

Performance and Resources Scrutiny Programme 2019

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

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1.0 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.

This quarter's report also provides an update regarding the Diversity and Inclusion Board.

2.0 Recommendations

Not applicable

3.0 Executive Summary

The officer strength, as at 30th September 2019 was 3181.25 full time equivalent (fte), which is 36.75 fte under the establishment of 3218.00. This is a net increase of 111.58 fte since the last HR report as at 30th June 2019.

The police staff strength as at 30th September 2019 was 2005.27 fte, which is 213.80 fte under the establishment of 2219.07.

The PCSO strength fte as at 30th September 2019 was 111.15 fte, which is 2.15 fte over the establishment of 109.00.

As at 30th September 2019, there were 519 specials in post which is an increase of 4 when compared to the last HR data provided as at 30th June 2019.

The total duty hour's worked for April to September 2019 increased to 100,611 compared to 78,203 for April to September 2018.

National figures show that Essex still have the second largest Specials Constabulary in England and Wales and are the fastest growing.

Officer and staff turnover has reduced for the period April to September 2019 when compared to the same period last year. Officer turnover has reduced from 4.54% to 4.08% and staff turnover has reduced from 5.58% to 4.58%. Turnover for PCSOs and specials however has increased from 2.86% to 3.38% and 10.85% to 16.59% respectively.

The representation of Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) officers has increased to a headcount of 98 as at 30th September 2019 (3.00%), which is an increase of 10 when compared to the last HR data as at 30th June 2019 (88 / 2.79%).

As at 4th October 2019, there were 39 BAME candidates in the officer recruitment process which equates to 7.11% of all applications. This proportion is marginally higher than proportion of BAME individuals within the economically active population of the county 6.56%.

The number of BAME Staff has reduced by a headcount of 1 (to 78) and the number of PCSOs and Specials have both remained static.

The headcount of female officers has increased from 1045 (33.08% of the total officer headcount) as at 30th June 2019 to 1089 (33.33%). For staff, the proportion of females has remained static (65.13%) whilst PCSOs and Specials have increased from 51.72% to 55.00% and 30.29% to 31.60% respectively.

Absence

For Officers, in the period April to September 2019/20, the average days lost per person was 4.29 which is a reduction of 0.32 average days lost per person when compared to the same period in 2018/19 (4.61). This is also the lowest level of absence for this period (April to September) over the last 5 years.

For staff, the average days lost per person has increased to 4.74 for the period April to September 2019 when compared to the same period last year (4.22).

For PCSOs, in the period April to September 2019/20, the average days lost per person was 5.60 which is a reduction of 1.38 average days lost per person when compared to the same period in 2018/19 (6.98). This is also the lowest level of absence for this period over the last 3 years.

For officers, the average days lost per person for short and medium term has remained static when compared to last year but there has been a significant reduction in long term absence. For staff, medium term absence has marginally reduced but short term and long term absence has increase. For PCSOs, there has been an increase in short and medium term absence but a significant reduction in long term absence.

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 45.88% to 19.46%. For PCSOs musculo/skeletal absence accounts for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost and this reason is also the second most common reason for sickness absence for officers and staff. The number (headcount) of officers on recuperative, adjusted and restricted duties has increased marginally from 405 as at 30th June 2019 to 407 as at 30th September 2019.

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 September 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 September 2019

The officer strength, as at 30th September 2019 was 3181.25 fte, which is 36.75 fte under the establishment of 3218.00. This is a net increase of 111.58 fte since the last HR report as at 30th June 2019.

The police staff strength as at 30th September 2019 was 2005.27 fte, which is 213.80 fte under the establishment of 2219.07. This is a decrease of 3.78 fte since the last HR report as at 30th June 2019 however due to an increase in establishment this has resulted in the number of vacancies increasing by 20.10 fte (from 193.70 fte to 213.80 fte).

