**Performance and Resources Scrutiny Programme 2018/19**

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

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| **Title of Report:** | **HR Strategic Dashboard Supplementary Report** |
| **Chief Officer** | **Richard Leicester** |
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| **Report from:**  | **Essex Police** |
| **Date of Meeting:** | **25th October 2018** |
| **Author on behalf of Chief Officer:** | **Adam Pfeiffer and Jon Burgees** |
| **Date of Approval:** | **16th October 2018** |

1. **Purpose of Report**

This report provides a narrative to accompany the HR strategic dashboard which relates to the force’s absence, establishment, strength, turnover and diversity profiles.

There is also an update on the Policing Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF) which is detailed after the absence summary.

1. **Recommendations**

Not applicable

1. **Executive Summary**

The officer strength as at 30th September 2018 was 2950.91 full time equivalent (fte), which is 49.09 fte under the establishment of 3000.00 fte.

As at 30th September 2018, the police staff strength was 1966.48 fte, which is 193.57 fte under the establishment of 2160.05 fte. Accounting for the 4.25% vacancy factor (91.80 fte), the current vacancies which can be recruited to are 101.77 fte.

The PCSO strength fte as at 30th September 2018 is 100.10 fte, which is 1.90 fte under the establishment of 102.00 fte.

So far this financial year to date (April to September 2018) a total of 136.29 fte officers have joined the force (consisting of both new recruits and transfers in).

There is a recruitment and training plan in place for the remainder of the financial year (October 2018 to March 2019) which can accommodate up to a maximum of 188.00 fte. At the time of writing the projected intake of 60.00 fte in October 2018 was achieved with 30.00 fte joining via the standard police constable entry and 30.00 fte through the new Investigate First Programme.

It is projected that a total of 102 specials will join between October 2018 and March 2019 which would result in a projected headcount of 516 by March 2019. Specials headcount has increased by 21 compared to the last HR data pack.

There has been a marginal increase in officer and staff turnover for April to September 2018 (when compared to April to September 2017) but a reduction in PCSO and specials turnover for the same period.

The representation of Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) officers has increased to a headcount of 72 as at 30th September 2018 from 68 as at 30th June 2018. There are currently 18 BAME candidates in the office recruitment process which equates to 4.62% of all applications (as at 9th October 2018).

For staff, the BAME headcount has reduced marginally from 75 (3.46%) as at 30th June 2018 to 74 (3.41%) as at 30th September 2018. For PCSOs the headcount has remained at 1, which is 0.92% of the total PCSO workforce.

The number of BAME specials has remained at 24 but the percentage against the total special workforce has reduced from 5.27% to 5.04%. This is because the overall headcount has increased but the number of BAME specials has remained the same.

Absence

For officers, the average number of days lost for April to September 2018 is 4.61 days, which is a reduction of 0.62 when compared to April to September 2017 (5.23 days).

For staff and PCSOs there has been an increase of 0.56 and 0.27 average days lost per person respectively.

For officers, there has also been a reduction in average days lost per person for medium term and long term absence for April to September 2018 when compared to April to September 2017; short term absence has remained static.

For staff, there has been a reduction in short term absence but an increase in medium term and long term. For PCSOs there have been reductions in short term and medium term absence but an increase in long term absence.

In relation to the percentage of payroll hours lost by general sickness reason, psychological absence is the highest for all employee groups which is the same as reported last quarter.

The number (headcount) of officers on recuperative, adjusted and restricted duties has remained fairly static at 411 as at 30th September 2018 compared to 414 as at 30th June 2018.

**4.0 Introduction/Background**

This commentary report provides context for the information contained within the HR strategic dashboard sheet and summarising the key highlights from each section. The data has been taken from the force HR system (SAP) as at 30th September 2018, except where previous data is displayed for trend analysis.

**5.0 Current Work and Performance**

Please note the following section numbers detailed in the below subheadings relate to the reference on the HR strategic dashboard.

