**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** | **Mr Richard Leicester** |
| **Date Paper was Written** | **8th April 2019** |
| **Version Number** | **4** |
| **Report from:**  | **Essex Police** |
| **Date of Meeting:** | **30th April 2019** |
| **Author on behalf of Chief Officer:** | **Mr Adam Pfeiffer and Superintendent Jon Burgess** |
| **Date of Approval:** | **18th April 2019** |

1. **Purpose of Report**

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

1. **Recommendations**

Not applicable

1. **Executive Summary**

The officer strength, as at 31st March 2019, was 3063.94 full time equivalent (fte), which is 60.94 fte over the establishment of 3003.00.

As at 31st March 2019, the police staff strength was 2004.16 fte, which is 165.43 fte under the establishment of 2169.59 fte.

The PCSO strength fte as at 31st March 2019 is 108.03, which is 0.03 fte over the establishment of 108.00 fte.

As at 31st March 2019, there were 517 specials in post, which is an increase of 40, when compared to the last HR data as at 31st December 2018 (477) and a net increase of 90 since 31st March 2018 (427).

The total duty hour’s worked in 2018/19 increased to 171,725 from 128,663 in 2017/18.

Essex Police remains one of the fastest growing Special Constabularies in the country and is now the second largest by headcount, behind only the Metropolitan Police Service.

Officer turnover for 2018/19 (7.75%) is lower when compared to the 2017/18 financial year (8.08%). Staff and specials turnover for the same period has also reduced by 1.55% and 1.88% respectively, but PCSO turnover has increased to 7.34% from 3.90%.

The representation of Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) officers has increased to a headcount of 82 as at 31st March 2019, which is an increase of 3 when compared to the last HR data as at 31st December 2018 (79).

When comparing 31st March 2019 to 31st March 2018, the headcount of BAME officers has increased by 16 from 66; this is a percentage point increase of 0.43 (from 2.17% to 2.60%).

There are currently 25 BAME candidates in the officer recruitment process which equates to 7.02% of all applications (as at 12th April 2019).

The number and proportion of BAME Staff, PCSOs and Specials have all increased.

The headcount of female officers has increased from 1021 as at 31st December 2018 (32.82%) to 1037 (32.88%) as at 31st March 2019. For staff and specials, the percentage of females has remained static and there has been a marginal reduction in female PCSOs (from 54.63% as at 31st December 2018 to 51.28% as at 31st March 2019).

Absence

For officers, in 2018/19, the average days lost per person was 9.41, which is a significant reduction (1.44) when compared to 2017/18 (10.85). This is the lowest average days lost per person for officers in 6 years, and the third year in a row of reduced absence. All twelve months of sickness absence in 2018/19 were lower than the respective months in 2017/18.

For staff, in 2018/19, the average days lost per person was 9.45, which is a marginal increase (0.20) when compared to 2017/18 (9.25). However, this is still lower than the average days lost per person in 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16.

For PCSOs, in 2018/19, the average days lost per person was 12.13, which is a significant reduction (3.41) when compared to 2017/18 (15.54). Only 1 of the last 9 months has seen a higher level of sickness absence than the same months last year and the average days lost per person is the second lowest level of sickness absence in six years.

For officers and PCSOs there has been a reduction across all sickness absence terms (short, medium and long term) in 2018/19 when compared to 2017/18. For staff there has been a reduction in short term absence but an increase in medium and long term absence for the same period.

Psychological absence accounts for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost for all employee groups, albeit, for officers, the percentage reduced in 2018/19 from 39.16% to 37.93%. The second most common reason for sickness absence for all employee groups is musculo/skeletal however the proportion of payroll hours lost for musculo/skeletal for all employee groups reduced in 2018/19 when compared to 2017/18.

The number (headcount) of officers on recuperative, adjusted and restricted duties has remained fairly static at 412 as at 31st March 2019 when compared to the last HR data as 31st December 2018 (410).

**4.0 Introduction/Background**

This commentary report provides context for the information contained within the HR strategic dashboard sheet and summarises the key highlights from each section. The data has been taken from the force HR system (SAP) as at 31st March 2019, except where alternative 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 corresponding reference on the HR strategic dashboard.

