

Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 Essex Police Review Task and Finish Working Group Meeting
 13 October 2015

Present: Cllr A Fluker
 Cllr Mrs P Channer
 Cllr E Bamford
 Cllr M Helm
 Cllr M Heard
 Cllr S Savage
 Richard Holmes

In attendance: Susan Hylands, notes

Cllr Heard expressed an interest in that he is currently employed by Essex Police as an auditor.

Cllr Savage expressed an interest as he is a substitute member on the Police and Crime Commissioner Panel and was sub agent for Nick Alston, PCC during his election.

Cllr Mrs Channer expressed an interest as representative on the Police and Crime Commissioner Panel.

Cllr Fluker introduced the meeting and noted that O&SC is an apolitical committee; however it should be borne in mind that the PCC is a political appointment. Notes of the Working Group meetings will be taken and made available to Members of the O&SC. The Working Group will make a recommendation to O&SC to consider and recommend to full Council.

Cllr Savage noted that the Working Group is confidential from the public but the Working Group may invite people to attend as it sees fit.

1. Election of Chairman & Vice Chairman

Cllr Helm proposed Cllr Fluker, seconded by Cllr Savage and Cllr Bamford.

Cllr Bamford proposed Cllr Savage as Vice Chairman, seconded by Cllr Fluker.

**Agreed: Chairman – Cllr Fluker
 Vice Chairman – Cllr Savage**

2. Terms of Reference and Work Plan

Draft ToR had been produced for O&SC and were considered. Amendments were proposed under the constitution to number 5 – “notes will be taken at meetings of the T&FW Group and will be made available electronically to all Members of the Council..” to be changed to “.. made available to Members of O&SC”.

3. Timescales

Cllr Fluker wished this scrutiny to progress without delay and ideally be in a position to report to Council at the end of October. Unfortunately the need to sequence minutes of meetings to Council meant an alternative pathway would need to be found. Mr Holmes had produced in advance of the meeting a report to the October meeting of Council seeking authority for a response on- behalf of the Council to be made without undue delay.. Cllr Fluker recorded the need to scrutinise the decision of the PCC and Chief Constable and noted a request to amend the wording of the recommendation. This is a separate piece of apolitical scrutiny and as such a response would not be made in consultation with the Leader/Deputy Leader

of the Council rather this should be in consultation with the Chairman of O&SC and Chairman of the Essex Police Review Task and Finish Working Group. Richard Holmes advised that the Working Group's aim should be to understand the implications of the Essex Police Review and the impact on the Council. Cllr Fluker advised that there was a desire from O&SC to have a special meeting with high level representatives invited to attend to answer questions around the decision making process and lack of engagement. The meeting discussed. Cllr Savage expressed a view that there would be further information released at the PCC public meeting on 29 October 2015.

It was also noted that Essex Police is being required to make a further £63m of cuts on top of previous cuts of £41m. This is a decision from Central Government and as such should be challenged with Central Government. Members discussed the ECC police precept which had not been protected by ECC and as a result and following the 2% cap which had subsequently been introduced, Essex Police is in effect underfunded.

At the proposed extraordinary meeting of O&SC as the Crime and Disorder Committee Nick Alston, PCC, Stephen Kavanagh, Chief Constable and Theresa May, Home Secretary or their representatives should be invited to attend. The two local MPs will be advised of the arrangements. This will be a public meeting to allow the proposals contained within the Essex Police Review to be scrutinised in public.

The meeting also expressed some concern around the difference in the national crime figures (UK crime statistics) and the local statistics provided and noted a need to understand this further along with the formula used for the decision making process. A list of questions will be drawn up and circulated to attendees prior to the meeting.

Actions: RH in liaison with Committee Services to arrange an extraordinary meeting of O&SC as the Crime and Disorder Committee for early November.

RH to circulate proposed date to Members of the T&FW group. ALL to respond with availability within 24 hours.

RH to draft a letter on behalf of Cllr Fluker, inviting the PCC, Chief Constable and Home Secretary, or their representatives, to attend the meeting.

A meeting of the Essex Police Review Task & Finish WG to be convened prior to this meeting to produce a list of questions to be presented.

RH to amend the report to Council to reflect the discussions outlined above.

RH to liaise with Cllr Heard regarding the national and local crime statistics.

Richard Holmes advised the meeting that he had received and accepted an invitation from the OPCC to attend an engagement workshop on 11 November 2015.

