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Community Leadership Overview and
Scrutiny Committee

28 January 2025

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE,
HELD ON TUESDAY, 28TH JANUARY, 2025 AT 7.30 PM
IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, AT THE TOWN HALL, STATION ROAD, CLACTON-
ON-SEA, CO15 1SE**

Present:	Councillors Steady (Chairman), Barrett (Vice-Chairman), Davidson, Doyle, Ferguson, Griffiths and Oxley
Also Present:	Councillors Kotz (Portfolio Holder for Assets & Community Safety; Joint Chairman of the Community Safety Partnership Board), Placey (Portfolio Holder for Partnerships; Joint Chairman of the Community Safety Partnership Board) and Smith (Portfolio Holder for the Environment & ICT) (all except item 11)
In Attendance:	Tim Clarke (Assistant Director (Housing and Environment)) (except item 11), Keith Simmons (Head of Democratic Services and Elections & Deputy Monitoring Officer), Grant Fenton-Jones (Environmental Health Manager) (except item 11), Leanne Thornton (Community Safety & Safeguarding Manager) (except items 10 (part) - 11), Bethany Jones (Committee Services Officer) and Katie Koppenaar (Committee Services Officer)

6. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

There were no apologies for absence submitted nor substitutes appointed by Members on this occasion.

7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest by Councillors in relation to any item on the agenda for this meeting.

8. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 38

On this occasion no Councillor had submitted notice of a question pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 38.

**9. REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS AND DELIVERY -
CONSIDERATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF A CRIME AND DISORDER
REDUCTION STRATEGY 2025-2028**

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director (Operations & Delivery) which set out the proposed Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy 2025 – 2028 and offered Members the opportunity to provide feedback on that draft strategy having heard from some of the key partners working with the Council through the Community Safety Partnership.

The following parties were in attendance to respond to any questions raised by the Committee.

Tim Clarke – Assistant Director (Housing and Environment) (TDC);
Councillor Gina Placey – Joint Chair of the Community Safety Partnership Board; and
Councillor Peter Kotz – Joint Chair of the Community Safety Partnership Board.

Members were aware that, as set out in Article 6 of the Council's Constitution, the Community Leadership Overview & Scrutiny Committee acted as the Council's designated "crime and disorder committee" for the purposes of Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 and had the power –

(a) *to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities [*] of their crime and disorder function;*

(b) *to make reports or recommendations to the local authority with respect to the discharge of those functions.*

* *"The responsible authorities" means the bodies and persons who are responsible authorities within the meaning given by section 5 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (c.37) (authorities responsible for crime and disorder strategies) in relation to the local authority's area.*

In fulfilling that function the Community Leadership Overview & Scrutiny Committee had the power (whether by virtue of section 9F(2) or 21(2) of the Local Government Act 2000 or regulations made under section 9JA(2) or 32(3) of that Act or otherwise) to make a report or recommendation to the local authority with respect to any matter which was a local crime and disorder matter in relation to a member of the authority.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution and The Crime and Disorder Act 1998, as amended by section 97 and 98 of the Police Reform Act 2002, there was a requirement on Community Safety Partnerships to develop a Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy

The Committee was informed that the Strategy had been ratified by the Community Safety Partnership Strategic Board on 9 January 2025. The Strategy would be presented to Cabinet on 21st February 2025.

In presenting the Strategy to Cabinet the relevant Portfolio Holders would recommend that Cabinet agreed to recommend the adoption of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy 2025 – 2028; and that authority be delegated to the Corporate Director for Operations and Delivery to make future minor updates or amendments to the Strategy in consultation with the Portfolio Holder responsible for community safety.

The Strategy would then go to the Full Council meeting on 25 March 2025 for adoption by the Council.

It was reported that the Strategy set out the overarching framework for the Council and its partners in the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to reduce crime and disorder by formalising the work that would be undertaken with the CSP and the Council's Community Safety Team over the next three years.

It set out the priorities for reducing crime and disorder and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), whilst protecting vulnerable people across Tendring over the next three years.

Through working together, the CSP had achieved many successes in reducing crime and disorder and ASB, protecting those who were vulnerable and making Tendring safe and secure for residents, businesses and visitors.