**1. Establishment v Strength as at 30th September 2018**

The officer strength as at 30th September 2018 was 2950.91 full time equivalent (fte), which is 49.09 fte under the establishment of 3000.00. This is a net reduction of 4.28 fte since the last HR data pack as at 30th June 2018. This marginal reduction was expected as there was only one intake (64.00 new recruits and 9.47 fte transfers in) between July and September 2018 yet officers will have continued to leave the force in line with projections.

As at 30th September 2018, the police staff strength was 1966.48 fte, which is 193.57 fte under the establishment of 2160.05 fte. Accounting for the 4.25% vacancy factor (91.80 fte), the current vacancies which can be recruited to are 101.77 fte.

The PCSO strength fte as at 30th September 2018 is 100.10, which is 1.90 fte under the establishment of 102.00. Please note the establishment is due to increase to 108.00 fte following approved investment from Colchester Borough Council (4.00 fte) and Uttlesford District Council (2.00 fte). As a result an intake has been scheduled for up to 10 PCSOs to join on the 10th January 2019 to ensure resourcing levels are maintained at the establishment.

Commands with the highest vacancies

Please note the figures on the dashboard relate to the top three Commands with the highest vacancy percentage (%) levels as a proportion against total establishment. Please note this is for Commands with a headcount of over 75.

Officers

The Local Policing Areas have the highest combined vacancy percentage (%) with 7.62% which equates to 119.38 fte vacancies. This is a reduction of 1.63% (26.00 fte) when compared to the last HR data pack as at 30th June 2018 (9.25% / 145.38 fte vacancies). There is a requirement to hold vacancies on the LPAs to accommodate Student Constables who are currently in training, of which there are currently 309.00 fte. This has reduced marginally compared to 30th June 2018 where there were 326 Student Constables in training.

Outside of the LPA’s the Commands with the highest level of vacancies are Contact Management (12.83%) and the Serous Crime Directorate (SCD) (12.30%).

The Contact Management vacancy percentage of 12.83% equates to 12.19 fte, which is an increase of 8.50 fte vacancies when compared to 30th June 2018. There are 12.52 fte Force Control Room Police Constable vacancies, of which 4 officers will be joining on the 29th October 2018 with another 3 due to commence over the next quarter. Recruitment is ongoing for the remainder of the vacancies.

There are 9.45 fte Local Demand Resource Management Constable vacancies; these posts will be moving to a new Resolution Centre and then recruited to. There are also 3.00 fte FCR Inspector vacancies, of which 2 started on the 1st October 2018 with the other due to start by November 2018. Please note the total vacancies equates to more than the 12.19 fte quoted, which is because there are 10.79 fte officers working in approved non established STORM Compliance and Review Team roles.

For the Serious Crime Directorate, the 12.30% vacancy rate equates to 26.93 fte vacancies, which has remained static when compared to the data as at 30th June 2018 (11.96% / 27.01 fte). It should be noted that SCD are currently reviewing various parts of the structure meaning some posts are being held for potential savings and redeployment opportunities which will have a short term impact on their vacancy rates.

Of the 26.93 vacancies, 8.00 fte are Covert Surveillance Detective Constables (DCs), which are currently not being recruited to as they are being reviewed under the business case. Since the last HR data pack the number of Dedicated Source Unit PC/DC’s has reduced from 6.62 fte to 2.61 fte following a reduction in establishment with individuals currently being interviewed for the remaining vacancies.

The number of Major Crime Investigation vacancies has remained similar to the last HR data pack (5.42 fte), however 2 officers are due to start at the end of October 2018 and the remaining 2 vacancies are being held as potential redeployment opportunities following the business case. Similarly there are 2.48 Serious and Organised Crime Unit vacancies which are also being held as potential redeployment opportunities.

Staff

The commands with the highest level of vacancies are outlined below. It should be noted that Essex Police (staff only) has a vacancy factor of 4.25%, therefore the actual number of vacancies that can be recruited to are lower than the figures detailed below.

SCD remains the Command with the highest levels of vacancies with 21.95% which equates to 74.20 fte. Crime & Public Protection have a vacancy rate of 13.02% (26.04 vacancies) and Strategic Change & Performance have a vacancy rate of 12.45%, which equates to 10.70 fte.

