



22nd January 2021 - ECFRS praised for Covid-19 response by HMICFRS

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS) has continued to keep its public and residents safe while supporting partners through the pandemic.

ECFRS was inspected by HMICFRS in October 2020 as part of an inspection into how fire and rescue services were responding to Covid-19, as they continued to face challenges during a difficult

period.

In an official letter received on Friday (22 January) the inspectors praised ECFRS for being well prepared, the support it offered to partners, maintenance of its core services and putting the welfare of its staff at the heart of decisions and activities.

Chief Fire Officer/ Chief Executive, Jo Turton said: "I'm really pleased that we received some excellent feedback from the inspectorate. We continually work to reassure our public that regardless of what is happening we will always be there for them in an emergency. We're also so passionate about our prevention work and know this is a priority to keeping people safe in their homes.

"This report echoes this message and highlights how we manage to do this in a way that keeps our people safe throughout a global pandemic.

"The overwhelming feeling I got when reading this publication was that the inspectors spoke of a Service that I recognise, and a Service that I am incredibly proud to be a part of."

Roger Hirst, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex, said: "There is some really positive feedback from this inspection that echoes what I've seen the Service deliver during this pandemic.

"HMICFRS has recognised the ECFRS's commitment to its core services and staff wellbeing throughout this difficult time, in addition to going above and beyond in the way it supported other emergency services and public sector organisations.

“The inspectorate’s findings reflect the Service’s hard work and the culture we now have. I am incredibly proud of our fire service as are the residents of Essex. “Feedback from our regular public engagement meetings has been nothing but praise.”

<https://www.essex.pfcc.police.uk/news/ecfrs-praised-for-covid-19-response-by-hmicfrs/>

4th February 2021 - Building a safe and secure Essex - Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex 2021/2022 budget proposals agreed

Essex residents and businesses will see more investment in policing over the next year. Members of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel have agreed the budget for policing and fire and rescues services recommended by Roger Hirst, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex.

Mr Hirst is keeping the increase in the precepts to a minimum to reduce the financial impact on the public. However, there will still be funds for 184 more police officers to enable Essex Police to keep people safe, prevent crime and catch criminals.

To continue to deliver the level of policing residents want, it is necessary to increase the policing element of the council tax by 4.98 per cent, equivalent to £9.90 a year for a Band D property. This is significantly less than the maximum increase permitted but the minimum required to continue Essex Police’s programme of growth. There will not be an increase in the Fire and Rescue element of council tax, there is not the same urgent need for an increase as investment for the service will be met from current reserves.

<https://www.essex.pfcc.police.uk/news/building-a-safe-and-secure-essex-2/>



10th March 2021 - PFCC helps Neighbourhood Watch continue its work to keep residents safe during lockdown

Essex County Neighbourhood Watch Association works to advise residents on how to keep safe, as well as sharing information on crimes in their local area.

The organisation – which has 140,000 members in Essex – has had to adapt some of the ways it works this year, in line with other organisations and businesses following government guidance against Covid-19.

The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex (PFCC) contributed £15,000 to Essex County Neighbourhood Watch Association from the 2019/2020 Community Safety Development Fund to allow the 14 district groups to run their projects.

This year, the funds usually spent on an AGM – cancelled this year – were instead used to invest in a Zoom account to enable the organisation to continue to function during lockdown by attending virtual meetings.

Across the county, the funding has also been spent on supplying residents with crime-fighting accessories such as UV pens, card signal blockers, No Cold Caller stickers and purse cables, as well as merchandise including Neighbourhood Watch badges, wheelie bin stickers and street signs to help them to stay safe.

There has also been an increase in the use of social media to spread the word and keep communities informed.

11th February 2021 - Essex VVU awarded over £1million in the fight against County Lines

The Essex Violence and Vulnerability Unit has been awarded £1,160,000 from the Home Office to continue its work to tackle County Lines and support young, vulnerable people from criminal exploitation.

The funding, which is for 2021/22, is a share of £35.5million which has been awarded to the 18 Violence Reduction Units operating across England and Wales in areas worst affected by serious violence. It is the third year of Home Office funding and takes the total invested in Violence Reduction Units to more than £105 million.

Roger Hirst, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex and Chair of the Violence and Vulnerability Unit said: “Violence has no place in our society. We must tackle violence at its root cause and work with the public and partners to create the safe and secure communities we all want and which allow all of us to flourish and prosper.

“Gangs that exploit people and coerce them into a life of crime are preying on some of the most vulnerable people in our society. While no agency can tackle this alone, in Essex we know that working together, through our Violence and Vulnerability Unit, can turn the tide against these gangs, protect the vulnerable and help to ensure we all live prosperous and productive lives.

“Protecting children and vulnerable people from harm and tackling gangs and serious violence are priorities in our Police and Crime Plan and they are important to the people of Essex who want to make sure their young people are protected and that violent activity is removed from our communities.

“In Essex we are making progress by using multi-agency prevention activities focussed on positive activities for young people, mentoring programmes and interventions at ‘reachable’ moments – all delivered in partnership with police, councils, health, education, criminal justice agencies, faith groups, voluntary

organisations, fire & rescue and the community sector. This work is backed up and supported through a strong surge in enforcement by Essex Police.



18th February 2021 - Funding available to help support victims and survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence

Up to £426,893 is available to help victims and survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Charities, groups and organisations working to support those who have experienced these awful crimes can apply for money via the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex.