The Council was proud of those achievements. In order to build upon previous work and to understand the challenges that arose the Council work with partners to address the challenges to ensure a safer Tendring for its residents.

Members were informed that the Strategy was based upon a wide range of data and information, from public consultation to crime and disorder information that were brought together in an annual Strategic Assessment. Through the assessment four key themes within the Strategy (as set down below) had been identified that fed into the CSP priorities. The challenges facing children, young adults and families that had evolved and continued to do so were recognised. For example, criminal gangs were targeting children to move drugs in and out of towns and other areas, including in Tendring. This was a national issue, but there was a need to be aware of criminal gangs, and to be able to spot the signs that children might be being targeted.

- 1. Tackling violence against women and girls is at the forefront of the CSP's agenda and reflects the Government's priority in tackling this issue, following the tragic deaths of Sarah Everard, Balvinder Gahir, Bibaa Henry, Nicole Smallman and Julia James, and an increase in reports of domestic abuse.*
- 2. Our ambition is to increase support for victims and survivors, increase the number of perpetrators brought to justice and reduce the prevalence of violence against women and girls.*
- 3. We will work in partnership across the CSP & Health and Wellbeing Board and with our partners and communities to achieve progress on our priorities during the lifetime of this strategy and seek to bring about real change for residents and visitors to Tendring.*
- 4. The CSP brings the opportunity for organisations and groups to come together to improve crime and disorder and ASB in Tendring and create an environment where people and communities can flourish, the CSP remains committed to making Tendring safe.*

The Committee was advised that the findings of the strategic assessment had informed the decision to select the CSP Priorities for Tendring which would be:

1. Tackling ASB and the root causes of ASB;
2. High Harm Violence (with a focus on Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and Domestic Abuse);
3. Drug and knife enabled Serious Violence (Gangs and County Lines); and
4. Emerging threats and Trends (i.e.: Shoplifting, Vehicle Crime, Arson & Criminal Damage).

Members were cognisant that there were no financial implications associated with the adoption of this Strategy as the Strategy formalised existing arrangements which were currently fully funded via the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner Annual Grant.

Councillor Kotz, Joint Chairman of the CSP Board and Tendring District Council's Portfolio Holder for Assets and Community Safety addressed the Committee by way of an introduction to the Strategy and recorded his thanks to the Community Safety & Safeguarding Manager (Leanne Thornton) and her Team for producing the Strategy. Councillor Kotz reminded the Committee that this was a high-level strategic document, and he requested that Members' questions be concentrated on matters at the District level rather than at the local Ward/neighbourhood level.

The Community Safety & Safeguarding Manager gave a presentation that highlighted the salient points of the Strategy which, in turn, had been based upon an annual strategic assessment.

At the meeting of the Committee the following questions were asked to which the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships and others, when appropriate, responded.

Committee Member asking the Question	Question (summary form)	Individual giving the response (if any)	Response (if any) (Summary form)
Councillor Griffiths	How is the Council/CSP communicating with residents to try to allay their fear of crime?	Leanne Thornton	Community Ambassadors are often out and about in town centres talking to residents receiving information / intelligence and putting over messages. Similarly, at Community safety Events. Community Days & Nights of Action also take place for example visiting pubs and clubs to talk to licensees and customers and put across safety messages relating to drink spiking.
Councillor Griffiths	Is there any "teeth" behind this Strategy or is it just 'for show'? How can it be demonstrated that the CSP has a grip on the crime and disorder issues		

	highlighted in this report?		
Councillor Doyle	How do the District's crime and disorder figures relate to those at the national level?	Leanne Thornton	Essex County Council undertakes a crime survey, and the statistics are then passed to this Council. Those statistics show that Tendring is on a par with the rest of Greater Essex.
Councillor Doyle	Are there support mechanisms available for those Council Officers who face such challenges out on the street and may encounter scenes of a violent and/or upsetting nature?	Leanne Thornton	Mutual support is available within the Team. Support mechanisms were available via HR and the EAP if counselling/mental health support was required. There were also reporting mechanisms available if "concerns or issues" needed to be sent up the "chain of command".
Councillor Oxley	Anti-Social Behaviour is prevalent in Walton. Is there a way of moving forward the request for a Public Spaces Protection Order more quickly?	Leanne Thornton	Am aware of the street drinking issue in Walton. Unfortunately, a significant amount of evidence is required to justify putting a PSPO in place and that must come from Essex Police. As yet the threshold has not been met.
Councillor Davidson	Crime Reporting figures are not accurate as most residents do not report crime as they believe nothing will	Leanne Thornton	Historically, reporting has been an issue due to the need to either visit a Police Station in person or use the

