

## Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex

### Communications and Engagement Strategy: 2021-2024

#### **Introduction**

As we start a new term for the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, it is important to revisit our approach to public engagement and communications to ensure it still aligns to the aspirations and strategic intent of the Commissioner. It will also provide a useful tool in informing our annual plans over the coming three years.

#### **Context**

The Commissioner has committed within the Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024 and the Fire and Rescue Plan 2019 – 2024 to continue to strive towards a vision that safe and secure communities are the bedrock on which we can all prosper and thrive.

This provides clear continuity with the strategic ambition from the previous term but also a new focus as we set out to deliver a strategic shift to prevention, to protect vulnerable people and get crime down.

In line with this approach the Communications and Engagement Strategy: 2021-2024 will provide significant continuity with activity over the previous four years while also delivering against the Commissioner's ambition for the next three-year term.

The Communication and Engagement Strategy 2017-2020, which was extended to 2021 following the postponement of the election, positioned communications and engagement as a strategic level function supporting the Commissioner to deliver his vision as well as the underlying constitutional purpose of the role.

This was articulated by the government when introducing the role of PCCs, with the essence that they should be:

*'The local link between the police and communities, working to turn the desires and ambitions of the public in terms of policing and crime reduction, into action.'*

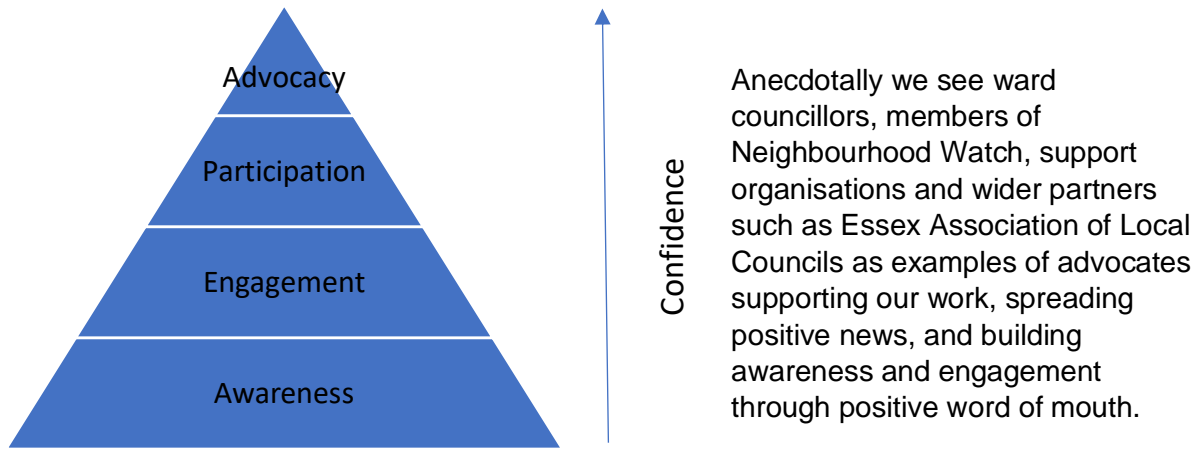
*'PCCs need to make sure the policing needs of their communities are met as effectively as possible, bringing communities closer to the police, building confidence in the system and restoring trust'*

While we need to broaden the focus of this statement to reflect the increased remit of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, including responsibilities for Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, the intent behind this statement is still at the heart of the role which is *'to give communities a voice, to give effect to their desires in relation to community safety, bring communities, police and fire and rescue services closer together and build confidence in the system'*.

#### **Analysis and areas for development**

Since the introduction of the SMSR Public Confidence Survey, we have tracked public awareness of the role of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex. Our assumption, based on the statutory rationale for the role of PFCCs, and evidence around brand loyalty in commercial environments, is that greater awareness needs to be built before we can establish engagement, then participation and finally advocacy. Public confidence

