

Report to Stronger Communities Select Committee



Date of meeting: 02 July 2019

Subject: Update on the work of EFDC Funded Police Officers

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Committee Secretary: J. Leither (01992 564756)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) 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's funded Police Officers became officially operational on 20th July 2018 and continue to make a real impact to the reduction in crime within the Epping Forest District.

The team are tasked according to the District Community Safety Partnership priorities which are identified through the Annual Strategic Assessment. These are aligned to the priorities set by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's (PFCC) Policing Plan. Aside from these priorities the team are occasionally deployed to support EFDC staff in carrying out their work where there is an identified threat, harm or risk to staff. Close management of the tasking process has ensured that our police team are deployed efficiently and effectively.

There is tasking and deployment overlap with the wider Community Policing Team for the district but the unique process of retaining and deploying our officer allows additional time for self-generated work. This often includes detailed interrogation of crime trends and the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) system to enable the team to predict the movement of travelling criminals and employ suitable tactics to intercept and disrupt this criminal activity.

A close, professional working relationship has developed between the officers and members of the Council's Community Safety Team and other front-line council service areas. In addition the team have nurtured relationships with police teams in surrounding Metropolitan boroughs and specialist teams within Essex Police which has further enabled them to effectively tackle the priorities mainly through the sharing of intelligence.

A problem profile, commissioned by the Community Safety Partnership, shows that crime in general has reduced across the district since June 2018.

The team have completed over 55 specific tasking requests over the last twelve months and have been active in every ward in the district. Examples of work they have undertaken between January 2019 to date are detailed below:

- Supported EFDC and Police Licensing teams with serving notices on high-risk licensed premises.

- Responded to priority tasking in Loughton and arrested two suspects for drugs supply offences.
- Deployed to firearms incident in Waltham Abbey whereby resident was threatening neighbours with a machete. Team lead the incident and successfully detained and arrested the suspect as well as recovering the weapon.
- During targeted patrols following a series of knife-point robberies in the district the team intercepted the target vehicle. A lengthy pursuit ensued but was discontinued when the vehicle went into London. Recovered following RTC and suspects linked through forensics have since been charged.
- Assist Housing with lock change at premises occupied by high-risk subject
- Identified and intercepted a recovery truck carrying a stolen vehicle and arrested two suspects. Further enquiries resulted in the recovery of 6 further stolen vehicles.
- Tasked to rural patrols re: increase in rural crime. Intercepted a known-burglar who was wanted for failing to appear at court.
- Ran an operation at Epping Forest College with a screening arch and provided engagement to students. There were 4500 pass-throughs with no positive searches.
- Traced subject vehicle linked to burglary series in Theydon Bois. Arrested two suspects, one of whom was wanted by multiple forces across the South-East.
- Intercepted a stolen vehicle in Theydon Bois that had been committing burglaries across the district. Suspect decamped and has not been traced but vehicle recovered with a arsenal of house-breaking tools inside
- Identified suspects for high value burglary in Chigwell and working with Metropolitan Police arrested well-known burglar in Ilford who was also wanted for multiple burglary offence across the district. Charged and currently awaiting trial.
- Recovered a large number of stolen vehicles discovered whilst on patrol around the district, activated ANPR or linked to ongoing crime series.
- Planning and execution of a search warrant to trace a vehicle linked to high value vehicle thefts. Number of stolen vehicles recovered and evidence linking the suspect to multiple offences. Suspect is currently 'Most Wanted' in West Essex and continues to be targeted by the team.
- Located vehicle in Roydon paying attention to houses. Pursuit ensued and vehicle recovered, found to be stolen on false plates, linked to multiple theft offences around Roydon and Nazeing.
- Supported the local election process through visiting polling stations and providing cover for the count.

A full list of the teams' activities can be found in the Activity Log included as Appendix A. (The Activity Log includes support for EFDC staff, under column 6 'EFDC support', where on 16 occasions, a risk or threat to staff existed).

Forthcoming Hub Activity in 2019

The team are currently working with Hainault Police to deliver education packages to local schools identified to be at risk from cross-border gangs/exploitation. This forms part of Operation Rose which was the county lines operation in late 2018. Both forces are seeking to plug the gap and prevent a resurgence of county line activity in the district. The police and council team continue to meet regularly with Met Police and BTP to share intelligence.

The team will be also leading on a number of operations for Operation Sceptre which is the national campaign tackling knife crime and associated offences. These operations will focus on targeting vehicles linked to crime using key routes in and out of the district.

Reason for decision: There is no decision related to this report.

Options considered and rejected: N/A

Consultation undertaken: A range of consultation was undertaken prior to the Council's decision to fund the additional police officers and this included with Nottinghamshire County Council, who had already funded a police team.

Service review: The funding of additional policing will be annually reviewed, with a detailed report to be presented to Cabinet in the final year of funding, in 2021.

Resource implications: The Council agreed three –year funding for the Police Officers, at a total of £555,000.

Personnel: Three Police Officers, including One Sergeant and two Police Constables.

Land: N/A

Community Plan/BVPP reference: Stronger Communities – Community safety and resilience.

Relevant statutory powers: N/A

Background papers: Cabinet Report February 2018.

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: Increased resources for the District to tackle crime and disorder.

Key Decision Ref (if required) N/A