The last HR data pack as at 30th June 2018 reported that the Operational Policing Command (OPC) had one of the highest numbers of vacancies with 14.04% (23.07 fte); however as at 30th September 2018 this has reduced to 11.19% (18.38 fte). This is due to a reduction in vacancies within the Centralised Resource Management Unit and the Casualty Reduction, Education and Enforcement Support Team.

In relation to SCD, due to the collaborative status of the Directorate, a number of the Essex joint funded roles within the Command are in fact occupied by Kent members of staff and vice versa. Therefore, a number of Essex joint funded roles that are shown as vacant have Kent staff occupying them, which will reduce the Essex vacancies to be filled.

Of the 100% Essex funded posts there are 26.93 fte vacancies, which is a reduction when compared to the last HR data pack as at 30th June 2018 (32.01 fte vacancies). Of the 26.93 fte, there are 13 posts that have been recruited to with individuals currently going through pre-employment checks. There are also a number of vacancies on hold pending the business case to either delimit or that have deliberately been left vacant to allow for re-deployment opportunities.

In Crime & Public Protection Command, the vacancy rate has increased from 11.24% (22.49 fte) as at 30th June 2018 to 13.02% (26.04 fte) as at 30th September 2018. Of the 26.04 fte, 9.18 fte are Investigation Support Officer roles and 3.19 fte Officer Manager Investigations fte which are all currently being held until the post implementation review is complete. There are 4.50 fte POLIT Support Officer vacancies and 2.70 fte MOSOVO Officer vacancies which are all being recruited to.

In Strategic Change, the vacancy rate has increased from 3.27% (2.62 fte) as at 30th June 2018 to 12.45% (10.70 fte) as at 30th September 2018. Of the 10.70 fte vacancies, 3.41 fte are Crime Data Integrity Auditors. These roles have been recruited to with 1 individual currently going through pre employments checks with 2 others joining on the 17th December 2018. In the meantime these vacancies are currently being covered by officers who are on limited duties. Other vacancies within Strategic Change are actively being recruited to and there are three that are due to be removed from the establishment which will reduce the vacancy percentage.

Other increases

It should be noted that Support Services Directorate and Contact Management have lower vacancy rates than those listed above but they have all marginally increased as at 30th September 2018, when compared to June 2018. SSD have increased from 6.48% to 7.64% and Contact Management have increased from 2.52% to 3.37%.

**2. Specials Data: Headline Figures**

As at 30th September 2018, there were 476 specials in post, which is a net increase of 21 when compared to the last HR data pack at 30th June 2018 (455) and an increase of 108 since 31st March 2017 (368).

At the end of March 2018 Essex Police had the 3rd largest Special Constabulary in England & Wales, behind Greater Manchester Police (2nd largest) who had 460 officers at that time and the largest growth of any Special Constabulary over the last financial year.

Specials Attrition

So far this financial year to date (April to September 2018), a total 49 specials have left the Special Constabulary which is a monthly average of 8 (the same as the monthly average of 8 in 2017/18).

Of the 49 that have left this financial year (April to September 2018), 11 (22.45%) have left to join the regulars. Although this has reduced marginally when compared to 2017/18 where 35% (35 headcount) left to join the regulars the force anticipates that it may see further leavers before the end of the calendar year in advance of the Police Constable intakes.

Specials Duty Hours

For April to September 2018 the total duty hours worked increased to 78,613 from 62,708 for the same period last year.

In quarter 2 (April to September 2018), the Special Constabulary provided 41,152 hours of policing (June to September 2018) which has increased from 30,941 for the same period last year (June to September 2017).  They also provided 17,405 hours of high visibility policing, an increase of 76% on the same quarter last year.

The total duty hours worked in September 2018 was 13,826, which is the equivalent of 864 specials working 16 hours a month or an additional 86 full time officers (who would attract a salary cost of £4.4m per year).

Specials Command continue to produce a quarterly report to the balanced scorecard process, giving details of how the Special Constabulary contributes to ‘Plan on a Page’ priorities.  The most recent documented good work in tackling high harm anti-social behaviour, household burglary, modern slavery, violent crime, domestic abuse and child sexual exploitation.

