttlesford and Braintree.

Roger Hirst is the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex.

Question	Answer
<p>There are concerns on the area being so rural. Many people feel isolated in these areas. They don't feel like they get the response they need from policing. What is the PCC's commitment to dealing with rural crime?</p> <p>How can crime be reported? And why is it important to report crime?</p>	<p>PFCC Roger Hirst - Roger explained that often it is hard to understand and deal with rural crime due to the isolation. There are teams and drones to help these areas, but a lack of patrol and longer response times. A rural crime forum and rural crime team has been set up which has been successful and has been doubled in size. There is also a strategy in place and further investment.</p> <p>Inspector Claire Talbot - She urges people to report crime as it forms part of an intelligence picture to target key areas with patrols and resources. People can get in contact through 999, 101 and also online live chat on the Essex Police website (open 7am-11pm). Also, an online reporting tool for ASB.</p> <p>PFCC Roger Hirst - he explained there was also Neighbourhood Watch and Farm Watch where people can provide information and intelligence.</p>
<p>A resident has explained that there are burglaries and they have not received a police response they are happy with. What does this do to victims' motivations to report?</p>	<p>PFCC Roger Hirst - He agreed that if you report crime to the police and the crime isn't addressed, it will deter people from bothering to report crime. However, it is also important to report crime, as it may be that the police could take a while to get there</p>

<p>What can your officers do on those reassurance messages?</p> <p>Tell us about what you do when you go out and do safe and well visits.</p>	<p>due to circumstance. He said victims must be supported, and so reporting is important to build intelligence in an area. The number of arrests while a crime takes place is quite few. But reporting helps to draw a picture so officers can intervene and make arrests. He urges residents to report</p> <p>Councillor Colin Day - The community safety partnership plays a large role and rural crime is a priority for them. Chief Inspector Bowling who leads the Rural Engagement Team had a large input in this. The partners have been visiting meetings and listening to concerns and giving advice on crime prevention. He explained that COVID-19 has reduced in person communications. He stated that he understands rural residents can feel isolated, but he is grateful to have the volunteer service who are trained in mental welfare. He realises he must do more. The fire service also provides information and support.</p> <p>Terry Povey- usually the service does home safety visits to ensure planning and safety within the house. Now it is a more partnered approach with the police service where they look at security and safety. COVID-19 had an impact, but they rethought them and still continue to do them and they are successful.</p>
<p>A lot of people are experiencing increasing concerns regarding hare coursing. What is being done to deal with this?</p>	<p>Inspector Colin Cox - He explained that whilst it is rife in the rural district of Uttlesford, there is a decline in the number of reports, which is largely due to the Rural Engagement teams who target and dedicate days to action. Also coordinated approach with other counties. They have also been training officers in ASB and utilising better technologies. Cameras and AMPR recognition are another intelligence the officers use.</p> <p>PFCC Roger Hirst - A few years ago there were 166 hare coursing events. It has gone down to 142 last year and 71 so far this year.</p>
<p>Has the pandemic impacted on recruitment numbers for officers?</p>	<p>PFCC Roger Hirst - Recruitment is going well.</p> <p>Terry Povey - Recruitment will increase in future. On-call recruitment is a challenge and two squads were lost due to the pandemic. But he said he is planning on taking on 72 on-call firefighters. He encourages people to consider this.</p> <p>PFCC Roger Hirst - Crime has started to rise. So, Roger explained that he is trying to increase recruitment and finance available. There are now</p>

	<p>another 515 more officers than four years ago. The government uplift programme means that the force will be more than 800 officers than four years ago.</p> <p>Inspector Colin Cox - There are Special Constables also, which is also a means of recruitment.</p>
<p>Speeding through villagers from sixty to thirty miles per hour and drivers don't slow down. Is a community speed watch group and option? Are these groups still happening in COVID?</p>	<p>PFCC Roger Hirst - During the pandemic, emptier roads caused people to drive badly, in fact they caught someone doing 90mph in a village. Community Speed Watch has been introduced again as it does make a difference. He explained that road crime is an awful crime, and crimes such as drunk driving and speeding kill more people than any other crime. He urges people to speak out if they see poor driving.</p>
<p>What are your views on using ANPR cameras to deter crime?</p>	<p>Councillor Colin Day - He explained that anything that can deter crime is good, but money must be weighed up as the COVID situation has reduced the amount of money available.</p> <p>PFCC Roger Hirst - ANPR helps to spot stolen vehicles and can be useful to keep track of people crossing borders. Recently more ANPR cameras have been signed off.</p>
<p>How are the police responding to drug dealing. Often the residents feel as though the police don't attend.</p>	<p>Inspector Colin Cox - He began by encouraging people to report any suspicious behaviour. People must understand each piece of information is part of a larger intelligence. He encourages people to report any information.</p>
<p>What is the fire safety messaging from ECFRS for bonfires and firework night?</p>	<p>Terry Povey - This week is candle safety week which he explained as being a significant week. This is because last year there were 33 house fires started by candles. He encourages people to be safe with candles. As for fireworks, he encourages people not to use domestic fireworks and to be careful.</p>
<p>What more can be done to improve two way communication between police and people reporting crime?</p>	<p>Supt Claire Talbot - She explained that there has been the introduction of Live chat where people can contact the police and get advice. They can also attend coffee with cops events, 101 calls (where waiting times have been reduced). There is also a quality of service team where people can challenge the current methods and suggest improvements. There is also online reporting, in person discussions with officers, safety partnerships. It is accessible and constantly improving.</p> <p>Inspector Colin Cox - He explained that they have different engagements such as door knockings in rural locations to ensure there are no concerns.</p>

<p>What things do you do to ensure the police engage with the public locally?</p>	<p>COVID has made a difference but they are still trying to put these measures in place. Coffee with cops happens outside now so engagement can still happen. Live Facebook Q&A sessions occur for engagement too.</p>
<p>What has been one really successful thing within partnership work?</p>	<p>Councillor Colin Day - The hub is a very successful initiative. He explained that he also has a Police Constable attached to the hub as well, and she plays a vital role as she knows Uttlesford well.</p>
<p>By the end of this year, what would you like to achieve?</p>	<p>PFCC Roger Hirst - He explained that serious violence driven by drugs must be decreased. The launch of the Violence and Vulnerability Programme last September stopped the increase. Through partnership, finance and arrests they will crack down on the crime. Stop and search must be increased and intervention work within health, social services and education to stop young children out of gangs. It is also important to stop domestic abuse. Lots has been done to stop it, but more must be done in dealing with perpetrators and stopping them from repeating offences. Driving police officer numbers is another priority to ensure that Essex will be stronger than it has ever been.</p>