**Performance and Resources Scrutiny Programme 2019/20**

**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** |
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| **Author on behalf of Chief Officer:** | **Mr Adam Pfeiffer and Superintendent Jon Burgess** |
| **Date of Approval:** | **17th July 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 30th June 2019, was 3069.67 full time equivalent (fte), which is 148.33 fte under the establishment of 3218.00.

As at 30th June 2019, the police staff strength was 2009.05 fte, which is 193.70 fte under the establishment of 2202.75 fte.

The PCSO strength fte as at 30th June 2019 is 107.33, which is 0.70 fte under the establishment of 108.00 fte.

As at 30th June 2019, there were 515 specials in post, which is a reduction of 2, when compared to the last HR data as at 31st March 2019 (517). The total duty hour’s worked for April to June 2019 increased to 51,961 from 37,169 for April to June 2018.

Officer turnover for April to June 2019 (2.09%) is slightly higher when compared to the same period last year (April to June 2018 – 1.87%). Staff and PCSO turnover for the same period has reduced by 0.64% and 0.08%, but specials turnover has increased to 5.42% from 3.85%.

The representation of Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) officers has increased to a headcount of 88 as at 30th June 2019 (2.79%), which is an increase of 6 when compared to the last HR data as at 31st March 2019 (82).

There are currently 32 BAME candidates in the officer recruitment process which equates to 6.65% of all applications (as at 4th July 2019) and is marginally higher than the economically active population of 6.56%.

The number of BAME Staff has reduced by a headcount of 1 (to 79) and the number of PCSOs and Specials have both remained static.

The headcount of female officers has increased from 1037 (32.88%) as at 31st March 2019 to 1045 (33.08%) as at 30th June 2019. For PCSOs, the percentage of females has remained static and staff and specials have both seen increases.

Absence

For officers, in the period April to June 2019, the average days lost per person was 2.28, which is a marginal increase (0.11) when compared to April to June 2018 (2.17).

For staff, in the period April to June 2019, the average days lost per person was 2.36, which is also a marginal increase (0.22) when compared to the same period in 2018 (2.14).

For PCSOs, the period April to June 2019, the average days lost per person was 3.36, which is a reduction (0.76) when compared to April to June 2018 (4.12).

For officers and staff there have been an increases across all sickness absence terms (short, medium and long term) for April to June 2019 when compared to April to June 2018. For PCSOs there has been an increase in short term absence but reductions in medium and long term absence for the same period.

Psychological absence accounts for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost for officers and staff and is the second most common reason for absence for PCSOs, albeit, the percentage of payroll hours lost, for PCSOs, has seen a significant reduction from 52.10% to 35.05%. For PCSOs musculo/skeletal absence accounts for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost (40.50%), this reason is also the second most common reason for sickness absence for officers and staff. It should be noted however, that the proportion of payroll hours lost for musculo/skeletal reasons (for officers and staff) reduced for the period April to June 2019 when compared to the same period in 2018.

The number (headcount) of officers on recuperative, adjusted and restricted duties has remained fairly static at 405 as at 30th June 2019 when compared to the last HR data as at 31st March 2018 (412).

**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 30th June 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 30th June 2019**

The officer strength, as at 30th June 2019, was 3069.67 full time equivalent (fte), which is 148.33 fte under the establishment of 3218.00. This is a net increase of 5.73 fte since the last HR report as at 31st March 2019.

As at 30th June 2019, the police staff strength was 2009.05 fte, which is 193.70 fte under the establishment of 2202.75 fte. Further details on the staff vacancies are provided below.

The PCSO strength fte as at 30th June 2019 is 107.33, which is 0.70 fte under the establishment of 108.00 fte. This is a net reduction of 0.70 fte since the last HR report as at 31st March 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 50.

Officers

The Serious Crime Directorate (SCD) have 32.85 fte vacancies, which is a vacancy percentage of 15.75%.

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 Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking DC (7.00 fte), Major Investigation Team (6.27 fte), Dedicated Source Unit PC/DC (4.56 fte), Covert Surveillance DC (4.00 fte) and Serious & Organised Crime Unit Investigations (3.38 fte). Of these vacancies, 13 have been successfully recruited to and are awaiting release dates and 1 is due to start the week commencing 15th July 2019. Adverts are out to fill the remaining 9 vacancies.