**3. Recruitment Plan 18/19**

Officers

So far this financial year to date (April to September 2018) a total of 136.29 fte officers have joined the force (new recruits and transfers in).

There is a recruitment and training plan in place for the remainder of the financial year (October 2018 to March 2019) which can accommodate up to a maximum of 188.00 fte. This includes standard police constable entry, together with the bespoke Investigate First programme, as well as transfers in from other forces. At the time of writing the projected intake of 60.00 fte in October 2018 was achieved with 30.00 fte joining via the standard police constable entry and 30.00 fte through the bespoke Investigate First Programme.

A transferee campaign is being designed by Corporate Communications and Corporate Recruitment which aims to bring in skilled officers particularly for the areas of Investigations and Firearms. In addition to this, the force website now allows individuals to register interest in level transfers and promotional opportunities for all ranks up to Superintendent, which will support this campaign.

Based on current projections, it is anticipated that the strength fte will achieve the establishment level of 3000.00 by December 2018, which is the same projected month as reported in the last HR data pack as at 30th June 2018.

The ambition, subject to financial scrutiny, is to achieve a strength equivalent to the establishment of 3000.00 fte as soon as possible. Projected recruitment numbers will be adjusted throughout the year to account for changes in establishment targets, as directed by the Strategic Change Team, and changes in attrition. These figures are regularly monitored through HR Resourcing, the Strategic Change Team and the Corporate Finance department.

Specials

It is projected that a total of 102 specials will join between October 2018 and March 2019, which would result in a projected headcount of 516 by March 2019.

**4. Turnover**

So far this financial year to date (April to September 2018) the average monthly leavers are 23, which has increased from 20 in the 2017/18 financial year. This increase is predominately down to a rise in officers transferring out of force between July and September 2018 and a rise in retirements in July 2018. Of the 26 transfers out of force between July and September 2018, 13 (50%) were to the City of London Police (50%) and 7 (26.92%) were to the Metropolitan Police.

When detailed as a turnover percentage (proportion of leavers against average headcount) it is 4.54% for April to September 2018 compared to 4.32% for April to September 2017. This is predominantly due to an increase in the number of officers transferring to other forces however there has been a reduction in the number of resignations.

For staff, the average monthly leavers has increased marginally to 20 a month for April to September 2018, when compared to 19 a month in 2017/18. In relation to turnover, the percentage for April to September 2018 has marginally increased to 5.58% when compared to 5.35% for the same period last year. This is due to an increase in resignations and a marginal increase in retirements.

For PCSOs, so far this financial year to date (April to September 2018), there have only been 3 leavers, which is a turnover percentage of 2.86% (a marginal reduction compared to April to September 2017 which was 2.96%).

The turnover for specials has reduced from 11.20% from April to September 2017 to 10.85% for April to September 2018.

**5. Gender & BAME Representation as at 30th September 2018**

The representation of Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) officers has increased to a headcount of 72 as at 30th September 2018 from 68 as at 30th June 2018. This is a percentage increase of 0.14% from 2.17% to 2.37% and is 4.19% under the BAME economically active population of 6.56%[[1]](#footnote-1).

There are currently 18 BAME candidates in the office recruitment process which equates to 4.62% of all applications (as at 9th October 2018). So far this financial year to date (April to September 2018), a total of 137 (headcount) officers have joined, of which 4 were BAME. This equates to 2.92% of all recruits. In relation to the latest intake in July of 60, a total of 3 were BAME which equates to 4.55%.

As stated earlier, at the time of writing, 60 new officers joined the force on the 8th October 2018. Of the 60 a total of 6 were BAME which equates to 10% of the total intake. This is the highest proportion of BAME joiners on any intake since December 2010.

Corporate Communications and Corporate Recruitment are in the final stages of a bespoke campaign to attract individuals from diverse communities to ensure the diversity of the workforce more accurately reflects that of the local community. Through the positive action plan support is provided by the diversity and inclusion team and a bespoke training input for BAME candidates to help prepare them for the national police search assessment processes to help remove any barriers faced by this group. In addition a train the trainer session was recently conducted by an external organised to enable a wider pool of people to deliver this programme. The force has also increased the number of recruitment buddies to 43 for BAME candidates and have updated the training that is provided to the buddies.