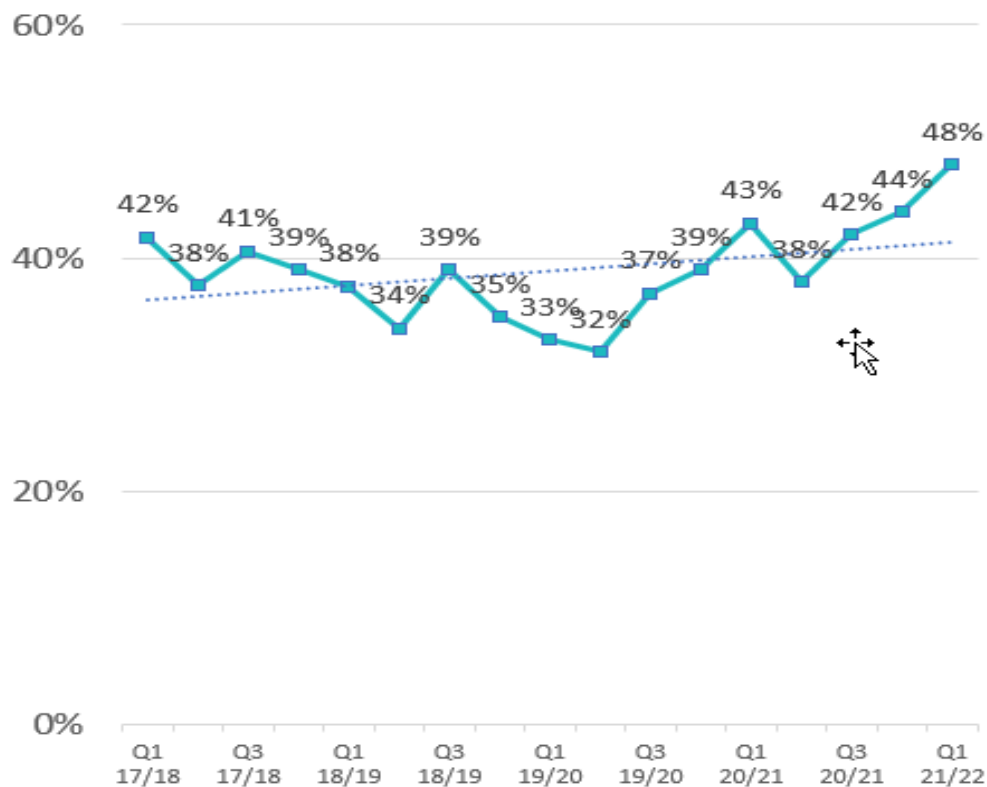
grows throughout the processes with different steps up a pyramid, reflecting increased confidence and eventually advocacy.



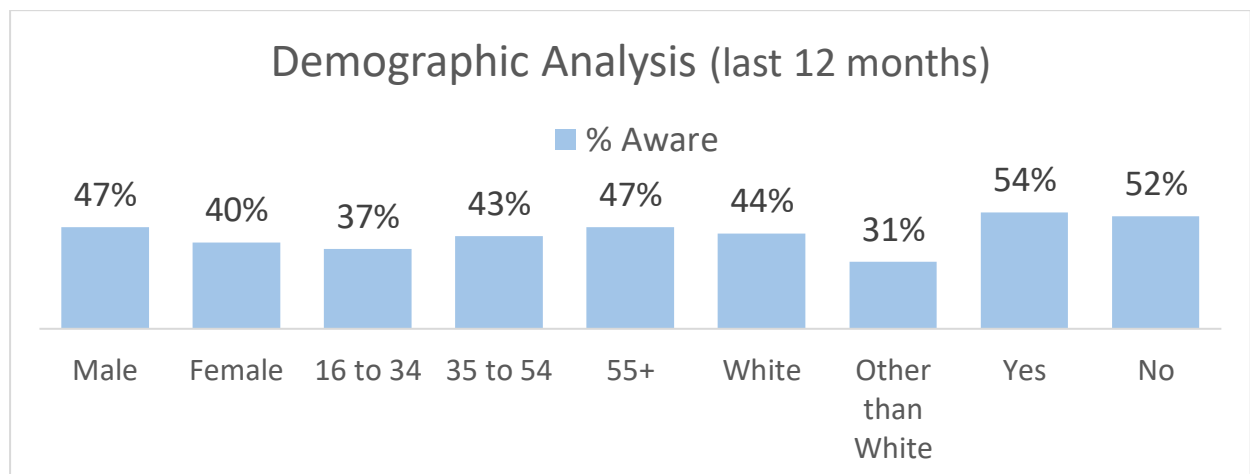
These advocates can come from any background, area of expertise and organisation but what connects them is their level of engagement and participation with the PFCC and his wider team.

If we look at our channels, we can see how they each reach different audiences, with broad media activity reaching the largest audience while face-to-face engagements delivers a much smaller reach but provides greater opportunity to build engagement, participation and advocacy. Subscription based channels such as the PFCC newsletter and social media channels fit between these two.

### Quarterly trend in awareness of PFCC – SMSR Public Confidence Survey



Under these general trends we can also see significant variation across demographics and location. With victims of crime being the most likely to be aware of the role of the PFCC while non white members of the public are the least likely.

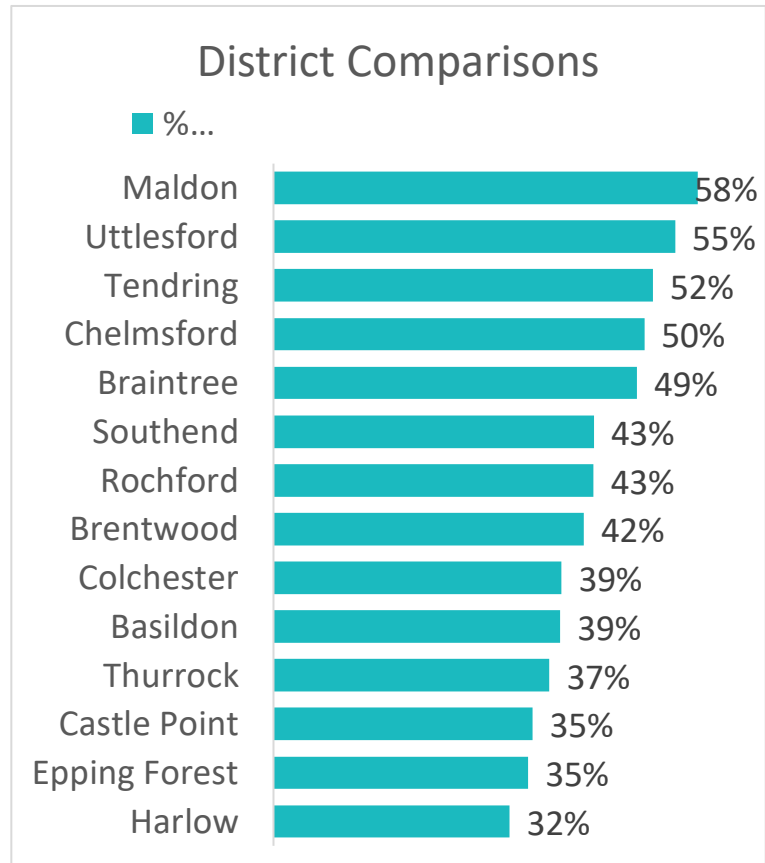


We also see significant variations between districts with Maldon, Uttlesford and Tendring having consistently high levels of awareness while Harlow and Epping Forest have consistently lower.

These insights provide valuable inputs into the development of our strategic approach to engagement and communication.

While we can assume from the evidence in the SMSR survey and ARU research on policing that for awareness to translate into more developed forms of engagement we need to demonstrate trust, accountability and delivery.

We also know through the Essex County Council segmentation work that by working with active representatives from communities including councillors, community groups and active individuals, we can influence and affect the wider communities they operate within as.



### Developing further insights

Over the term of this strategy, we propose to commission research into the specific drivers of this transition to enable us to tailor our activity to understand and affect the shift from passive citizens to active participation. We also want to explore the connection between awareness, and confidence in the role of the PFCC and the impact this has on the public's confidence in Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service

## Strategic approach

At the heart of our strategic approach to engagement and communications is the principle that public involvement in community safety underpins safe and secure communities and that by working together, communities and the emergency services will create better societies where people can prosper and live fulfilling lives.

Our approach to communications and engagement is based on this ongoing involvement and participation - by building awareness of the Commissioner's role and then working with communities to demonstrate trust, accountability and delivery, we can foster confidence and drive increased levels of public participation.

This builds on the democratic nature of the role and demonstrates the public accountability that both Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service has through the elected role of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.