Operational Policing Command have 31.78 fte vacancies, which is a vacancy percentage of 7.08%. A large proportion of these vacancies are Roads Policing Constables (12.43 fte). A recruitment process for these teams was completed earlier in the year with a pool of officers now selected. The release of these officers will be managed through the monthly Resourcing Deployment Meeting, with 4 officers already agreed to start on the 1st October 2019. The future releases will be assessed in line with operational resilience.

Crime & Public Protection Command have 24.56 fte vacancies, which equates to a vacancy percentage of 8.68%. The majority of these vacancies are within the Public Protection Investigation Hubs (21.01 fte). This will reduce significantly as 14 officers will be moving into the Investigation Hubs on the 8th July 2019 and a further 16 officers will be moved into these teams by 30th September 2019. It is noted that the number of officers that are moving to the command exceeds the number of vacancies however this will allow for officers who have been successful in other roles around the force to be released.

Staff

Since the production of the last HR Data pack, the strength fte of police staff has increased marginally from 2004.16 fte to 2009.05 fte, however the number of vacancies have increased from 165.43 fte to 193.70 fte. This is mainly because the establishment has increased by 33.16 fte, from 2169.59 fte to 2202.75 fte.

The commands with the top 3 vacancy levels are Strategic Change Performance (18.01%), Serious Crime (16.71%), which has reduced from 18.96% last quarter, and Crime & Public Protection (14.28%).

The 193.70 fte vacancies means the force currently has a vacancy rate of 8.79%, which is higher than the force wide average vacancy factor requirement of 5.50%. Note, this accounts for staff in posts that are not permanently on the establishment (non-established posts). At the current time a total of 180.48 fte posts are currently being advertised.

Given the vacancy percentage, a review has been undertaken of the staff vacancies to understand the current status and whether there are any trends or necessary action to be taken.

Please note that the total number of vacancies in this analysis equate to a higher number than the vacancies cited above.  This is because the strength figure cited earlier accounts for staff in non-established positions and/or departments that are over establishment, whereas this analysis solely reviews the vacant posts.

It should also be noted that there are a number of ‘joint-funded’ posts within the Kent & Essex Serious Crime Directorate, Kent & Essex Support Services and at a Chief Officer level, which may appear vacant but are in fact occupied by a Kent member of staff.

The analysis shows (from a snapshot of data taken on 21st June 2019) that the large majority of posts are actively being recruited to and are being held for various reasons.

As at 21st June 2019, the force was currently actively recruiting to 180.48 fte posts. The majority are within the below sections of the recruitment process.

* Due to be advertised /awaiting approval to advertise (15.07%)
* Currently being advertised (17.22%)
* Undergoing selection process (22.04%)
* Awaiting pre-employment checks (34.35%)

These areas have been further investigated with consultation with departments across Human Resources, Business Services and Corporate Vetting to understand any unnecessary delays to the process and to ensure adequate action to manage any areas identified.

**Approval to advertise**

A weekly vacancy panel, chaired by the Head of Resourcing and attended by Human Resources, Strategic Change and Corporate Finance approves the release of advertisements. The frequency of the meeting ensures the timely approval and release of adverts and the oversight of advert approval against financial and structural considerations. The panel also considers the requirement for either internal and/or external recruitment.

The majority of police staff recruitment is managed locally by recruiting managers, with the support from Operational Human Resources (HR) if required. Therefore the speed at which posts are advertised and subsequently filled, can vary significantly, depending on local factors. Anecdotal feedback suggests that the majority of delays at this point are due to the advert/job information taking time to finalise due to missing or incorrect information or terminology which is necessary to progress the process. This includes delays at the above Vacancy Panel due to queries relating to the funding of individual posts. To help combat this issue Human Resources have recently set up a monthly two-way feedback process, whereby a representative from the above Vacancy Panel, together with Corporate Recruitment and Business Services link with managers via their local HR Advisors to share best practice and learning to enhance efficiency and reduce delays in the process.

**Post currently being advertised**

With the exception of volume recruitment, staff positions are generally advertised for a period of two weeks to allow sufficient time for suitable individuals to see and apply for the role, yet ensure the process moves forward expediently. Where necessary, for particular roles advertisements are extended.

