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

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

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| **Title of Report:** | **Crime Data Accuracy - Update** |
| **Agenda Number:** | **7** |
| **Chief Officer** | **DCC Mills** |
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| **Report from:**  | **Essex Police** |
| **Date of Meeting:** | **30th April 2019** |
| **Author on behalf of Chief Officer:** | **Ch Insp Chris Bradford, Force Crime and Incident Registrar** |
| **Date of Approval:** | **11th April 2019** |

1. **Purpose of Report**

To provide a quarterly update in relation to the crime data accuracy (CDA) of Essex Police.

1. **Recommendations**

For the Board to consider and note the contents of this report.

1. **Executive Summary**

The crime recording compliance of Essex Police has continued to improve over the last quarter, albeit this report outlines that this is heavily reliant on quality assurance provided by the NCRS Support and Review Team (NSRT). The force’s new audit team are reporting pleasing results for the recording of ‘Other Crime’; however, the review of such records has identified that some hidden violent crimes can be found in this category of incidents. The audit team have also identified gaps in some crime recording processes of the Crime and Public Protection Command; they are assisting with monitoring improvements in this area.

Progress continues against the CDA improvement plan. In the last quarter, 461 staff have received specific face-to-face CDA training and a new eLearning package focussing on the recording of rape crimes, has been launched. The NSRT have had a formal extension agreed to continue to support officers and staff in the improvements required. CDA has also been added as a key item in the revised force performance framework.

As part of a regular review of the crime recording rules, a variety of changes were introduced in April 2019. Most notably, these include the introduction of a new crime outcome, that recognises crimes where no formal action is being taken but some form of diversionary, educational or intervention activity is undertaken.

Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & rescue Services (HMICFRS) has now formally announced they will be carrying out a Crime Data Integrity (CDI) inspection of Essex Police commencing on 29th April 2019.

**4.0 Introduction/Background**

This report will provide an overview of the current crime data accuracy (CDA) performance of Essex Police and an update on the key developments against the CDA improvement plan. The report will also provide an update on the recent changes to the crime recording rules, and lastly an overview of the HMICFRS CDI inspection, which will take place in Essex Police from 29th April 2019.

**5.0 Current Work and Performance**

**5.1 Performance**

**Crime Incident to Recorded Crime Rate** - As introduced in the last quarterly report, the force is now tracking its crime recording performance by analysing the percentage of crime incidents that result in the recording of a crime (chart 1). This method tracks those reports received by the Force Control Room (FCR) and entered as a crime incident onto the Command and Control system (STORM), which following the resolution of the incident, result in the formal recording of a crime.

Chart 1 – Crime Incident to Recorded Crime %

We expect to be able to provide a much clearer picture of the ideal rate following receipt of the results of the forthcoming HMICFRS audit. The average rate for the last quarter (Dec 18 – Feb 19) is 62.18%, compared with the previous 12 months average of 57.92% (Dec 17 – Nov 18). This shows the rate is improving and therefore strongly suggests crime recording compliance is also improving.

**5.2 Audit**

In the last quarter the new CDA audit team have been recruited, trained and inducted into the auditor roles. Already the team have completed their first formal audit and have taken on responsibility for providing daily scrutiny of the high-risk crimes of rape and modern slavery, and those reports received directly into Crime and Public Protection teams.

**‘Other crime’ audit** – The new team’s first audit reviewed incidents and crimes categorised as ‘other crime’ i.e. non-sexual and non-violence, such as theft, criminal damage, public order etc. The results showed a compliance rate of 92%[[1]](#footnote-1) for these types of crimes. The audit identified a relatively high number of unrecorded violent crimes hidden in the ‘other crime’ incidents. For example, an incident was reported relating to criminal damage in a shop; a crime of criminal damage was appropriately recorded with the shop owner as the victim. However, during the call from the shop member reporting the incident (not the owner), they mentioned that an item had been thrown at them; this should have resulted in an additional crime of assault with the staff member shown as the victim. When a full audit is undertaken, this issue would have the effect of reducing the violence compliance rate.

The key issues leading to errors are the same as those identified through previous audits, therefore the current learning and development plan to address these issues remains appropriate. Where appropriate, failed incidents are rectified and specific detail is shared with those involved to allow learning to take place.

**Rape and Modern Slavery** –The audit team monitor all reports of modern slavery/ human trafficking, as well as all reports of rape that do not result in the recording of a crime. Table 1 shows the number of unrecorded crimes found through this process in the last 6 months.

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| Unrecorded Crime Found Through Audit Sep 18 – Feb 19 |
| Month | Rape | Modern Slavery |
| Sep-18 | 4 | 8 |
| Oct-18 | 11 | 8 |
| Nov-18 | 4 | 7 |
| Dec-18 | 8 | 8 |
| Jan-19 | 1 | 13 |
| Feb-19 | 5 | 5 |

Table 1 – Unrecorded Rape/ Modern Slavery

All failed records found through this process are corrected. Work continues to improve the knowledge of officers and staff in these areas. A monthly report detailing the issues identified in these areas is now shared with command teams, which allows the appropriate level of scrutiny in the cases where crimes are missed.

**Reports received directly by Crime and Public Protection Command (C&PP)** –C&PP receive a large volume of direct reports of potential crimes from other agencies. For example, Children’s Social Care contact the Child Triage Team within the Public Protection Operations Centre, to discuss a report of crime they have received from a child’s school in order to agree a joint response to the incident. The C&PP teams have the ability to record this contact directly onto the Athena system, as either a crime or a non-crime record.

Since January 2019, the new audit team have conducted reviews of reports received by the relevant C&PP teams to check that the appropriate records (crime/ non-crime) were created. So far, issues have been found with the recording arrangements within the Child Triage Team, the Essex Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) team and the Adult Triage Team. Further teams are still subject to review.

The audit team are supporting C&PP Command with monitoring compliance whilst they put in place interventions to improve performance; positive improvements have already been identified e.g. the compliance in the Child Triage Team has increased from 50% in January 2019 to 80% in March 2019. The audit team will continue to support C&PP over the next quarter.

**Summary** - The purpose of the audit team is to assist the force in understanding gaps in crime recording in order to focus efforts to address them. This will ultimately improve the service to the public and ensure the force can be confident in the use of its crime data. The early results represent an encouraging development in this endeavour.

**5.3 Unreported Crime**

When considering Essex Police’s crime data accuracy, the force’s focus is on whether the data recorded following a victims report is accurate. Following presentation of the last quarterly report, the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner asked if Essex Police could establish whether victims of crime were reporting to the police.

Questions in the Public Perception Survey and User Experience Survey ask respondents whether they had been a victim of crime or anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the last two years and whether they reported the matter to the police. For the 12 months ending December 2018, there were 7725 respondents to the survey and 12% (983) self-reported as a victim of crime in the last two years. This is comparable with the victim response rate for the Crime Survey of England and Wales Survey. Of the 983 who self-reported as a victim of crime, 83% (817) state that they reported their crime/ASB to the police.

Chart 2 shows these levels have been consistent since the survey began.



Chart 2 – Public perception survey – crime reporting

Further work is taking place by the Head of Public Engagement & Customer Service working with the independent research company SMSR to analyse the insight from the results, in particular whether any conclusions can be drawn about the reporting rates for different crime types and for victims with different characteristics.

**5.3 Crime Data Accuracy Improvement Plan**

The CDA Improvement Plan was introduced in the last quarterly report. The following are the key updates from the last quarter.

**Learning & Development –** The following table shows the total completion rates of the main CDA courses so far. The last column shows the numbers of these staff who have been trained in the last quarter.



Table 2 – Overview of CDA Training Courses

In addition to the provision of the above courses, the training team are delivering short inputs as part of other existing courses and assisting with other ad-hoc CDA training when the need arises.

In the last quarter, the training team have finalised an eLearning package focussed on the recording of rape crimes that will be mandated for public protection staff. In addition the team have commenced work on another eLearning package that deals with the most common errors for crime recording which will be completed by all frontline staff.

At the April 2019 Crime Data Accuracy Board, it was agreed that the amount of CDA training received by probationers should be increased, this change will be introduced from the intake starting in May 2019. It was also agreed at the board that CDA training should form one of the first modules for LPT officers as part of the new training days resulting from the shift pattern change.

**NCRS Support and Review Team (NSRT**) – The last report explained the role of the NSRT in detail. In summary, the team exist to provide a frontline support and quality assurance (QA) function whilst the force improves CDA. The QA function focusses on crime incidents that have not resulted in the recording of a crime for the previous 24 hours. Table 3 shows the incidents reviewed and the compliance found for the last quarter.

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| **Month** | **Incidents Reviewed** | **Compliance Rate** |
| **Pass** | **Fail** | **Total** |
| Dec-18 | 3,191 | 855 | 4,046 | 78.87% |
| Jan-19 | 4,527 | 1,298 | 5,825 | 77.72% |
| Feb-19 | 4,155 | 1,151 | 5,306 | 78.31% |

Table 3 – Overview of incident reviews undertaken by NSRT

This shows that compliance in this category still requires improvement. Where compliance does not meet the standards required, the NSRT re-open the incident to ensure this is rectified and where necessary a crime is recorded. This suggests our overall improvement in crime recording compliance reported earlier in the report, is not being achieved through getting crime recording decisions right first time, but is heavily reliant on the quality assurance function provided by the NSRT.

In March 2019, chief officers agreed this temporary team should remain in place until compliance reaches acceptable levels.

**Performance Management** – CDA now features in the revised force performance framework. This will ensure that CDA performance is considered alongside other key performance areas. Through the CDA Board, work is underway to identify those staff who are contributing the greatest volume of errors and to ensure the appropriate support and intervention is in place to improve their performance.

The Performance Improvement Unit (PIU) are now represented at the CDA Board. At the May 2019 CDA Board, the DCC will consider if PIU will be required to support managers to improve performance in this area.

**5.4 Changes to the Crime Recording Rules**

The Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) are subject to regular review and amendments are made at least twice yearly. The following section outlines the noteworthy changes that came into effect on 1st April 2019.

**Introduction of Outcome 22** –Outcome 22, is introduced to cover the following circumstances: *“Diversionary, educational or intervention activity, resulting from the crime report, has been undertaken and it is not in the public interest to take any further action.”*

This outcome will therefore recognise crimes where no further formal action is taken against the offender, but where there is still some activity to prevent further offending. Examples of where this outcome is likely to be used:

* Community Resolution+ where a child is not given a formal sanction but referred to the Youth Offending Team to divert them away from crime (previously known as youth triage)
* No further formal action is taken against the offence however a Domestic Violence Protection Notice is issued
* No further formal action is taken against the offence however a Community Protection Warning/Notice issued

**Changes to the way Non-Crime Modern Slavery/ Human Trafficking is recorded**. –. The changes relate to cases of Modern Slavery/ Human Trafficking where a formal crime record is not required. Examples include where the offending in question has occurred in another force or outside of England and Wales. There will now be six different types of Modern Slavery non-crime records (N200/01 to N200/06). This will provide better oversight of modern slavery cases where crimes are not recorded and allow better analysis of the breakdown for non-crime records.

**A new classification of rape – ‘multiple undefined offenders’** – When recording crimes of rape, there is a specific rule which means one crime is required for each person who has penetrated the victim. If the victim makes an allegation that multiple offenders penetrated them, but they are unable to provide any details about the offenders, then the new classification of ‘multiple undefined offenders’ should be used. If the victim can provide any descriptive detail about any of the offenders then a separate rape crime should be recorded for each offender who can be differentiated. This new category should only be used for those cases where the victim is unable to define separate offenders.

**A new classification of ‘additional voyeurism offences’ (Upskirting)** – A new classification is introduced to capture the forthcoming introduction of the new offences relating to ‘upskirting’. These offences are due to come into force on 12th April 2019.

**5.5 HMICFRS Crime Data Integrity Inspection**

The last report gave an overview of the rolling CDI inspection programme in progress by HMICFRS.

