

Performance and Resources Scrutiny Programme 2020

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.

2.0 Recommendations

Not applicable

3.0 Executive Summary

The officer strength, as at 31st December 2019 was 3196.94 fte, which is 21.06 fte under the establishment of 3218.00. This is a net increase of 15.69 fte since the last HR report as at 30th September 2019.

The police staff strength as at 31st December 2019 was 2024.74 fte, which is 204.14 fte under the establishment of 2219.07 fte. This is an increase of 19.47 fte since the last HR report as at 30th September 2019.

The PCSO strength as at 31st December 2019 was 108.08 fte. Whilst this is a reduction of 3.07 fte since the last HR report as at 30th September 2019, it is only 0.92 fte under the establishment of 109.00. There is a planned intake of up to 8.00 fte on the 17th February 2020.

As at 31st December 2019, there were 522 specials in post, which is a marginal increase of 3 when compared to the last HR data as at 30th September 2019.

For April to December 2019 the total duty hours worked increased to 130,824 from 123,507 in the same period in 2018 and the average hours per officer increased from 30.01 a month to 31.82.

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 December 2019, when compared to the same period last year. Officer turnover has reduced from 6.40% to 6.22% and staff turnover has reduced from 7.60% to 6.62%. Turnover for PCSOs and specials, however, has increased from 3.83% to 6.01% and 17.48% to 24.42% respectively.

The representation of Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) officers has remained at a headcount of 98 as at 31st December 2019, which is the same when compared to the last HR data as at 30th September 2019. Measured as a proportion of the total officer workforce this has remained static at 2.99% (compared with 3.00%).

As at 7th January 2020, there were 40 BAME candidates in the officer recruitment process, which equates to 6.60% 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 increased by a headcount of 4 (to 82) and PCSOs have remained at a headcount of 3, but as a proportion this represents an increase of 0.09% (from 2.50% to 2.59%). The headcount and representation of BAME specials has reduced marginally from 36 (6.94%) to 34 (6.51) as at 31st December 2019.

The headcount of female officers has increased from 1089 (33.33% of the total officer headcount) as at 30th September 2019 to 1106 (33.73%) as at 31st December 2019. For staff, the proportion of females has reduced slightly from 65.13% to 64.96%, whilst the proportion of female PCSOs and specials have increased from 55.00% to 56.03% and 31.60% to 32.38% respectively.

Absence

For Officers, in the period April to December 2019, the average days lost per person was 6.87, which is a reduction of 0.16 average days lost per person when compared to the same period in 2018/19 (7.03). 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 7.72 for the period April to December 2019 when compared to the same period last year (6.86).

For PCSOs, in the period April to December 2019, the average days lost per person was 8.37, which is a reduction of 0.79 average days lost per person when compared to the same period last year (9.16). 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 medium term absences has remained static when compared to last year, but there has been a reduction in long term absence, reducing from 4.73 to 4.46 and a slight increase in short term, from 1.47 to 1.60. For staff, there have been increases in all absence terms for the period April to December 2019, when compared to the same period in 2019. 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 37.48% to 19.66%. 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 reduced from 407 as at 30th September 2019 to 396 as at 31st December 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 31st December 2019, except where alternative data is displayed for trend analysis.

5.0 Current Work and Performance

Please note the following section numbers detailed in the below subheadings relate to the corresponding reference on the HR strategic dashboard.

1. Establishment v Strength as at 31st December 2019

The officer strength, as at 31st December 2019 was 3196.94 fte, which is 21.06 fte under the establishment of 3218.00. This is a net increase of 15.69 fte since the last HR report as at 30th September 2019.

The police staff strength as at 31st December 2019 was 2024.74 fte, which is 204.14 fte under the establishment of 2228.88 fte. This is an increase of 19.47 fte since the last HR report as at 30th September 2019, however the variance between establishment and strength has only reduced by 9.66 fte. This is because, although the strength has increased, the establishment has also increased by, 9.81 fte. There

are recruitment intakes planned in February 2020 and March 2020 and the force is expected to achieve its officer establishment by February 2020.

The PCSO strength as at 31st December 2019 was 108.08 fte. Whilst this is a reduction of 3.07 fte since the last HR report, as at 30th September 2019, it is only 0.92 fte under the establishment of 109.00 fte. There is a planned intake of up to 8.00 fte on the 17th February 2020, which should result in the strength fte exceeding the establishment of 109.00.