The agreed force position is to advertise positions to the internal workforce (unless in exceptional circumstances) may lead to further delays where further advertisement is necessary or departments cannot immediately release individuals to posts.  In addition further delays to recruitment may apply where roles are filled internally and a further vacancy arises within the force (3.20 % of posts within the analysis are waiting for a start date or for the individual to commence). The force position is however in place to ensure that the force continues to support the development of its police staff, and thus it is not proposed this is reviewed at this time.

**Undergoing Selection Process**

As a general rule set time parameters are in place to ensure the effective processing and customer experience of candidates for individual staff roles. The majority of these are managed locally and will be influenced by local factors and/or candidate requirements or availability. Where necessary managers who have a critical necessity to fill posts will ensure the expedient management of this part of the process in conjunction with Business Services. The aforementioned monthly feedback sessions will however enable learning between local Human Resources and stakeholders such as Business Services to ensure optimum efficiency without compromising the candidate experience.

**Awaiting Pre-employment checks**

The highest proportion of the vacant posts (being recruited to) fell within this section. Consultation with Business Services and Corporate Vetting concludes that the majority of these posts were either awaiting vetting or the candidates application was within the vetting process. Due to the priorities currently placed on re-vetting expired clearances, volume Police Officer and Specials recruitment, delays may be experienced in terms of the vetting of other posts, albeit critical posts will receive priority based on an assessment of each individual rationale.  Prioritisation of vetting activity is reviewed on a daily basis though the supervisory structure within the team.

Whilst 4 uplift posts have been agreed through chief officers and have been filled there still remains 4 vacancies within the team.

Volume recruitment intakes for roles such as DDO, PCSOs, FCR and IMU are scheduled through a recruitment plan which is evaluated and updated where necessary on a monthly basis, in line with projections as to future staffing strength against establishment. Candidates for this process may therefore be present within the recruitment process for a longer period, however this is offset by the enhanced efficiencies gained through volume training.

As identified earlier, there are also a number of posts (42.03 fte) which are on hold. Of the 42.03 posts, 10.00 are being held as they are substantive roles of individuals who are currently on internal secondments or covering more senior roles within their teams and there are 8.06 being held pending a review (either the department as a whole or the specific role). There are also 5.79 that have not been requested to advertise, however this will be for reasons such as recent adverts that have yielded no success or may be waiting for further vacancies to arise before advertising and a 6.56 that are on hold to fund another post.

**2. Specials Data: Headline Figures**

As at 30th June 2019, there were 515 specials in post, which is a reduction of 2, when compared to the last HR data as at 31st March 2019 (417).

Specials Attrition

The average monthly leavers has increased marginally from 9.17 for 2018/19 (April 2018 to March 2019) to 9.33 for the period April to June 2019.  The turnover percentage for April to June 2019 has also increased to 5.42% from 3.85% for April to June 2018.

The reason for the turnover increase, is due an increase in the number of specials joining the regulars (increased to 10 when compared to 7 last year) and 3 specials who transferred to another force, whereas last year (April to June 2018) no specials transferred to other forces. All 3 specials who transferred did so due to changes in personal circumstances namely moving house or employment.  Note, resignations remained the same at 15.

It should be noted that at the time of writing, 16 specials have left in July, of which 11 are joining as regulars to the new office intake on the 15th July 2019.

Specials Duty Hours

For April to June 2019 the total duty hours worked increased to 51,961 from 37,169 in the same period in 2018 and the average hours per officer increased from 28.57 a month to 33.67.

The total duty hours worked in June 2019 was 17,470, which is the equivalent of 1092 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 2019/20**

**Officers**

2019/20 Recruitment Plan

So far this financial year to date (April to June 2019), a total of 72.41 officers have joined the force (70.00 fte new recruits and 2.41 fte transferees / re-joiners).

The next intake is scheduled for the 15th July 2019 where it is projected 80.00 fte new recruits will join (70.00 fte via the standard police constable recruitment route and 10.00 fte via the Police Now programme).