The PCSO strength as at 30th September 2019 was 111.15 fte, which is 2.15 fte over the establishment of 109.00. This is a net increase of 3.82 fte since the last HR report as at 30th June 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 a vacancy rate of 14.75% (31.05 fte vacancies) which is a marginal reduction of 1.00 percentage point when compared to the last HR data as at 30th June 2019 which highlighted a vacancy rate of 15.75% (32.85 fte vacancies).

There are vacancies within a number of roles within SCD. The majority of vacancies are in the roles of Major Investigation Team DC (5.26 fte) albeit this has reduced from 6.27 fte as reported last quarter and Covert Surveillance DC (4.00 fte) which has remained the same. There are 3.18 fte Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking DC vacancies, however this has reduced when compared to the last quarter when there were 7.00 fte vacancies. Whilst SCD have a number of vacancies, 12 officers have been successful for roles within the department, of which 4 have had moves agreed at the monthly Resourcing Deployment Meeting and are likely to start by the end of the calendar year and the remaining 8 are awaiting a release date.

Operational Policing Command have 32.38 fte vacancies (7.20%) which is marginally higher than the position reported as at 30th June 2019 (7.08%). As reported last quarter a large proportion of vacancies (12.00 fte) are in the role of Roads Policing Constable. At the time of writing, 4.00 fte officers started in the role on 1st October 2019 and a further 4 have had release dates agreed at the monthly Resourcing Deployment meeting to start on the 9th December 2019. A further 4 are still on hold and release dates will be assessed in line with operational resilience.

There are also vacancies within Firearms (both the Firearms Department and Stanstead). A Firearms course for 12 officers started on the 27th August, which, if all officers are successful, will significantly reduce the vacancies. In addition, there is also an officer who was posted on the 1st October 2019 and there are 3 transferee officers who have expressed an interest in Firearms roles. However, it should be noted that they are at an early stage of the transferee process and it is not guaranteed they will join.

Support Services have a vacancy rate of 6.23%, which is an increase compared to last quarter (1.37%). The majority of vacancies are in the role of Operational Investigative Skills Trainer PC/DC roles and Professional Development Officer PC roles. At the time of writing, 3 officers started on the 1st October 2019, 1 officer is due to start on 11th November 2019 and 2 other officers have been successful and are due to be discussed at the October 2019 Resourcing Deployment meeting.

It should be noted that last quarter it was reported that Crime & Public Protection Command had one of the highest vacancy rates with 8.68%. This has reduced to 4.12% as at 30th September 2019 following a number of officers who transferred to the Public Protection Investigation hubs.

Staff

Due to an increase in establishment and a marginal reduction in actual strength fte, the number of vacancies have increased from 193.70 fte to 213.80 fte.

The command with the highest vacancy level is Strategic Change Performance with 18.59% which is a marginal increase when compared to the last HR report (18.01%). This equates to 19.65 fte vacancies, of which 3.00 are being held and the remainder are at various stages of the recruitment process.

Whilst SCD still have the second highest vacancy level with 16.02% this has reduced when compared to data as at 30th June 2019 (16.71%). Last quarters data showed that Crime & Public Protection Command had the third highest vacancy level as at 30th June 2019 with 14.28% however that has reduced to 10.49%. Criminal Justice Command now have the third highest vacancy level with 12.73% which is an increase when compared to data as at 30th June 2019 (9.88%).

The number of vacancies of 213.80 fte, when measured as strength fte against establishment, means the force currently has a vacancy rate of 9.63%, 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).

In order to provide an indicative example of recruitment activity relating to staff vacancies a sample of the roles that were live on the Success Factors e-Recruitment system on the 4th September 2019 was taken. On this date there were 158 different roles live on the Success Factors e-Recruitment system. Of the 158 roles, the majority (43.98%) were currently in the selection phase i.e. shortlisting, eligibility and interview. Of the remainder, 10.19% are roles that have recently been applied for, 27.78% are currently at the pre-employment stage (vetting, references and medical where relevant) and 18.06% relate to candidates who have been provided a final offer and due to start.

