**Performance and Resources Scrutiny Programme 2019**

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

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| **Chief Officer** | **ACC Andy Prophet** |
| **Date Paper was Written** |  |
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| **Report from:**  | **Essex Police** |
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| **Date of Approval:** | **13th May 2019** |

1. **Purpose of Report**

This report provides an overview of the work conducted within the Crime and Public Protection Command (C&PP) for Q4 of 2018/19 (1st January – 31st March 2019).

1. **Recommendations**

There are no specific recommendations within this report but the board are invited to note the key areas of performance highlighted.

1. **Executive Summary**

This report provides a broad assessment of the work being undertaken within Crime and Public Protection and is structured around the four operational areas within the command. It details core performance and crime data, outcomes, achievements, issues and outlines ambitions for future work.

The report provides updates on some of the improvement programmes identified in the last report and includes detail on new work being conducted within the command.

1. **Introduction/Background**

C&PP has responsibility for investigating some of the most serious crimes against the most vulnerable in our communities and for tackling those offenders who pose the highest risk to our communities.

The four main departments are:

* Public Protection Investigation Units (PPIU): There are three PPIUs aligned to the Local Policing Areas of Essex Police; North, South and West. Each PPIU is overseen by a DCI and includes Adult Sexual Abuse Investigation Teams (ASAIT) and Child Abuse Investigation Teams (CAIT).
* Management of Sexual Offenders and Violent Offenders (MOSOVO): Consisting of seven teams based across the county with responsibility for Managing Registered Sex Offenders, Managing Violent Offenders, Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and delivery of the Disclosure Barring Scheme (DBS).
* Police Online Investigation Team (POLIT): One team with responsibility for investigations across the county into offences involving indecent images of children and paedophilia material held on a computer. This unit respond to referrals from other agencies (most significantly the National Crime Agency) and provide a proactive capability utilising systems to detect those people in Essex viewing and distributing indecent images of children via the internet.
* Operations Centre: Based at headquarters, providing support to the whole force and comprising of:
	+ Adult, Child and CSE Triage Teams who receive, process and respond to referrals from partner agencies;
	+ Assessment Team who review and provide intelligence for all reported incidents handled by the Force Control Room that relate to any of the 14 strands of vulnerability;
	+ Central Referral Unit (CRU) providing specialist safeguarding services to victims of High Risk Domestic Abuse and Honour Based Abuse in support of LPA based Domestic Abuse Investigation Teams (DAIT).
1. **Current Work and Performance**

**Public Protection Investigation Units (PPIUs)**

Crimes recorded:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ASAIT** | Q4 2017/18 | Q4 2018/19 |
| Rape | 153 | 260 |
| Other Sexual Offences | 24 | 47 |
| Other Offences | 53 | 71 |
| Non-Crimes | 67 | 96 |
| **CAIT** | Q4 2017/18 | Q4 2018/19 |
| Rape | 143 | 120 |
| Other Sexual Offences | 161 | 190 |
| Other Offences | 289 | 387 |
| Non-Crimes | 228 | 200 |

Crime outcomes:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ASAIT**  | Q4 2017/18 | Q4 2018/19 |
| Rape | 4 (0)[[1]](#footnote-1) | 1 (1) |
| Other Sexual Offences | 2 (1) | 3 (0) |
| Other Offences | 12 (1) | 12 (1) |
| **CAIT**  | Q4 2017/18 | Q4 2018/19 |
| Rape | 4 (10) | 2 (10) |
| Other Sexual Offences | 7 (25) | 8 (36) |
| Other Offences | 26 (128) | 30 (187) |

* ASAITs case load is over 50% higher in Q4 2018/19 when compared with Q4 2017/18.
* Rape was the most numerically acute investigation type in Q4 2017/18 accounting for over 50 % of investigations compared to all other types of investigation combined. This trend continues in Q4 2018/19.
* (Other sexual offences) whilst numerically lower than rape offences have shown a sharper increase in between Q4 2018/19 and Q4 2017/18 (95% increase) when compared to Rapes between Q4 2018/19 and Q4 2017/18 (69% increase).
* CAIT caseload remains largely unchanged in Q4 2018/19 when compared with Q4 2017/18.
* Other offences are the most numerically acute investigation type in Q2018/19 accounting for over 40% of CAITs total caseload. This trend continues from Q4 2017/18.
* There has been a decrease of around 15% in the number of rapes recorded in Q4 2018/19 when compared to Q4 2017/18. This is considered to be a blip in the longer term trend of increased reporting.

Key achievements:

A joint Essex Police and Social Care Forum has been introduced in the North which meets quarterly and is attended by a number of police representatives at inspector level along with mid and north social care service managers. This is a positive initiative to address a number of partnership managerial issues and work streams.