Within this approach are three areas of work:

- Listen and engage with the public
  - regular ongoing engagement directly with the public and through partners
  - focused engagement with priority groups including rural, youth and business audiences
  - analysis of correspondence (quarterly reports), media (Roger's Radar) and informal intelligence
  - use surveys on key issues to foster engagement and discussion
  - data and intelligence (confidence survey, audience specific evidence)
- Build trust and accountability
  - demonstrate we have acted on feedback
  - provide clear, understandable public information
  - use our statutory documents to engage the public and tell our story
- Share what is being delivered,
  - provide engaging content aligned to Police and Crime Plan and Fire and Rescue Plan
  - promote PFCC and DPFCC commentary on public safety messages (e.g. COVID, legislative change, VAWG, EDI issues etc)

**Overarching Strategic Message Matrix:**

<i>Key messages for the PFCC</i>	<b>Trust</b>	<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Delivery</b>
Supporting message 1	We are keeping Essex safe	We listen to concerns from the public and act on them	Police and Crime Plan Priorities Fire and Rescue Plan Priorities
Supporting message 2	We are preventing crime and protecting vulnerable people	We are professional, accessible and transparent	Scrutiny Programme, Performance Data
Supporting message 3	We govern the services	We scrutinise and challenge the services, holding them to account	Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service activity

**Tactical Delivery**

What we do well:

- We have good networks across Greater Essex with trusted public, private and third sector partners meaning we can access and influence the public/residents/businesses through their established networks.
- We deliver a high volume of effective events such as public meetings, conferences, council meetings and member briefings where we engage our stakeholders and residents.
- We have high communications and engagement standards.
- We deliver set pieces of communications and engagement activity well such as the precept survey, police and crime plan and strategic announcements.
- We have an engaging and high performing regular newsletter with a growing list of subscribers.
- We have professional and prompt correspondence system which engages with individuals and groups, acting on and resolving complaints and concerns, building trust and the PFCC's reputation.
- We have strong relationships with key local media including BBC Essex, Essex Radio, Newsquest and the Essex Democracy Reporter.

Areas of focus:

- Branding – is our branding clear, what do people think of us? Improve our corporate identity.
- Content development – tell the story of what we do, how we are making Essex safer.
- Channels – Continue to invest and expand our relationships with key local media while growing our affiliate networks and our social reach.
- Agility - be more proactive instead of reactive.
- Engage with our internal audiences by raising PFCC profile within Essex Police/ Essex County Fire and Rescue Service
- We publicise transparent and accessible information, but this could be more engaging.

## **Delivery Plan: (Key Projects/Set Pieces)**

### Year 1: 2021-2022

- Launch the Police and Crime Plan 2021-24 (November 2021) and provide ongoing content on the main themes and what this will mean in practice, delivered through traditional, social and affiliate media channels.
- Increase focus on passing out parades and commendation ceremonies to demonstrate delivery and build trust with officers and firefighters.
- Develop profile raising internal letter/communications to officers, firefighters, staff and volunteers with EP and ECFRS.
- Realign PFCC website to incorporate new Police and Crime Plan.
- Undertake user analysis of the current website to inform future structure and site performance.
- Confirm long term website development supplier.
- Annual Transparency Audit
- Data Protection Officer Assessments (quarterly)
- Correspondence Report (quarterly)
- Case work relating to concerns raised by the public referred to EP and ECFRS
- Launch Community Safety Development Fund (November 2021)
- Precept (Survey November 2021 to January 2021, Precept Announcement Comms January/February, Council Tax Leaflet (March 2022)
- Develop corporate identity and key messages matrix (December 2021)
- Annual Report/Statement of Accounts
- Support to V&V Comms/SETDAB/VAWG/ Emergency Services Collaboration Messaging/Essex Communicators Group
- Maximise opportunities with traditional media and position the Commissioner as the voice of V&V, while continuing to grow the Deputy Commissioner's profile in their areas of focus such as Domestic Abuse.
- Establish refreshed engagement plan
  - 14 district level public engagement sessions
  - Council engagement
  - Business led Strategic Board, rural engagement forum, youth engagement
  - PFCC Partner Conference (February 2022)
  - EP / PFCC Human Trafficking, Modern Day Slavery and Organised Immigration Crime Conference
  - ECFRS manager's briefings and station visits
  - Essex Citizens regular meetings
  - Ad hoc engagement opportunities (1 per district per year)
  - Hot spot engagement activity

### Year 2: 2022-2023

- Further explanation of the Police and Crime Plan and how it is being delivered and regular content relating to Fire and Rescue Plan – on-going content development delivered through traditional, social and affiliate media channels.
- Precept (Survey & Comms).
- Outcomes of the Community Safety Development Fund.
- Commission research into PFCC awareness and confidence.
- Establish prioritised plan for website development with new supplier.