In addition to this, a further 11.00 fte officers are also transferring in / re-joining the force in July 2019. This would take the total recruitment for July to 91.00 fte and the total recruitment for the year to 163.41 fte. The recruitment plan projects a total of 156.00 fte to join by July 2019. As such, the force is slightly ahead of this ambition by a total of 7.41 officers.

To ensure continued oversight, projected recruitment numbers are reviewed regularly 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**

So far this financial year to date (April to June 2019), a total of 28 Specials have joined the force, although this is behind the original recruitment projection it is still comparable to the number of joiners for the same period last year (27). This is primarily due to the force receiving a lower number of applications per week than would be required (albeit this is a similar number to the same period last year). Internal departments such as Vetting and Health Services continue to manage the competing priorities of regular Police officer recruitment and Specials recruitment in terms of processing high numbers of candidates.

A new marketing plan to develop the #My Other life campaign launched in July 2019 to increase the number of applications and further resources to undertake medical assessments have also been provided by Health Services. As is detailed above in section 2 the Vetting Department have received 4 new posts as agreed through Chief Officer and are attempting to recruit to these posts at this time. The ability for the force to achieve the desired number of Specials by March 2020 will require the campaign, together with other planned outreach activities, to be successful in terms of raising the number of applications. It should be noted that the recruitment and training plan has sufficient capacity to support the achievement of the aspirational resourcing level.

There are currently 47 candidates currently within the recruitment process for the August intake and a further 46 in process for later intakes. This position will continue to be monitored through the Specials Review Board chaired at Chief Officer level to ensure effective oversight of the ambition.

**4. Turnover**

The last HR data showed that the average monthly officer leavers for 2018/19 was 20 a month, however the number of leavers for the period April to June 2019 has increased to an average of 22 a month. Although this has increased, the rate of 22 a month is line with the leaver profile that was projected for the 2019/20 financial year.

When detailed as a turnover percentage (proportion of leavers against average headcount), the turnover for April to June 19 was 2.09% which is an increase when compared to April to June 2018 (1.87%).

It should be noted that there has been an increase in the number of resignations for April to June 2019 when compared to the same period in 2018, from 11 to 24. However, there has been a reduction in the number of officers transferring to other forces, from 17 to 12, which is a 29.41% reduction.

Early exit analysis shows that that, for resignations, a wide range of reasons for leaving were provided (8 different reasons in total), meaning that there is not a specific trend as to why officers are resigning. Of the 24 a total of 6 (25.00%) cited changes in personal circumstances and 4 (16.67%) cited financial reasons as their reason for leaving. Of the 12 transfers to other forces, 4 (33.33%) cited financial reasons and 3 (25.00%) cited aspirational /advancement reasons.

For staff, the average monthly leavers for April to June 2019 was 16, which is lower than the same period last year (20). From a turnover perspective this has reduced from 2.81% to 2.17%, a reduction of 0.64 percentage points.

For PCSOs, there was only 1 leaver for the period April to June 2019, which is a turnover percentage of 0.86%. This is the same headcount number when compared to the same period last year (April to June 2018) but a marginal reduction in turnover (0.94%).

The turnover for specials has increased from 3.85% for April to June 2018 to 5.42% for April to June 2019.

**5. Gender & BAME Representation as at 30th June 2019**

The representation of Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) officers has increased to a headcount of 88 as at 30th June 2019, which is an increase of 6 when compared to the last HR data as at 31st March 2019 (82). This is a percentage point increase of 0.19 from 2.60% to 2.79%. This is 3.77% under the BAME economically active population of 6.56%[[1]](#footnote-1).

For the period April to June 2019, a total of 70 (headcount) new recruits joined, of which 8 were BAME. This equates to 11.43% of all new recruits. Of the 3 officers who joined as a transfer in / re-joiner, none were BAME. Combined, of the total 73 joiners, 8 were BAME, which equates to 10.96%.

There are currently 32 BAME candidates in the officer recruitment process which equates to 6.65% of all applications (as at 4th July 2019).

For staff, the BAME headcount has reduced from 80 (3.62%) as at 31st March 2019 to 79 as at 30th June 2019 (3.57%). For PCSOs, the headcount has remained static at 3, which is 2.59% of the total PCSO workforce.

The number of BAME specials has remained static at 36 (6.99%) as at 30th June 2019 when compared to the last HR data as at 31st March 2019 (36 / 6.95%).