This is lower than the actual number of vacancies reported above as not all vacancies will be on the system at the same time. For example, some adverts may have recently closed and had no applicants and are waiting to be re-advertised, or a role is due to be advertised but is awaiting approval. Other examples may include posts that are being held. These will be for reasons such as being held for substantive post holders who have secured temporary promotions or secondments, roles that have not been requested to go to advert as they are pending a review or roles that are on hold to fund another post. There are also a number of roles that are not actively being recruited to as the vacancy may be due to a post not being fully occupied due to the occupant being part time.

The reporting process is being further developed to allow for more in depth analysis around each stage of the recruitment process (including pre-application) which will include average length of time at each stage and direction of travel. As a result, this will result in areas of concern being identified and allow for necessary interventions

to take place. A more in depth analysis will therefore be presented within the next paper.

2. Specials Data: Headline Figures

As at 30th September 2019, there were 519 specials in post which is a marginal increase of 4 when compared to the last HR data as at 30th June 2019.

National figures show that Essex still have the second largest Specials Constabulary in England and Wales and are the fastest growing.

Specials Attrition

The average monthly leavers has increased from 9.17 for 2018/19 (April 2018 to March 2019) to 14.33 for the period April to September 2019. The turnover percentage for the period April to September 2019 is 16.59% which is 5.74 percentage points higher than the same period in 2018/19 (10.85%).

The reason for the turnover increase is predominately due to a significant increase in the number of specials leaving to join the regulars. So far this financial year to date (April to September 2019), a total of 33 officers (38.37%) left to join the regulars compared to just 13 (23.63%) for the same period in 2018/19. Note, whilst not as significant as those leaving to join the regulars, the number of resignations has increased to 48 when compared to 39 for the same periods.

Specials Duty Hours

For April to September 2019 the total duty hours worked increased to 100,611 from 78,203 in the same period in 2018 and the average hours per officer increased from 29.22 a month to 32.63.

The total duty hours worked for the period April to September 2019 of 100,611 which is an average of 16,769 a month. This is the equivalent of, on average, 1048 specials working 16 hours a month (an increase when compared to the same period last year – 815).

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 September 2019), a total of 242.72 have joined the force (225.00 fte new recruits, 15.93 fte transferees and 1.81 fte re-joiners). Note of the 225.00 fte new recruits, 215.00 joined via the standard police constable recruitment route and 10 via the Police Now programme.

The next intake is scheduled for the 2nd December 2019 where it is expected up to 80 officers will join.

Investigate first launched on 30th September 2019. At time of writing the force has seen 78 registrations of interest for the Meet the Detective event taking place on the 2nd October 2019 and a further event is planned for the 10th October 2019. There are 20 places on the Investigate First programme that will feature as part of the Constable intake in March 2020 (a further intake of 20 will be scheduled for September 2020).

At the time of writing, the Home Office had recently announced Essex Police's share of the 6000 additional officers to be recruited nationally by 31st March 2021 (135). In anticipation of a potential uplift, the recruitment plan has been adapted to allow for up to 100 new recruits in both the February 20 and March 20 intakes. This will provide the resilience to not only achieve the original establishment of 3218 but provide enough officers to achieve the uplifted establishment. Planning for the year 2020/21 is currently underway in light of the announcement of this information.

Successful achievement of these recruitment ambitions will be dependent on a number of factors, most notably, the pipeline of candidates into the recruitment process and their success through the assessment and clearance process.

The average weekly officer applications for this calendar year is 42. The recent average weekly applications for week commencing 26/08/19 to 22/09/19 was 56. September 2019 saw 268 applications (against an average of 148 a month over the period Aug 17 - Aug 19) which is the second highest number of applications over the last 26 months.

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 September 2019), a total of 90 specials joined the force, which is lower than the same period last year (109).