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) and the Operational Policing Command (OPC) remain the Commands with the highest vacancies in force, however they have both reduced when compared to the last HR report, as at 30th September 2019. SCD's vacancy percentage has reduced from 14.75% (31.05 fte vacancies) to 12.30% (25.90 fte vacancies) and OPC's vacancy percentage has reduced from 7.20% (32.38 fte vacancies) to 6.71% (30.18 fte vacancies). At the time of writing, for SCD, there are 3 officers who have been successful for roles and are awaiting a release date through the Resourcing Deployment panel and there are 4 officers awaiting release dates for OPC roles.

The Command with the third highest proportion of vacancies in force is Crime and Public Protection, which has a vacancy percentage of 6.24% (17.85 fte vacancies) and has increased from 4.11% as at 30th September 2019. The majority of the vacancies (12.57 fte) are for Detective Constables (DC) in the Child Abuse Investigation Teams, of which 2 officers are due to start week commencing 7th January 2020 and 3 in February 2020; the remaining vacancies are actively being recruited to.

It should be noted that the last HR report identified that Support Services had the third highest vacancy rate with 6.23%, however this has now reduced to 4.52% as a result of an individual joining the department.

Staff

As per the last HR report, Strategic Change Performance Directorate and SCD remain the Commands with the highest vacancy levels. However, Strategic Change Performance Directorate have a reduced vacancy factor from 18.59% to 14.73% (11.15 fte vacancies). SCD also have a reduced vacancy factor from 16.02% to 14.38% (47.90 fte vacancies).

Crime and Public Protection Command has increased to a vacancy rate of 13.17% (26.51 fte vacancies) from 10.49%, which has resulted in this Command having the third highest proportion of vacancies. The majority of vacancies are in the roles of

Investigation Support Officer (6.88 fte), DBS Decision Maker (5.60 fte), Assessment Officer (2.62 fte) and DBS Unit Assistant Manager (2.00 fte vacancies). Of these vacancies listed, 9 individuals have been selected and are undergoing pre-employment checks, with the remaining vacancies all due to be advertised or currently out to advert.

For information, the Criminal Justice Command had the third highest vacancy percentage as at 30th September 2019 (12.73%), however this has reduced to 9.90% resulting in it no longer being in the top 3.

The number of vacancies of 194.33 fte, when measured as strength fte against establishment, means the force currently has a vacancy rate of 8.76%, which is a reduction compared to the last HR report (9.93%). However, it should be noted that this is higher than the force wider average vacancy factor requirement of 5.50%. Note, this accounts for staff in posts that are not permanently on the establishment (non-established posts).

Whilst the current vacancy rate is higher than the force vacancy factor requirement the strength fte of police staff is increasing; the monthly average number of joiners for the period April to December 2019 (19) is higher than the monthly average number of leavers for the same period last year (16).

A significant proportion of police staff vacancies are actively being recruited to and will be at differing stages of the recruitment process (for example advert, selection and pre-employment). However, it should be noted that some roles are classed as on hold 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 and roles that are on hold to fund another post. There are also a number of roles that hold vacancies as the is not fully occupied (due to the occupant being part time).

At the time of writing, there were 55 external candidates in pre-employment checks for a range of roles across the force.

2. Specials Data: Headline Figures

As at 31st December 2019, there were 522 specials in post, which is a marginal increase of 3 when compared to the last HR data as at 30th September 2019.

As previously reported, 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 14.11 for the period April to December 2019. The turnover percentage for the period April to December 2019 is 24.42%, which is 6.94 percentage points higher than the same period in 2018/19 (17.48%).

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 December 2019), a total of 55 officers (43.31%) left to join the regulars compared to just 23 (28.75%) for the same period in 2018/19. It should be noted that whilst not as significant as those leaving to join the regulars, the number of resignations has increased to 64 when compared to 53 for the same periods.

Specials Duty Hours

For April to December 2019 the total duty hours worked increased to 130,824 from 123,507 in the same period in 2018 and the average hours per officer increased from 30.01 a month to 31.82.

The total duty hours worked for the period April to December 2019 of 130,824 which is an average of 14,536 a month. This is the equivalent of, on average, 909 specials working 16 hours a month (an increase when compared to the same period last year where this figure stood at 858).

