

PFCC Decision Report

Report reference number: 159-22

Classification (e.g., Not protectively marked/restricted): **Official**

Title of report: Essex Rural Crime Strategy 2023-2026

Area of county / stakeholders affected: Pan-Essex

Report by: Ch/Insp Terry Balding

Chief Officer: ACC Nolan

Date of report: 28th November 2022

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1. Executive Summary

This report seeks agreement to approve the Essex Rural Crime Strategy 2023-2026. The Strategy builds on the success of the previous Rural Crime Strategy that has served Essex between 2017-2021. Through the previous strategy Essex Police (EP), the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) and Essex Rural Partnership (ERP) have delivered a significant reduction in the number of rural crimes. In the 12 months leading to June 2022 compared to June 2019, Unauthorised encampments have gone down by 50%, hare coursing has seen a reduction of 10% and the theft of large machinery has reduced by 36%.

The new strategy builds upon the previous strategy and has been developed in consultation with stakeholders to ensure it continues to reflect the needs of rural communities.

2. Recommendations

- To approve the Rural Crime Strategy 2023-2026 for publication in early 2023.

3. Background to the Proposal

The current strategy completed its four-year term in 2021. It is timely now to renew the strategy to ensure that it is relevant and reflective of the needs of communities in Essex.

The proposed Essex Rural Crime Strategy 2023-2026 sets out the vision of Essex Police, the Essex Rural Partnership (ERP) and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) to work together to create a safe, secure, and resilient rural community. The overarching aim of the strategy is reducing crime and vulnerability within Essex's rural communities.

Following feedback from rural communities the Strategy provides a stronger focus on tackling all crimes within rural communities, supporting community empowerment, protecting vulnerable and isolated rural communities, and supporting victims of crime.

4. Proposal and Associated Benefits

The renewed strategy updates the strategic objectives of the Rural Crime Strategy to include:

- To reduce crime in rural communities
- To increase the reporting of crime in rural communities
- To increase the confidence of rural communities
- To reduce vulnerability and build increased resilience within isolated rural communities
- Support the victims of crime and prevent crime from happening.

Working together ERP, EP and the PFCC will deliver a range of activities set out in the Strategy focused on prevention, intelligence, enforcement, and reassurance. These activities include relevant specific we will commitments from the Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024, elements of the Force Plan and have been informed from early versions of the ERP strategy.

The renewed strategy will ensure that the strategic rural crime objectives are updated and reflective of the needs of communities in 2023. Section 7 describes how the PCP measures are aligned with the Essex Rural Strategy.

5. Options Analysis

The PFCC, ERP and EP could have decided to continue with the old strategy, however, having considered the current operating models and changes in both the Police Plan and Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024 this option was rejected.

The PFCC, ERP and EP could also have decided to develop separate strategies or not take the time to engage with the rural community, however, this option would have provided a poorer product and failed to capitalise on the excellent partnership

work undertaken and developed over the period of the previous strategy, so this was also rejected.

The option of do nothing was considered but was dismissed as it would fail to deliver any of the benefits set out above.

6. Consultation and Engagement

Significant consultation has taken place throughout 2022 by the Local Policing Support Unit (LPSU) and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC). This has included:

- Focus groups across Essex
- Discussions at the Rural Crime Forum, Safer Essex and Strategic Coordination Group
- Public Survey

This has informed and shaped the development of the strategy.

The results of the survey and a list of workshops are attached within the appendix.

7. Strategic Links

The Rural Crime Strategy objectives are informed by the wider Police and Crime Plan with the priorities within the Strategy closely aligned to the Plan's priorities. Of note, there is a specific priority within the Police and Crime Plan of 'protecting rural and isolated areas' which has informed the development of this strategy. The Essex Rural Crime Strategy includes the following measures:

- Confidence of the Rural Community through (SMSR Confidence survey)
- Increased level of reporting (Crime Data Accuracy)
- Rural Community Engagement (attendance and reach)
- Measurement of specific rural crime types – hare coursing, unauthorised encampments, theft of plant machinery and wildlife offences.

These are designed to provide a view of performance against this Strategy and while there is some cross over with the Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024 measures, they are not intended to replace those measures or be reported on through the same performance framework. Reporting against the measures in the Essex Rural Crime Strategy 2023-2026 will be fed back to EP internally, the PFCC's Rural Crime Forum and ERP.

8. Police operational implications

The Rural Crime Strategy is delivered across all of Essex Police with particular emphasis on the Rural Engagement Team and Community Policing Teams. The strategy provides clear objectives that all of Essex Police will work towards. There is no new or additional operational impact upon teams within Essex Police.

9. Financial implications

There are no financial implications in the development of the strategy. The PFCC has previously approved funding of the strategy development work including workshops, surveys, and launch, decision record 012-22 refers and is included as appendix 3. Delivery of the strategy will not lead to increased or reduced costs.

10. Legal implications

There are no legal considerations to highlight in renewing the Rural Crime Strategy.

11. Staffing implications

Beyond the established staffing costs of the Rural Engagement Team – Inspector, two Sergeants and ten Police Constables. The force plans to maintain the current level investment in the Rural Engagement Team irrespective of any success in reducing rural crime and / or building community confidence. In other words, successful delivery of the strategy will not lead to reduced costs. Delivery of the strategy will be carried out by existing staff within existing responsibilities.

12. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion implications

There are no diversity or equality implications in the development of the strategy, but full consideration to all equality and diversity matters will be given in the implementation of the strategy, with any associated equality impact assessments being completed as and when necessary.

13. Risks and Mitigations

There have been no risks identified.

14. Governance Boards

The proposal has been discussed and presented to rural stakeholders for views and feedback.

- Safer Essex (06/09/2022)
- COG (07/09/2022)
- Essex Rural Partnership (07/10/2022)
- PFCC Strategic Board. (15/12/2022.)

15. Links to Future Plans

The Rural Crime Strategy proposal is not linked to any current future plans. If approved, the strategy will be considered again towards the end of the term proposed and this review will consider relevant PFCC, EP and ERP strategies at that time.

16. Background Papers and Appendices

Essex Rural Strategy 2017

<https://www.essex.pfcc.police.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/2017-Rural-Crime-Strategy-A4.pdf>

Draft Rural Crime Strategy 2023



EPFCC 2023-2026
Rural Crime Strategy

PFCC Rural Crime Survey Executive Summary



PFCC Rural Crime
Survey Executive Sum

Essex Rural Crime Strategy Decision Report 012-22



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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 / DPFCC.

Chief Executive / M.O. Sign: 

Print: Darren Horsman - Deputy Monitoring Officer

Date: 02/12/2022

Chief Finance Officer Sign: 

Print: Janet Perry

Date: 15 December 2022

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)*

None

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 NO 2. Of Appendix? YES NO

If 'YES', please provide details of required redaction:

N/A

Date redaction carried out:

Chief Finance Officer / 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 / Chief Finance Officer

Decision and Final Sign Off

I agree the recommendations to this report:

Sign: 

Print: ROGER HIRST

PFCC/~~Deputy PFCC~~

Date signed: 21st December 2022

I do not agree the recommendations to this report because:

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Sign:

Print:

PFCC/Deputy PFCC

Date signed: