**Performance and Resources Scrutiny Programme 2018/2019**

**Report to: the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Title of Report:** | **Special Constabulary Quarterly Update** |
| **Agenda Number:** | **4** |
| **Chief Officer** | **ACC Andy Prophet** |
| **Date Paper was Written** | **11th September 2018** |
| **Version Number** | **3** |
| **Report from:** | **Essex Police** |
| **Date of Meeting:** | **27th September 2018** |
| **Author on behalf of Chief Officer:** | **Supt Simon Anslow** |
| **Date of Approval:** |  |

1. **Purpose of Report**

Quarterly update on the Special Constabulary Development Programme and future recruitment.

1. **Recommendations**
2. PFCC and Essex Police adjust the ambition to a target of 600 active specials by March 2020 with a stretch target of 700.
3. Essex Police provide additional investment in marketing and vetting to support this ambition.
4. Essex Police extend the commitment of a dedicated specials support team for a further 3 years
5. **Executive Summary**

The Special Constabulary headcount now stands at 464 officers. This is a net increase of 174 since April 2017 (+34%) and represents the largest headcount since July 2013.

Essex Police has made significant progress in the recruitment and contribution of Special Constables over the last 12 months. The force is not only bucking the national trend, but in many areas is performing better than all other forces in the country. Our successes include:

* The biggest headcount growth in the country in the last financial year
* Becoming the third largest special constabulary in the country, only marginally behind GMP
* The hours and contribution from Special Constables has significantly increased
* Based on an expectation of 16hrs a month, the current number of hours worked would be the equivalent of 737 Specials working 16hrs a month.

Recruitment this financial year is behind the timetable presented to the board in June 2018, with 21 fewer officers at this point in the year than projected. The key element to this shortfall is the number of candidates whose vetting could not be concluded before the hiring deadline. The process of clearing a candidate through vetting is not one-dimensional and not solely a function of the number of vetting operatives. Other challenges include: candidates completing their forms accurately and in a timely fashion and other organisations and agencies providing the necessary information for decisions to be reached.

Over the course of the past 12 months it has become apparent that the attrition rate at key stages of the recruitment, assessment and selection process have been higher (and persistently higher) than originally anticipated.

Based on current trends and performance, we anticipate delivering a headcount of 515 to 530 Special Constables by the end of March 2019. If we were to maintain this rate of growth through 2019/20, with no additional investment, we would project a headcount of 580-600 Specials by the end of the financial year (25% larger than GMP’s current Special Constabulary).

To achieve a headcount of 700 officers by March 2020 we will need to recruit 334 new officers in 2019/20. Considering current attrition within the recruitment pipeline this will require us to achieve 92,017 website hits, yielding 1,573 Success Factors[[1]](#footnote-1) applications. This represents a 135% increase on current performance. Whilst there is sufficient training capacity planned for next year, this number of applicants in a single year will increase pressure on vetting. From discussion with D/Supt Dean Chapple the CVU will require a further uplift of 2 staff, at an annual cost of £52,837, in order to ensure sufficient applicants are cleared for hiring deadlines.

A number of additional issues are identified within this report:

* Attraction – after advertising for Special Constables for 20 months we are seeing reduced impact from further advertising and fewer applications.
* Turnover – 137 new Specials started between June and December 2018. Surveying at the time indicated that 90% of new starters intended to join the regulars. There is a risk that as this cohort will now be nearing independent patrol the rate of applications to regulars could accelerate and undermine recruitment. At this time we cannot tell if this will materially alter the turnover rate, so future modelling is predicated on turnover in the last 12 months.
* Programme staffing – staff were recruited on a 3yr fixed term contract, as we enter the 3rd year of the programme there is a significant risk that some will leave for other employment before the programme concludes. Programme staff have started to ask about their long term position and are looking for other jobs.

Attraction of 1,573 applications in the next financial year is a significant challenge and will require additional external expertise to deliver. Indicative costs for procurement of a recruitment/marketing agency are £85,000 (based on a recent campaign by Hertfordshire Police and other best ‘professional estimates).

An additional £137,837 for this programme is a substantial sum and whilst such investment will deliver a headcount above the 580-600 currently projected, there remains a real risk that a headcount of 700 will not be achieved, given that we are entering the 3rd year of a continuous recruitment campaign in an environment where we continue to ‘compete’ with recruitment to the regular paid role.

Beyond 2020, maintaining a headcount of 700 will require 176 new Specials a year and supporting infrastructure to handle such volume. Based on average contribution over the last 12 months, 700 Special Constables could be expected to provide the equivalent of 94 FTE officers; a value of approximately £4.9m a year[[2]](#footnote-2). Maintaining a headcount of 700 officers beyond March 2020 would require an annual budget of £1.63m (combined pay and non-pay).

**4.0 Introduction/Background**

In September 2016 the headcount of the Special Constabulary was 350 officers. The intention of the Special Constabulary Development Programme has been to double that headcount to 700 officers by March 2019. This was an ambitious target and the current recruitment landscape has added to the challenge.

This report will focus on current recruitment activity, opportunities to increase the rate of recruitment and the ongoing challenges that exist.

**5.0 Current Work and Performance**

**5.1 Recruitment**

National police workforce statistics for the 12 months to the end of March 2018 show that Essex Police had the largest headcount growth in the country over the last financial year[[3]](#footnote-3). Essex was one of just 12 forces to achieve any numerical growth and one of only 5 to grow by more than 20 officers. Across the country the number of Special Constables declined by 13.4% in the last financial year.

5.1.1 2018/19 Performance

Essex Police received 282 completed applications between 1st April 2018 and 31st August 2018[[4]](#footnote-4). Over the same period in 2017 we operated a different application process and received 804 expressions of interest, albeit 75% of those expressing interest failed to attend assessment centres.

Recruitment activity over this period has consisted of:

* Social media using the #MyOtherLife brand to promote the work of, and opportunities within, the Special Constabulary. This has included use of targeted, paid-for advertising to reach new audiences and focus the message on those most likely to be interested in joining the Specials. This has attracted nearly 9,000 website visits since the start of April 2018.
* Engagement with employers as part of ESP. We have now signed up 10 employers, including significant employers like Essex County Council, Southend Borough Council, EE, British Airways, Penna and Basildon District Council. Positive conversations with other district councils are progressing across the county. We have also carried out recruitment outreach at Ford and Amazon. This has yet to yield any clear uplift in applications, however, we will continue to develop relationships and seek more proactive support from companies in recruiting their staff to the Specials. The strength of the ESP work to date is in realising more officers on paid leave from their day jobs, giving Essex Police an additional contribution – 84hrs were volunteered under ESP during August 2018, compared with 0 in August 2017.
* Promotion of Community Special Constables. We now have 17 councils signed up and they are in control of the level and reach of the advertising for the role. This has so far led to 86 links to Success Factors, but only 9 completed applications. Advertising this scheme is reliant upon the investment of individual Parishes as we need a specific local appeal. We continue to push Parishes to make greater use of local social media.
* Outreach events across the county. This has included: careers fairs; Essex Pride events; Young Farmers events; attending colleges and universities; the Police & Fire Cadet games; presence at sports events. Our presence at Chelmsford Pride saw an uplift in applications
* Recruitment Information Events have continued; the most recent (13/09/2018) attracted 50+ attendees indicating there remains a good level of interest in the role. 50 individuals have already registered for our next event.
* Contact with all leavers since 2012 inviting them to re-apply. Unfortunately only 3 applications were received following our letter and re-recruitment evening.

Between 1st April 2018 and 31st August 2018 89 new Special Constables have started with Essex Police[[5]](#footnote-5). This compares with 68 new starters in the same period in 2017[[6]](#footnote-6) (+31%). Our projections at this point in the year were for 110 new starters. The gap between expectations and actual starters is explored in section 6.0 below.

Whilst we may not have seen as many new starters as anticipated, retention of existing Specials has improved. Between 1st April 2018 and 31st August 2018 35 attested officers resigned the Special Constabulary, 12 to join the regulars. This compares with 41 attested officers in the same period in 2017, 16 of whom left to join the regulars.[[7]](#footnote-7) This represents a reduced turnover rate, down to 22.5% this year, compared with 31.4% last year[[8]](#footnote-8).

Based upon current trends in relation to course occupancy for new students (largely dependent on vetting) we anticipate 122 new starters in the remainder of this financial year. Depending on turnover, this will take us to a headcount of 515 to 530 by the end of March 2019. Barring a change in approach by forces such as GMP, West Yorkshire and Thames Valley Police this will give Essex the second largest Special Constabulary in England and Wales after the Metropolitan Police.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **No.** | **In** | **Out** |
|  | Sep-18 | 464 | 20 | 10 |
|  | Oct-18 | 474 | 15 | 10 |
|  | Nov-18 | 479 | 0 | 10 |
|  | Dec-18 | 469 | 24 | 10 |
|  | Jan-19 | 484 | 15 | 10 |
|  | Feb-19 | 489 | 24 | 10 |
|  | Mar-19 | 502 | 24 | 10 |
|  | **Totals** | **516** | **122** | **70** |

5.1.2 Predicted Recruitment

Recent analysis of the recruitment pipeline has provided us with a greater understanding of where we see attrition. This shows that:

* 91% of visits to the website do not result in a user choosing to progress further
* 81% of clicks to “submit your application” do not result in completion of a Success Factors application
* 30% of completed applications do not pass shortlisting
* 30% of those invited to assessment centres do not attend
* 25% of candidates are unsuccessful at assessment centre
* Only 0.4% of applicants fail the Job-Related Fitness Test
* 5% of candidates fail their medical
* 10% of candidates fail vetting
* 27% of those passing assessment centre withdraw from the process before hiring

This analysis shows that on current performance **we need to attract 471 applications for every 100 new starters**. To attract 471 applications we need to register 27,550 website visits and see 2,480 people click to “apply now”.

We do not yet have data to compare this pipeline with other Essex Police recruitment streams or with other Special Constabularies.

Marginal gains may be possible in terms of:

* Converting a higher percentage of people that click “submit your application” into completed applications
  + Being explored through more in-depth website analysis to see where potential applicants ‘drop out’ after they click through to Success Factors.
* Providing more detail on expectations on the application form to reduce the 30% attrition at shortlisting
  + Improving the information on the webpage prior to starting an application
* Reducing the non-attendance rate at assessment centres
  + Reviewing the level of support provided to candidates prior to the assessment centre to ensure they understand what’s expected, how to prepare and supporting them through any concerns.

A review of the detail surrounding the 27% who pass assessment centre but then withdraw from the process suggests there is very little opportunity to positively impact on this. The majority of withdrawals relate to changes in candidate’s personal circumstances since they applied.

Looking ahead to 2019/20 we face a challenging recruitment picture to reach 700 by the end of March 2020. Assuming delivery of a headcount of 530 by the end of this financial year, and based on current turnover within the Specials, we will need to recruit 334 new officers in 2019/20. Considering current attrition within the recruitment pipeline this will require us to achieve 90,917 website hits, resulting in 8,282 “apply now” clicks, yielding 1,573 Success Factors applications. This would require vetting of circa 420 candidates.

The requirement to attract 1,573 applications represents a 135% increase on current performance. As set out later in this report, achieving such an uplift in the 3rd year of a continuous recruitment campaign is likely to be extremely difficult.

**5.2 Operational Performance**

In the three months to 31st August 2018, Special Constables provided 40,943 hours of service; this is an increase of 34% when compared to the same period in 2017, when Special Constables provided 30,486 hours of service.

The last 3 months saw a 32% increase in the numbers of hours spent on operational duties (those where officers are most likely to be visible to the public) compared to the same period in 2017: 27,723 to 20,851.  This is equivalent to an additional 83 full-time officers (£1m salary equivalent over a quarter[[9]](#footnote-9)).

Special Constables recorded 16,863 hours of visible policing in the three months to 31st May 2018 (this equates to an average of 183 hours per day).

In the last quarter Specials have provided significant assistance to Operation Backspin in support of the US President visit, working 81 duties and a total of 870hrs. Over the same period of time the Special Constabulary worked 51 duties in support of World Cup policing, volunteering a total of 350hrs to high visibility patrols, primarily in town centres.

Witham-dedicated Community Special Constables funded by the Parish Council are in post and have attracted positive publicity on social and print media. Another 4 potential Community Special Constables for other areas have passed assessment centres.

Our recent Net Promoter Score[[10]](#footnote-10) survey results reflect the improvements in volunteer experience within the Special Constabulary with the NPS rising from +21 to +45 from year to year. This is encouraging as recent academic studies have demonstrated the link between positive volunteer experience and improved retention. Our Engagement Rate (proportion of officers working at least 16hrs a month) is consistently above 70% this year. This compares with a national average of 55%. Both the improved NPA and engagement rate show a volunteer workforce that is committed to Essex Police and delivery of operational policing.

**6.0 Implications (Issues)**

6.0.1 Attraction

The following chart shows application trends at the start of this financial year. “SF Clicks” represents the number of times website users have clicked the link to start their Success Factors application. The start of June saw investment of £2,000 in boosted social media during National Volunteers Week. The lack of significant return on this investment suggests that our impact on social media may be reducing as we have now been advertising for Specials continuously for 20 months.

Given the level of engagement on social media over the last 20 months it is likely that anyone who follows policing, or is otherwise within the target groups, has seen our advertisements and already made a decision on whether or not to apply. The challenge going forward is to identify a volume audience that does not currently engage with policing on social media, or is not on social media at all, yet would be interested in volunteering as a Special. Whether such a cohort exists in sufficient numbers is unclear.

The Essex Police media team have provided outstanding material and support to the recruitment campaign, but it is likely that more specialist expertise and capacity is needed to facilitate the required rate of recruitment. Other forces have seen success through use of specialist advertising agencies. Costs have been £85-100k and these companies have been used to create and launch new campaigns rather than stepping in after 20 months of constant advertisement.

The numbers required to reach 700 officers will not be achieved without additional investment in marketing, however, even if this investment is made there are no guarantees that targets can be reached given the recruitment environment and the extensive reach of the campaign so far.

6.0.2 Vetting

Analysis of the recruitment pipeline demonstrates that one of the key reasons for the shortfall in new starters on training courses has been the capacity of the Corporate Vetting Unit (CVU) to complete vetting (accepting the external factors highlighted in the executive summary) in time for hiring deadlines. Across the 7 intakes so far this year a total of 42 candidates have not been able to start their training as their vetting was not concluded in time.



*Note: Where a candidate does not clear vetting or medical in time for their planned intake the Business Centre will attempt to place them on another course, so there may be some double-counting in the number of candidates available for intake.*

The challenges within the vetting process have arisen as a result of increased demand from regular recruitment, continuing demands of other volume recruitment, vetting of contractors and the requirement for re-vetting of existing staff. Whilst the CVU has been supported with additional staff and a restructure within the unit, these changes are relatively recent and the training requirement of new staff means that they are not yet operating at full capacity. The Special Constabulary have been prioritised within the CVU workloads, behind only regular recruitment, however, this has not been sufficient to deliver the required numbers of cleared candidates.

Options to increase CVU capacity or reduce demand have been fully explored with D/Supt Chapple and Gemma Smith (CVU manager). Changes have been made to improve the standard of completion of forms and processes within the CVU have been fully reviewed. The challenge remains one of demand.

The collective opinion of D/Supt Chapple, Gemma Smith and Head of Special Constabulary is that additional dedicated staff within CVU is necessary to recruit 334 Special Constables in the next financial year.

6.0.3 Turnover

Surveying of new recruits to the Special Constabulary has shown that 90% of officers have joined with an intention to move on to the regular force in due course. For many this involves them achieving Independent Patrol Status (IPS) in lieu of academic qualifications.

Given the increase in recruitment in the second half of 2017 and the expectation that most officers will achieve average IPS in about 12 months, there is a risk that a significant cohort of Specials that joined last year will be eligible to apply for the regulars in the next few months.

137 officers joined between June and December 2017. If 90% of that cohort maintain an ambition to join then we could see 120 applications for the regulars later this year. It is unlikely that numbers will be this large, but there is a risk that a higher proportion of officers could leave the Special Constabulary for the regulars. This could significantly increase turnover and undermine recruitment activity.

6.0.4 Programme Staffing into 2019/20

The Special Constabulary Development Programme was conceived as a 3 year programme. The majority of staff working in Specials recruitment, training and development teams were employed on 3 year fixed-term contracts. Year 3 was intended as a year of consolidation, however, it is clear that we now need to increase the rate of recruitment and training during 2019/20. Unless staff contracts are extended into 2020 there is a substantial risk that the staff on fixed-term contacts will seek alternative roles, with insufficient time to back-fill, compromising our capacity to deliver the numbers during the next financial year. Programme staff have started to ask about their long term position and are looking for other jobs.

6.0.5 Budget Setting 2019/20

The below table sets out the level of investment required to provide sufficient staff and capacity to recruit an additional 330 officers in the next financial year.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Pay** | | | |
|  | **Role** | **Rank/Grade** | **No.** | **Cost** |
|  | Head of S/Constabulary | Superintendent | 1.0 | £107,150 |
|  | Specials Development Manager | PO1 | 1.0 | £43,251 |
|  | LPA Specials Coordinators | Scale 6 | 3.0 | £116,436 |
|  | Supported Policing Champion | SO1 | 1.0 | £36,897 |
|  | Specials Support Officer | Scale 4 | 1.0 | £27,155 |
|  | Training and Development Manager | SO2 | 1.0 | £42,784 |
|  | EPC Classroom Trainers | SO1 | 4.0 | £156,200 |
|  | Specials PDOs | Constable | 3.0 | £157,302 |
|  | Recruitment Delivery Manager | SO1 | 1.0 | £36,897 |
|  | Recruitment Co-ordinator | Scale 5 | 1.0 | £29,729 |
|  | Recruitment Assistant | Scale 3 | 1.0 | £23,106 |
|  | Business Centre Administrators | Scale 3 | 2.0 | £46,212 |
|  | Corporate Vetting Decision Maker | Scale 5 | 1.0 | £29,729 |
|  | Corporate Vetting Administrator | Scale 3 | 1.0 | £23,108 |
|  | **Total cost** |  |  | **£852,848** |
|  | **New Posts for 2019/20** |  |  | **£52,837** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Non-Pay** | | | |
|  | **Cost Area** |  |  | **2019/20** |
|  | Medical Assessments |  |  | £98,782 |
|  | Attestations |  |  | £3,344 |
|  | Uniform |  |  | £151,610 |
|  | Duty Allowances |  |  | £272,489 |
|  | Mileage |  |  | £192,345 |
|  | Boots Allowance |  |  | £17,500 |
|  | City & Guilds |  |  | £3,600 |
|  | Media Campaign |  |  | £85,000 |
|  | Training Overtime |  |  | £20,000 |
|  | **Total Costs** |  |  | **£844,671** |
|  | **New costs** |  |  | **£90,000** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Total Combined Costs** |  |  | **£1,697,519** |
|  | **New costs** |  |  | **£204,049** |