This is primarily due to the force receiving a lower number of applications per week than would be required. A new marketing plan to develop the #My Other life campaign launched in July 2019. Between June 2019 and August 2019, there were 200 applications which is a reduction of 23% when compared to the previous quarter (246) but it is an increase of 27% when compared to the same period last year. For September 19 there were 78 applications which is an increase of 27 when compared to September 18 (51).

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. Specific action has been set to enhance marketing activity in conjunction with a review of the candidate pipeline to

more closely understand the drop out points to inform both marketing and process activities.

A regular meeting between the Head of Special Constabulary, the Head of Resourcing and the Head of Corporate Communications to oversee marketing and recruitment activity.

Subject to sufficient application numbers as detailed, if the remaining 9 courses are filled to capacity it is projected up to 191 specials will join this financial year which could result in an end of year headcount of just over 600. However, it should be noted that there are a significant number of specials that are either in process or have expressed an interest to join the regulars, which could result in a higher level of turnover, which would in turn impact on the end of year headcount.

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 number of officer leavers for the period April to September 2019 has increased to an average of 22 a month when compared to the average of 20 in 2018/19. However, given the increase in the overall officer headcount this in line with the leaver profile that was projected for 2019/20.

Importantly however, when measured as a turnover percentage (the proportion of leavers against average headcount) there has been a reduction. For the period April to September 2019, the turnover was 4.58% which is 0.46 percentage points lower than the same period last year (4.54%).

For staff, the average monthly leavers for April to September 2019 was 17, which is lower than the same period last year (21). From a turnover perspective this has reduced from 5.58% to 4.58%, a reduction of 1.00 percentage points.

For PCSOs, there have been 4 leavers for the period April to September 2019, which is a turnover percentage of 3.38%. Whilst this is a turnover percentage point increase of 0.52 when compared to the same period last year, it is only a headcount increase of 1 (3 left in the period April to September 2018). Of the 4 PCSOs that left 1 retired, 2 resigned and 1 left to join the regulars.

The turnover for specials has increased from 10.85% for April to September 2018 to 16.59% for April to September 2019 for reasons as stated above.

5. Gender & BAME Representation as at 30th September 2019

The representation of Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) officers has increased to a headcount of 98 as at 30th September which is an increase of 10 when compared to the last HR data as at 30th June 2019. This is a percentage point increase of 0.21% from 2.79% to 3.00% and demonstrates the highest proportion of BAME officers in the force over the last 6 years. The percentage representation of

officers within the force is 3.56% under the proportion of BAME individuals within the economically active population (6.56%¹).

Of the 225 new recruits this financial year, a total of 16 are BAME which equates to 7.11% of all recruits. Of the 17 transferees / re-joiners, 1 was BAME which equates to 5.88%. Combined, of the 244 joiners, 17 were BAME, which equates to 6.67% of all new joiners.

There are currently 39 BAME candidates in the officer recruitment process which equates to 7.96% % of all applications (as at 3rd October 2019). It should be noted that these individuals are still required to pass the stages of the selection process and as such it is not guaranteed they will subsequently join the force.

For staff, the BAME headcount has reduced from 79 as at 30th June 2018 (3.57% of the total staff headcount) to 78 as at 30th September 2019 (3.53%). For PCSOs, the headcount has remained static at 3, but due to the 4 leavers this financial year to date, the overall headcount has reduced, which has resulted in the proportion of BAME officers reducing from 2.59% to 2.50%.

The number of BAME specials has remained static at 36 (6.94% of total special headcount) when compared to the last HR data as at 30th June 2019 (36 / 6.94%).

The headcount of female officers has increased from 1045 (33.08% of the total officer headcount) as at 30th June 2019 to 1089 (33.33%) as at 30th September 2019.

Of the 225 new recruits this financial year, a total of 79 are female which equates to 35.11%. Of the 17 transferees / re-joiners, 9 was female which equates 52.94%. Combined, of the 244 joiners, 89 were female, which equates to 66.48%.

For staff the proportion of females has remained static (65.13%) whilst PCSOs and Specials have increased: PCSOs have increased from 51.72% as at 30th June 2018 to 55.00% as at 30th September and Specials for the same period have increased from 30.29% to 31.60%.

