

Strategic Board Programme 2021/2022

Report to: the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex

Title of Report:	Police and Crime Plan Development
Agenda Number:	
Chief Officer	Pippa Brent-Isherwood (Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer)
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Report from:	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex's office
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Author on behalf of Chief Officer:	Darren Horsman (Strategic Head of Policy and Public Engagement)
Date of Approval:	

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to agree the draft Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024 attached at Annex 1, including the measures attached at Annex 2 prior to it being presented to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel for final endorsement.

2.0 Recommendations

That the Strategic Board endorses, or amends as necessary, the Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024 attached at Annex 1, including the measures attached at Annex 2, prior to it being presented to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel on 21st October for further discussion and final agreement.

3.0 Executive Summary

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 requires the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to issue a Police and Crime Plan for their term of office, setting out how they plan to discharge their responsibilities; to secure and maintain efficient and effective policing services, and to hold the Chief Constable to account for the operational delivery of this. The Police and Crime Plan must be developed "as soon as practicable" after the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner takes office, and in any case within the financial year in which they are elected.

The Police and Crime Plan is the primary document through which the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner sets out their vision and objectives for policing and communicates these to local communities, service users, delivery partners and other stakeholders. It brings together police, partners and the people of Essex to build safe and secure communities, thereby promoting public confidence in policing and ensuring that victims are satisfied with the service and support they receive. The priorities in the Police and Crime Plan provide the primary basis on which the Commissioner will hold the Chief Constable to account for the performance of Essex Police throughout the electoral term, and will be used by the Chief Constable (alongside other considerations) to set the Force Plan. It also provides a framework by which the Commissioner's achievements during their term of office are likely to be judged by the public and other commentators (e.g. local media). As such, it is an important strategic document guiding police activity and the use of public funds, and which both the Commissioner and the Chief Constable must have "due regard" to when discharging their statutory functions.

Before issuing or varying a Police and Crime Plan, the Commissioner must, as a minimum:

- (a) Prepare a draft of the Plan or variation;
- (b) Consult the Chief Constable in preparing the draft Plan or variation;
- (c) Send the draft plan or variation to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel;
- (d) Have regard to any report or recommendations made by the Panel in relation to the draft plan or variation;
- (e) Give the Panel a response to any such report or recommendations, and
- (f) Publish any such response.

In addition, the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 requires the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, after consulting with the Chief Constable, to obtain the views of the people of Essex in general, and of victims of crime in particular, about matters concerning the policing of the area and their co-operation with the police in preventing crime and anti-social behaviour in the area. Those arrangements must include arrangements for obtaining their views on the Police and Crime Plan.

The Commissioner must ensure that the Police, Fire and Crime Panel has a reasonable amount of time in which to review the draft Plan or variation and to make its report or recommendations to the Commissioner.

In this instance, the Commissioner indicated their wish to publish the Police and Crime Plan 2021 – 2024 by November 2021. The approach to developing the Plan was shared with Strategic Board on 10th June 2021 and this was endorsed.

4.0 Current Work and Performance

4.1 Development of the Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024

The Police and Crime Plan 2021 – 2024 is based on the manifesto commitments on which the Commissioner fought and won re-election to the office of Police, Fire and

Crime Commissioner in May 2021. It is also informed by a range of documents and evidence including:

- Various internal documents, including the Annual Report for 2020/21, Strategic Board and Performance & Resources Board papers, the results of the ongoing independent public confidence and victim satisfaction survey jointly commissioned by the Commissioner and the Chief Constable.
- The four strategic policing pillars set out by the Home Secretary earlier in 2021:
 - A relentless focus on cutting crime;
 - A resilient workforce;
 - Stronger and more diverse leadership, and
 - Ensuring we are trusted by the public to work together as one, providing national grip over the law enforcement system.
- The major national documents concerning policing, in particular the Beating Crime Plan, Policing Vision covering the period 2017 – 2025, the Strategic Policing Requirement, and the new National Crime and Policing Measures, which set out the Government's key national priorities on crime under the following headings:
 - Reduce murder and other suicides
 - Reduce serious violence
 - Disrupt drugs supply and county lines
 - Reduce neighbourhood crime
 - Tackle cyber crime
 - Improve satisfaction among victims (with a particular focus on victims of domestic abuse)
- A range of presentations from police leads on each of the draft priority areas, followed by extensive discussion and debate from a wide range of police colleagues.
- Workshop discussions with over 100 partner organisations including local councils, charities, support groups, advisory groups and interest groups.
- Feedback from victim support groups
- A range of feedback following presentations at multi agency groups and special interest groups such as Safer Essex, Essex Partners, Basildon Diversity Forum and disability advisory groups.
- Feedback obtained through the public survey
- Feedback obtained through the Youth Voice project undertaken by the Essex Council for Voluntary Youth Services.

In total over 1000 people have been involved in conversations around the Police and Crime Plan with a further 1500 people participating in the public survey.

4.2 Other Interdependencies and Considerations

As well as the data and intelligence referenced above, information was gathered from the plans and strategies of key partner organisations and groups (both already existing and in development) to ensure that, where appropriate, plans align, and priorities do not conflict.

Several national developments have taken place during the development of the Plan including the launch of the Government's Beating Crime Plan. Wherever possible these developments have been fed into the development of the Plan and been appropriately reflected. Where national strategies or priorities are still being finalised, such as the refresh of the national Strategic Policing Requirement, the latest published version has been used in the document and included within the analysis and development of the Commissioner's local priorities. The Plan will be varied if necessary, following the process set out in section 3.0 above, once these national documents are finalised.

