
Minutes of the meeting of the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel, held in Committee Room 1, County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH on Monday, 13 January 2020

Present:

Councillor	Representing
Wendy Schmitt (Chairman)	Braintree District Council
Aidan McGurran	Basildon Borough Council
Chris Hossack	Brentwood Borough Council
Godfrey Isaacs	Castle Point Borough Council
Mike Lilley	Colchester Borough Council
Malcolm Maddocks	Essex County Council
Mike Webb	Rochford District Council
Lynda McWilliams	Tendring District Council
Joycelyn Redsell	Thurrock Council
Colin Day	Uttlesford District Council

Co-opted Independent Member

Kay Odysseos

Also in attendance

Pippa Brent-Isherwood	Chief Executive, Office of the Essex PFCC
Victoria Freeman	Secretary to the Panel
Roger Hirst	Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Rick Hylton	Deputy Chief Fire Officer

1 Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

The report of the Membership, Apologies and Declarations was received.

1. The following apologies were noted:

- Councillor Nigel Bedford, Epping Forest District Council
- Councillor Michael Helm, Maldon District Council
- Councillor Jeremy Lager, Chelmsford City Council
- Councillor Frances Mason, Harlow District Council
- Councillor Ian Shead, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council
- John Gili-Ross, Co-opted Independent Member

An apology for absence was also received from Jane Gardner, Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and Jo Turton, Chief Fire Officer.

2. Councillors' declared Code Interests were noted, as follows, and all members participated fully in the meeting:

Name	Nature of Interest
Colin Day	In receipt of a Metropolitan Police Pension and Chairman of the Uttlesford Community Safety Partnership
Chris Hossack	Chairman of the Brentwood Community Safety Partnership
Godfrey Isaacs	Chairman of the Castle Point and Rochford Community Safety Partnership
Malcolm Maddock	In receipt of an Essex Police Pension
Lynda McWilliams	Chairman of the Tendring District Council Community Safety Partnership and her son is a police officer
Joycelyn Redsell	Member of Thurrock Community Safety Partnership
Wendy Schmitt	Chairman of the Braintree Community Safety Partnership
Mike Webb	Chairman of the Castle Point and Rochford Community Safety Partnership

2 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3 Questions from members of the public

There were none.

4 HMICFRS Report - Essex County Fire and Rescue Service

The Panel received report EPFCP/01/20, which shared the publicised report from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) on Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS) as a part of the independent inspection of Fire and Rescue Services.

It was recognised that since the review and inspection of the Service in July 2019, much progress had been made, and that this view had been supported by Her Majesty's Inspectorate. The Commissioner was confident, that when re-inspected, the service would no longer be inadequate, and that good progress would be made. Furthermore, progress had been made in improving the culture of the Service, with the Equal Strategy planned for approval in March 2020.

Technical fire safety had been raised as a key area of concern, and a plan for improvement had been submitted shortly after the inspectorate debrief and a new Protection Strategy and Prevention Strategy was expected in March 2020.

The Commissioner welcomed the report from a service perspective and highlighted that it supported the service's priorities.

In response to questioning, Members were informed that it had been recognised that expert programme management was necessary, therefore dedicated programme managers within the organisation would guide the pathway of improvement.

It was explained that prior to the inspection, in response to previous reports, an exercise had been undertaken to take the work force forward in defining and embedding clear values and behaviour.

In response to questioning, it was explained that the Fire Service had been successful in its prevention activity but needed to reduce the number of seriously injured and to have an ethos and willingness to reduce risks. The new joint Police and Fire Educational Team had reached 6,000 school children across Essex since its implementation, but it was recognised that more could be done on educating secondary school children in road safety.

In response to longer term investment in digital transformation, the Commissioner recognised that a substantial investment in IT infrastructure was needed. Funding had been approved, with work planned over the forthcoming year.

The Panel noted the report.

5 Police IT Implementation Projects - Athena Programme and Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP)

The Panel received report EPFCP/02/20, which provided an update on major IT implementation projects for Essex Police with a focus on the Athena Programme and the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP).

During the presentation of the report, it was explained that Athena was a joint venture in collaboration with nine forces, and was not integrated with any other national database. The option to extend the consortium of forces could be an option, however consideration would need to be given to the sharing of costs in recognition of the changes that the current forces have been through.

Members expressed concern that the Police Intelligence Report (PIR) submission function of the mobile app had been unavailable for a considerable period, however it was explained that this applied to just one section of the ap, which would be available by the end of January 2020.

In response to questioning, it was explained that neither the current systems in place, nor the development of any current system, would have an impact on Athena.

The Panel noted the report.

6 Essex PFCP Budget Half Year Outturn Report 2019/20

The Panel received report EPFCP/03/20, which provided an update on the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel's outturn position for the period 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2019 as filed with the Home Office prior to the deadline of 31 October 2019.

The Panel noted the report.

7 The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to update the Panel on any ongoing issues

The Commissioner gave a brief verbal update on some ongoing issues.

Precept:- The outline of the settlement for the Fire and Rescue Service had been made on the 20 December 2019 and it was expected that this would go through the consultation process and subsequently be approved. The Policing Funding Settlement for 2020/21 had been delayed and was expected the following week. 2,173 responses had been received from the public consultation which closed on the 12 January 2020. The headlines from the consultation highlighted that of the 2,035 responses received on the precept, 66% were prepared to support an increase, 21% would not, and 12% were unsure. Of the 1,551 respondents who indicated how much of an increase they would support, 18% supported up to £50%, 17% up to £25, 16% up to £20 and 15% up to £10.

Violence and Vulnerability Unit:- £1.1m funding for the current year had been approved on the 29 December 2019 and funding from central government would continue until next year. There was a three year programme in place to make the Unit deliver.

PFCC Office:- The implementation phase of the restructure was coming to an end. Members were advised that Rick Hylton, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, would be acting up in the absence of the Chief Fire Officer, Jo Turton, until her return.

8 Forward Look

The Panel received report EPFCP/04/20, setting out the business proposed to be taken to meetings up to February 2020.

The Chairman advised that she had agreed for the meeting on the 22 January 2020 to be cancelled and for the business to be carried forward to an additional meeting to be arranged for February 2020, alongside those items on the forward plan for the 6 February 2020, with the exception of the precept.

The Panel noted the changes to the report.

9 Dates of future meetings

The Panel received report EPFCP/05/20, setting out the proposed Panel meeting dates for 2020.

The Panel will next meet at 2.00pm on Thursday, 6 February 2020 in Committee Room 1, County Hall. There will be a pre-meeting for Panel Members only, commencing at 1.00pm.

The Panel noted the report.

With no urgent business, the meeting closed at 3.36 pm.

Chairman
13 January 2019