**1. Establishment v Strength as at 31st March 2019**

The officer strength, as at 31st March 2019, was 3063.94 full time equivalent (fte), which is 60.94 fte over the establishment of 3003.00. This is a net increase of 43.67 fte since the last HR report as at 31st December 2018, and a net increase in 2018/19 of 114.11 fte, when compared to the position as at 31st March 2019 (2949.83 fte).

As at 31st March 2019, the police staff strength was 2004.16 fte, which is 165.43 fte under the establishment of 2169.59 fte.

The PCSO strength fte as at 31st March 2019 is 108.03, which is 0.03 fte over the establishment of 108.00 fte. This is a net increase of 9.27 fte since the last HR report as at 31st December 2018 and has increased following an intake of 10.00 fte PCSOs on the 28th January 2019.

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 for Commands with a headcount of over 75.

Officers

The Serious Crime Directorate (SCD) have 25.02 fte vacancies, which is a vacancy percentage of 12.23%. Although this is a net reduction of 3.51 percentage points when compared to data as at 31st December 2019 (15.74%), the new SCD structure was implemented on 21st March 2019. This resulted in a net reduction in establishment of 16.40 posts, which is why the overall vacancy percentage has reduced.

There are vacancies across the majority of Departments within SCD and across a number of roles. The majority of vacancies are in the roles of Major Investigation Team DC (6.27 fte), Covert Surveillance DC (5.00 fte), Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking DC (4.00), Dedicated Source Unit PC/DC (3.56 fte) and Serious & Organised Crime Unit Investigations DC (3.38 fte).

Of these vacancies, 18 have been successfully recruited to (4 of which are subject to successful completion of training and 14 who are due to start, or are awaiting release dates). The remaining vacancies will be advertised.

Operational Policing Command have 29.54 fte vacancies, which is a vacancy percentage of 6.58% and an increase when compared to the last HR data as at 31st December 2018 where the vacancy percentage was 6.03%. This is predominately due to the 2018/19 uplift of 25 posts in the Operational Support Group that were added to the establishment on 13th February 2019. Of the 25, 1 is an Inspector which is due to start on the 1st May 2019 and 3 are Sergeants who have been selected and are awaiting start dates. Of the 21 Constable posts, 17 are occupied, with the remaining 4 due to start over the next 3 months (1 on the 15th April 2019, 2 on the 13th May 2019 and 1 on the 22nd July 2019).

Crime & Public Protection Command have 17.93 fte vacancies, which equates to a vacancy percentage of 6.37%. This is a reduction when compared to the data as at 31st December 2018 (6.65%).

The vacancies are predominately in the role of Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT) DC (17.73 fte). This role was advertised throughout December 2018 and 5 officers were successful, however a further advert is due to be placed to fill the remainder of vacancies. There are also 6.65 fte Proactive PC vacancies; these have been selected for and the successful individuals are awaiting release dates.

The last HR data report highlighted that the Local Policing Areas combined had 111.91 fte vacancies as at 31st December 2018. This has reduced to now being 12.67 fte over establishment, which is a result of, new recruits graduating to Local Policing Areas. In addition a change in process has been introduced that aligns officers on the HR system to the Local Policing Areas as they commence their tutorship at the 20 week point in their training. Previously officers were aligned under the establishment of Learning & Development for 12 months until their graduation date.

Staff

The Commands with the highest level of vacancies are outlined below. Essex Police (staff only) has a vacancy factor of 5.6%, 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 vacancy rate of 18.96%, which equates to 63.16 fte, albeit; as with officers, this has reduced marginally due to the implementation of the new structure that went live on the 21st March 2019.

It should be noted that, 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 42.55 fte vacancies, which are distributed across all of the Departments within the Directorate. At the time of writing, 10 individuals had been selected for vacancies with individuals undergoing pre-employment checks and the majority of other vacancies are actively being recruited to with individuals at various stages of the recruitment process (initial advert, selection process and vetting).

The Crime & Public Protection Command continue to have one of the highest vacancy rates with 12.19% (24.37 fte), however this is a reduction when compared to the last HR data as at 31st December 2018 (13.40%).

