

**Report to Stronger Communities
Select Committee**

Date of meeting: 20 September 2022

**Portfolio: Community & Partnerships
Cllr. Holly Whitbread**

**Subject: Bi-Annual Report on the work of the
Council-funded Police Officers**

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Democratic Services Officer:**



Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the Communities Select Committee receives a six-month report on the work and range of operations of the Council's funded Police team.

Report:

The Council continues to fund the employment of an additional Police Sergeant and 2 Police Constables to supplement existing local policing resources. A third police constable funded by Essex Police joined the team in April 2022. The team were originally incepted in July 2018 with an initial 3-year contract, which has now been extended, they are tasked in-line with District Community Safety Partnership (CSP) priorities which are identified through the annual Strategic Assessment and aligned with the priorities set by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's (PFCC) Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024 and Essex Police Crime Prevention Strategy 2021-2025. As well as working to those priorities, the team can be requested, via a tasking process, to support any Council department where there is an identified threat, harm or risk to staff. A service level agreement is in place to prevent abstraction of the officers except in extreme cases or high priority incidents. This also covers staff sickness and extended training periods through credit to the Council from Essex Police.

The funded police team continue with the following primary functions:

- 1. Support functionality of Epping Forest District Council departments/teams**
- 2. Provide 'added value' to the district in supporting the Community Policing function**
- 3. Targeted action against criminality in the district**

At the time of writing, the police team have accepted 26 tasks during 2022. The tasking log is included in the Appendix but some highlights below:

- Leading on partnership approach to tackling an organised crime group (OCG) operating in the district. This included the use of council intelligence and resources to tackle various strands under an 'Achilles Heel' approach. This tasking continues and is building a bigger intelligence picture of the OCG.
- Provide support to Neighbourhoods whilst fencing repairs were conducted at a 'high-risk' premises. The presence of the team prevented violence and abuse towards council officers and contractors.

- Support an eviction where it was believed that there were fireworks and booby traps in the property. Bailiffs lead on the eviction however the team were required to prevent breach of the peace. Police had been doing some work on the property and had previously forced entry to the property which resulted in a major incident: the tenant had barricaded himself in the room and had a chain round his neck threatened to cause an explosion. The eviction was completed without incident.
- Dedicated patrols at Epping Market followed information from partners which suggested an under-reporting of 'pickpocket' type offences against elderly victims. The team have conducted overt and covert patrols as well as working in partnership with EFDC and the Business Crime Team to raise awareness and increase engagement. A suspect was arrested in possession of recently stolen items. She was subsequently convicted. Crime levels have decreased and the under-reporting appears to have reduced. This operation will continue throughout 2022.
- Ride London 2022. The team lead on the planning and preparation for police aspect working in partnership with EFDC and London Marathon Events. On both days, Sgt Ross lead the police team in support of the event organisers and wider Essex Police resources. There were no incidents of note and the event was highlighted for the strength and quality of the partnership work involved.
- Following a serious exposure investigation being highlighted through morning crime review, the team identified a vehicle involved. Police recorded linked to a high risk Registered Sex Offender from Southend. Sgt Ross leads the initial investigation with gathering primary evidence and deployed the council-funded officers as an arrest team. The offender was arrested swiftly and has since been convicted of a number of offences.
- The team provided oversight of the district elections in May. Sgt Ross was involved in the planning stages with the team providing cover at the polling stations and the subsequent count. The event concluded with no incidents reported.
- For ASB Awareness Week in July, the team worked in partnership with a number of council teams to partake in three separate community engagement events in Waltham Abbey, Chigwell and Ongar. These were 'days of action' where officers from both organisations met with the public, gave out crime prevention advice and materials and conducted joint patrols in the local area to highlight and address any concerns raised by residents.
- A member highlighted that a particular 'theft from vehicle' crime trend was present around Waltham Abbey Honey Lane. The team researched recent crimes and intelligence to identify key days and times. This resulted in a pursuit with a vehicle seen to used in this area. One person was arrested and two further prolific thieves have been linked to the case. As a result there was a 30% decreased in that crime type in that area.

- Assistance required to attend an EFDC property to execute a warrant for a Gas inspection. Police assistance required due to alleged firearms/weapons contained within the property. Executed with no issues reported. Police intelligence obtained owing to person present at the time.

The Essex Police YTD figures key figures below:

Offence Type	District	Diff	Force	Diff
Theft of Motor Vehicle	+5.2%	+28	+24.7%	+919
Burglary	-25.5%	-154	+6.6%	+416
Theft from a Vehicle	-8.8%	-63	+4.4%	+247
Personal Robbery	+26.3 %	+20	+10.1	+122
Anti-social behaviour	-59.8%	-2185	-53.8%	-29228
Shoplifting	-28.0%	-198	+18.7%	+1426

*Essex Police: Performance Summary to July 2022 – 12 month rolling data

Reason for decision: N/A

Options considered and rejected:

Consultation undertaken:

Resource implications:

Legal and Governance Implications:

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:

Consultation Undertaken:

Background Papers:

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

Equality: