

BRAINTREE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

Supporting parish and town councils in the District of Braintree

Chairman Cllr Martin Lee

MINUTES OF THE REPRESENTATIVE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 19th. OCTOBER 2022 VIA ZOOM AND IN PERSON AT WITHAM TOWN HALL AT 7pm

In attendance: Martin Lee (Chairman), Peter Gentry (Little Yeldham), Susan Pedder (Black Notley), Michael Lager (Witham TC), Jane Taylor (White Colne), India Jayatillake (Kelvedon PC), Ann Hooks (Rayne), Roger Hirst (PFCC), Jane Gardner (Deputy PFCC), Liane Edwards (PFCC Communications officer), Trisha Roberts (Toppesfield PC), Roger Duffey (Finchingfield) & Kevin B. Money (BALC Clerk)

1. Apologies for absence – Dave Gronland (Halstead TC), Derek Hambling, Philip Rawlinson (Gt. Yeldham), Melanie A'Lee (Rivenhall), Ken McDonald, John Pearce (Weathersfield), Andrew Hull (Shalford)

2. Welcome from the Chairman and Executive Committee. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and especially Roger Hirst and Jane Gardner from PFCC

3. To approve the Minutes of the last meeting of BALC Representatives on 20th. July 2022. Proposed by Ann Hooks Seconded by Michael Lager. **All Agreed**

4. Guest Speakers: Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner Roger Hirst and Jane Gardner Deputy Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner
Roger Hirst provided the meeting with a slide presentation. These slides can be found at the BALC website at <https://e-voice.org.uk/balc/news/>
Roger gave a comprehensive presentation and went through each slide fully.

The topics covered were

Police & Crime Plan 2021-24

Crime Trends

Braintree Investment

The 12 policing priorities to get crime down

Further investment in crime prevention • Reducing drug driven violence • Protecting vulnerable people and breaking the cycle of domestic abuse • Reducing violence against women and girls • Improving support for victims of crime • Protecting rural and isolated areas • Preventing dog theft • Preventing business crime, fraud and cyber crime • Improving safety on our roads • Encouraging volunteers and community support • Supporting our officers and staff • Increasing collaboration

Essex Police 2022/23

Investing in prevention • 3755 officers by March 2023 • 442 Specials, 2nd largest • Crime Prevention Strategy • Better working between emergency services – Fire, Ambulance, Police • Closer collaboration with partners – CSPs, Councils

More enforcement against organised crime (Jan - April 2022)

Serious Violence Unit established July 2020 -67 officers • Investment in 30 officers and better technology in 2021-2022 precept • April – June 2022, the Serious Organised Crime Unit within SCD dismantled OCG recovered 18 viable firearms with ammunition • SOC seized 19kg of cocaine and arrested a number of significant OCG nominals, • Recovered £38,000 and receiving a proceeds of crime forfeiture of over £800,000. • Essex police have recorded 53 OCG disruptions in April and May this year, making Essex the lead force for OCG disruptions in the Eastern Region.

Reducing drug-driven violence

Highlights:

Since 2018 the Partnership has secured over £5m for Essex from central Government

Work in localities – Anticipate reaching 37,860 individuals in 2022- 23
Growing the Violence & Vulnerability Unit to increase capacity and capability
Developing an evidence base of what works, including our nationally innovative Fearless Futures Project

Protecting vulnerable people and breaking the cycle of domestic abuse

Building confidence in reporting • Awareness campaigns • J9 awareness programme Supporting victims • £20m invested since 2016 • £1m COVID specific support (Inc SA) • 3.5 additional Domestic Abuse advocates in 2022-23 bringing us to 31 IDVAs Changing Behaviours DRIVE - Targeted 1-2-1 work • high levels of physical abuse reduced by 82%, • sexual abuse reduced by 88%; • harassment and stalking behaviours reduced by 75% and • controlling behaviours reduced by 73%.

Reducing violence against women and girls

Offending Essex experienced a 6.2% increase (2,315 more) in the number of VAP offences committed against females in the 12 months to August 2022 compared to the 12 months to August 2021; this compares to an 8.6% increase (2,435 more) in the number of VAP offences committed against males in the same period.

Violence against women and girls strategy • Building women and girls trust in police standards, culture and approach to VAWG • Relentlessly pursuing perpetrators • Strengthen prevention work by contributing to safer spaces for women and girls • Witham Town Centre £447,271 (SSR4) • Grays, Thurrock £625,000 (SSR2) • Bunny Walks, Chelmsford £550,000 (SSR3)

Essex Fire Service - Journey so far

13% reduction in dwelling fires over last five years • 6,646 safe and well visits • 7,540 smoke alarms fitted 1,125 sensory alarms • 1071 full audits and 113 desktop audits
100,831 children reached in last year • 7770 hours driving ambulances since start of pandemic • 68 staff volunteering at vaccination centres

Looking forward

Investment areas in Essex • Improved training provision • Investing in prevention activity • Improved fire protection capacity • Recruiting and retaining on-call firefighters Fire Reform Whitepaper • Need for reform widely accepted • Revised governance (Mayor, PFCC or single councillor) • New College of Fire and Rescue and ethics • Bring into law majority of Grenfell Inquiry recommendations

Precept Survey 2023/24 Precept survey opens Friday 21st October 22 – closes Sunday 27th November 22

HAVE YOUR SAY on paying for policing and fire and rescue services in Essex

The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex (PFCC), Roger Hirst, is seeking views on paying for policing and fire rescue services in Essex, as he sets the 2023/2024 budgets for the Services. Funding for Essex Police comes from two sources, central government funding and local council tax, while funding for Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS) comes from central government, local council tax and business rates.

Essex residents are being urged to have their say on how much they would be prepared to spend and which areas of policing and crime they would like to see further investment in. They can fill in a survey to give their views.

Survey link: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/PFCCprecept2023-24/>

Following his presentation, he took questions from members

Kelvedon PC asked about speeding, drinking and drug abuse. Gangs walking in high street with knives at 6pm in the evening. What can be done? Roger responded by passing this onto Police department but to get residents to report these offences and Crimestoppers or 101. The more reporting is better than none. Jane Gardener said she would email the appropriate person and request contact is made with the Kelvedon PC to investigate the matter.

Martin Lee – 900 extra officers only went back to 10 year ago levels. Roger Hirst said that more officers are being trained. Increasing the numbers by 10%. 250 Officers leave each year. More

efficiencies are important. With the Fire Service possibly going on strike leaving the experienced officers at a low level. Fire-fighters are leaving and not being fully replaced. Jane mentioned that police officer numbers are rising. New officers are placed on front line duties. More Community policing is increasing. Fire-fighters recruiting started about 2 years from a 9 year absence.

Peter Gentry said that their local Community Policing officer is doing a good job.

Michael Lager and Witham Town Council is a great believer in close community partnership and it works well in Witham.

Witham TC recruit local community police officers to crack down on crime. The local police station is now in the Town hall. ASB is very much down, but drug dealing is still prevalent. CCTV works well in Witham and they have moved away from monitoring by Chelmsford City Council. The extra funding is being used for community street walkers. The Town feels safer in Witham.

Community Safety Partnership is an important department but will impact on operational requirements. Roger encouraged all Councils to get involved with the Community Safety Partnership

Trisha from Toppesfield PC informed the meeting that a new prison is proposed to be built in the area. Has PFCC been consulted on his proposal?

Roger is not a consultee in the planning process but does know about the application.

Martin said that the proposed area is too far from any local transportation (trains / buses etc).

The social impact on the area from this application needs readdressing.

Martin Lee thanked Roger Hirst, Jane Gardner and Liane Edwards for giving up their valuable time this evening. Roger Hirst, Jane Gardner and Liane Edwards then left the meeting

5. To receive reports:

- a) Finance report. To receive the Bank reconciliation as at 30th. September 2022

Councillors noted the Bank reconciliation as at 30th. September 2022

Proposed by Ann Hooks and seconded by Peter Gentry. **All Agreed**

- b) Local Highways Panel

Peter Gentry informed the meeting that LHP are taking far too long to approve funds. LHP are underfunded and not being taken seriously by ECC. An average wait is 3 years from start to finish. Jane Taylor said that the LHP have a new highways officer from ECC and hopefully scheme will be actioned more quickly.

- c) BDC Standards Sub Committee

Nothing to report

- d) EALC Executive

Following the EALC AGM a single Councillor manipulated the session which left little time for other Councillors to ask the guest speakers relevant questions.

Not much heard on the White paper from Graham Butland.

Please use libraries as they are very user friendly and needed

The agenda was very boring and the lack of attendance was due to being held during the day when Councillors work. Maybe a weekend meeting next time

6. Update on New BALC website. The Association Clerk informed the meeting of the new BALC website. The new website can be found at <https://e-voice.org.uk/balc/>

7. Information Sharing – an opportunity for Councils to ask questions and share their experiences Toppesfield setting up a warm bank furnishing elderly people in the village. Activities happening in the village hall with teas/ coffees and entertainment.

Each Council should try to organise a warm bank one a day and every week.

Witham Town Council refer you to [this](#) in the Witham TC website

BDC has scheduled a meeting to organise funding to operate funding for these warm banks.

The Clerk to ask all members if they are organising warm bank days

8. Date of next meeting – **Wednesday 18th. January 2023 at 7pm**
Venue Witham Town Hall and via Zoom

9. BALC 2023 meeting dates were agreed as –
Executive meeting dates are 04.01.23: 05.04.23: 05.07.23: 04.10.23 all via Zoom
Representative meeting dates are 18.01.23: 19.04.23: 19.07.23: 18.10.23 in person and via Zoom

The Chairman then closed the meeting at 9.20pm and thanked everyone for attending

Signed



18th. January 2023

Martin Lee - Chairman