Diversity and Inclusion Board Update

The force now has a well-established strategic Diversity and Inclusion Board which is a quarterly meeting chaired by the Chief Constable. This board is attended and supported by the Diversity and Inclusion team.

The Diversity and Inclusion board has been in place since 6th August 2018 and provides governance arrangements to ensure that the force meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty.

The Board has wide attendance, and details of the aims and objectives can be found within the terms of reference for the board (appendix 1).

¹ 2011 National Census Data

Since the creation of the board, a number of key strategic work streams have been commissioned and their progress has been monitored. These include:

Diversity and Inclusion Strategy development:

The new strategy has been developed in consultation with the board and will be launched later in 2019. The strategy covers four key areas of focus including:

- Attract, recruit, progress and retain a more diverse workforce to create a culture that values difference and better reflects our communities.
- Treating everyone whom we come in to contact with fairly and with respect.
- Engage with, listen to and learn from all communities in ways that ensure their needs are heard and responded to.
- Make our services accessible for all.

Progress against the strategic aims and objectives will be monitored through the Diversity and Inclusion Board by the introduction of a new diversity & inclusion dashboard which is currently under development by Corporate Services.

Review of Equality Impact Assessment Process (EqIA)

A new equality impact assessment process has been developed and training has been provided to key stakeholders across the force. This process clarifies the requirements for appropriate EqIA in all relevant areas and provides a visible and accessible toolkit which is in line with national guidance and best practice.

Implementation of the NPCC Diversity and Inclusion toolkits

The force are currently carrying out a self-assessment against the new diversity and inclusion toolkits introduced by the National Police Chiefs Council. The Diversity and Inclusion board will monitor progress against these toolkits and ensure that appropriate progress is made across the organisation.

Implementation of Multi Faith Calendar

A new online calendar has been developed and introduced which overlays annual faith and diversity events against the operation planning process. This calendar supports the force in ensuring that due consideration is given to diversity and cultural events within the operational planning process.

Positive Action Programme / BAME attraction campaign

The force have redesigned the attraction process and positive action programme to support candidates from under-represented groups in joining the service. Since launching the new positive action programme in August 2018, a total of 19 (51%) of declared BAME individuals who have undertaken it have passed the assessment process. As per the above in section 5, positive progress has been seen in terms of BAME candidates joining the force.

Disability Confident Employer status achieved

Essex Police has been accredited by the Department for Work and Pensions as a Disability Confident Employer following the successfully completed a Disability Confident self-assessment. Work has been undertaken to meet all of the core actions to be a Disability Confident employer. This includes the review of the

Reasonable Adjustments procedure and the Disability Staff Support Network which offers support, guidance and advice to all employers.

Implementation of membership to the Business Disability Forum

Essex Police are now members of the Business Disability Forum. This is a not-for-profit member organisation that the force are working with to help ensure that we have an accessible workplace for all.

Review of Faith/Quiet rooms

Work has been commissioned and completed to review the current provision of faith and quiet rooms. This work has been completed with a view of agreeing a standard specification and minimum requirement for the provision of appropriate faith and quiet rooms across the force.

Joint Essex Police and Support Networks (SSN) agreement development

Through the diversity and inclusion board a review has been undertaken regarding the provisions of support provided to the key staff support networks. This has included reviewing the support and supervision of the SSNs and the allocation of time provided to the networks to support the wider workforce.

6. Absence and Adjusted / Recuperative

Summary Numbers

For Officers, in the period April to September 2019, the average days lost per person was 4.29 which is a reduction of 0.32 average days lost per person when compared to the same period in 2018/19 (4.61). This is also the lowest level of absence for this period over the last 5 years.

For staff, the average days lost per person has increased to 4.74 for the period April to September 2019 when compared to the same period last year (4.22).