The QUEST team investigating non-recent child sexual abuse became operational in February 2019 and are working with partners. The terms of reference for this team have been agreed and they currently have 61 ongoing investigations. The QUEST team currently have a team of six staff consisting of a senior investigating officer, a Detective Sergeant and four investigators. The team cover offences across the county.

The Synergy Essex First Responder Project was launched as a pilot in January 2019 and will ensure that every victim of rape in Essex will speak to an ISVA within 24 hours of reporting. Essex is the only force in the UK to offer this level of service with the ambition that this will decrease the number of victims that disengage and provide enhanced support for victims through the Criminal Justice System. Since its introduction, Synergy have received 279 referrals from Essex Police, 80% of which have been viable and actioned. The official launch of this project is 7th May 2019.

The embedded detective sergeant within the RASSO unit now solely concentrates on rape investigations. It is anticipated that by focusing on one crime type there will be an improvement in the number of charges for rape. Liaison is also underway with Suffolk and Norfolk Police to discuss the low charge rates across the region and to identify ways to drive improvements in this area.

Training has been delivered to 150 foster carers, social workers and fostering panel members at the Essex Fostering Development Day. The training covered expectations for managing children missing from care and the responsibilities of the carer when receiving children at risk of missing and actions following missing events.

Breck’s Last Game, an educational tool for schools based on the online grooming of Breck Bednar through gaming resulting in his murder in Grays, was launched on 3rd April 2019. This launch culminated the collaborative project between Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Surrey and Essex Police and is designed to be shown to key stage three and four children (11 years upwards). In Essex, the Youth Service have delivered bespoke training sessions to 450 children who will then assist to deliver and embed the training into their own schools.

A joint training package has been developed between Essex Police and CARA (Centre for Action on Rape and Abuse in Essex) to advise on what to do if a person has been the victim of a sexual offence. The training was delivered to 35 volunteers of the SOS bus in Colchester and Chelmsford and the management are now looking to train all of their volunteers.

**MOSOVO**

Core Performance:

In April 2019 the MOSOVO team were managing 1564 Registered Sex Offenders (RSOs) in the community, an increase of 18 since the last quarter. 380 low risk offenders are subject of Intelligence Led Management. There were 85 active / overdue visits; however, this number is dynamic due to new RSOs registering and the ongoing visits by MOSOVO staff. Of these 85 active / overdue visits, none were categorised as high or very high risk. Despite the increase in the number of outstanding visits since the last report, this is still a much-improved position from 2017 and will be subject of close monitoring by the command to ensure that the numbers do not continue to rise.

Crime Reporting:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **MOSOVO** | Q4 2017/18 | Q4 2018/19 |
| All offences | 121 | 182 |
| Non-Crimes | 49 | 59 |

Outcomes:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **MOSOVO outcomes** | Q4 2017/18 | Q4 2018/19 |
| All Offences | 31 | 37 |

Achievements:

A further polygraph officer has now been trained within MOSOVO increasing the capability of polygraph tests that can be conducted on Registered Sex Offenders.

**POLIT**

Core Performance:

POLIT have received 44 external referrals in Q4 2018/19 compared to 36 in Q4 2017/18. These referrals are primarily from the National Crime Agency (NCA) and Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCUs).

Crime Reporting:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **POLIT** | Q4 2017/18 | Q4 2018/19 |
| All Offences | 39 | 89 |
| Non-Crimes | 2 | 2 |

Outcomes:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **POLIT Outcomes** | Q4 2017/18 | Q4 2018/19 |
| All Offences | 27 | 20 |

Achievements:

POLIT have four members of staff who have successfully passed the National Grading Training enabling them to train staff across the force to the national standard in grading Indecent Images of Children (IIOC).

Polygraph testing has been introduced within POLIT in order to enhance safeguarding arrangements and identify offenders who pose a higher risk to children through contact offending.

The proactive team continue to target the systems available to identify offenders accessing and sharing IIOC within Essex. Since their inception at the end of 2018 the team have executed 39 search warrants and identified 35 children requiring safeguarding.

**Operations Centre**

Core Performance:

Over the quarter, the team provided safeguarding to 751 High Risk victims of Domestic Abuse compared to 641 in Q4 2017/18.

Essex MARAC heard 491 cases, of which 398 were referred by police.

Child Triage had a 92% attendance rate at strategy meetings following 785 referrals. The workload in this team has increased by 60% this quarter compared to the same period last year due to more accurate recording and process changes.

For CSE Triage over the quarter there have been 685 partner referrals and the team have achieved 79% attendance at strategy meetings (35 participated in out of 44 requested).

The Adult Triage received 919 referrals and achieved 63% attendance at strategy meetings, participating in 7 out of the 11 strategy meetings requested. .