The budget proposal identifies additional costs that will be necessary in order to provide the staffing capacity and marketing reach to achieve a headcount of 700 by the end of March 2020. Without this investment a headcount of 700 cannot be achieved:

**Corporate Vetting Decision Maker (Scale 5) - £29,729**

**Corporate Vetting Administrator (Scale 3) - £23,108**

These roles are necessary to ensure that the necessary volume of applicants are vetted to meet recruitment deadlines. This will in turn improve the occupancy rates on our intakes. If occupancy rates are improved then the current EPC establishment have sufficient capacity to train the required number of new Specials.

D/Supt Chapple (Head of PSD) and Gemma Smith (Head of CVU) have given the undertaking that on recruiting to these positions an existing, trained, decision maker and administrator would be allocated to the Specials, whilst the new officers back-fill them. This would give an immediate performance lift for Specials recruitment without the training lead-in times.

**Business Centre Administrators (Scale 3) - £46,212**

These positions have been in place for the first 2 years of the programme, but based on the original recruitment timetable were not envisaged for the 3rd year. Given the high number of applications required in 2019/20 these posts will need to be retained.

**Media Campaign - £85,000**

The existing Specials recruitment campaign has been extremely successful in attracting a large number of applications over the last 20 months, however, given the reduced impact we have seen in recent months we need a significant marketing push to attract the required number of applications. This additional push requires specialist marketing skills that our in-house team do not possess in order to reach out beyond social media.

The below tables set out predicted recruitment both maintaining current investment and with the additional investment:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **With Current Investment** | | | |  | **With Additional Investment** | | | |
|  |  | **No.** | **In** | **Out** |  |  | **No.** | **In** | **Out** |
|  | Sep-18 | 464 | 20 | 10 |  | Sep-18 | 464 | 30 | 10 |
|  | Oct-18 | 474 | 15 | 10 |  | Oct-18 | 484 | 18 | 10 |
|  | Nov-18 | 479 | 0 | 10 |  | Nov-18 | 492 | 0 | 10 |
|  | Dec-18 | 469 | 24 | 10 |  | Dec-18 | 482 | 30 | 10 |
|  | Jan-19 | 484 | 15 | 10 |  | Jan-19 | 502 | 18 | 10 |
|  | Feb-19 | 489 | 24 | 10 |  | Feb-19 | 509 | 30 | 11 |
|  | Mar-19 | 502 | 24 | 10 |  | Mar-19 | 529 | 32 | 11 |
|  | Apr-19 | 516 | 24 | 11 |  | Apr-19 | 550 | 42 | 11 |
|  | May-19 | 516 | 15 | 11 |  | May-19 | 550 | 21 | 11 |
|  | Jun-19 | 520 | 15 | 11 |  | Jun-19 | 559 | 21 | 12 |
|  | Jul-19 | 524 | 24 | 11 |  | Jul-19 | 569 | 42 | 12 |
|  | Aug-19 | 537 | 15 | 11 |  | Aug-19 | 599 | 21 | 12 |
|  | Sep-19 | 541 | 24 | 11 |  | Sep-19 | 607 | 42 | 13 |
|  | Oct-19 | 554 | 15 | 12 |  | Oct-19 | 636 | 21 | 13 |
|  | Nov-19 | 557 | 15 | 12 |  | Nov-19 | 644 | 21 | 13 |
|  | Dec-19 | 561 | 15 | 12 |  | Dec-19 | 651 | 21 | 14 |
|  | Jan-20 | 564 | 24 | 12 |  | Jan-20 | 659 | 42 | 14 |
|  | Feb-20 | 576 | 15 | 12 |  | Feb-20 | 687 | 21 | 14 |
|  | Mar-20 | 579 | 15 | 12 |  | Mar-20 | 693 | 21 | 14 |
|  | Apr-20 | 582 |  |  |  | Apr-20 | 700 |  |  |
|  | **Totals** |  | **177** | **115** |  | **Totals** |  | **293** | **143** |

*Note: the absence of any new starters in November ‘18 is a quirk of the training schedule, classroom and trainer availability in that month. There are intakes in the last week of October and first week of December.*

* Maintaining the 2018/19 investment is likely to deliver a headcount of 580-600 officers by the end of March 2020.
* Additional investment, as per the 2019/20 budget proposal set out above, offers the best chance of delivering a headcount of 700 officers by the end of March 2020, however, this will still not guarantee that target can be achieved.

