

Safer Essex Terms of Reference (adopted March 2022)

1. Introduction

Safer Essex has the strategic lead for co-ordinating the partnership response to community safety issues and initiatives across Essex, Southend and Thurrock. Safer Essex acts as the county-wide Strategy Group for community safety.

2. What we are trying to achieve (purpose)

Safer Essex brings together key partner organisations / stakeholders to work jointly and effectively to facilitate a collaborative approach between agencies and partnerships in delivering the following community safety outcomes:

- i. Prevent crime and anti-social behaviour**
- ii. Prevent fires from happening**
- iii. Understand and tackle hate crime**
- iv. Understand and tackle violence, including violence against women and girls**
- v. Improve community confidence in the multi-agency response to community safety issues**
- vi. Continue to deliver effective Community Safety Hubs across Greater Essex**

3. How we will go about it (objectives)

Safer Essex will:

- i. Oversee and coordinate community safety activity across Greater Essex**
- ii. Carry out a high-level, overarching county-wide Strategic Assessment which brings together the assessments carried out by local community safety partnerships (CSPs).**
- iii. Develop a county-wide Community Safety Agreement, in alignment with the priorities developed by local community safety partnerships and other strategic partnerships (as outlined in section 9).**
- iv. Raise awareness of current and planned activities of Community Safety Partnerships and networks and identify opportunities for added value**
- v. Share information and learning to improve community safety**
- vi. Ensure awareness and understanding of new legislation and initiatives**
- vii. Work with other boards, sharing information and complementing their work and agendas**
- viii. Scrutinise progress in delivering all five assets within the Crime Prevention Strategy, and provide the governance for assets 4 (“We will support Safer Essex to realise partnership capabilities and capacity”) and 5 (“We will support ECVS to unlock community potential, develop and deliver community led solutions”)**
- ix. Support the delivery of the “Live Safe” workstream within the Essex Fire Prevention Strategy.**

4. Scope

These Terms of Reference set out:

- the functions of Safer Essex (6)
- the expectations of its members (7)
- the form and governance arrangements of Safer Essex (8)

- the relationship with other strategic groups and boards (9)
- a summary of the policy context in which Safer Essex operates

5. Assumptions and Context:

- 5.1.** The outcomes that Safer Essex is working to deliver are complementary to the Police and Crime Plan and Fire and Rescue Plan. Safer Essex will also lead on the delivery of asset 4 of the Crime Prevention Strategy (“We will support Safer Essex to realise partnership capabilities and capacity”).
- 5.2.** Members are accountable to each other for the effective operation of the group and to their own partnerships and organisations for the effectiveness of their contribution and actions.
- 5.3.** Community engagement happens locally through CSPs and partners’ engagement strategies, with nominated leads representing community views and issues at Safer Essex.
- 5.4.** Sub-groups will be created on a functional or task and finish basis to consider and deliver specific time bounded programmes of work or activity as required.
- 5.5.** Safer Essex will work with a variety of other Boards and Partnerships (as shown in section 9).

6. Functions

- 6.1.** Safer Essex has a role to bring together and facilitate research and intelligent analysis of data and information about needs and what works across partner agencies.
- 6.2.** The Essex Community Safety Network (ECSN) is an important practitioner group and has a direct link to Safer Essex, helping set and deliver the work programme for Safer Essex and the agendas of meetings.

7. Expectations of members

7.1. Attendance

Members are expected to show regular attendance at meetings, and to nominate suitable substitutes from their organisation when appropriate. Members have a responsibility to update their own organisation about discussions and decisions at Safer Essex meetings.

7.2. Cooperation and joint working

Members are expected to approach Safer Essex with a willingness to cooperate with partners and enter into joint projects where this would be of benefit to Greater Essex and where the organisation has capacity to contribute the necessary resources. This might also include a willingness to share information.

Members should respect the views of others at all times and should operate in the spirit of transparency, openness and collaboration.

7.3. Responsibility

Members should have regard to the key outcomes that Safer Essex is seeking to achieve and to Police and Crime Plan and Fire and Rescue Plan outcomes in their own strategic plans.

Members should also have regard to Safer Essex when attending other meetings and be willing to feed back.

8. Governance

8.1. Accountability

Safer Essex is accountable to another body or person only where functions and resources have been specifically assigned to be delivered through Safer Essex's governance.

8.2. Arrangements for Chairing

The Chair and Vice Chair will be elected from membership of the group, with an election for both roles every two years.

8.3. Frequency of meetings

Safer Essex will meet every eight weeks. Additional extraordinary meetings will be convened as required.

8.4. Agenda and papers

Agendas shall be circulated five clear working days prior to the meeting. It is preferable that all reports be circulated at the time of the agenda but, where that is not possible, they should be circulated as soon as possible after the agenda has been circulated.