	<p>happen in response and so it is not worth their while. Therefore, Tendring's figures look good but are not accurate. How can we encourage and educate residents to report crime?</p>		<p>ineffective 101 telephone system. However, there are more ways than ever to report crime e.g. online or via the dedicated TDC telephone number. The Community Safety Team encourages the public at every opportunity to report crime as all crime reported is risk assessed, categorised and solvability assessed.</p>
<p>Councillor Davidson</p>	<p>Need to find a way to challenge children who are seen wearing suspiciously expensive clothes, footwear or other accessories as to where the money to buy them came from as a way of discovering whether they are caught up in shoplifting or 'county lines' drug distribution.</p>	<p>Leanne Thornton</p>	<p>A recent anti-shoplifting initiative has been the introduction of the Shop Safe Radio System, funded by the CSP, whereby shop owners are in constant contact with the CST and Essex Police and can report ASB and shoplifting as it happens. In addition, Essex Police and Essex Fire & Rescue have a joint education team that goes into schools and youth clubs and give sessions on various crime prevention and personal safety matters.</p>
<p>Councillor Davidson</p>	<p>Are there programmes to educate children on the dangers of</p>	<p>Leanne Thornton</p>	<p>Yes. This is part of the work of the Essex Police and Essex Fire &</p>

	carrying knives and knife crime?	Councillor Placey	Rescue Joint Education Team. In addition, the CST is working locally with the “U-Turn” knife crime charity. Efforts are ongoing to encourage more schools to invite the Joint Education Team in.
Councillor Ferguson	Need to come up with a “Report It” campaign alongside the publication of this Strategy in due course. In addition, there is a need to promote the work and achievements of TDC and the CSP.	Tim Clarke Leanne Thornton	Will take away the idea of a publicity campaign and discuss it with the Council’s Communications Manager. The CSP produces an annual report of its achievements which can be shared with Members and more widely disseminated. Essex Police also produce a comprehensive monthly newsletter which can be subscribed to.
Councillor Ferguson	What is a ‘Minerva’ Zone?	Leanne Thornton	This is a specific area/location in the local community where women and girls report that they do not feel safe. If enough reports are received, then an action under the Police’s “Minerva” initiative will be carried out.

Councillor Steady	Referred to the BBC News report that Essex Police had revealed plans to make all 99 of its PCSOs redundant to help balance its budget. This will mean that the speedy implementation of the Council's CCTV project is even more urgent as a gap would now be generated in community policing.	Councillor Kotz	Not aware of the full details of this so can not comment as yet. Referred also to the Home Office's mooted changes to policing. Was aware that the CCTV Project planning applications would be considered at Planning Committee next week. He felt that the role of this Committee was to keep a good eye on the Strategy's priorities and how they were implemented as a 'rolling' live document.
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A Member suggested that the Committee Members should go out and about with the Community Ambassadors to help Members understand the crime and disorder problems and issues within the community. Leanne Thornton welcomed that suggestion and offered to facilitate this. Councillor Kotz mentioned that Essex Police were also extending a similar invitation.

The Chairman thanked Leanne Thornton for her excellent report and presentation.

Councillor Kotz thanked the Committee for their constructive comments.