6.0.6 Beyond 2020

An establishment of 700 Special Constables is likely to require 176 new recruits a year in order to sustain that headcount. Where other forces have achieved significant growth in numbers of Specials this has always been followed by significant attrition, as at the end of the growth programme resource and investment is typically withdrawn.

To maintain a headcount of 700 we are going to need to maintain investment in: marketing; recruitment staff (outreach, admin and approximately 50 assessment centres per year); business centre administrators (processing 570 applications a year); training (provision of initial training for 176 new students across 10 courses; on-going tier 2 and 3 training; CPD for circa 500 officers and PDO support for 400 non-independent officers); Specials Command (ongoing leadership, support and administration for the whole Special Constabulary).

Based on current performance, 700 Special Constables could be expected to provide the equivalent of 94 FTE officers; a value of approximately £4.9m a year[[11]](#footnote-11). Maintaining a headcount of 700 officers would require an annual budget of £1.63m (combined pay and non-pay).

A headcount of 580 officers is likely to be sustained by 152 new officers a year, delivered across 9 intakes. Their contribution would be equivalent to 88 officers, who would otherwise cost £4.6m in salary. Sustaining this headcount would require an annual budget of £1.42m.

**6.1 Links to Police and Crime Plan Priorities**

The Police and Crime Plan 2016-20 states that the PFCC will: “boost community volunteering, encourage the Active Citizen Programme and grow the police family – doubling the Special Constabulary, with a Special Constable in every community”

**6.2 Demand**

The impact on demand is best measured through contribution of operational hours. The improvements in operational performance were described in section 5.2.

**6.3 Risks/Mitigation**

The following red risks are identified on the force risk register:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| URN | Score | Risk | Rationale |
| 1196 | 40 - Red | Unable to meet the Special Constabulary establishment target due to Force recruitment. | Surveying continues to show that the majority of Specials are joining with a future intention to join the regulars. In the last 12 months we have seen a reduction in leavers to the regulars (38 officers), however, as officers who have been recruited under the current campaign reach independent patrol status we anticipate seeing an increase number of applications. Anecdotally the recruitment team state that they is an increase in the number of Specials applying for the regulars. |
| 1659 | 40 - Red | Regular recruitment compromising Specials recruitment | Essex Police intends to increase establishment to 3,000 officers in the next 12 months, a growth of 150 officers. This means that the current regular recruitment campaign will continue. The launch of the #FitTheBill campaign saw a marked reduction in applications to the Specials and reduced the capacity for Specials recruitment messages on our social media platforms. Where forces have previously succeeded in doubling the size of the Special Constabulary (Northants, West Yorks) this was done in an environment where the forces were not also recruiting regulars. |
| 1806 | 40 - Red | Programme Staffing | Recruitment ambition for 2019/20 is significant with an additional 334 new recruits required to achieve a headcount of 700 officers. The training programme is already stretched as far as it can be, using a full complement of staff. Staff on 3yr fixed term contracts are actively looking at alternative jobs as we approach the 3rd year of the programme. Their leaving will create significant gaps that we are unlikely to fill given the short term nature of the remaining contract period. This will compromise recruitment targets. |
| 1202 | 30 – Red | Administrative and logistical support | 2018/19 intakes have been compromised by the number of candidates who could not be vetted in time for hiring deadlines. There is no capacity for additional foundation training to be provided this financial year, so each gap in course occupancy compromises our longer term ambitions. |

**6.4 Equality and/or Human Rights Implications**

There are no specific equality or human rights implications in this paper.