Of the 24.37 fte vacancies, 10.53 fte are Investigation Support Officer – Investigations posts. This has remained the same as the position as at 31st December 2018 as the posts were being held due to a review of the Investigation Hubs. This has now concluded and the new structure will be implemented in July 2019. As a result, there will be a reduction in the number of posts and therefore vacancies, with the remaining due to be recruited to. There are also 4.38 fte Assessment Officer vacancies and 3.00 fte Intelligence Support Officer vacancies, of which 8 individuals have been recruited and are undergoing pre-employment checks.

The Criminal Justice Command have a vacancy rate of 11.70% (31.48 fte), which is an increase when compared to the last HR data as at 31st December 2018 (10.51%). Of the 31.48 vacancies, 11.05 fte are Criminal Justice Administrators and 7.76 fte are Detention Officers; both roles are in the process of being recruited to. In relation to the Criminal Justice Administrators, the level of vacancies remain high. The turnover for this role is predominately a result of staff who have been successful for promotional opportunities internally.

Of the other vacancies in Criminal Justice, 6.00 fte have been filled with individuals currently going through pre-employment checks and 2.00 fte are on hold due to temporary promotions of the staff to more senior roles in Criminal Justice.

Other increases

The only other significant change of note is Support Services which has reduced by 3.40 percentage points from 7.17% as at 31st December 2018 to 3.77% as at 31st March 2019. This is predominantly due to a reduction in the number of vacancies within IT and Learning and Development. Individual vacancies were also filled in Transport Services, Human Resources and Estate Services which has also contributed to the reduction in the vacancy percentage.

**2. Specials Data: Headline Figures**

As at 31st March 2019, there were 517 specials in post, which is a net increase of 40 when compared to the last HR data as at 31st December 2018 (477) and a net increase of 90 since 31st March 2018 (427).

National workforce statistics relating to the Special Constabulary were released on the 24th January 2019 for the period up to September 2018. The key headlines were:

* The number of Special Constables nationally has reduced by 12.3% in the last year (-1,588).
* Essex Special Constabulary grew by 22.1% in the same period.
* Only 10 forces saw a growth in the last year
* Essex was the second largest Special Constabulary in the country, behind the Metropolitan Police Service (2,062) and 56 ahead of the next largest force which was Thames Valley Police.
* Essex saw the largest headcount growth of any force in the last year (+86), 41 more than the next largest (Surrey)
* There are more Specials in Essex Police than are present in the whole of Wales and in the whole North East region.

Specials Attrition

Although the average monthly leavers has increased marginally from 8.33 in 2017/18 (April to March 2018) to 9.17 for 2018/19 (April to March 2019), the turnover percentage has actually reduced from 25.16% to 23.28%. This is because the Special Constabulary workforce has increased resulting in an overall lower turnover, when measured as a percentage.

Of the 110 Specials who left the force in 2018/19, a total of 33 (30.00%) have left to join the regulars, which is a reduction when compared to 2017/18 where 35% (35 headcount) left to the join the regulars.

Specials Duty Hours

For 2018/19 (April to March 2019) the total duty hour’s work increased to 171,725 from 128,663 in 2017/187 and the average hours per officer increased from 27.86 a month to 30.57.

The total duty hours worked in March 2019 was 18,843, which is the equivalent of 1178 specials working 16 hours a month.

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.

**3. Recruitment 18/19 and 19/20**

**Officers**

2018/19 Financial Year

Following the 2018/19 uplift, the Essex officer establishment increased by 150.00 fte. A recruitment plan was devised to ensure these requirements were met, together with the replacement of officers who left through natural attrition.

In 2018/19, a total of 346 officers joined the force (via all recruitment entry routes). As a result, the force achieved a strength equivalent to the establishment of 3003.00 in December 2018 and continued to maintain strength fte above the establishment in the months of January, February and March 2019.

The following graph provides a breakdown of the 346 joiners by each recruitment entry route.

2019/20 Recruitment Plan

Following the 2019/20 precept increase, the establishment for 2019/20 has increased by 215.00 from 3003.00 to 3218.00. As a result, a recruitment plan has been agreed between Human Resources, Learning and Development and Corporate Finance that aims to recruit up to 476.00 officers, which, if achieved, would result in the strength achieving the increased establishment of 3218.00 by March 2020.