For staff, the BAME headcount has reduced marginally from 75 (3.46%) as at 30th June 2018 to 74 (3.41%) as at 30th September 2018, due to a resignation in September 2018. For PCSOs, the headcount has remained at 1, which is 0.92% of the total PCSO workforce.

The number of BAME specials has remained at 24, but the percentage against the total special workforce has reduced from 5.27% to 5.04%. This is because the overall headcount has increased, but not the number of BAME specials.

The headcount of female officers has marginally increased from 974 as at 30th June 2018 (31.96%) to 983 as at 30th September 2018 (32.30%).

For staff and PCSOs, the percentage of females has remained static when compared to 30th June 2018/

The headcount of female specials has increased from 138 (30.33%) at 30th June 2018 to 142 (29.83%).

**6. Absence and Adjusted / Recuperative**

Summary Numbers

For officers, the average number of days lost for April to September 2018 is 4.61, which is a reduction of 0.62 when compared to April to September 2017 (5.23).

For staff and PCSOs there has been an increase of 0.56 and 0.27 average days lost per person respectively.

Reasons for the increases will be highlighted later in the paper.

Average hours lost by month 2017/18 & 2018/19 YTD (April to June 2018)

For officers, the graph on the strategic dashboard shows that there is an improved position in relation to the average hours lost per person each month from April to September 2018, when compared to the same period last year. September 2018 shows the greatest improvement, with a reduction of 1.17 average hours lost per person, when compared to September 2017.

The staff graph shows that all months are higher than the same months in 2017 except for August 2018 where there was a reduction of 0.46 average hours lost per person when compared August 2017.

PCSO average hours lost per person were higher in April, May, June and September 2018 when compared to the same months last year, but there were reductions in July and August 2018 when compared to last year.

Commands with highest absence (average days lost per person)

Please note the figures on the dashboard relate to average days lost per person and those listed in the top 3 are Commands with headcounts over 75.

Officers

For officers, the commands with the highest average days lost per person are Contact Management (12.71), LPA North (6.44) and Crime and Public Protection (5.57).

In relation to Contact Management, they have one of the highest average days lost per person (14.71) but has reduced when compared to April to September (13.71 average days lost per person). Similarly, LPA North has one of the highest levels of absence but they have reduced marginally from 6.59 for April to September 2017 to 6.44 for April to September 2018.

Of the top three commands, only Crime and Public Protection are showing an increase in average days lost for April to September 2018 when compared to the same period in 2017; from 4.89 to 5.57. Although there have been marginal reductions in short term and medium term absence, there has been an increase in long term absences, specifically relating to psychological and musculo/skeletal related absences. There have also been increases in cardiac/circulatory and digestive related absences. It should be noted however that there was a reduction in September 18 average days lost per person when compared to September 2017 which has had a positive impact on the rolling year position.

For all three of the top commands the reasons for absence accounting for the most payroll hours lost are psychological and musculo/skeletal, these are also the two reasons for absence that have the highest percentage of payroll hours lost for all employee groups across the total force.

Although there are other commands with high average days lost per person; Support Services with 6.75 average days lost per person; Criminal Justice with 5.19 and Local Policing Support Unit with 5.01, these have smaller average officer headcounts within the commands and therefore absence has a greater impact.

There are nine commands showing an improvement in average days lost per person for April to September 2018, when compared to the same period in 2017.

Strategic Change Performance is showing the greatest improvement, reducing by 3.57 average days lost per person from 6.81 for April to September 2017 to 3.24 for the same period in 2018; however it should be noted that they only have an average headcount of 14 officers. Local Policing Area (LPA) South is also showing a significant reduction of 2.18 average days lost per person, from 5.95 for April to September 2017 to 3.77 for the same period this year. CT Division has also reduced from 5.47 for April to September 2017 to 3.60 for April to September 2018 and Contact Management has reduced from 13.71 for April to September 2017 to 12.71 for the same period in 2018.