- Annual Transparency Audit
- Data Protection Officer Assessments (quarterly)
- Correspondence Report (quarterly)
- Case work relating to concerns raised by the public referred to EP and ECFRS
- Annual Report/Statement of Accounts.
- Support to V&V Comms/SETDAB/VAWG Messaging/Essex Communicators Group.
- Deliver annual engagement plan
  - 14 district level public engagement sessions
  - Council engagement
  - Business led Strategic Board, rural engagement forum, youth engagement
  - ECFRS manager's briefings and station visits
  - Essex Citizens regular meetings
  - Ad hoc engagement opportunities (1 per district per year)
  - Hot spot engagement activity

### Year 3: 2023-2024

- Success and results of the Police and Crime Plan and Fire and Rescue Plan how it is being delivered – on-going content development delivered through traditional, social and affiliate media channels.
- Precept (Survey & Comms)
- Outcomes of the Community Safety Development Fund
- Annual Transparency Audit
- Data Protection Officer Assessments (quarterly)
- Correspondence Report (quarterly)
- Case work relating to concerns raised by the public referred to EP and ECFRS
- Annual Report/Statement of Accounts
- Support to V&V Comms/SETDAB/VAWG Messaging/Essex Communicators Group
- PFCC Election
- Deliver annual engagement plan
  - PFCC Conference
  - 14 district level public engagement sessions
  - Council engagement
  - Business led Strategic Board, rural engagement forum, youth engagement
  - ECFRS manager's briefings and station visits
  - Essex Citizens regular meetings
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**Delivery Matrix:****Comms & Engagement Channels List and recommended frequency:**

<b>Channel</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Delivery Lead</b>
Local Media	Residents	Weekly	Emma
Website	External/Internal	As required	Liane
PFCC Newsletter – e-gov delivery 9,000 plus subscribers	External/Internal	Weekly (Friday)	Emma
Key Messages – updating messaging grid and lines to take for delivery via correspondence/media/public engagements	External/Internal	Monthly	Darren/Emma
Roger’s Radar – internal staff email	Internal	Daily	Emma
SMT Round -Up	Internal	Weekly (Friday)	SMT
Correspondence (Letters/Emails)	External/Internal	Daily	Suzanne
Correspondence Reports	Internal	Quarterly	Suzanne
Case Work from public (referred to EP & ECFRS)	External/Internal	Daily	Suzanne
Advocate Management (comms to MPs, Senior Councillors, charities and other organisations)	External	As required	Darren/Suzanne
Transparency Audit	Internal	Annually	Suzanne
Data Protection Reports	Internal	Quarterly	Suzanne
Public Meetings (online and in person)	External	Monthly	Liane
Council Meetings (online and in person)	External	Monthly	Liane
PFCC/DPFCC 121 Engagement e.g. Parish Council, Voluntary Groups, Rotary/WI etc)	External	Monthly	Liane
PFCC Hotspot/problem Targeting (reaction to public concerns, meeting, online forum etc)	External	As required	Darren
PFCC Conference	Partners/Stakeholders	Yearly	Darren
Focus Events – workshops/meetings/engagement with hard to reach/niche groups such as BAME/Youth/Business/Rural	Partners/External	Monthly	Darren
PFCC Vlog/Blog	Internal (ECFRS)	Monthly	Emma
PFCC Police Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction letter to new district commanders</li> <li>• Condolence letters to officers/Families seriously injured/killed</li> </ul>	Internal Essex Police	As required	Suzanne
PFCC Police Engagement at events such as police pass out parades/commendations/bravery awards/Specials Attestations	Internal Essex Police	As required	Liane

PFCC Fire Engagement at manager's meeting, pass out parades, service awards etc	Internal ECFRS	As required	Liane
PFCC Video Message/Focus – interview with Roger/Jane at an event they have attended/ week of action/awareness week etc	External	Weekly	Emma
Facebook	External	Daily	Emma
Twitter	External	Daily	Emma
Linked In	External/Internal	Twice weekly	Emma
YouTube	External	As required	Emma
Instagram	External	Twice weekly	Emma
Media Release	External	As required	Emma

We also have partner networks to utilise as required via email distribution lists covering:

- Business – Essex Chambers & Federation of Small Business
- Essex Association of Local Council (EALC) – Parish Councils
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Essex MPs
- Community Safety Partnerships
- Voluntary and third sector

### **Evaluation & Monitoring:**

Dashboard of activity and engagement levels produced quarterly for review by SMT using figures and information from:

- Correspondence reports (increase in engagement/thanks instead of complaints)
- Social Media monitoring
- Media coverage
- Newsletter bulletin reports
- Survey results/participation
- Awareness level of PFCC statistic from survey
- Audience numbers at meetings/events