The recruitment plan for the 2019/20 is as follows:

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| --- | --- |
| **Intake Date** | **Number** |
| 07/05/19 | 76 |
| 15/07/19 | 80 |
| 23/09/19 | 80 |
| 02/12/19 | 80 |
| 10/02/20 | 80 |
| 30/03/20 | 80 |

To ensure continued oversight, projected recruitment numbers are reviewed monthly by HR Resourcing, the Strategic Change Team and the Corporate Finance Department. The plan includes contingencies and can be adjusted to account for changes in establishment, (as directed by the Strategic Change Team), and changes in attrition.

**Specials**

2018/19 Financial Year

In 2018/19 a total of 215 specials joined the force which is an increase of 35 when compared to the number of joiners in 2017/18 (180) and is the highest number of specials joiners over the last 10 years.

2019/20 Financial Year

Specials

It is projected that a total of up to 224 specials will join between April 2019 and March 2020, which, if achieved and taking into account current attrition projections, would result in a projected headcount of 600 by March 2020.

**4. Turnover**

The last HR data showed that the average monthly officer leavers for April to December 2018 was 22 a month, however the number of leavers in quarter 4 reduced to an average of 14 a month. As a result, the total number of leavers for 2018/19 was 240, (an average of 20 a month) which is the same as the 2017/18 financial year.

When detailed as a turnover percentage (proportion of leavers against average headcount), the turnover for 2018/19 was 7.75% which is a reduction when compared to 2017/18 (8.08%).

It should be noted that there was a reduction in the number of resignations for 2018/19 when compared to 2017/18, however, there has been an increase in the number of officers transferring to other forces. For 2018/19, a total of 77 officers have transferred to other forces, compared to only 37 for the same period last year. Of the 77, the majority have transferred to the City of London (37.66%) and the Metropolitan Police (33.77%). Analysis of the reasons for officers transferring out will be reported in the next Exit paper that is due to presented at the Chief Officer Group on the 5th June 2019.

A recruitment campaign to bring in transferees from external forces, focussing in particular on detectives, and where applicable, promotional opportunities continues. In 2018/19 a total of 33 officers joined via direct entry / transferring in or re-joining, which is an increase of 4 compared to 2017/18 and the highest number over the last 8 years.

For staff, the average monthly leavers for 2018/19 was 17, which is lower than the 2017/18 financial year (19). From a turnover perspective this has reduced from 10.64% to 9.09%, a reduction of 1.55 percentage points.

For PCSOs, there were 8 leavers in 2018/19, which is a turnover percentage of 7.34%. This is an increase when compared to 2017/18 where the turnover was only 3.90%. It should be noted however, that, overall PCSO headcount is low therefore a small number of leavers has a bigger impact on the percentages.

The turnover for specials has reduced from 25.16% in 2017/18 to 23.28% in 2018/19.

**5. Gender & BAME Representation as at 31st March 2019**

The representation of Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) officers has increased to a headcount of 82 as at 31st March 2019, which is an increase of 3 when compared to the last HR data as at 31st December 2018 (79). This is a percentage point increase of 0.06 from 2.54% to 2.60%. This is 3.96% under the BAME economically active population of 6.56%[[1]](#footnote-1).

When comparing 31st March 2019 to 31st March 2018, the headcount of BAME officers has increased by 16 from 66; this is a percentage point increase of 0.43 (from 2.17% to 2.60%).

In 2018/19, a total of 313 (headcount) new recruits joined, of which 14 were BAME. This equates to 4.47% of all new recruits. Of the 33 officers who joined as a transfer in / re-joiner, a total of 3 were BAME, which equates to 9.09%. Combined, of the total 346 joiners, 17 were BAME, which equates to 4.91%.

Since the last HR data as at 31st December 2018, there has been 1 intake of new officers that joined in February 2019, of which 5.26% were BAME (4 out of 76).

There are currently 25 BAME candidates in the officer recruitment process which equates to 7.02% of all applications (as at 12th April 2019).