4.3 Strategic Oversight

The development of the Plan has been led and overseen on behalf of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner by their Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, supported by the Director of Strategic Change and Analytics on behalf of the Chief Constable as a key stakeholder. Regular Strategic Group meetings have been held to keep the project on track and a further operational group was established to coordinate and align activity.

Regular discussions have been held at the Commissioner's Senior Management Team and Chief Constable's Chief Officer Group throughout the development process to ensure the process has been transparent and collaborative. The Commissioner and Chief Constable have also discussed development of the Plan at regular intervals through their monthly Performance Management meetings.

5.0 Implications (Issues)

5.1 Links to Police and Crime Plan Priorities

The Police and Crime Plan 2021 – 2024 will set the overarching strategic priorities for policing during the Commissioner's current term of office.

5.2 Demand / Resource Implications

The development of the Plan took a considerable commitment from the Commissioner's and Chief Constable's teams. To develop a designed version of the Plan, undertake the public survey, commission independent analysis of these results and commission a listening project to reach young people also required a financial commitment of up to £10,000, though it is anticipated the final costs will be lower than this.

5.3 Risks / Mitigation

Statutorily the Commissioner must provide a copy of the Police and Crime Plan to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel for review. They must also have regard to any report or recommendations made by the Panel. This may result in changes to the attached Plan. To mitigate this risk a working group has been established with the Panel to share the Plan during its development and to take on the Panel's views as it has been developed.

While this has mitigated the risk, it is still probable that further small changes will be requested by the Panel. The Commissioner has committed to highlighting any changes accepted following this feedback to the version attached to this paper, with the Chief Constable and his team in good time prior to the Plan being publicly launched.

It was also possible that partners or key stakeholders would not adequately buy into the Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024 making its delivery harder. The engagement approach undertaken throughout the Plan's development was designed specifically to mitigate this risk and feedback throughout has been positive. This indicates that this risk will not be realised.

5.4 Equality and / or Human Rights Implications

Significant effort has been made to ensure that people from communities across Essex have had the opportunity to engage and participate in the development process. Following our learning from similar development processes in the past and the findings of the ongoing independent public perception and victim satisfaction survey, we included within the engagement process specific activity to ensure we heard from young people, people from diverse communities (including faith groups) and victims of crime.

A full equality impact assessment has been undertaken to ensure that the Plan meets its statutory obligations and contributes to delivering an equitable and fair criminal justice system for the people of Essex.

5.5 Health and Safety Implications

There are no health and safety implications arising directly from this report.

6.0 Consultation / Engagement

As set out in section 3.0 above, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner is required to make arrangements, after consulting with the Chief Constable, to obtain the views of the people of Essex in general, and of victims of crime in particular, about matters concerning the policing of the area and their co-operation with the police in preventing crime and anti-social behaviour in the area. Those arrangements must include arrangements for obtaining their views on the Police and Crime Plan.

In developing the Police and Crime Plan, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner also has statutory duties to consult with the Chief Constable and to have regard to the relative priorities of each responsible authority (including local authorities, the fire and rescue service and Clinical Commissioning Groups). Chief officers of police and local authorities likewise have statutory duties to co-operate with the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner in the formulation of their Police and Crime Plan.

The development process undertaken has allowed for wide ranging engagement activity both with mandated consultees and with wider partners and the public. This has been delivered to foster a sense of purpose and strategic direction among the wider criminal justice system within the county.

The engagement activity undertaken is outlined in Annex 3, while the results the commissioned Youth Voice project is included in Annex 4. A full public survey has also been undertaken with 1500 people responding to the survey and 535 people completing the survey in full. Key findings from the survey include:

- The priorities given the highest order of importance by respondents were *Further investment in crime prevention* and *Reducing drug driven violence*, followed by *Reducing violence against women and girls*.
- The priorities with the highest level of agreement were *Supporting officers and staff*, *Reducing violence against women and girls*, and *Reducing drug driven violence* where over 60% of respondents strongly agreed with the priority.
- The majority of respondents agreed with the We Will statements, although 10-15% disagreed with five statements under improving safety on our roads, three under increasing collaboration, two under further investment in crime prevention, two under reducing drug driven violence, and one under protecting rural areas (where in addition, 30% disagreed with the We Will “Support the development of a transit site for temporary accommodation for travellers”).
- A range of comments were made, mainly about specific points under each priority. However, across all of the priorities, there were a number of comments about the need for more police visibility or presence, more police officers, or the return of community/neighbourhood policing.

A full written report is being developed and will be published alongside the Police and Crime Plan for the Police, Fire and Crime Panel on 21st of October. The completed Equality Impact Assessment will also be published alongside the Plan at this stage.

7.0 Actions for Improvement

A full evaluation of the development process will be undertaken to capture learning for the future. The data and intelligence feeding into this will be sourced from:

- Social media reach and engagement figures;
- Attendance levels at engagement events;
- Event feedback;
- Participation rates for the proposed public survey, and
- Number of hits on the relevant web pages

Throughout its duration, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner must keep the Police and Crime Plan under review and exercise their powers to vary it accordingly, particularly in light of any report or recommendations made to the Commissioner by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel on their Annual Report and in respect of any changes to the Strategic Policing Requirement issued by the Secretary of State under section 37A of the Police Act 1996. Should the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner feel the need to vary the Plan at any point they must, as a minimum, consult the Chief Constable and the Police, Fire and Crime Panel on such variation before issuing it.

8.0 Future Work / Development and Expected Outcome

Delivery of the expected outcomes from the plan will be monitored through the performance framework that has been developed as part of the overall development process. The Plan will also inform the Commissioner's scrutiny programme and work with partners across Essex.

9.0 Decisions Required by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

As set out in section 2.0 above