Staff

For staff, the commands with the highest average days lost per person per person are Contact Management (6.04), Strategic Change Performance (4.79) and Crime and Public Protection (4.68). As with officers, these were the same three commands in the top three for the April to June 2018 pack.

For all three of the top commands, psychological absence accounts for the most payroll hours lost and, for Contact Management and Crime and Public Protection, musculo/skeletal related absence is the second highest number of payroll hours lost. For Strategic Change Performance the second most common reason for absence is miscellaneous, which includes absence for cancer and post-operative recovery.

Contact Management staff absence has increased by 1.55 average days lost per person, which is predominantly due to increases in long term absence for psychological and miscellaneous absence; there have also been increases in absence for musculo/skeletal and respiratory absence. Medium term absence in the command has seen a marginal increase but short term absence has seen a slight reduction.

Crime and Public Protection staff absence has increased by 1.97 average days lost per person, which is predominantly due to increases in long term absence for psychological and musculo/skeletal absence; there have also been increases in absence for genito/urinary, digestive and ear/eye absence. There have also been marginal increases in short term and medium term absence.

Strategic Change Performance staff absence has seen an increase of 2.33 average days lost per person, which is the greatest increase of all the commands. This is predominantly due to increases in long term absence for psychological and miscellaneous absence; there have been minor increases in absence for genito/urinary and headache/migraine absence but a slight reduction in absence for musculo/skeletal absence. Medium term absence in the command has seen also an increase but short term absence has seen a slight reduction.

As with officers, there are other commands with high average days lost per person for staff, including LPA West at 13.25, Local Policing Support Unit (LPSU) at 6.94 and Stansted at 6.15 but these have significantly lower average headcounts meaning absence can have a much greater impact.

For staff, there are six commands that have achieved an improved position in average days lost per person for the period April to September 2018, when compared to the same period in 2017. Local Policing Area (LPA) South is showing the greatest improvement, with a reduction of 6.05 average days lost per person, however the command only had an average headcount of 8 members of staff for April to September 2018, meaning a small amount of absence can significantly impact the overall absence picture. Despite having a high number of average days lost per person, at 6.94, Local Policing Support Unit has seen a reduction of 1.83 for April to September 2018 when compared to April to September 2017.

PCSOs

For PCSOs only LPA West is showing an increase in average days lost per person to 14.94 for the period April to September 2018 compared to 2.75 for the same period in 2017. As with officers and staff the two most common reasons for absence, in this command, for PCSOs are psychological and musculo/skeletal related absence. LPA West also has a low average headcount of 27 PCSOs for the period April to September 2018 and therefore, as previously mentioned, absence has a much greater impact.

LPA North has seen a reduction of 4.84 average days lost per person from 8.36 for the period April to September 2017 to 3.52 for April to September 2018 and LPA South has seen a reduction of 2.27 for the same periods.

Absence Term

For officers, there has been a reduction in average days lost per person for medium term and long term for April to September 2018 when compared to April to September 2017; short term absence has remained static.

For staff, there has been a reduction in short term absence but an increase in medium term and long term. For PCSOs there have been reductions in short term and medium term absence but an increase in long term absence.

Absence Reasons

In relation to the percentage of payroll hours lost by general sickness reason, psychological absence is the highest for all employee groups.

For officers, the percentage of payroll hours lost to psychological absence has reduced from 42.23% for April to September 2017 to 39.13% for April to September 2018, whereas staff has increased from 26.00% to 34.40%. For PCSOs, psychological absence has also increased, from 41.43% for April to September 2017 to 45.88% for the same period in 2018.

The percentage of payroll hours lost to musculo/skeletal is the second most common reason for absence for all employee groups and has increased for the officers in the period April to September 2018 compared to April to September 2017, but has reduced for staff and PCSOs .

Officer absence for musculo/skeletal reasons has increased from 24.03% for April to September 2017 to 25.31% for April to September 2018; Staff absence has reduced from 24.35% to 20.60% for the same periods and PCSOs have reduced from 35.54% (April to September 2017) to 33.39% for April to September 2018. PCSO absence for musculo/skeletal reasons has shown a significant increase when compared to the previous pack (April to June 2018), when musculo/skeletal absence only accounted for 19.80% of PCSO payroll hours lost.

