



**MINUTES of
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (MEETING AS THE CRIME AND
DISORDER COMMITTEE)
14 NOVEMBER 2019**

PRESENT

Chairman Councillor M W Helm

Vice-Chairman Councillor R P F Dewick

Councillors V J Bell, Mrs J L Fleming, M S Heard, C P Morley, S P Nunn
and R H Siddall

Substitute
Councillor(s)

1. CHAIRMAN'S NOTICES

The Chairman drew attention to the list of notices published on the back of the agenda.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED

- (i) that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13 March 2019 be received.

Minute No. 964 – Maldon District Community Partnership Update

Councillor M S Heard requested that it be clarified whether the 185 Stop Checks conducted related to the Maldon or Chelmsford area.

Councillor M S Heard requested that the minute be amended to include the additional word (highlighted in red) as follows:

*“Police accessibility – There was a brief discussion regarding the loss of village police offices and Members were advised that the Government had changes the policing model and it was now necessary to identify innovative ways **to** engage with residents...”*

RESOLVED

- (ii) that subject to the above amendment the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13 March 2019 be confirmed.

4. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Councillor M S Heard declared that he no longer had a non-pecuniary interest in all agenda items as he had retired from the police service.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

In accordance with the Council's Public Question Time and Participation at Council and Committee Meetings Scheme, Councillor Chrisy Morris addressed the Committee as a member of the public.

Mr Morris raised concerns and requested that Inspector Barry Booth note his comments for further investigation.

6. ESSEX COMMUNITY REHABILITATION COMPANY

The Committee received a presentation from Ms Kirsty Gibbons, Manager of Service Delivery for Essex Community Rehabilitation Company (ECRC), which informed the Committee of the work conducted on the rehabilitation of service users through community payback following Community Court Referrals.

As part of the presentation, and in response to questions from Members, the following information was provided:

- The ECRC manage low to medium risk cases. High risk cases were managed through the Probation Service;
- At time of writing the report:
 - There were 47 service users in Maldon, 6 in Southminster, 3 in Heybridge and 6 in Burnham-on-Crouch;
 - 13.04% female, 86.96% male;
 - The majority of service users were between 20-29 years of age;
- A large proportion of service users undertake unpaid work, with the inclusion of a punitive element alongside rehabilitation;
- As part of Rehabilitation Activities Requirements (RAR) probation officers work alongside other agencies to address other requirements service users may have as part of their rehabilitation, i.e. addressing drug use. This would ensure that service users were getting full value from rehabilitation;
- Unpaid work supports many areas of the community. A large number of non-profit organisations have been supported, some local authority work undertaken including local churches and schools. This unpaid work provided a visible demonstration of justice within the community. Within Maldon, service users have undertaken unpaid work at the *Museum of Power* and *Heybridge Cemetery*;
- A Community Court Referral can sentence Community Payback for up to 300 hours. This was expected to be a minimum of seven hours per week, where the

service user was employed, up to twenty-eight hours per week where the service user was unemployed;

- Service user surveys show that 99.8% of offenders were less likely to re-offend having completed Community Payback;
- As part of the service, Community Integration Officers work closely with the Jobcentre Plus (JCP), and refer and support the acquisition of various qualifications, such as the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS), by service users;
- Once employment is achieved a review gets carried out, however, following the end of the court order, no further information on service users was received.

Ms Gibbons advised the Committee that the team would welcome suggestions and projects as they are always looking for ways to best support communities through payback. Members were also advised that, if they were inclined to do so, site visits would be welcome.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Ms Gibbons for an interesting and informative presentation.

7. MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

The Committee received the report of the Head of Paid Service, presented by Mr Spencer Clarke, the Community Safety Manager at Maldon District Council. The report provided Members with an update on the progress of activities undertaken by the Maldon Community Safety Partnership (CSP) since the previous meeting of this committee (13 March 2019) and to inform on the strategic priorities for 2019/20.

The report provided a detailed update on the following matters:

- Statutory Duties – the CSP was required to produce the Strategic Assessment of Crime, a draft was currently being reviewed with publication expected for December 2019-January 2020. It was noted that as part of the Crime Risk Matrix, which looks at over 30 different types of crime within Maldon district the majority of cases, as a result of public perception, related to road use, i.e. speeding, dangerous and irresponsible driving.
- Priorities for the partnership were reported as tackling violent crime; driving down anti-social behaviour; identifying and supporting vulnerable people; rural crime and promoting road safety and challenging irresponsible driving.