The headcount of female officers has increased from 1037 (32.88%) as at 31st March 2019 to 1045 (33.08%) as at 30th June 2019.

For the period April to June 2019, a total of 70 (headcount) new recruits joined, of which 23 were female. This equates to 32.86% of all new recruits. Of the 3 officers who joined as a transfer in / re-joiner, all were female. Combined, of the total 73 joiners, 26 were female, which equates to 35.62%.

For staff and specials, the percentage of females has increased slightly when compared to 31st March 2019. For PCSOs the headcount of females has remained static at 60 as at 30th June 2019.

**6. Absence and Adjusted / Recuperative**

Summary Numbers

For officers, in the period April to June 2019/20, the average days lost per person was 2.28, which is a slight increase (0.11) when compared to the same period in 2018/19 (2.17). However, this is still lower than the average days lost per person for April to June in 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18.

For staff, for April to June 2019/20, the average days lost per person was 2.36, which is a marginal increase (0.22) when compared to April to June 2018/19 (2.14).

For PCSOs, in the period April to June 2019/20, the average days lost per person was 3.36, which is a reduction (0.76) when compared to April to June 2018/19 (4.12). Only 1 month in the last 3 months has been higher than the same months last year.

Average hours lost by month 2018/19 & 2019/20 (April 2019 to June 2019)

For officers, the graph on the strategic dashboard shows that for April and May 2019 absence was higher than the same months last year but for June it is an improved position (June 19 average hours lost per person, lower than June 2018).

For staff, sickness absence is higher for all three months in the period April to June 2019, when compared to April to June 2018, albeit May 19 is only 0.03 average hours per person higher than May 2018.

For PCSOs, the average hours lost per person was higher in April 19 than April 18 but May and June 19 were lower when compared to 2018.

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 50.

Officers

For officers, the Commands with the highest average days lost per person are Contact Management (5.40), Criminal Justice Command (3.25) and CT Division (3.00).

For Contact Management, it should be noted that although they have the highest average days lost per person, their absence is lower for the period April to June 2019 when compared to April to June 2018.

The reasons for absence accounting for the highest percentage of payroll hours lost are psychological and musculo/skeletal and for Criminal Justice psychological reasons account for the most payroll hours lost, followed by nervous system. For CT Division musculo/skeletal absence accounts for the most payroll hours lost with psychological reasons the second most common reason.

Although there are other Commands with high average days lost per person; Chief Officer & Force Command with 5.86 average days lost per person and Local Policing Support Unit with 5.41, these have smaller average officer headcounts within the Commands and, therefore, any absence experienced has a greater impact on overall rates.

There are six Commands showing an improvement in average days lost per person for April to June 2019, when compared to April to June 2018 with the greatest reductions being in Operational Policing Command (2.08 to 1.58), Local Policing Area (LPA) North (3.17 to 2.17) and Contact Management (5.73 to 5.40).

Staff

For staff, the Commands with the highest average days lost per person, for the period April to June 2019, are Contact Management (3.39), Operational Policing Command (2.44) and Crime and Public Protection (2.42).

Contact Management staff absence has increased by 0.22 average days lost per person for April to June 2019 compared to April to June 2018, which is predominantly due to increases in medium and short term absence.

There have been increases in a number of absence reasons including absences for digestive reasons, respiratory absence, infectious disease, miscellaneous reasons, genito urinary absence, musculo/skeletal and nervous system.

However it should be noted that contact management has seen a reduction in long term absence and a significant reduction in absence for psychological reasons, where the percentage of payroll hours lost has reduced from 43.16% to 30.98%, albeit this remains the absence reason accounting for the largest proportion of payroll hours lost.

There have also been reductions in the absence reasons of cardiac/circulatory, ear/eye and headache/migraine

Operational Policing Command staff absence has seen an increase of 0.71 average days lost per person for April to June 2019 when compared to the same period in 2018, which is predominantly due to increases in all absence terms.

In relation to reasons for absence there have been increases in absence for digestive reasons, cardiac/circulatory absence, nervous system and minor increases in absence for genito urinary and headache/migraine reasons. Musculo/skeletal absence has seen a reduction in the percentage of payroll hours lost from 19.81% for April to June 2018 to 9.19% for April to June 2019, a percentage point reduction of 10.61%.