A bespoke campaign to attract individuals from diverse communities to ensure the diversity of the workforce more accurately reflects that of the local community was launched on the 10th December 2018. Since the launch of that campaign there have been 629 applications, of which, 60 are BAME (9.54%).

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 and to help remove any specific barriers faced by this group. 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 increased from 77 (3.54%) as at 31st December 2018 to 80 (3.62%) as at 31st March 2019. This is a headcount increase of 14 (0.12%) when compared to 31st March 2018 when there were 66 BAME staff (3.50%). For PCSOs, the headcount has increased to 3, which is 2.56% of the total PCSO workforce.

The number of BAME specials has increased to 36 (6.95%) as at 31st March 2019 when compared to the last HR data as at 31st December 2018 (28 / 5.87%). This is an increase of 15 (2.03%) when compared to 31st March 2018 (21 / 4.92%).

The headcount of female officers has increased from 1021 as at 31st December 2018 (32.82%) to 1037 (32.88%) as at 31st March 2019. This is also an increase when compared to 31st March 2018, when there were 972 female officers (31.95%).

For staff and specials, the percentage of females has remained static when compared to 31st December 2018. For PCSOs the headcount of females has increased by 1 to 60 as at 31st March 2019, when compared to 31st December 2018, but the percentage of PCSO workforce has reduced from 54.63% to 51.28%. Similarly when comparing 31st March 2019 to 31st March 2018 the percentage of female staff and specials has remained fairly static, but has reduced slightly for PCSOs, although the female PCSO headcount has increased.

**6. Absence and Adjusted / Recuperative**

Summary Numbers

For officers, in 2018/19, the average days lost per person was 9.41, which is a significant reduction (1.44) when compared to 2017/18 (10.85). This is the lowest average days lost per person for officers in 6 years, and the third year in a row of reduced absence. All twelve months of sickness absence in 2018/19 were lower than the respective months in 2017/18.

For staff, in 2018/19, the average days lost per person was 9.45, which is a marginal increase (0.20) when compared to 2017/18 (9.25). However, this is still lower than the average days lost per person in 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16.

For PCSOs, in 2018/19, the average days lost per person was 12.13, which is a significant reduction (3.41) when compared to 2017/18 (15.54). Only 1 month in the last 9 months have been higher than the same months last year and this is the second lowest level of sickness absence in six years.

Average hours lost by month 2017/18 & 2018/19 (April 2018 to March 2019)

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 2018 to March 2019, when compared to the same period last year.

For staff, sickness absence improved in the latter stages of 2018/19, with November 18, December 18, January 19 and February 19 all lower when compared to the same months in the previous year. The last HR data reported the gap between this year and last year was +0.41 average days lost per person. As a result of the improved sickness absence towards the end of the financial year, the gap at the end of the financial year has reduced to +0.20 average days lost per person (when comparing 2018/19 to 2017/18).

For PCSOs, since the last HR data, there was a reduction in average hours lost per month for January and March 2019, when compared to the same months 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 (24.74), LPA North (12.61) and Crime and Public Protection (10.44). However it should be noted that although they have the highest average days lost per person all three have reduced in 2018/19 when compared to 2017/18.

The top 3 Commands are the same as reported in the last HR data for the period April to December 2018, however since that data set all three Commands have had lower averages days lost per person in the months of January, February and March 2019, when compared to the same months last year.

For all three of these Commands, the reasons for absence accounting for the highest percentage of payroll hours lost are psychological and musculo/skeletal.

Although there are other Commands with high average days lost per person; Strategic Change Performance with 12.74 average days lost per person; Support Services with 12.73 and Criminal Justice with 10.44, these have smaller average officer headcounts within the Commands and, therefore, any absence experienced has a greater impact on overall rates.

There are nine Commands showing an improvement in average days lost per person for 2018/19, when compared to 2017/18 with the most significant reductions being in Contact Management (30.70 to 24.74), Operational Policing Command (9.90 to 6.83), Local Policing Area South (10.84 to 7.78) and Strategic Change Performance (14.47 to 12.74).

Staff

For staff, the Commands with the highest average days lost per person per person are Contact Management (13.18), Criminal Justice (11.02) and Strategic Change Performance (10.06).