Members' attention was drawn to the Essex Police force crime performance data for Maldon and the Essex comparison which was attached at appendix 1 and 2 of the report. It was noted that the number of offences per 1,000 population was one of the lowest out of the Essex districts.

- Eastern Region Counter Terrorism Local Profile – Main issue for Essex was a trend in the radicalisation of youths through social media and the internet. The CSP continue to work with Community Partners with representation from Jewish Community, Black African Communities and universities to monitor all

types of hate crime.

- Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) Update – The PFCC encouraged concerns to be forwarded to determine concerns and priorities in the local area. It was noted that the increase in the Council Tax Precept for 2018/19 had funded the employment of an additional twelve officers for the region, of which six were deployed to Maldon. The next increase will be contributing towards the town centre, with the anticipated acquisition of four more officers, to focus specifically on rural crime.

Additional funding was received from the Home Office which totals £2.2 million and goes towards youth crime prevention and a Violence Reduction Unit.

- Community Safety Partnership Hub – Maldon staff are now co-located at the Chelmsford hub, as of 26 March 2019. The co-location had seen an improvement in tackling crime, safeguarding and effective policing.
- Operation Overwatch – Operation Overwatch has been deployed five times and identified hot spots within the region. Within Maldon, one of these was Promenade Park where effective policing had identified and neutralised various offences and low-level nuisances. The Parish Clerk Forum had provided good intelligence on where these issues had occurred around the area and received positive feedback on the work carried out.
- Work with the Crucial Crew is currently being reviewed and restructured as it was considered more effective that they approach primary schools in the Spring prior to students moving on to Year 7.
- Positive prevention work was being carried out with youths through Colchester United Football Club working in schools on issues like knife crime, gang crime, embedding positive values.
- Progress on Action Plans – a brief update was given on some of the projects which had been progressed throughout the year:
 - Neighbourhood Watch – effective communication tools included the use of social media and a newsletter to communities.
 - Community Payback – since April 2019, over 800 hours of community payback had been carried out across the district, this included work in cemeteries, churchyards, and green spaces.
 - TruCam – Maldon District Council was the first district within the country to introduce additional enforcement through TruCam.
 - Domestic Abuse Training – Members were informed that training would be carried out in the Council Chamber on 26 November 2019 which they were welcome to attend. This would be delivered by Safer Places.

At this point Councillor M S Heard asked that his disappointment at the non-attendance of the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) be recorded in the minutes. He then went through the crime figures in all areas noting the increases. He acknowledged that some good work was being done but crime was still rising albeit reported as falling. He said he had not seen evidence of local, visible and effective policing reversing the trend in serious violence. He requested that the PFCC attend a future meeting to explain the crime statistics. The Chairman reminded the Committee that the Committee can extend an invitation but cannot demand that the PFCC attend.

Councillor Nunn endorsed the earlier comments and said that the Highstreet in Maldon was the worst it had ever been for drug use, drunkenness and violence and said it was exacerbated by low visibility of police.

The Community Safety Manager advised that the PFCC held public meetings across the district, one in Maldon in January, Chelmsford two weeks ago with twenty five in attendance. He reminded Members that the Scrutiny at this meeting was through the work of statutory partners and the PFCC was not a member of Maldon Community Safety Partnership (CSP) the group that reported to Overview & Scrutiny (Crime & Disorder) Committee.

In response to a question on prevent referrals the Public protection Manager advised that there were currently no preventative referrals within Maldon, it was noted that this was usually 30 per annum with the majority of cases being within education. It was acknowledged that the main concern was grooming through internet and social media fora.

Inspector Barry Booth then addressed a question from Councillor Siddall regarding drugs and other problems in rural communities. He reported that one of the first things he put in place was a third team. There were six additional officers, split across three teams, who were dedicated to rural policing. Acknowledging Members concerns, he said he hoped to see more of a police presence in rural areas, the ideal would be to have a discrete rural team but resources were dependant on government funding. He said if the allocated Maldon Officers were not visible enough he would take that back and ensure that officers were making themselves known in the community.

Councillor W Stamp, with permission of the Chairman and in accordance with Procedure Rule 20, asked the Community Safety Manager where the money generated from the TruCam fines was allocated and was advised that the money went to the Police Team. Councillor Stamp went on to thank Essex Police for boosting the police presence within Burnham-on-Crouch and the increased engagement within the community. It was further noted that the initiatives introduced by the Chief Inspector, Gerry Parker had been very effective and gave the force the freedom to do what they need to do.