However, groups must act quickly as the closing date for applications is Wednesday, February 24th.

Roger Hirst, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex, said: "The Ministry of Justice has secured £4.625 million for sexual violence and £8.95m for domestic abuse to give to organisations which support vulnerable people. In Essex we have been allocated up to £426,893 so if you think we can help your group, charity or organisation, get in touch with us now."

The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex is already working with the services that it funds to utilise some of the funding available to ensure their continued availability during the Coronavirus pandemic.

In addition, some of the money available will be open to services not currently funded by the PFCC in order to encourage underrepresented groups to seek support. Therefore, small specialist organisations that support domestic abuse and sexual violence victims with protected characteristics such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation are invited to apply for funding.

The criteria for this fund are:

- You must be a registered charity, a charitable incorporated organisation, or a social enterprise, including companies limited by guarantee and community interest companies.
- You provide specialist domestic abuse and/or sexual violence support services for individuals and families of protected characteristics which have the purpose of helping victims of crime who reside in Essex cope with the impacts of crime, and, as far as possible, recover from the harm they have experienced.



22nd Feb 2021 - Celebrating a year of progress and working together to keep our communities safe

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's (ECFRS) Annual Report for 2019 – 2020 shows the Service is effectively managing risk, helping to prevent fires and harm in our communities and working together to protect the public.

Jo Turton, Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive, said:

“2019/20 was a busy year and as an organisation we have made significant progress to support our people and keep our communities safe. Throughout the year our staff and volunteers have worked incredibly hard and show fantastic passion for their roles. As a result, we now have a stronger service, better able to work with partners and more focused on preventing harm happening in our communities.”

“Like all organisations, the Service has been tested by the global pandemic, but the professionalism of our teams has meant we were able to respond quickly and effectively. There has been no change to the way we respond to incidents, and keeping people who live, work and travel in Essex is, and will always be our priority.”

The report shows a strengthened service, delivering good value for money to the public and with clear committed leadership that has a good grip on the Service's strengths and the areas where it needs to improve.

During the year the Service had its first inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue. They found that the Service was good at:

- Responding to fires and other emergencies
- Responding to national risks
- Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future
- Managing performance and developing leaders

<https://www.essex.pfcc.police.uk/news/celebrating-a-year-of-progress-and-working-together-to-keep-our-communities-safe/>



28th February 2021 - Tri-Service Rural Community Officer starts work for all three emergency services

A new Tri-Service Rural Community Officer, representing all three emergency services, has begun working in the Maldon and the Dengie Peninsular areas of Essex.

Les Davis will establish himself as a pivotal member of the community, making Essex safer while working collaboratively for Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS), Essex Police and East of England Ambulance Service (EEAST).

With the support of Roger Hirst, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex, the role is part of a 15-month pilot between the services.

Roger Hirst, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex said:

“Supporting residents living in our rural communities is a key focus in my Police and Crime Plan and my Fire and Rescue Plan. I am delighted we have been able to introduce this scheme as Les will make such a difference to health, wellbeing and safety in our rural communities.

“Acting on feedback we received from our engagement with residents it was clear that a role like this would help people in some of the areas of our county, which because of their geography, can sometimes feel a little remote.

“Les is working right in the hub of those communities, representing three emergency services, being a visible and reassuring presence.”



25th February 2021 - Dog Theft Survey

Roger Hirst, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex, is supporting a national survey designed to understand public perception of dog theft, enforcement, and the prosecution of offenders.

He is aware that there are concerns from dog owners across Essex, who are worried about their four-legged friends, following stories that have been circulating on social media and notices that have been placed in popular dog walking areas.

Take part in the survey

Roger said: “As a dog owner myself I fully appreciate how alarming this can be. Dogs are part of the family and are a source of great love, comfort and companionship. This is particularly relevant now when we are all at home and walking our dogs is the one part of the day that we can look forward to. It’s important that we find out what is really happening in Essex so we respond effectively, allay fears and offer people relevant advice, so they are more confident about what the picture is, what is happening in response and what they can do to be safer.”

<https://www.essex.pfcc.police.uk/news/dog-theft-survey/>

PFCC WELCOMES £130.5M TO TACKLE SERIOUS VIOLENCE, MURDER AND KNIFE CRIME

Roger Hirst, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex and Chair of the Violence and Vulnerability Board, welcomed this funding, announced by the Home Office today.

He said: “Violence has no place in our society. We must tackle violence at its root cause and work with the public and partners to create the safe and secure communities we all want, and which allow all of us to flourish and prosper. We have brought together this partnership to ensure that public agencies including the emergency services work together with community bodies in an effective public health approach to these crimes, through early intervention and protecting vulnerable people. This money will make a real difference to that work and validates the success of our approach so far.

“Protecting children and vulnerable people from harm and tackling gangs and serious violence are priorities in our Police and Crime Plan and they are important to the people of Essex who want to make sure their young people are protected and that violent activity is removed from our communities.

“The extra funding for domestic abuse perpetrator programmes, on top of the money announced last week, is also warmly welcomed. Breaking the cycle of domestic abuse is also a priority. Putting interventions in place to change behaviours will help to prevent these awful crimes from happening. It’s so important and will make such a difference.”

The Home Office announcement is available [**here.**](#)