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

Since the last update, there was an intake on the 2nd December 2019 of 79.00 fte officers. Therefore, this financial year to date (April to December 2019), a total of 323.74 fte have joined the force (304.00 fte new recruits, 15.93 fte transferees and 3.81 fte re-joiners). Note of the 304.00 fte new recruits, 294.00 fte joined via the standard police constable recruitment route and 10.00 fte via the Police Now programme.

Following the Home Office uplift announcement, it was reported in the last HR update that the recruitment plan was adapted to allow for up to 100 new recruits in both February 20 and March 20. Whilst the force has the capacity to recruit and train up to 100 on each of these intakes this plan is currently being reviewed with the Chief Officer team to ensure the establishment is reached and, where possible, exceeded, whilst ensuring it meets budgetary requirements.

Following the launch of Investigate First on the 30th September 2019, the selection process has now concluded and there are currently 27 candidates in pre-employment checks. It was originally projected that 20 would join in March 2020, however, if more than 20 successfully clear the pre-employment checks they will join as part of the March 2020 intake.

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 the 2019 calendar year was 52. For the four week period 02/12/2019 to 29/12/2019 the weekly average was lower at 36, however for the week commencing 30/12/2019 this increased to 57. Whilst December 2019 had a slightly lower number of applications than previous months in 2019, it was still higher than December 2018, where only 96 applications were received.

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

Since the last HR update a total of 44 specials have joined (13 in October 2019, 21 in November 2019 and 10 in December 2019). Therefore, so far this financial year to date (April to December 2019), a total of 134 specials joined the force, which is marginally lower than same period last year (140).

The marginal reduction is primarily due to the force receiving a lower number of applications each week than would be required and it is also recognised that the specials media campaign is running alongside the regular officer recruitment campaign.

Between October 2019 and December 2019, there were 211 applications, which is a reduction of 26% when compared to the same period last year and an increase of 0.5% from the previous quarter. Work is currently underway to develop the second phase of the #My Other life campaign, however in December 2019 some interim media activity was released, which contributed to an increase in applications; in December 2019 there were 60 applications, which is an increase of 11 when compared to December 2018 (49).

Internal departments such as Business Services, 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.

There is 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 set against a terms of reference and current recruitment data. A weekly meeting is chaired by the Head of Special Constabulary with appropriate stakeholders, which is supported by the Recruitment oversight meeting that is chaired by the Head of Business Services and the Head of Resourcing.

There are 5 remaining courses for the remainder of the financial year (January 2020 to March 2020) where it is projected between 68 and 90 specials will join. If achieved, this will result in the end of year headcount remaining relatively static

when accounting for the significant numbers of specials leaving to become a Police officer. There are 2 further regular recruitment courses in February and March 2020.

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 December 2019 has increased to an average of 22 a month when compared to the average of 20 in 2018/19, however this is 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 December 2019, the turnover was 6.22%, which is 0.18 percentage points lower than the same period last year (6.40%).

For staff, the average monthly leavers for April to December 2019 was 16, which is lower than the same period last year (18). From a turnover perspective this has reduced from 7.60% to 6.62%, a reduction of 0.98 percentage points.

For PCSOs, there have been 7 leavers for the period April to December 2019, which is a turnover percentage of 6.01%. This is a turnover percentage point increase of 2.18 when compared to the same period last year and a headcount increase of 3 (4 left in the period April to December 2018). Of the 7 PCSOs that left, 1 retired, 4 resigned and 2 left to join the regulars.

The turnover for specials has increased from 17.48% for April to December 2018 to 24.42% for April to December 2019 for reasons as stated above.

5. Gender & BAME Representation as at 31st December 2019

The representation of Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) officers has remained at a headcount of 98 as at 31st December 2019, which is the same when compared to the last HR data as at 30th September 2019. This is a marginal percentage point reduction of 0.01% from 3.00% to 2.99% (due to the overall office workforce increasing) but demonstrates the highest proportion of BAME officers in the force over the last 6 years. The percentage representation of officers within the force is 3.57% under the proportion of BAME individuals within the economically active population (6.56%¹).

Of the 304 new recruits this financial year, a total of 19 are BAME, which equates to 6.25% of all recruits. Of the 21 transferees / re-joiners, 1 was BAME, which equates to 4.76% of all transferees/rejoiners. Combined, of the 325 joiners, 20 were BAME, which equates to 6.15% of all new joiners. The total of 20 BAME joiners for this period alone is already higher than the previous 9 full financial years.