The issue of adequate police space at Maldon was raised and the Director of Service Delivery confirmed that the Council was awaiting confirmation as to whether Essex Police wanted to lease additional space (both internal and parking facilities) at the Princes Road offices. Inspector Barry Booth said he would discuss this with his facilities team and report back to the Director of Service Delivery.

The Director of Service Delivery reassured Members that all partners were making a contribution to tackling crime in different ways and that the Council, supporting the

police through the Community Protection Team and the use of TruCam, was really proactive and at the forefront of this work.

The Chairman then put the recommendation to the Committee and it was agreed.

RESOLVED that Members reviewed and commented on the new current progress and the success of the initiatives undertaken by the Maldon Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to date.

8. **ESSEX POLICE REPORT**

Inspector Booth presented his report to the Committee highlighting the following initiatives introduced in the last year:-

Project Enlightenment – re-invigorating officers into schools, this commenced end of December early January with the Plume, William De Ferrers, Ormiston Rivers Academy, Ramsden Hall and Heybridge. It was noted that it was not just middle and high schools that required intervention but also Primary Schools.

Engagement Strategy – the PCSOs have taken the lead on this and are responsible for supporting all local initiatives:- fairs; coffee mornings with police officers; support in schools; regattas. They co-ordinate all arrangements for the aforementioned events.

Tasking and Co-ordination - attending Safety Advisory Group meetings, Community meetings, MACE meetings etc. All feedback is taken away and acted upon as appropriate.

Operation Overwatch - work ongoing on sexploitation, drugs and gangs. Employing anti-social behaviour legislation such as Community Protection Notices ((CPNs) has been very effective, led by the Town Teams. There has been over seventy hours of police footwork, over forty searches, resulting in key arrests, community resolutions and dismantling organised crime groups.

CPT (Community Policing Team) – the team take control of briefings, all community information is incorporated into briefings that drive the activity of the police, very successful strategy.

Gypsy Traveller Rural Engagement Team – working with them on organised crime groups, breaking up burglary rings that prey on the elderly posing as police.

Neighbourhood Watch – reinvigorating the neighbourhood watch. A success story in the Chelmsford area at the moment . Rolling out the active alert mobile telephone system which is now being used by three communities. The information provided through this system fills in the blanks for the police around local crime. This is working very well around drug dealing, suspicious persons, lifetime intelligence which has led to a number of significant arrests. Noted that should other communities wish to sign up to the active alert number they should contact Sergeant Matt Dalby.

Stop and Search - ninety plus stop searched since the beginning of January in Maldon alone. This is something we should be doing more of given the current climate.

In response to questions Inspector Booth responded as follows:-

- that Police attendance at Parish/Town Council meetings can be co-ordinated on email via an intelligence sharing document. This would generate an action on the central system and a Police Officer would be assigned to attend as required. In the case of Maldon Town Council, he signposted Members to the Town Sargeant Graham Thomas, to discuss the way forward. He added that as long as they had appropriate notice it should always be possible to send a police representative;
- that if necessary a separate active mobile alert phone could be set up for the farming community;
- that managing rural crime was a challenge given that the overall number of rural officers was only eight, there was a lot of area to cover and rural crime was on the increase. Police needed to know what the policing requirements were in these areas in order to prioritise resources;
- that noting the report of targeted burglaries of safes in the area he would liaise with the organised crime team and report back. He said that these types of crimes were not normally restricted to a given area;
- that following a report around youth anti-social behaviour and bullying in the Dengie he would step up engagement in Schools to drive down this type of crime;
- that he would continue to police robustly and make every effort to generate more resources to increase the number of police on the street. In the meantime, he reiterated that local information in line with what had been reported at the meeting was what the police needed in order to better allocate resources.

In response to a query regarding police station signage from Councillor Dewick the Director of Service Delivery said he would liaise with the Local Highways Panel and report back. Councillor W Stamp, referring to a recent meeting with the Assistant Crime Commissioner, Jane Gardiner, where it was agreed to look into pool cars being made available at Maldon as opposed to Chelmsford alone, be followed up. The Chairman said that he was meeting imminently with the PFCC and would take the matter up with him.

The Chairman then thanked Inspector Barry Booth for his excellent presentation.

There being no further items of business the chairman closed the meeting at 21:18pm

M W HELM
CHAIRMAN