Contact Management staff absence has increased by 1.51 average days lost per person, which is predominantly due to increases in long term absence. There have been increases in absences for psychological and genito urinary absence; there have also been slight increases in other absence reasons including miscellaneous, cardiac/circulatory and nervous system. Medium term absence has also seen a slight increase but short term absence in the Command has seen a reduction.

Strategic Change Performance Directorate staff absence has seen an increase of 4.87 average days lost per person, which is the greatest increase of all the Commands and is predominantly due to increases in long term absence for psychological absence and absence for miscellaneous reasons. There have also been increases in absence for ear/eye, cardiac/circulatory, genito urinary and headache/migraine absence but a reduction in absence for infectious disease, respiratory and digestive reasons. Medium term absence in the Command has also increased but short term absence has seen a reduction.

Of the top 3 Commands for staff sickness absence, Criminal Justice is the only one to have reduced in 2018/19 (11.02) when compared to 2017/18 (11.72). This is mainly due to a reduction in long term absence, although both medium term and short term absence have increased. Absence for miscellaneous, genito urinary, cardiac/circulatory, ear/eye, respiratory and skin reasons have seen increases, although absence for psychological, infectious disease, digestive, musculo/skeletal and nervous system reasons have seen reductions.

As with officers, there are other Commands with high average days lost per person for staff, including ACC Fire Collaboration at 51.89, LPA West at 39.13, and Local Policing Support Unit (LPSU) at 14.37, but these have significantly lower average headcounts meaning absence can have a much greater impact on the Commands figures and appear disproportionate to Commands with higher headcounts.

For staff, there are six Commands that have achieved an improved position in average days lost per person in 2018/19, when compared to 2017/18. The most noticeable reduction, which has the greatest impact on the overall figures (due to the higher headcounts) is Serious Crime Directorate (8.96 to 6.58) and Criminal Justice Command (11.72 to 11.02).

PCSOs

For PCSOs, only LPA West is showing an increase in average days lost per person to 15.37 in 2018/19 when compared to 4.60 for the same period in 2017/18. 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 North has seen a reduction of 15.08 average days lost per person from 22.07 in 2017/18, to 6.99 in 2018/19 and LPA South has seen a reduction of 0.53 for the same periods.

Absence Term

For officers, there has been a reduction in average days lost per person in all absence terms (short, medium and long term) in 2018/19 when compared to 2017/18.

For staff, there has been a reduction in short term absence, but an increase in medium term and long term. For PCSOs, as with officers, there have been reductions in all absence terms, with long term absence showing a reduction of 3.19 average days lost per person.

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 39.16% in 2017/18 to 37.93% in 2018/19, whereas staff has increased from 26.21% to 31.04%. For PCSOs, psychological absence has reduced, from 35.77% in 2017/18 to 35.05% in 2018/19.

The percentage of payroll hours lost to musculo/skeletal is the second most common reason for absence for all employee groups but has reduced for all employee groups in 2018/19 when compared to 2017/18. Officer absence for musculo/skeletal reasons has reduced from 23.62% in 2017/18 to 21.95% in 2018/19; Staff sickness absence has reduced from 20.86% to 18.70% for the same periods and PCSOs have reduced from 38.87% to 20.98%.

Digestive related absences are showing an increase for officers in 2018/19 (8.47%) when compared to 2017/18 (7.31%).

For staff, miscellaneous absence is showing an increase of 2.54% of payroll hours lost in 2018/19, when compared to April 2017 to March 2018. Miscellaneous absence includes reasons such as cancer, operations, post-operative recovery and fever and high temperature.

Respiratory related absences are showing an increase of 6.79% of payroll hours lost for PCSOs in 2018/19 when compared to 2017/18.

 Performance Improvement Unit (PIU)

 The PIU continue to work with all commands in relation to reducing absence levels and improving performance. The team are commencing work in other areas beyond absence, such as early conversations with the Crime Registrar and Command Teams regarding improving levels of Data Accuracy.

The PIU are taking a lead regarding adjusted duties and have already witnessed movement around officers previously being in adjusted roles, but not in established posts.