For PCSOs, in the period April to September 2019/20, the average days lost per person was 5.60 which is a reduction of 1.38 average days lost per person when compared to the same period in 2018/19 (6.98). This is also the lowest level of absence for this period over the last 3 years.

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

For officers, the graph on the strategic dashboard shows that absence in the months of April and May 19 were higher than the same periods last year but since then, there has been 4 months of lower absence when compared to the same months last year.

In addition the average hours lost in all 4 of those months are the lowest levels of absence seen in those months over the last 5 years (i.e. Jul 19 is lower than July 18, July 17, July 16 and July 15).

For staff, sickness absence in all 6 months for the period April to September 2019 is higher when compared to April to September 2018.

For PCSOs, 4 out of the 6 months have been lower when compared to the same months last year. Whilst the most recent month (September 19) was the first since April 19 to be higher than last year, it is the second lowest level of average hours lost in the month of September over the last 5 years.

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 (10.04), Criminal Justice Command (6.82) and CT Division (5.69) which is the same top 3 as reported last quarter.

For Contact Management, although they have the highest average days lost per person, their absence is lower for the period April to September 2019 (10.04) when compared to April to September 2018 (12.71). This represents a reduction of 2.67 average days lost per person.

The reasons for absence accounting for the highest percentage of payroll hours lost in Contact Management are psychological (53.70%) and musculo/skeletal (19.05%) This is the same top two reasons for absence in CT Division (psychological = 46.61%, musculo/skeletal = 27.64%).

As with Contact Management and CT Division, psychological related absences account for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost in Criminal Justice (41.29%) however nervous system related absence is next with 22.92%.

Whilst LPA North are not in the top 3 Commands with highest absence they are the biggest Command in force and currently have the highest level of absence across the three Local Policing Areas' with 5.07 average days lost per person, when compared to the South (3.28) and the West (4.39).

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 7.32, these have smaller average officer headcounts within the Commands and, therefore, any absence experienced has a greater impact on overall rates.

There have also been reductions across other commands showing for April to September 2019, when compared to April to September 2018 with the greatest reductions being in Support Services (6.75 to 2.75), Operational Policing Command (3.76 to 3.09), HQ Directorate (3.48 to 1.52) and Student Constables (1.18 to 0.86).

Staff

For staff, the Commands with the highest average days lost per person, for the period April to September 2019, are Contact Management (7.00), Crime and Public Protection (4.69) and Criminal Justice Command (4.54).

Contact Management staff absence has increased by 0.96 average days lost per person for April to September 2019 compared to April to September 2018. This is due to increases in short term, medium term and long term absence. In relation to absence reasons, psychological related absences account for the highest proportion of absence (33.14%), however this is marginally lower than the proportion lost for the same period last year (39.10%). Musculo/skeletal related absences account for the next highest proportion of payroll hours lost (17.26%) which is an increase when compared to the same period last year (13.47%). There has also been an increase in the number of digestive and miscellaneous related absences.

Whilst Crime & Public Protection Command have one of the highest average days lost per person of the larger commands (4.69) this is a static position when compared to the same period last year. In relation to reasons for absence, the types of absences and instances are similar this year when compared to last, but like Contact Management psychological related absences account for the highest proportion (30.11%). However, this is down when compared to the same period last year (32.23%) and musculo/skeletal is second with 29.71% which is an increase from 24.66%.

Similarly, Criminal Justice Command's average days lost per person is 4.54 which is similar to last year (4.49).

Whilst not in the top 3, Support Services are the second largest Command in terms of headcount and their average days lost per person has increased from 2.80 for the period April to September 2018, to 3.74 for the current period (April to September 2019). This is predominantly due an increase in average days lost per person in Business Services (increasing from 3.59 to 4.43), Human Resources (increasing from 1.86 to 3.21) and Transport Services (increasing from 3.34 to 9.41). In relation to reasons, psychological related absences accounts for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost, in Human Resources and Business Services and is the second highest in Transport Services (highest being miscellaneous related absences).