It was moved by Councillor Ferguson, seconded by Councillor Griffiths and:-

RESOLVED that –

- (a) the Crime and Disorder Strategy presented to the Committee be supported and Cabinet advised of this support for delivery by the appropriate partners including Essex Police;
- (b) the Committee -
 - (i) commends the Strategy authors for ensuring that the language and format and use of graphics to create what is an accessible document for most readers;

- (ii) urges the Cabinet to ensure that all reasonable and appropriate steps are taken to care for the health, safety and wellbeing of all staff involved in enforcement activities and community safety;
- (iii) recognises the increasing levels of violence against the person, shoplifting, possession of weapons, personal robbery, hate crime and domestic abuse and the need for robust action to address these growing crime problems in the District;
- (iv) urges the Community Safety Partnership to adopt, as a priority, the need to educate and encourage confidence in the reporting of crime by the public and business managers to reduce significantly the current levels of under reporting by victims; and
- (v) expresses its concern for delivery of the priorities on the basis of the plans announced on the day of the meeting for all 99 PCSOs in Essex to be made redundant.

10. REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT - WATER QUALITY IN THE TENDRING DISTRICT

The Committee considered a report of the Assistant Director (Housing & Environment) which would provide it with statistical evidence and data regarding the quality of Seawater, Freshwater Courses and Drinking Water within the District of Tendring.

The data collated had been obtained, principally, via the Environment Agency, along with further information on water quality and data around Private Water Supplies and Oyster beds provided by the Council's Environmental Health Service.

At the meeting the Portfolio Holder for the Environment & ICT (Councillor Smith) introduced this item by way of a statement he read out.

The Environmental Health Manager (Grant Fenton-Jones) gave a brief overview of the report, drawing out its salient points and especially the information contained within the appendices. He reported that, overall, the bathing and drinking water quality was excellent and for bathing there were only two areas of minor concern i.e. Holland Haven and Mistley/Manningtree.

Mr. Fenton-Jones informed the Committee that, since January 2024, third party water distributor/supplier inspections (e.g. caravan park sites) had been an extra burden on the Team's statutory workload.

Mr. Fenton-Jones also reported that Natural England were in the process of commissioning a bio-diversity study and action plan for the Stour and Orwell Rivers which would especially focus on invasive species and their impact on water quality. He undertook to keep the Committee updated.

Committee Member asking the Question	Question (summary form)	Individual giving the response (if any)	Response (if any) (Summary form)
Councillor Griffiths	How would the	Grant Fenton-	The Team's focus

	Council carry out its Regulation 8 inspections on mobile home sites with intermittent use and seasonal use caravan parks.	Jones	would be on sampling sites that used stored water and a pump supply. The site owners would need to carry out a Legionella risk assessment as part of the licensing regime before that site could re-open for the new season. For those sites with mains supply the focus would be a robust examination of that site's customer safety policies and practices.
Councillor Doyle	How will the Council ensure that the new housing targets will be met without overloading the water supply and foul and surface water drainage systems?	Grant Jones	Fenton- Anglian Water's willingness to grant Discharge Consents will be a necessary and significant factor in achieving the required growth in housing supply. Environmental Health will work closely with Planning colleagues as a consultee on planning applications on matters such as SuDS attenuation; climate change amelioration; encouragement of 'grey water' recycling; separation of 'foul' water from rainwater.
Councillor Barrett	Can you confirm	Grant Fenton-	Yes, 100%. This

	that the misuse of storm drain overflows is a low level issue for Anglian Water in this District?	Jones	District is doing well currently and is expected to improve even further over the next ten years.
Councillor Davidson	Does the Environmental Health Team regular the Dock River at Parkeston?	Tim Clarke	No, that is an Environment Agency responsibility.
Councillor Doyle	Does this Council actively advise the public that Gull poo is toxic?	Grant Fenton-Jones	The Council is already responding to a similar enquiry about problems caused by pigeons and so that work could be expanded to include Gulls.

It was moved by Councillor Davidson, seconded by Councillor Doyle and:-

RESOLVED that the Committee –

- (a) welcomes the reports on water quality and that this demonstrates the generally good news story for the District and its water quality;
- (b) also welcomes the biodiversity action plan being developed for the Stour and Orwell rivers; and
- (c) notes the opportunities to be explored around visiting the sewage treatment work at Holland Haven; the company in Harwich who are taking sewage waste and converting it into energy bricks and clean water; and the Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners in respect of the research project being undertaken with the University of Essex.