For the period April to June 2019 Crime and Public Protection has average days lost per person of 2.42, which is an increase of 0.12 when compared to the same period last year (2.30 average days lost per person).

This is mainly due to an increase in medium term absence for musculo/skeletal reasons. Absence for digestive reasons and cardiac/circulatory absence have also seen increases along with minor increases for headache/migraine and psychological reasons. A number of absence reasons have seen reductions in the percentage pf payroll hours lost including nervous system, ear/eye, respiratory and genito urinary related absence.

As with officers, there are other Commands with high average days lost per person for staff, including LPA North at 8.10 and LPA South at 5.38, 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 five Commands that have achieved an improved position in average days lost per person for April to June 2019, when compared to April to June 2019. The most noticeable reduction, which has the greatest impact on the overall figures (due to the higher headcount) is Strategic Change Performance (2.31 to 1.02).

PCSOs

For PCSOs, only LPA West is showing a reduction in average days lost per person to 2.51 for April to June 2019 when compared to 6.59 for the same period in 2018.

As with officers and staff the two most common reasons for absence, in this Command, for PCSOs are psychological and musculo/skeletal related absence. However, unlike the other employee groups, musculo/skeletal has the highest percentage of payroll hours lost for PCSOs with psychological reasons being the second most common reason for absence.

LPA North has seen an increase of 0.32 average days lost per person from 3.02 for April to June 2018 to 3.34 for the same period in 2019 and LPA South has seen an increase of 0.52 average days lost per person for the same periods.

Absence Term

For officers, there have been marginal increases in average days lost per person in all absence terms (short, medium and long term) for April to June 2019 when compared to April to June 2018.

For staff, there have also been slight increases in all absence terms in for the same periods but PCSOs have only seen an increase in short term absence. For medium and long term absence PCSOs have seen a reduction of 0.11 and 0.81 average days lost per person respectively.

Absence Reasons

In relation to the percentage of payroll hours lost by general sickness reason, psychological absence is the highest for officers and staff and the second highest for PCSOs.

For officers, the percentage of payroll hours lost to psychological absence has increased from 39.26% for April to June 2018 to 41.91% for April to June 2019, whereas staff has increased from 36.47% to 36.89%. For PCSOs, psychological absence has reduced significantly, from 52.10% for April to June 2018 to 16.96% for April to June 2019.

The percentage of payroll hours lost to musculo/skeletal is the second most common reason for absence for officers and staff but has reduced for both employee groups April to June 2019 when compared to April to June 2019. Officer absence for musculo/skeletal reasons has reduced from 26.38% for April to June in 2018 to 23.21% for the same period in 2019 and staff sickness absence has reduced from 22.88% to 16.90% for the same periods. For PCSOs musculo/skeletal absence accounts for the highest percentage of payroll hours lost and has increased from 19.80% for April to June 2018 to 40.50% for April to June 2019, a percentage point increase of 20.70%.

Respiratory related absences are showing an increase for officers for April to June 2019 (7.64%) when compared to April to June 2018 (6.48%).

For staff, digestive absence is showing an increase of 2.62% of payroll hours lost for April to June 2019, when compared to April to June 2018.

Genito urinary related absences are showing an increase of 9.91% of payroll hours lost for PCSOs for April to June 2019 when compared to the same period in 2018.

**Performance Improvement Unit (PIU)**

There are six areas within Commands that have been identified as being outliers for high absence, each with higher headcounts and over 2.50 average days lost per person:

1. Contact Management

2. North LPA Investigations

3. North LPT (Clacton)

4. CT (SB Ports),

5. West (Grays & Brentwood LPT)

6. Roads Policing

The PIU are supporting each of the six departments at both Command and supervisor levels. An action plan has been drafted by the Head of Essex PIU in conjunction with HR Services, to be owned by the various Command SLTs and delivered in conjunction with HRAs and PIU advisors.

The governance of the plan will be achieved through a weekly oversight meeting chaired by the Director of HR. The Head of PIU, Command Leads and HR Departments including Health Services will provide updates around focussed activity, perceived barriers and progress made.

