

MINUTES

OFFICE OF THE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER (PFCC) FOR ESSEX

ESSEX POLICE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY BOARD

24 September 2020, 10.00am to 1.00pm, via Microsoft Teams

Present:

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| Roger Hirst (RH) | Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex - Chair |
| DCC Pippa Mills (PM) | Deputy Chief Constable, Essex Police |
| ACC Andy Prophet (AP) | Assistant Chief Constable, Essex Police |
| ACC Rachel Nolan (RN) | Assistant Chief Constable, Essex Police |
| Supt Tom Simons (TS) | Strategic Change and Performance, Essex Police |
| Mark Johnson (MJ) | Strategic Change and Performance, Essex Police |
| Annette Chan (AC) | Chief Accountant, Essex Police |
| Janet Perry (JP) | Strategic Head of Performance and Resources, PFCC's office |
| Elizabeth Helm (EH) | Interim Head of Finance and s151 officer, PFCC's office |
| Suzanne Harris (SH) | Head of Performance & Scrutiny (Policing), PFCC's office |
| Camilla Brandal | Minutes, PFCC's office |

Apologies:

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| Jane Gardner (JG) | Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex |
| Pippa Brent-Isherwood (PBI) | CEO and Monitoring Officer, PFCC's office |
| Dr Vicki Harrington (VH) | Director of Strategic Change and Performance, Essex Police |
| Debbie Martin (DM) | Chief Finance Officer, Essex Police |
| Richard Jones (RJ) | Head of Business Partnering and Management Accountant, Essex Police |

1 Introduction and welcome

RH welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from JG, PBI, DM, RJ and VH. TS was standing in for Dr Harrington.

2.i Minutes of last meeting

There were no amendments to the minutes of the meeting held on 27 August 2020 and they were therefore agreed. There were no matters arising from the August minutes.

2.ii Action Log

22/20 Efficiency & Investments Plan
Still open until meeting has taken place in November.

- 23/20 Quarterly Finance Report
Meeting took place on 5 September with a follow up meeting on 8 October.
Close.
- 29/20 Action Log
Internal briefing has taken place and the matter is now being managed
through the Strategic Board. Close.
- 30/20 Action Log
Meeting has taken place and report scheduled to be presented at October
P&R meeting. Action to be completed by end November.
- 31/20 Forward Plan
SH and Claire Heath had spoken about the template and it was agreed that
this should be complete within the next couple of weeks, ready for the October
P&R meeting.
- 32/20 Monthly Performance Report
PM confirmed that the Force are now referring to the 'internal' survey as the
'independent' survey. Close.
- 33/20 Balance Scorecard
JP had met with MJ. Close.
- 34/20 Use of Stop and Search
On Forward Plan for November. Close.
- 35/20 Stop and Search Disproportionality
SH received invitation to Reference group. Close.
- 36/20 Stop and Search Disproportionality
On Forward Plan with 9 month review noted as well. Close.
- 37/20 Force Growth Programme 2019/20 Closure
SH to speak to TS about having an open slot on the Agenda for the PIR
evaluation results. Action to be completed by end October.
- 38/20 Force Growth Programme 2020/21
Recruitment campaign shared with partners. Close.

2.iii Forward Plan

- 2.iii.1 Stop and Search items have been added.
- 2.iii.2 The Force's Crime Prevention Strategy 2021-24 to be taken to the Essex Police (EP)
Strategic Board in December but P&RSB would be provided with an update.
- 2.iii.3 The PFCC Commissioning update has been moved from September to October due
to Kirsty Smith being available to present at this meeting.