Respiratory related absences are showing increases for officers and PCSOs for April to September 2018, when compared to the same period in 2017. However, for officers, this reason only accounts for 5.11% of payroll hours lost and, for PCSOs, only 1.90% of absence for the period April to September 2018 was due to respiratory related absence.

 Performance Improvement Unit (PIU)

 In relation to Contact Management, the PIU have worked with the Command and managers in relation to processes and procedures, with dip checking and subsequent guidance provided to managers. With the predicted spike in respiratory related absences, the Head of Health and Wellbeing Humphries has secured flu vaccinations, which are due to be rolled out over the next couple of months (with Contact Management as one of the drop-in locations). Longer term and more complex cases are being selected and examined in relation to available options around support and in some cases, consideration for formal procedures.

In relation to the North LPA, a series of PIU drop-ins have been arranged in order to give further advice to supervisors around absence management. Targeting of individual cases and supervisors that have been identified as potentially left wanting are being reviewed, with PIU advice and support. Sergeant and Inspector courses are being attended by PIU in relation to guidance and expectations. The Head of PIU is meeting with District Commanders and Superintendents in order to assist with guidance around longer term cases, highlighting any shortfalls observed and options. The Absence Management Group meetings (AMGs) for the North are being attended by PIU, including by the newly appointed PIU Head. These will be assessed around detail, quality and accountability with line management.

In relation to the Crime & Public Protection Command, PIU have attended the absence management meetings where close scrutiny and management guidance was observed.

 National Absence Figures

The following table and graphs show how Essex compare to the national position for the percentage of contracted hours lost against the contracted hours available.



 

For officers, in the year ending 31st March 2018, the percentage of contracted hours lost reduced to 5.07% from 5.32% for the year ending March 2017 and from 6.12% for the year ending March 2016. Essex are now ranked 31st nationally, which is the highest ranking over the last 4 years and 9 places higher than the year ending 31st March 2016 (40th).

For Essex the percentage of contracted hours lost has reduced year on year since March 2016, whereas the national percentage of contracted hours lost has been increasing year on year since March 2015.

For staff (inc PCSOs), for the year ending 31st March 2018, the percentage of contracted hours lost increased to 4.73%, which is only fractionally higher than the national average (4.64%). Essex are ranked 27th nationally, which is an increase when compared to the year ending 31st March 2017, but much higher than the year ending 31st March 2015, when Essex were ranked 40th.

Adjusted / Recuperative

The number (headcount) of officers on recuperative, adjusted and restricted duties has remained fairly static at 411 as at 30th September 2018, compared to 414 as at 30th June 2018.

When comparing officers on recuperative, adjusted and restricted duties for 30th June 2018, all ranks have remained static apart from Constables, which reduced by 3.

The number of staff on recuperative or restricted duties has reduced by 11 from 83 on 30th June 2018 to 2 on 30th September 2018 and PCSOs have increased slightly from 9 to 12.

**6.0 Implications (Issues)**

Not applicable

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

Essex Police is projected to achieve a police officer strength equivalent to 3000 by December 2018.

In addition to this, the Special Constabulary headcount has increased to its highest level since April 2014 and is projected to increase further throughout the year. The Special Constabulary provided 78,613 hours of policing (April to September 2018) which has increased from 62,708 for the same period last year (April to September 2017).

Ensuring the force is sufficiently resourced is a specific ambition within the narrative of the Police and Crime Plan. The provision of a sufficient number of skilled, equipped and supported resources closely links to the delivery of all seven of the priorities. In addition to this, having a workforce that is representative of our communities will give the force a broader range of skills, knowledge and experience that can positively contribute towards the priorities.

Essex Police have reduced officer average days lost per person in 2017/18 by 0.52 when compared to 2016/17. This trend has continued with April to September 2018 average days lost per officer reducing when compared to April to September 2017.

Reduced sickness absence improves the efficiency and effectiveness of the police force by ensuring more resources are available to task and deploy.

The Police and Crime Plan has an ambition to ensuring the force is sufficiently resourced and this improvement supports that priority.