Minutes and actions will be recorded at all meetings (sensitive and confidential material will be excluded as agreed by the chair and vice-chair).

8.5. Proceedings of meetings

Where Safer Essex determines that a virtual or hybrid meeting is the most appropriate form of meeting in any circumstances, Safer Essex shall be entitled to hold that meeting as a virtual or hybrid meeting.

Safer Essex may adjourn or otherwise regulate its meetings as it deems fit.

8.6. Voting and decision making

Matters arising at any meeting of Safer Essex shall be decided by consensus wherever possible. Where this is not possible, such matters will be decided by a majority of votes. In the event of equality of votes, the following shall apply:

- Those dissenting shall provide feedback as to why they are not willing to support the proposal placed before Safer Essex
- The party seeking the support of Safer Essex shall take into account the feedback received and, where possible, present an alternative proposal to Safer Essex at the same meeting for a further vote
- Where it is not possible to present an alternative proposal to the same meeting, and provided there is no urgency (as determined by the Chair) for the matter to be determined at that meeting, the proposal (or an alternative) shall be re-submitted at the next meeting of Safer Essex
- Where a proposal that is re-submitted is subsequently supported by Safer Essex with a majority vote, it shall be passed
- Where a proposal is re-submitted and again is not supported by a majority vote, there may be no further submission of the proposal unless it is substantially modified (as determined by the Chair)

8.7. Quorum

No decisions are to be taken by Safer Essex if the meeting is not quorate.

At least one third of those organisations listed in section 11 below must be represented in order for the meeting to be quorate.

8.8. Review of Terms of Reference

The terms of reference will be reviewed no less frequently than every two years.

8.9. Secretariat

Co-ordination and secretariate will be provided by Essex County Council's Equalities and Partnerships Team. The team will

- Arrange meeting dates and venues (where appropriate)
- Guide the formation of the agenda with the Chair
- Monitor and follow up actions from meetings
- Issue all agendas and papers
- Produce minutes of the meetings and circulate with any follow up papers

Additional activity will be supported from within partner resources.

9. Work with other Boards and Groups**9.1. Safer Essex will liaise and work with other bodies, to include:**

- Essex Chief Executives Association
- Essex Children's Partnership Board
- Essex Criminal Justice Board
- Essex Leaders and Chief Executives Group
- Essex Partners
- Essex, Southend and Thurrock Safeguarding Adult Boards
- Essex, Southend and Thurrock Safeguarding Children Boards
- Health and Wellbeing Boards
- Essex and Thurrock Prevent Delivery Groups and Southend Violence & Vulnerability Strategic Group
- Reducing Reoffending Board
- Sexual Abuse Strategic Partnership
- Southend, Essex and Thurrock Domestic Abuse Board
- Strategic Hate Crime Partnership
- Violence and Vulnerability Roundtable and Operational Group

9.2. Safer Essex will link closely with the following boards and partnerships, to understand and be able to influence and support their work:

- Essex Criminal Justice Board
- Essex Southend and Thurrock Reducing Reoffending Board
- Southend, Essex and Thurrock Domestic Abuse Board
- Sexual Abuse Strategic Partnership
- Strategic Hate Crime Partnership

The below diagram represents the relationship between Safer Essex and other Boards and Partnerships.

It will be a core function of the Chair and Vice Chair to ensure this coordination is effective.

and for that group to produce an annual Community Safety Agreement (based on the strategic assessments prepared by the strategic groups for each of the local government areas in the county) that sets out county wide priorities and opportunities for cross-border working and feeds into district partnership plans.

11. Membership

The following organisations shall have membership of Safer Essex.

Member organisations are expected to be represented at meetings by someone with decision-making power, who may be accompanied by another officer.

Organisations

- Association of Secondary Heads in Essex
- Clinical Commissioning Groups (currently represented by Mid and South Essex CCG)
- Essex Alliance
- Essex Association of Local Councils
- Essex Council for Voluntary Services
- Essex Council for Voluntary Youth Services
- Essex County Council (Children's Services, Public Health, relevant Member)
- Essex County Fire and Rescue Service
- Essex Police
- Essex Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner
- HMP Chelmsford
- Local Authorities and CSPs, to be represented by a combination of relevant member, CSP Chair, and or CSP manager (maximum of 2, with exact representation to be determined locally)
- National Probation Service
- Policing Institute for the Eastern Region, Anglia Ruskin University
- Violence & Vulnerability Unit
- Youth Offending Services from Essex, Southend and Thurrock

Partnership Boards

- Essex Criminal Justice Board
- Essex Southend and Thurrock Reducing Reoffending Board
- Safeguarding Adults Boards in Essex, Southend and Thurrock
- Safeguarding Children Boards in Essex, Southend and Thurrock
- Southend, Essex & Thurrock Domestic Abuse Board
- Strategic Hate Crime Prevention Partnership