**6.5 Health and Safety Implications**

There are no specific health and safety implications in this paper.

**7.0 Consultation/Engagement**

* David Stovell – Corporate Finance
* Alan Blakesley & Diane Tate – Learning & Development
* Allison Bentley – Human Resources (sent to Becky Humphreys & Lisa Turner)
* Amanda Humphrey – Health Services
* Dean Chapple – Corporate Vetting
* Alan Jones – Uniform Stores
* Simon Alland – Mobile First

**8.0 Actions for Improvement**

The action taken to improve recruitment over the last quarter has been summarised in section 5.1 above.

**9.0 Future Work/Development and Expected Outcome**

A refreshed recruitment strategy has been drafted setting out the direction over the next 6 months:

* Investment in social media, putting out existing marketing material, generating new ways to convey our message and promoting the operational work of the Specials to as wide an audience as possible.
* Proactively create marketable opportunities through operational activity
* Energetic focus on ESP, particularly exploiting the marketing opportunities through their internal media and on-premises outreach
* Identify marketing partners, groups, forums, businesses, associations etc that are prepared to disseminate our material to large audiences for little or no cost.
* Introduce a “Recruit a Friend” initiative, exploiting our NPS of +45 and knowledge that Specials would recommend others to join
* Exploit potential interest in other forces and at county borders
* Encourage greater promotion of Community Special Constables by their sponsoring Parish/Town Councils
* Promote new opportunities, such as SCD and Detective Pathway to try and reach a new audience
* Tap into other EP campaigns to encourage them to feature Specials e.g. BAME and upcoming Road Safety campaign.
* Targeted investment in external advertising that takes our message to a wide audience other than via Social Media
* Create and attend events with a proven track record for success
* Ensure that the application experience and resulting workflows minimise attrition
* Internal media to maximise interest from Police Staff and retiring officers
* Understand what people want from volunteering and what stops them from volunteering and tailor messages accordingly

A tactical plan underpinning this strategy is included at Appendix A.

In addition, subject to the 2019/20 budget proposal being accepted, we will commence:

* Procurement of a suitable marketing/recruitment agency to deliver the 2019/20 campaign
* Immediate advertising of new positions in Corporate Vetting Unit

**10.0 Decisions Required by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner**

1. PFCC and Essex Police adjust the ambition to a target of 600 active specials by March 2020 with a stretch target of 700.
2. Essex Police provide additional investment in marketing and vetting to support this ambition.
3. Essex Police extend the commitment of a dedicated specials support team for a further 3 years

APPENDIX A – RECRUITMENT PLAN



1. Success Factors is the programme used by the force to take applications for the Special Constabulary. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Based on 700 Specials volunteering an average of 19.25 productive hrs a month, compared to 125.5 productive hrs per month for a regular officer (NPCC) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728153/police-workforce-tabs-jul18.ods> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Data from Success Factors [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Data from Recruitment Business Services [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Data derived from Duty Sheet [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Date taken from Duty Sheet [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Based on the extrapolated number of leavers over a 12 period (based on the first 5 months) as a proportion of the current number of attested officers. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Calculated based on the number of productive hours worked by Specials (total hrs minus training hrs), divided by the average productive hours worked by a regular (1506/yr as per NPCC), then multiplied by the ready reckoner cost of a PC. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Our Net Promoter Score (NPS) reflects the proportion of people that would recommend joining the Special Constabulary vs the proportion that would discourage it. Based on global NPS standards, any score above 0 would be considered “good”, +50 is “Excellent,” and above 70 is considered “world class [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Based on 700 Specials volunteering an average of 19.25 productive hrs a month, compared to 125.5 productive hrs per month for a regular officer (NPCC) [↑](#footnote-ref-11)