As with officers, there are other Commands with high average days lost per person for staff, including LPA South at 12.16 and LPA North 9.16, 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, the only command with a headcount of over 25 that has reduced is Strategic Change Performance (from 4.79 to 2.43).

PCSOs

For PCSOs, only LPA West is showing a reduction in average days lost per person to 5.33 for April to September 2019 when compared to 14.94 for the same period in 2018.

LPA North has seen an increase of 1.69 average days lost per person from 3.52 for April to September 2018 to 5.21 for the same period in 2019 and LPA South has seen an increase of 1.12 average days lost per person for the same periods. However, it should be noted that the overall PCSO headcount is low, so a small number of instances can have a much greater impact on absence.

Absence Term

For officers, the average days lost per person for short and medium term has remained static when compared to last year but there has been a significant reduction in long term absence, reducing from 3.12 to 2.80.

For staff, there has been a marginal reduction in the average days lost per person to medium term absence (0.71 to 0.69) however there has been an increase in short term (1.05 to 1.19) and most notably long term (2.46 to 2.85) which is the main reason for the overall staff increase. For PCSOs there has been an increase short and medium term absence but a significant reduction in long term absence; 5.55 average days lost per person, reducing to 3.46.

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 39.13% for April to September 2018 to 42.98% for April to September 2019, whereas staff has increased from 34.40% to 36.08%. For PCSOs, psychological absence has reduced significantly, from 45.88% to 19.46% for the same period.

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 September 2019 when compared to April to September 2018. Officer absence for musculo/skeletal reasons has reduced from 25.31% to 21.77% and staff has reduced from 20.60% to 17.20% for the same periods. For PCSOs musculo/skeletal absence accounts for the highest percentage of payroll hours lost and has increased from 33.39% for April to September 2018 to 36.94% for April to September 2019.

In relation to other absence reasons for officers, the majority have remained largely similar this period when compared to last. The most noticeable change outside of the top two reasons are a reduction in the percentage of payroll hours lost to miscellaneous related absences (7.58% reducing to 4.4%).

For staff, the percentage of payroll hours lost for other absence reasons have remained static this period when compared to last. For PCSOs, there have been a number of variations, however, due to such a low headcount, this is expected. For example, cardiac/circulatory, ear/eye related absences have reduced but there has been an increase in the percentage of payroll hours lost to reason such as digestive, genito urinary, headache/migraine, infectious disease and respiratory.

The National Position

National iQuanta data has been released which shows the proportion of payroll hours lost as a percentage against the contracted hours available:

Essex	Year Ending 31st Mar 19		% / Ranking Variance to March 18		% / Ranking Variance to March 15	
	% of Contracted Hours Lost	National Ranking (out of 43)	% of Contracted Hours Lost	National Ranking (out of 43)	% of Contracted Hours Lost	National Ranking (out of 43)
Officers	4.39%	20	-0.68%	-11	-1.20%	-18
Staff (inc PCSOs)	4.76%	28	0.03%	1	-0.63%	-12

In respect of officers, Essex Police’s position has improved significantly, moving 11 places from 31st out of 43 to 20th out of 43. Essex is now below the National Average for officer absence (4.44%). For staff, the position has remained static; minor increase of 0.03% which has resulted in the national ranking reduced to 28th from 27th. The national staff position is 4.14%.

When compared to 31st March 2015, officers have reduced by 1.20% and moved up 18 places and staff have reduced by 0.63% and moved up 12 places.

Performance Improvement Unit (PIU)

Five command areas are subject of an ongoing action plan. This is based on them being identified as outliers for officer absence, each with higher headcounts and higher average days lost per person:

1. Contact Management
2. North LPA Investigations
3. North LPT (Clacton)
4. West (Grays & Brentwood LPT)
5. Operational Policing Command - Roads Policing

The PIU have focussed on and supported each of these priority areas. A review of process compliance and long term cases has taken place which has resulted in some long term absent officers from each of those commands returning to work.