On 25th March 2019, Essex Police was formally informed HMICFRS will be commencing the CDI inspection of the force on 29th April 2019. Table 4 gives an indication of the timeline of activity arising from the inspection.

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| **Activity** | **Key Dates** | **Status** |
| **Notification of the inspection** - the lead auditor attends the force and explains the inspection process and data requirements. | Monday 25 March 2019  | Completed |
| **Deadline for submission of incident data** - the force are asked to provide six months of data covering all crime incidents and directly recorded crimes, from which HMICFRS will select a random representative sample. The force is also required to provide 50 public protection records, 80 crime cancellation decisions, 40 modern slavery records and 20 N100 records. | Monday 1 April 2019  | Completed |
| **Deadline for submission of requested documents** - as part of a desktop assessment of the force's crime recording arrangements, HMICFRS request the following documents: crime recording policy, audit schedule, minutes of the last three CDA Boards, copies of recent audits and CDI training plan. | Friday 12 April 2019  | Completed |
| **Deadline for submission of self-assessment** - the force is asked to complete a self assessment against the progress made against the recommendations from the HMIC 2014 CDI inspection. | Friday 12 April 2019 | Completed |
| **Survey closing date** - the force is requested to send an anonymous online survey to staff involved in the crime recording process. | Monday 15 April 2019  | In Progress |
| **In-force audit commences** - In advance of the audit start date, the force is requested to provide access to Essex Police systems for the auditors and to ensure provision of a suitable workspace for the auditors. The force is also requested to download recordings of the telephone calls of the incidents that will be subject to audit. The audit is expected to last approximately two weeks. | Monday 29 April 2019 | In Progress |
| **In-force fieldwork** - HMICFRS will attend the force to conduct interviews with key members of staff, focus groups and reality testing in the operational environment.  | W/c 27 May 2019 | Not Started |
| **De-brief** - a full debrief will be offered to the force following the conclusion of the inspection. A report will be prepared and released at a later date. | Date to be agreed  | Not Started |

Table 4 – Key Activity HMICFRS CDI Inspection

HMICFRS have published the results of 32 force CDI inspections. 13 forces (41%) have been graded as ‘Inadequate’, 12 (38%) as ‘Requires Improvement’ and 7 (22%) as ‘Good’.

If a force is graded as ‘Inadequate’, then a re-inspection takes place to measure improvements. 7 re-inspections have taken place with 2 forces remaining as ‘Inadequate’, 1 re-graded as ‘Requires Improvement’, 2 as ‘Good’ and 2 as ‘Outstanding’.

**6.0 Implications (Issues)**

Covered in Section 5.

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

Accurate crime recording is necessary to:

* Ensure that victims of crime receive the service they expect and deserve;
* Prioritise effective investigation of crime in keeping with national standards and the College of Policing’s Code of Ethics;
* Inform the public of the scale, scope and risk of crime in their local communities;
* Allow PCCs, Forces and local partners to build intelligence on crime and criminal behaviour necessary for an efficient and effective response;
* Enable Government, PCCs, Forces and their partners to understand the extent of demands made on them and the associated costs of service delivery; and
* Inform the development of Government policy to reduce crime and to establish whether those policies are effective.

**6.2 Demand**

The accurate recording of crime (and incidents) is vital to allow the force to fully understand its demand.

**6.3 Risks/Mitigation**

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| URN | Score | Risk |
| 1621 | 30 - Red | A failure to identify and accurately record all reported crime without delay would lead to an inability to provide an effective service to victims and a loss in public confidence:- • It will impact on our victims as it delays their access to external support services. • It will impact on public confidence as it will lead to a loss of trust in our ability to listen. • We will be unable to understand the full demand for the service and resources required. |

The ‘CDA Improvement Plan’ is intended to mitigate against this risk.

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

None

**6.5 Health and Safety Implications**

 None

**7.0 Consultation/Engagement**

Crime Data Accuracy Board Members

**8.0 Actions for Improvement**

Covered in Section 5.

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

Covered in Section 5.

1. Confidence level 90% - Confidence interval +/- 4. Auditors are relatively inexperienced; accuracy of audits is expected to improve over time. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)