¹ 2011 National Census Data

There are currently 40 BAME candidates in the officer recruitment process, which equates to 6.60% of all applications (as at 7th January 2020). 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. Of the 40 BAME candidates in process, 12 have passed the selection process and are currently going through pre-employment checks, with 9 hoping to be cleared in time for the February 2020 intake and 3 for the March 2020 intake. If achieved, this would result in total BAME recruitment for the year of 32. If achieved and assuming there are no further BAME leavers this financial year, this could result in 110 BAME officers as at 31st March 2020, which would equate to a minimum proportion of 3.23% of the total workforce.

For staff, the BAME headcount has increased from 78 as at 30th September 2019 (3.53% of the total staff headcount) to 82 as at 31st December 2019 (3.67%). For PCSOs, the headcount has remained static at 3, however due to the overall PCSO headcount being lower the actual proportion of PCSOs has increased from 2.50% to 2.59%.

The number of BAME specials has reduced from 36 (6.94% of total special headcount) as at 30th September 2019 to 34 (6.51%) as at 31st December 2019.

The headcount of female officers has increased from 1089 (33.33% of the total officer headcount) as at 30th September 2019 to 1106 (33.73%) as at 31st December 2019.

Of the 304 new recruits this financial year, a total of 104 are female, which equates to 34.21%. Of the 21 transferees / re-joiners, 11 were female, which equates 52.38%. Combined, of the 325 joiners, 115 were female, which equates to 36.48% and is higher than the current female officer proportion.

For staff the proportion of females has reduced slightly from 65.13% to 64.96%, whilst PCSOs and specials have increased. PCSOs have increased from 55.00% as at 30th September 2019 to 56.03% as at 31st December 2019 and specials, for the same period, have increased from 31.60% to 32.38%.

6. Absence and Adjusted / Recuperative

Summary Numbers

For officers, in the period April to December 2019, the average days lost per person was 6.87, which is a reduction of 0.16 average days lost per person when compared to the same period in 2018/19 (7.03). 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 7.72 for the period April to December 2019 when compared to the same period last year (6.86).

For PCSOs, in the period April to December 2019, the average days lost per person was 8.37, which is a reduction of 0.79 average days lost per person when compared to the same period last year (9.16). 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 December 2019)

For officers, the graph on the strategic dashboard shows that absence in the months of April, May, November and December 2019 were higher than the same periods last year but the 5 months between May and November had lower absence, when compared to the same months last year.

In addition the average hours lost in those 5 months are the lowest levels of absence seen in those months over the last 5 years (i.e. Jul 2019 is lower than July 2018, July 2017, July 2016 and July 2015).

For staff, sickness absence in all 9 months for the period April to December 2019 is higher when compared to April to December 2018.

For PCSOs, 4 out of the 9 months have been lower when compared to the same months last year. The months September through to December 2019 were all higher than the same month last year.

Commands with highest absence (average days lost per person)

Please note the figures on the dashboard relate to average days lost per person and those listed in the top 3 are Commands with headcounts over 50.

Officers

For officers, the Commands with the highest average days lost per person are Contact Management (16.46), Criminal Justice Command (9.90) and ERSOU (5.69), which is the same top 3 as reported last quarter (although ERSOU was formerly called CT Division).

For Contact Management, although they have the highest average days lost per person, their absence is lower for the period April to December 2019 (16.46) when compared to April to December 2018 (18.57). This represents a reduction of 2.11 average days lost per person.

The reasons for absence accounting for the highest percentage of payroll hours lost in Contact Management are psychological (48.16%) and musculo/skeletal (19.06%). This is the same top two reasons for absence in Criminal Justice Command (psychological - 33.43%, musculo/skeletal – 29.43%) and ERSOU (psychological – 45.06%, musculo/skeletal – 21.17%).

LPA North are not in the top 3 Commands with highest absence, but they are the biggest Command in force and currently have the highest level of absence across the three Local Policing Areas' (LPA) with 8.12 average days lost per person, when compared to the South (5.61) and the West (6.56). However, it should be noted that LPA North have reduced their average days lost per person by 1.43, when compared to April to December 2018 (9.55).