Achievements:

A review of how the Child Triage team undertake requests under Section 47 of the Children’s Act 1989 has been conducted in consultation with Children’s Social Care across Southend, Essex and Thurrock. Implementing the findings of the review has led to improvements in service delivery with expedited information sharing and an inbuilt review structure has been introduced to monitor processes moving forward.

The CSE triage team have scoped how to record exploitation in the most accurate manner on IT systems to ensure that the scale and demographics of the demand is understood. A process has been introduced to contact parents of children at risk of exploitation in order to signpost to other agencies for support and provide guidance on having conversations with children about different signs of exploitation.

A business case was submitted and approved in principle to re-locate the Adult Triage team with Essex Adult Social Care at County Hall in Chelmsford. The projected timescale for this move is early - mid 2020 and will provide for greater partnership working and information sharing.

Essex MARAC has successfully managed to hear cases within protocol for the last quarter. They have also hosted the SET Scrutiny panel and successfully rolled out an electronic audit process with a good response on the first months’ cases.

**6.0 Implications (Issues)**

**PPIU**

Officer vacancy rates within the PPIUs continue to be monitored and there is currently an active campaign to recruit to these vacancies.

A number of places on the annual investigation CPD event have been allocated to LPAs to encourage recruitment into PPU in the future.

A recruitment event is being planned to target transferees from the Metropolitan and City of London Police to join PPIU, particularly those living in the south of the county.

**POLIT**

Plans to move the POLIT team from Tilbury Police Station to a more suitable location continue to be explored. The current location not only impacts on the IT infrastructure but a significant proportion of the teams work is within the North LPA and this impacts on the time officers spend travelling across the county.

The remedial action plan implemented within the Digital Forensics Unit (DFU) has begun to show an improving picture in terms of the parity between Kent and Essex submissions. However, previous delays have begun to impact on the POLIT team whereby magistrates’ court bail extensions have been refused as a result of the delays in the investigations resulting from the DFU backlog.

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

The work of the Public Protection Command links to the following priorities in the Police and Crime Plan:

Priority 3 – Breaking the Cycle of Domestic Abuse

Priority 4 – Reverse the Trend in Serious Violence

Priority 5 – Tackle Gangs and Organised Crime

Priority 6 – Protecting Children and Vulnerable People from Harm

**6.2 Demand**

ASAIT have seen an increase of 64.3% (148 offences) in the number of investigations compared to Q4 of 2017/18.

CAIT have seen an increase of 17.5% (104 offences) in the number of investigations compared to Q4 2017/18.

MOSOVO have seen an increase of 50.4% (61 offences) in the number of investigations compared to Q4 2017/18.

POLIT have seen an increase of 128.2% (50 offences) in the number of investigations compared to Q4 2017/18.

There has been a 17.2% increase (110 offences) in the number of High Risk Domestic Abuse investigations compared to Q4 2017/18.

The force has seen an 85.7% increase (six offences) in the number of Honour Based Abuse Investigations compared to Q4 2017/18.

**6.3 Risks/Mitigation**

There are two key risks currently being managed in relation to C& PP Command.

 **Risk 1635**

C&PP Command Recruitment Challenges: Crime and Public Protection are currently encountering recruitment challenges including:

* The inability to attract the appropriate staff/officers with the required skill set
* Inability to retain skilled staff/officers
* A low number of transferees from other forces
* Delays within the recruitment process

Mitigating actions are on-going:

* Command team work to identify and encourage officers to join the command
* The introduction of a mentoring programme for identified officers
* Command team engagement across the command to acknowledge the good work of officers and the challenges faced with the types of investigations
* A continued recruitment campaign for transferees from other forces
* Use of agency staff to fill vacancies in the short term
* Working with HR to better project future vacancies
* Structured development for officers within the Investigation Development Module (IDM) which is proposed to move from 12 to 18 months service

The above risk was raised during this quarter and to add narrative, although post 31st March 2019, it has been agreed at Chief Officer Group that a number of vacant posts within the command will be filled as a priority.

**Risk 1823**

Insufficient rape investigations result in injustice for victims. The quality and consistency of rape investigations and the development of the relationship with the CPS need to be improved to address the relatively low levels of charges for rape.

Mitigating actions are on-going:

* Develop a revised performance management framework to identify barriers to performance
* Establish consistent application of investigation prioritisation using the SOP across all three PPIUs
* Progress PPIU police staff business case to maximise deployment of resources
* Develop escalation process to raise cases that require additional support to CPS
* Maintain and develop effective CPD to support investigative standards
* Implement an independent multi-agency rape scrutiny panel to identify barriers to improved performance across agencies

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

There are no identified issues in relation to Equality or Human Rights.