Adjusted / Recuperative

The number (headcount) of officers on recuperative, adjusted and restricted duties has remained fairly static at 412 as at 31st March 2019 when compared to the last HR data as 31st December 2018 (410).

When comparing officers on recuperative, adjusted and restricted duties for 31st March 2019, Constables have reduced by 8, Sergeants have increased by 8, Inspectors have increased by 1 and Superintendents have increased by 1.

The number of staff on recuperative or restricted duties has increased to 92 as at 31st March 2019 compared to 74 as at 31st December 2018 and PCSOs have only increased by 1 from 13 to 14.

**6.0 Implications (Issues)**

Not applicable

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

Essex Police achieved a police officer strength equivalent to 3003.00 in December 2018 with the strength fte also exceeding the establishment in January, February and March 2019.

In addition to this, the Special Constabulary headcount has increased to its highest level since April 2014 and is projected to increase further throughout 2019/20. The Special Constabulary provided 171,725 hours of policing in 2018/19 when compared to 128,663 in 2017/18.

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 significantly reduced officer average days lost per person in 2018/19 when compared to 2017/18.

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 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

Amanda Humphrey - Head of Health and Wellbeing

Jon Burgess - Superintendent Performance Improvement Unit (HR)

**8.0 Actions for Improvement**

A continued recruitment campaign to bring in transferees from external forces together with the analysis to understand reasons behind transfers out of force which will be reported in the next Exit Analysis paper due to Chief Officers the Police, Fire and Crime Commission on the 5th June 2019.

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

1. Continue to increase the number of specials throughout 2019/20 in line with the revised expectation to achieve 600 by March 2020, with a stretch ambition for 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 2019/20.

**Expected Outcome:** in 2018/19 the number of BAME officers increased by 16 from resulting in the proportion of BAME officers increasing from 2.17% as at 31st March 18 to 2.61% as at 31st March 2019.

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

Operational HR

Operational HR continue to support commanders, managers and supervisors through supporting the Attendance Management Group Meetings (AMGs) tracking compliance with protocol in relation to contacts, fit notes and Occupational Health interventions.

Operational HR also commenced proactive days looking at specific case intervention to guide and advise managers in support of ongoing cases. These commenced in April 2018; these could contribute to the reducing figures; monitoring over the 2019/2020 period will assess the impact.

Health Services

The Feel Well Live Well sessions continue with 1210 individuals engaging in either the full programme, refresher or taster sessions thus promoting organisational health and wellbeing. In support of World Sleep Day (March 2019), Occupational Health delivered a session in Colchester, promoting the benefits of sleep hygiene.

Good attendance is continuing on the Feel Well Live Well for Leaders programme with an increase of 34 further delegates in the last reporting period.

Health Services has been invited to present a case study on the support programmes at the Police Wellbeing Conference in London in April, where the benefits of the pro-active support programmes currently offered by Essex Police will be explored.

The last report detailed the internal flu vaccination programme, which took place in autumn 2018. As part of the South East Region Wellbeing Group, each individual force approach to flu vaccination and comparative sickness absence data will be shared and reviewed at the next regional meeting. Of the six forces (including Essex) involved in this group, very differing approaches to flu vaccination were undertaken this year. This group therefore provides a unique opportunity to compare sickness absence data from the same sector and organisation type, as well as what has proved to be the most effective method of vaccination delivery, which will aim to direct the appropriate strategy for the forthcoming winter period.

The team remain engaged with national wellbeing developments and recently attended the third NPCC/ Police Care UK (formerly the Police Dependants Trust) conference in March 2019 where the latest developments and strategic direction for Police Wellbeing were discussed. The event also included the inaugural Oscar Kilo Awards. Five award categories were available and the author is delighted to report that, again, the wellbeing team were the Mental Health Award category winners for the Feel Well Live Well programmes with the award being presented by Chief Constable Andy Rhodes, NPPC Wellbeing lead.

This latest award cements both external recognition through the Personnel Today Award received in late 2018 and, now, the Oscar Kilo/NPCC Mental Health award within policing, in terms of the added value and support of mental health conditions that is provided within the organisation.

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

Not applicable

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