Although there are other Commands with high average days lost per person; Local Policing Support Unit with 8.97 average days lost per person, Strategic Change Performance with 8.90 and Operation Sceptre with 8.80, these have smaller average officer headcounts within the Commands and, therefore, any absence experienced has a greater impact on their overall rates.

There have also been reductions across other commands showing for April to December 2019, when compared to April to December 2018 with the greatest reductions being in Support Services (10.73 to 3.21) and HQ Directorate (6.96 to 3.54).

Staff

For staff, the Commands with the highest average days lost per person, for the period April to December 2019, are Contact Management (11.24), Crime and Public Protection (9.02) and Criminal Justice Command (7.58).

Contact Management staff absence has increased by 1.75 average days lost per person for April to December 2019 compared to April to December 2018. In relation to absence reasons, psychological related absences account for the highest proportion of absence (28.96%), however this is lower than the proportion lost for the same period last year (36.72%). Musculo/skeletal related absences account for the next highest proportion of payroll hours lost (16.50%), which is an increase when compared to the same period last year (13.20%). There has also been an increase in the proportion of digestive, respiratory, nervous system, infectious disease and miscellaneous related absences. Cardiac and circulatory related absence is showing the greatest reduction in the proportion of payroll hours lost; from 6.43% to 1.18%.

Crime & Public Protection Command have one of the highest average days lost per person of the larger commands (9.02) and this is an increase when compared to the same period last year (7.21). 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 (34.53%). This is an increase when compared to the same period last year (25.81%) and musculo/skeletal is second with 26.46% which is also an increase, from 24.06%.

Criminal Justice Command's average days lost per person is 7.58, which is a reduction when compared to last year (8.01).

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 4.43 for the period April to December 2018, to 6.27 for the current period (April to December 2019). This is predominantly due an increase in average days lost per person in Business Services (increasing from 2.08 to 7.30), Human Resources (increasing from 3.19 to 5.19), Procurement (increasing from 2.74 to 16.30) and Transport Services (increasing from 8.11 to 11.58). In relation to reasons, psychological related absences account for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost in Procurement, Human Resources and Business Services and is the third highest in Transport Services (highest being miscellaneous related absences followed by musculo/skeletal).

As with officers, there are other Commands with high average days lost per person for staff, including LPA South at 14.27, Local Policing Support Unit (LPSU) at 10.52 and LPA North 9.42, 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 three commands with a headcount of over 25 that have reduced; Strategic Change Performance (from 8.02 to 6.44), LPSU (from 11.65 to 10.52) and Criminal Justice Command (as detailed above).

PCSOs

For PCSOs, only LPA North is showing an increase in average days lost per person, to 6.96 for April to December 2019 when compared to 4.75 for the same period in 2018.

LPA South has seen a reduction of 0.31 average days lost per person from 9.01 for April to December 2018 to 8.70 for the same period in 2019 and LPA West has seen the most significant reduction of 6.47 average days lost per person for the same periods (from 17.18 for April to December 2018 to 10.71 for the same period in 2019). 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 medium term has remained static when compared to last year, but there has been a reduction in long term absence, reducing from 4.73 to 4.46, and a slight increase in short term, from 1.47 to 1.60.

For staff, there have been increases in all absence terms for the period April to December 2019, when compared to the same period in 2019. Long term absence has shown the greatest increase, from 3.94 average days lost per person to 4.57; medium term has increased only slightly, from 1.09 to 1.13 and short term has increased from 1.84 to 2.02.

For PCSOs there has been an increase in short and medium term absence, but a significant reduction in long term absence; 6.47 average days lost per person, reducing to 5.20.

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 39.61% for April to December 2018 to 40.63% for April to December 2019, staff has also only increased slightly from 32.61% to 32.67%. For PCSOs, psychological absence has reduced significantly, from 37.48% to 19.66% for the same periods.

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 for April to December 2019 when compared to April to December 2018. Officer absence for musculo/skeletal reasons has reduced from 23.00% to 20.90% and staff has reduced from 19.65% to 17.00% for the same periods. For PCSOs, musculo/skeletal absence accounts for the highest percentage of payroll hours lost and has increased slightly from 34.37% for April to December 2018 to 35.14% for April to December 2019.

In relation to other absence reasons for officers, the majority have remained largely similar this period when compared to last. The most noticeable reduction outside of the top two reasons is a reduction in the percentage of payroll hours lost to miscellaneous related absences (6.14% reducing to 5.01%).