**6.5 Health and Safety Implications**

There are no identified issues in relation to Health and Safety.

**7.0 Consultation/Engagement**

 This report has been written in consultation with the Crime and Public Protection Command Team. Data has been provided by the Performance Analysis Unit and individual teams for information held locally.

**8.0 Actions for Improvement**

**PPIU**

The Drink Aware project working with Night Time Economy venues to deliver vulnerability awareness training to staff and implement Drink Aware Crews in identified venues has received £32k of funding from the NHS (match funded by the OPFCC) and will be launched pan Essex in May 2019.

All PPIU detective inspectors and detective sergeants will complete the National College of Policing four day Child Death Course as a result of the learning from the Poppi Worthington enquiry where officers were inadequately trained in response to child death.

A one day CPD event is also being held in June for front line officers and first responders in relation to child death to ensure that officers recognise the signs of homicide early and maintain our obligations on behalf of HM Coroner.

Operation Goldcrest is anticipated to go live as a pilot in September 2019. This will enable young people who are victims of Child Sexual Exploitation to anonymously report abuse and enable police to gather intelligence from these reports even if the victim does not engage with police. The outcome of a funding application is awaited in order that academic research can be conducted to inform decisions for any future rollout across the county.

All officers working in ASAIT will be trained to SCAIDIP level within the next 18 months. This will allow all staff to become omni competent, ensuring that demand can be met despite the vacancy rate.

The South PPIU hub are looking to develop the use of Special Constables within the department in order to support staff with investigative tasks and evidence gathering.

**MOSOVO**

A review has been conducted of MOSOVO and proposals are being developed to support a realignment of teams, providing greater efficiencies and better resilience.

The MOSOVO team are continuing to explore the use of technology to assist them in their role when examining offenders’ devices. Further laptops are required to enable the training to begin which is being progressed with IT.

**POLIT**

There is an ambition for a grooming team to be formed, working alongside POLIT to investigate offences of grooming children online, undercover investigations instigated by the Regional Organised Crime Units and reports received from Online Child Activist Groups (OCAGs). It is hoped that this team will be established late summer 2019.

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

The ongoing engagement between Essex Police and Dot Com charity continues to progress and a soft launch of the national pilot is planned for 5th June 2019 at Holy Cross School in Thurrock. The full national launch is planned for 24th October 2019 and is being supported by Chief Constable Harrington and the wider Chief Officer team. Essex Police media team are fully engaged in both events.

The two-day annual investigations CPD event is being held in May with invitations extended to partners and CPS. There are a number of speakers including experts from the NCA and forensic medical backgrounds.

Op Columbus began in April 2019 and aims to ensure that MARAC cases are discussed for safeguarding measures and diversion options are considered along with investigative opportunities to address offending behaviour. This has already made a positive impact on cases being heard.

The Catalyst Project is a partnership initiative being led by The University of Essex in conjunction with Essex and Suffolk County Councils. The team are using academic expertise in data analytics to identify patterns and predictive insight relating to serious sexual offences which will assist decision making for public service initiatives aimed at helping vulnerable people. The funding is available until June 2019 and meetings are being held to look at the development of the draft report and how Essex Police will be provided with the IT tool that assisted in completion of the analysis work.

There is an increased demand within the area of rape investigation, therefore increasing the demand on investigation teams within Crime and Public Protection Command. The number of recorded adult and child rape continues to increase which mirrors the National trend. The total of rape offences against adults and children has seen a 19.1% increase in recorded rapes in comparison to Q4 2016/2017. There were 51 more recorded offences (267 to 318) and of these, 104 were classed as non-recent offences. Although a challenge, this is improving with assistance from the QUEST team.

The increase of demand within POLIT of 128.2% may be reflective upon all indecent child image offences being removed from LPA’s to the POLIT team. This is in recognition of the specialist knowledge required for such offences. ASAIT have seen an increase in demand of 64%, which may be reflective of the remits changing in offences taken from the CAIT team and transferred to ASAIT. CAIT have also seen an increase in demand of 17.5% which may be reflective of the introduction of the QUEST team. However, *all* increases in demand may be due to the training delivered on Crime Data Accuracy. These increases in demand will be monitored accordingly.

Over this past quarter, recruitment challenges have been experienced, including the inability to attract and retain staff with the required skillset. This has now seen approval from the Chief Officer Group to fill vacant posts within Crime and Protection immediately.

In relation to developing staff and their skillset, the Crime and Public Protection Command are completing Strategic Skills Analysis for all police officers and staff to offer support for additional training for lateral growth and development. This is in collaboration with Learning and Development and will continue across the next quarter.

1. The numbers in brackets are offences that were assigned outcomes 9, 11 or 20 and are therefore considered resolved. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)