11. **REVIEW OF THE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Democratic Services & Elections which provided it with an update on its approved Work Programme for 2024/25 (including progress with enquiries set out in its Work Programme), feedback to the Committee on the decisions in respect of previous recommendations from the Committee in respects of enquiries undertaken and a list of forthcoming decisions for which public notice had been given.

Members were reminded that the Council had commissioned the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) to undertake an ‘Overview & Scrutiny Development Review’ in

2021 as a way of further improving that function at the Council. Two relevant recommendations arising from that review had been:

“Further strengthening the annual process for developing work programmes for each O&S committee - Engaging Members, Officers, partners and the public to prioritise the topics for review. This could include a selection criterion to identify appropriate topics for the work programme. Currently the work programme is also the last item on the agenda at O&S meetings, we would recommend bringing it to the beginning, so it can be given greater priority and benefit from more considered discussion, rather than being subject to the inevitable end of meeting fatigue.

Reviewing how the recommendations are made and how impact is measured – This could include putting the ‘recommendations monitoring report’ at the beginning of agendas to orientate O&S towards outcomes-focused meetings, alongside an emphasis on finding strong recommendations from questioning to present to Cabinet (or partners) as improvement or challenge proposals.”

The inclusion of the matters set out in the “purpose of the report” section of the Head of Democratic Services & Elections’ report sought to further re-enforce the inter-relationship of the matters referred to. As such, it was designed to further support consideration of work programming of the Committee and contribute to addressing progress with the Corporate Plan.

The detailed matters relating to the following matters were set out in the relevant Appendix identified:

- (1) Work Programme for 2024/25 approved by Full Council on 6 August 2024 (Appendix A);
- (2) feedback to the Committee on the decisions in respect of previous recommendations from the Committee in respects of enquiries undertaken (none on this occasion); and
- (3) a list of forthcoming decisions for which notice had been given since publication of the agenda for the Committee’s last meeting (Appendix B).

In considering work programming matters, the Committee was further reminded of the other recommendations from the CfGS review undertaken in 2021 namely:

“Considering greater use of task and finish groups – This more informal type of O&S can allow improved cross-party working and detailed investigation of a single issue focussed on producing substantive recommendations.

Improved agenda planning and management - Committees should focus on one or two substantive items per agenda to allow for cross-cutting themes to be properly identified and explored, and different insights brought to bear on critical issues.

Considering how to engage the public in the work of O&S - This could include O&S going on more site visits in the community, inviting the public to offer ideas for work programmes, and greater use of social media channels for resident input and communicating the progress and impact of scrutiny work.

A clearer focus on democratic accountability - Scrutiny of Cabinet Members should form a key part of the work programme, providing an opportunity to hold the Leader and portfolio holders to account for delivery of the corporate plan and any other issues O&S feel is important.

Also pertinent to the Committee's considerations were its terms of reference as set out in Article 6.01(i) of the Council's Constitution together with the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 7 (Work Programme) and the themes of the Council's Corporate Plan which were:-

- *Pride in our area and services to residents*
- *Raising aspirations and creating opportunities*
- *Championing our local environment*
- *Working with partners to improve quality of life*
- *Promoting our heritage offer, attracting visitors and encouraging them to stay longer*
- *Financial Sustainability and openness*

Members noted that the Committee had held an informal meeting on Thursday 9 January 2025, during which the attendees had received a very informative presentation from Dr. Emily Murray of the Centre for Coastal Communities (University of Essex). A Member suggested that Dr. Murray be invited to attend a future formal meeting of the Committee and the Head of Democratic Services & Elections undertook to add that as a provisional item on the Committee's 2025/26 Work Programme.

Members also received or would shortly receive an update of the work of the Task & Finish Groups established by the Committee, namely:

- Crime and Disorder (Familial Violence/Abuse);
- Joint working with Parish and Town Councils; and
- Youth Provision for School Age Children outside of school.

It was **RESOLVED** that –

- (a) the progress with enquiries set out in its Work Programme 2024/25, plus any feedback to the Committee on the decisions in respect of previous recommendations and the list of forthcoming decisions be noted; and
- (b) the updates of the work of the Committee's Task and Finish Groups be formally received and noted.

The meeting was declared closed at 9.19 pm

Chairman

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