For staff, the percentage of payroll hours lost for other absence reasons have also remained fairly 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.

Performance Improvement Unit (PIU)

Five command areas are subject of an ongoing action plan for both Operational HR and PIU. This is based on them being identified as outliers for both officer and staff 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 peer review of Contact Management in relation to process compliance and culture associated with absence management is underway, with findings and recommendations being reported to the Assistant Chief Constables for that Command.

Operational HR

Given the increase in staff absence the operational HR team have continued to focus on the top 5 departments to review case management, compliance with protocol and to assess additional methods of support or return to work initiatives. To support ongoing review and learning the Operational HR team have also undertaken peer reviews of long term sickness cases to look for any opportunities to influence cases.

Contact Management absence continues to be the main focus from an HR perspective; Contact Management Command have also started additional initiatives to review absence, this includes an attendance improvement plan, continued AMGs to review compliance, deep dive reviews for ongoing long term and high Bradford Score cases to consider capability protocol application and weekly oversight meetings through T/ACC Wells as the portfolio lead.

Other detailed activity for the Operational HR team includes:

- Ensure scrutiny at Attendance Management Groups is continued for both long term cases and those short term cases that have an increasing Bradford Score.
- Providing professional advice and guidance to supervisors from Operational HR on bespoke cases.

- Operational HR and Organisational Management looking for trends and reasons for absence to understand the current increasing pattern.
- Operational HR to continue encouraging and supporting the utilisation of Case Conferences with managers and Occupational Health.
- As needed, Commands and Operational HR to undertake further 'deep dive' case reviews to explore all opportunities for intervention and advice to managers.
- Operational HR continuing to deliver Reasonable Adjustment training to Commands and Departments.

Adjusted / Recuperative

The number (headcount) of officers on recuperative, adjusted and restricted duties has reduced from 407 as at 30th September 2019 to 396 as at 31st December 2019.

The number of staff on recuperative or restricted duties has increased by 25 from 78 to 103 and PCSOs have remained static at 11 for the same periods.

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 17.74 fte. The representation of BAME officers has continued to increase with 19 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 2.99%, an increase from 2.60% as at the 31st March 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.

The Special Constabulary provided 130,824 hours of policing for the period April to December 2019 compared to 123,507 for the same period last year.

The total duty hours worked for the period April to December 2019 of 130,824, which is an average of 14,536 a month. This is the equivalent of, on average, 909 specials working 16 hours a month (an increase when compared to the same period last year – 858).

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 maintain the number of specials throughout 2019/20 in line with the revised expectation to achieve 600 by March 2020.

Expected Outcome: due to the increase in specials leaving to join as police officers and 2 further officer intakes planned for February 20 and March 20 it is projected the headcount of specials will be maintained for the remainder of the financial year.

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 and 2019 absence will be undertaken to look at patterns and trends to see if this can influence or direct any proactive work in 2020.

The operational HR Team are currently working with the Continuous Improvement Team in Strategic Change and Performance Command to see if they have any further insight in relation to staff survey results and links to wellbeing and attendance.'

Health and Wellbeing Services

The Feel Well Live Well sessions continue with 1331 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 112 delegates having now attended this programme, which demonstrates traction in the Leaders programme is now underway.

Attention in this period has focussed on the support provided to the officers and staff involved in Op Melrose, which culminated in a large scale TRiM response and additional resources seconded into the team on a short term basis to assist with the large numbers. The support for some of these officers and staff continues.

In addition to the senior health assessments development reported in the last quarter, a further development is now underway with the introduction of an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). The EAP will commence in February 2020 and will provide telephone counselling on a 24/7 basis via a third party contract.

The internal provision will continue to provide both face to face counselling and the delivery of the pro-active initiatives, however this enhanced service also provides:

- Unlimited access to 24/7/365 confidential telephone helpline
- Coverage for spouse/partner and dependants within HMRC guidelines
- Legal information services & Debt & Financial information
- Family advice line on topics such as childcare and eldercare
- Manager consultancy and support
- Two visits for on-site promotion

In addition to the above, anonymised management information regarding usage and issues affecting individuals on a location basis can also be obtained from this service, thus having the opportunity to inform and direct future initiatives from an evidence based perspective.