Operational HR

Given the increase in staff absence a detailed review of the top 5 departments has been undertaken to review case management, compliance with protocol and also look at additional methods of support or return to work initiatives.

Contact Management long term staff absence cases have been reviewed and actions sent against each case for the command area, HR and Occupational Health to progress. This will also be supported with a review of return to work initiatives. This work remains ongoing and the Contact Management Command have devised an attendance improvement plan which is reviewed continually with HR support.

Fortnightly oversight meetings with the Director of HR remain in place and a dashboard to monitor the outlying departments is being developed.

Other detailed activity for the Operational HR team includes:

- Ensure scrutiny at Attendance Management Meetings is continued
- Providing professional advice and guidance to supervisors on bespoke cases
- Looking for trends and reasons for absence to understand the current increasing pattern
- Continue encouraging and supporting the utilisation of Case Conferences with managers and Occupational Health
- Undertake further 'deep dive' case reviews with HRAs to explore all opportunities for intervention and advice to managers

Adjusted / Recuperative

The number (headcount) of officers on recuperative, adjusted and restricted duties has increased marginally from 405 as at 30th June 2019 to 407 as at 30th September 2019.

The number of staff on recuperative or restricted duties has reduced by 2 from 80 to 78 and PCSOs have reduced from 15 to 11 for the same period.

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 the level of recruitment so far exceeding the initial plan by 16.74 fte. The representation of BAME officers has continued to increase with 17 BAME officers joining this financial year to date. As a result, the total number of BAME officers has increased to a total of 98, which equates to 3.00%, an increase from 2.79% as reported on 30th June 2019. This is the highest proportion of BAME officers over the last 6 years.

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

The Special Constabulary provided 100,611 hours of policing for the period April to September 2019 compared to 78,203 for the same period last year.

The total duty hours worked for the period April to September 2019 of 100,611 which is an average of 16,769 a month. This is the equivalent of, on average, 1048 specials working 16 hours a month (an increase when compared to the same period last year – 815).

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
Jon Burgess – Head of PIU

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 at the start of the year 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.

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

Expected Outcome: following the increase seen so far this financial year to date and the 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 20 point plan initiated by the Operational HR Team has been further developed into a joint plan with PIU to encourage attendance at work across the business. This is monitored and reviewed through the Director of HR's Fortnightly Oversight Meeting as well as through the Force's Attendance and Well Being Board.

In conjunction with PIU and Organisational Management a reflective review of 2018 absence will be undertaken to looking at patterns and trends for the last two quarters of 2018/2019 to see if this can influence or direct any proactive work for the last two quarters of 2019/2020.

Longer term initiatives also 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 and Wellbeing Services

The Feel Well Live Well sessions continue with 1301 individuals engaging in either the full programme, refresher or taster sessions thus promoting organisational health and wellbeing.

Good attendance is continuing on the Feel Well Live Well for Leaders programme with an increase to 95 delegates having now attended this programme which demonstrates traction in the Leaders programme is now underway. Police Care, who fund one of the posts to deliver these programmes are pleased with progress and have agreed to roll forward the under-spend, thus extending funded delivery into the early part of financial year 2020/2021.

Agreement has been obtained to develop senior health assessments, when the new health surveillance nurse arrives in post in support of more senior colleagues and as a result of the findings of the Superintendents Association's survey of its' members and their wellbeing. A self-service 24 hour kiosk for physical health results and outcomes will also be made available over the forthcoming year, where individuals are provided with the facility to take their own health metrics, in confidence and without the need to make an appointment with a health professional and at a time that suits them regardless of the shifts they are working. This facility also provides anonymised management information which can assist in the development of services and products to support wider organisational wellbeing.

The Counselling and Wellbeing team have again been successful in external recognition for the products and benefits these provide, on a pro-active basis, with the Feel Well Live Well programmes winning the Kent Branch of the CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) award for Health and Wellbeing in October 2019 and additionally have been shortlisted in the World Class Policing Awards which are to be held in November 2019.