The detail in relation to activity will include:

* 1:1 PIU meetings with Command SLTs following scrutiny / observations around identified patterns, individuals and Positive Attendance Management (PAM) compliance.
* A review of process adherence by the six outlying commands, including a review of monthly Absence Management Meetings (AMGs).
* A review of each of the long term absence cases within the six identified areas.
* Further training is to be delivered and understood in relation to:
  + Compliance and required audit under PAM processes (including overdue return to work interviews and quality of staff contact).
  + Steps necessary under the Equality Act 2010 and Regulations in relation to maximising the recuperative period prior to adjusted duties being triggered.

The plan was launched at the overarching Attendance & Wellbeing Board on 4th July 2019 by the Director of HR and will continue until absence within the identified command areas has significantly improved.

Operational HR

The existing approach to managing attendance is supported and underpinned by an appropriate policy and series of procedures and practices. It is the responsibility of all supervisors, managers and senior leaders to be accountable for supporting staff and officers who are unable to attend work through ill health.

In turn advice and guidance is provided through Operational HR, Health & Wellbeing Services and Business Services. Compliance with protocols is essential to ensure that members of staff are supported and continue to be engaged with the organisation whilst away from the work environment it also allows for effective communication to discuss and explore options for returning to work at the most appropriate time.

Compliance is tracked through the monthly Attendance Management Groups held within Commands and Departments. The chair of the meeting will provide scrutiny in relation to the submission of Fit Notes, level of contact made by supervisor and appropriate referrals to Occupational Health. It is essential that Command Teams continue to drive scrutiny and compliance through these meetings. This will be monitored by the quarterly Attendance and Wellbeing Board chaired by the Director of HR.

The Attendance Support Meeting (ASM) is another local management tool that allows the facilitation of conversations in relation to return to work options. This also provides an audit of all considerations, options and support provided to an individual. These are held by the first line supervisor as appropriate depending on indicators reached on the policy. Utilisation of a consistent ASM will support the effective management of cases. Part of the ‘Day of Action’ focus is to drive timely and consistent utilisation of these meetings by supervisors.

The Operational HR Team introduced ‘Day of Action’ in early 2018. This was in recognition that compliance is not always achieved when supervisors and managers are diverted to other tasks or are inexperienced in relation to the requirements under our attendance practices. The Day of Action will review all police staff absence cases and provide reminders, guidance and coaching to managers. As part of the guidance provided in relation to cases, those cases that are complex, multi-faceted or difficult to manage will be raised with the relevant Command Team HR Partner for further support.

Operational HR Interventions and Support

During the first quarter of the 2019/20 financial year the Operational HR Team have undertaken the following proactive work to support attendance management interventions:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| HRA/HRP Interventions | Outcomes |
| Medical Redeployment or Medical Retirement processes | One case included case conference with the FMA, individuals meetings with the member of staff and management and HR Advice on the medical redeployment process. Member of staff in notice period and the HR Adviser is actively supporting to assess new posts.  The other had individual meetings with the member of staff to discuss the ill health retirement process and pension tier. They have now been medically retired. |
| Central Attendance Management Group meetings | HR Partner attendance at the central AMG with the Head of Health Services for a high level review on long term cases and pay appeals. |
| Reasonable Adjustments | Interventions in cases to assess requirement for reasonable adjustments or pursued adjustments to allow return to work. One case was long term and reasonable adjustment and medical redeployment facilitated a return to work. |
| Formal Training and Coaching Sessions for supervisors | These coaching sessions have been delivered in Contact Management and Criminal Justice |
| Formal Stages under the capability process | Over a 3 month period 13 formal stages held under the capability procedure at stages 1, 2 and 3 including 2 probationer hearings |
| Case Conferences | Case Conferences with Health Services and HR Advisers to review and progress cases; these have included specific management advice to facilitate return to work initiatives. This is an area that has been developed in the past three months with 17 case conferences being arranged. |
| Attendance at local Attendance Management Group Meetings | Command Team checks in relation to compliance (Fit Notes, Contacts, OH referrals and Attendance Support meeting). AMGs will also focus on difficult cases. In total 38 AMGs have been attended. |

The table above details the formalised meetings and interventions undertaken by the Operational HR team. On a daily basis the entire team will undertake reviews, advice and guidance on absence cases.