Action: RH to clarify whether the engagement event on 11 November 2015 is open to Members and advise members of the O&SC accordingly.

The meeting had a discussion around the potential impact of the Review on MDC. Richard Holmes confirmed that there is a full time ASB Co-ordinator in post and Spencer Clarke will

be working with Essex Police to produce information for residents to identify types of ASB and the agencies who will be responsible for which elements.

4. Reporting

Nothing further to add to the discussions outlined above.

5. Any other Business

In response to a question from Cllr Bamford it was clarified that if any new information of significance is released at the PCC briefing on 29/10/15 Cllr Mrs Channer, as representative on the Police & Crime Panel, can provide information to full Council as an update.

A new recommendation will be added to note the Essex Police proposals outlined in its review.

The report will advise that background papers have already been issued to Members and will be available in the Member's Room.

Action: RH to add a new recommendation to the report to Council and to add information regarding background papers.

The meeting closed at 16:40.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 Essex Police Review Task and Finish Working Group Meeting
 2 November 2015

Present: Councillor A S Fluker (Chairman)
 Councillor Mrs P A Channer (*joined the meeting at item 5*)
 Councillor E L Bamford
 Councillor H M Bass
 Councillor M W Helm
 Councillor S J Savage
 Richard Holmes (RH)

In attendance: Tara Bird, notes

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Councillor M S Heard.

The Chairman advised that due to a perceived conflict of interest with his employee (Essex Police Authority) Councillor Heard had resigned from this Working Group.

2. Notes of Last Meeting

Councillor Bass advised that he had sent his apologies for the last meeting.

3. Matters Arising

Extraordinary Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (O&S) meeting as the Crime and Disorder Committee:

This had been arranged for Wednesday 18 November 2015.

Invitations to special meeting:

It was confirmed that letters had been sent to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), Chief Constable of Essex Police and the Home Secretary.

Report to Council:

This was no longer required due to the special meeting and reported to the Council through the Minutes.

Engagement Workshop:

It was confirmed that the Workshop on 11 November was for Officers. The Chief Executive and Leader of the Council had been invited to a briefing on 18 November to provide an update on Essex Policing. Information received at this briefing would be cascaded to Members.

National and Local Crime Statistics:

Spencer Clarke would take this matter forward.

4. Update on Responses to Invitations to the Special Meeting of O&S Crime and Disorder Committee

RH advised that he had received confirmation that the PCC would be attending the special meeting.

ACTION: RH to pursue responses from the Chief Constable of Essex Police and the Home Office to the invitation to attend the special meeting.

5. Specific Questions from Members for the Special Meeting of O&S Crime and Disorder Committee

Copies of the crime figures for September were circulated. Clarification was requested as to whether figures included attempted crimes, particularly attempted burglaries.

Following a discussion, it was agreed that RH would formulate questions based on Members comments and the following subject areas. These would then be circulated to Working Group Members for review:

- Public consultation / Communication – Why no public consultation? Communication with the public. Public engagement plan and key messages.
- Decision making - Rationale behind the decision / process. Restructuring the police.
- Rural crime figures– Justification for withdrawal of support. Mitigation. Gaining / retaining public confidence.
- Estates – Been drain on resources for a number of years, why had it taken so long to reach this stage. Weekday only opening of Maldon Police Station.
- Revenue Line – Protection of tax base. Budget impact.
- Impact on the Council
- Geographical constraints of the District – Particularly the Dengie.
- Savings – Monies saved and use of these.

RH reported that the PCC had requested sight of any questions prior to the meeting.

ACTION: RH to formulate questions based on Members comments and the above subject areas and circulate them to Working Group Members for review

Clarification to be sought as to whether crime figures included attempted crimes, particularly attempted burglaries.

6. Consideration of Public Speaking at the Special Meeting of O&S Crime and Disorder Committee

Following discussion it was agreed that there would not be any public speaking allowed at the special meeting of the O&S Crime and Disorder Committee.

The Chairman requested that public speaking at future O&S meetings needs to be considered.

ACTION: Public speaking at future O&S meetings to be considered.

7. Any Other Business

It was confirmed that details of the special meeting were published on the Council's website.

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Meeting date to be arranged seven or ten days following the special meeting of O&S Crime and Disorder Committee on 18 November 2015.

The meeting closed at 4:14pm.