**6.2 Demand**

A reduction in absence has resulted and an increase in overall resources has resulted in more hours available to deal with demand.

**6.3 Risks/Mitigation**

Not applicable

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

Not applicable

**6.5 Health and Safety Implications**

Not applicable

**7.0 Consultation/Engagement**

Operational HR - Human Resource Advisors / Partners

Simon Anslow - Head of Special Constabulary

Lisa Turner - Recruitment and Planning Partner

Amanda Humphrey - Head of Health and Wellbeing

Mat Newton - Head of Learning and Development

Jon Burgess - Superintendent Performance Improvement Unit (HR)

**8.0 Actions for Improvement**

Bespoke transferee recruitment campaign which aims to bring in skilled officers as well as a bespoke campaign to attract individuals from diverse communities to ensure the diversity of the workforce more accurately reflects that of the local community.

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

1. Achieve a strength fte that achieves the establishment target of 3000.00 fte by 31st March 2019 and ensure the budget and spend is balanced.

**Expected Outcome:** based on current projections, it is expected that this will be achieved.

1. Continue to increase the number of Specials throughout 2018/19 in line with the revised expectation to achieve 600 by March 2020, with a stretch target of 700.

**Expected Outcome:** based on current projections, it is expected that the headcount of specials will increase throughout the financial year.

1. Continue to increase BAME officer representation throughout 2018/19.

**Expected Outcome:** the force recognises a current and future challenge in terms of ensuring its workforce reflects that of the diversity of the local population. In particular the force is seeking to enhance workforce representation of individuals from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities who make up approximately 6.56% of the county’s population.

There has been a marginal increase as at 30th September 2018 when compared to 30th June 2018 and the intake in July and October have had a representation of 4.55% and 10% respectively. Following the work streams identified earlier in the report and the improved number of BAME officers currently within the recruitment process, it is projected that the number and percentage of BAME officers will continue to improve throughout the financial year.

Absence

Performance Improvement Unit

Moving forward, the continuing aspiration of the force is to achieve at least the national average of average days lost per person per year. The national average of officer days lost due to sickness is 9.77, with 10.20 days for staff and 9.50 days for PCSOs. Therefore, based on current performance and activity to address attendance, it is can be seen that we have achieved this aim in respect of officers and now seek to sustain the position throughout the year. The aim to reach the national average for PCSOs has now been reconsidered and it is unclear currently when it can be expected taking into account the absence experienced this year. Police Staff attendance is already better than the national average.

Positive Action

The Feel Well Live Well sessions continue with 979 individuals engaging in either the full programme, refresher or taster sessions thus promoting organisational health and wellbeing. The first dates for the new Feel Well Live Well for Leaders sessions have been published with a very positive response. Further dates will be published shortly for the next calendar year in order to ensure managers and leaders are developed to support their teams and to maintain their own wellbeing.

From a local and national perspective, the pilot survey in Trauma Resilience has concluded in which Essex were one of nine forces involved and feedback on these results is expected shortly with the full national survey being released in the near future. This research is being undertaken by the Police Dependants Trust.

Locally in Essex, the University of Essex Business School research in managing mental health in the workplace, funded by ACAS, in which the force formed part of the cohort of employers concluded in early October. The organisational case study produced from the involvement in this research project will be forwarded shortly for review and agreement. The purpose of this research is to promote best practice in supporting mental health within the workplace and including information on a ‘Let’s Talk’ platform developed by the University for Essex employers and residents.

New for this winter season is a full programme of local, internal flu vaccinations which commences in late October. The programme is being delivered by the internal Occupational Health nurses and dates have been published across the county in order to support attendance and good winter health this year. Early booking information has indicated a positive organisational response to this initiative with the requirement for some reserve dates to be advertised due to the demands for the service already received.

World Mental Health Day (10 October 2018) was marked this year with both Mr Hirst and Mr Harrington publicly re-affirming their commitment to reducing the stigma of mental health at work with the re-signing of the Mind Bluelight Pledge.

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

Not applicable

1. 2011 National Census Data [↑](#footnote-ref-1)