Adjusted / Recuperative

The number (headcount) of officers on recuperative, adjusted and restricted duties has reduced slightly to 405 as at 30th June 2019 when compared to the last HR data as 31st March 2019 (412).

When comparing officers on recuperative, adjusted and restricted duties for 30th June 2019, Constables have reduced by 6, Sergeants have reduced by 1, Inspectors have increased by 1, Chief Inspectors have reduced by 2 and Superintendents have increased by 1.

The number of staff on recuperative or restricted duties has reduced to 80 as at 30th June 2019 compared to 92 as at 31st March 2019 and PCSOs have only increased by 1 from 14 to 15.

**6.0 Implications (Issues)**

Not applicable

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

Essex Police have continued to recruit officers in line with the recruitment plan for 2019/20 with early projections showing that total recruitment up to July would exceed the plan by 7.41 fte.

The representation of BAME officers has continued to increase with 8 BAME officers recently joining. As a result, the total number of BAME officers has increased to a total of 88, which equates to 2.79%, an increase from 2.60% as reported on 31st March 2019.

The Special Constabulary headcount has remained static but remains at its highest level since April 2014 and it is projected to increase further throughout 2019/20.

The Special Constabulary provided 51,961 hours of policing for the period April to June 2019 when compared to the same period last year (37,169).

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.

**6.2 Demand**

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

**8.0 Actions for Improvement**

A continued recruitment campaign to bring in transferees from external forces

**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.

**Expected Outcome:** based on projections it is expected that the headcount of Specials will continue to increase throughout the financial year, however, due to lower levels of recruitment and applications in quarter 1 and an increase in the number of Specials leaving to join the regular officers, it may fall short of the 600. Note, this is being managed by Mr Prophet via the Specials Board and a more comprehensive update will be provided in the next quarterly specials update paper.

1. Continue to increase BAME officer representation throughout 2019/20.

**Expected Outcome:** following the increase seen in quarter 1 of 2019/20 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

The operational HR team have developed a 20 point plan to support the drive to encourage police staff attendance.

This plan will document and track trends and statistics by Command or Department and will ensure the basics are being achieved. Those high volume commands, as identified earlier in the paper, will have a bespoke review based on the trend and analysis data.

The plan will also see the maximisation of working relationships between Health & Wellbeing Services and HR through the introduction of ‘deep dive meetings’. These will be bi-monthly meetings to focus on complex cases to ensure appropriate intervention is in place; the terms of reference for these meetings is detailed in Appendix B. The HR Advisers will also work closely with AMG chairs to scrutinise further any causal links to absence; such as discipline cases, business cases for change or vacancy factors and turnover rates. Local Command Teams can also consider further interventions through welfare and support calls to staff and introducing a network of local peer support SPOCs.

Longer term initiatives will include analysis of the relevant sections of the staff survey results and also contacting other forces who demonstrate good attendance through the iQuanta data to identify areas of best practice.

Health Services

The Feel Well Live Well sessions continue with 1235 individuals engaging in either the full programme, refresher or taster sessions thus promoting organisational health and wellbeing, with 53 of these delegates having attended the Feel Well Live Well for Leaders programme which continues to gain momentum.

Training has recently taken place for the counselling team in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy techniques in order that the internal team will also be able to utilise these techniques to support colleagues. 43 individuals have received psychological screening questionnaires in this financial year to date, in order to support those in specialist roles, for example POLIT.

Work is almost complete on the Oscar Kilo Blue Light Wellbeing Framework, which is a self-assessment tool that sets a new standard for the emergency services. Whilst this will not form part of future HMICFRS assessments, the assessors will be reviewing work towards completion of the elements contained within the framework.

Health Services presented a case study on the support programmes at a Police Wellbeing Conference in London in April, where the benefits of the pro-active support programmes currently offered by Essex Police were explored. This resulted in some very positive feedback and enquiries from other forces.

The flu vaccination programme was considered at the recent Attendance and Wellbeing Board.  On considering the positive impact on the reduction in the amount of absences recorded as Influenza Absence when compared with the year before, the benefits of staff engagement and the individual’s feeling the organisation is committed to ensuring their overall wellbeing the decision was taken by the board to continue with the programme this year.

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

Not applicable

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