3 Finance

3.i Efficiency & Investments Plan (Transformation Savings)

- 3.i.1 TS presented the monthly report which outlined progress against current and future efficiency and savings plans as set out in the budget and the Force's Medium Term Financial Strategy ('MTFS'). From the Executive Summary, it was noted that the target set for the Force is 2.25% of the MTFS and the target has currently been exceeded by £1.278m with a combined cashable and non-cashable savings total of £8.053m.
- 3.i.2 TS confirmed that the two business cases that had been paused in May due to Covid19 had now been resumed and the report now reflects the in-year 2020/21 forecast of the savings reduction as a result of the pause. The two resumed business cases are on course to be delivered for Quarter 4 2020/21.
- 3.i.3 RH expressed his congratulations on the ambitious programme and the work done to continue to deliver against it. RH gave the Board an update on the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) which would present the same process and procedural challenge as last year. The outcome of the Police Funding Settlement is unlikely to be known until early in 2021 which would also prove challenging for planning savings and investments. RH confirmed that the working hypothesis is that there will be a 3 year CSR for revenue and a 4 year CSR for capital. RH also spoke about the additional police officer posts for next year, Eastern Region Specialist Operations Unit (ERSOU) delegations, Council Tax collection deficit amounts, Pensions hearing outcomes, pay increases for officers and staff, Emergency Services Network funding and the ongoing pressure to find savings and efficiencies from current programmes.
- 3.i.4 PM commented that the two plans that had been designated as amber on Table 1.3 related to the paused business cases. She confirmed that the amber status shown against the O365 investment into 18 month surge project would hopefully revert to green following a review of the pilot outcomes of the project.

3.ii Monthly Finance Report

- 3.ii.1 AC presented the Monthly Finance Report for month 5 for the Force. Items to note from the Executive Summary were that the latest forecast revenue position is now an underspend of £150,000 having included the benefit of Home Office funding for: Op Melrose; Op Talla; and PPE expenditure. The police officer numbers at the end of August are 3,331 FTE and by the year end are expected to be 3,369 FTE. The Capital Reserve is forecast to be £10.3 million in deficit at the year end after forecast capital expenditure of £20.0 million and forecast capital income from property disposals of £6.7 million.
- 3.ii.2 AC confirmed the forecast revenue position this month reflects the additional grants being received, which have resulted in a number of virements. There is a forecast overspend on police officer pay and allowances due to FTEs being 24.5 more than budget. The forecast overspend on police officer overtime is based upon anticipated demand affecting a number of commands. There are underspends on: Police staff pay resulting from 16 FTE vacancies; Transport due to a reduction in vehicle fuel costs; Supplies and Services due to revenue consequences for the IT Technical refresh, a proposed 7 Forces programme delayed until 2021/22, decommissioned hardware and software support and IT maintenance contracts; and recovery of Op Talla PPE expenditure from the Home Office.

- 3.ii.3 AC went through the main forecast movements, the main forecast overspends (police officer overtime and police staff overtime), the Workforce analysis, which included the pay summary and police officer FTEs, the Virement analysis and Reserves
- 3.ii.4 JP asked about vetting causing delay of recruitment and asked if AC knew how much of the overtime is related to the impact of the delay. PM confirmed that the HR paper which is coming to the next P&RS Board will address this issue.
- 3.ii.5 RH referred to Page 10 of the report for forecast change from budget setting which showed that the main divergence between budget and actual headcount expansion is between now and October, and asked whether this was because we are expecting the numbers to stop rising or whether we are expecting to recruit above the 3,369 FTEs by 31 March. PM confirmed that the Chief Constable is very clear that the Force are recruiting to the figure of 3,369. It was agreed that RH would speak to the Chief Constable regarding the additional recruitment planned for 2021/22 and the expected funding position.

Action 39/20:

It was agreed that RH would speak to the Chief Constable regarding the additional recruitment planned for 2021/22 and the expected funding position.

- 3.ii.6 AC went through the Capital pages of the report (Page 17 onwards) detailing the capital expenditure, capital financing, variances and forecast capital reserves. JP referenced the £3.7m currently transferring from revenue to capital and although this was now being managed through the Strategic Board, at some point it could impact on the current reported positions for both capital and revenue. EH asked whether there was any update on the Finance model from Matt Tokley and PM confirmed that this will be presented at the planned finance meeting on 8 October. After a brief discussion around forecasts and projections, it was agreed that JP and AC would speak outside the meeting about the previous history of capital expenditure slippage and that the revenue to capital transfer will be managed through the Strategic Board and reported back to the P&RS Board.

Action 40/20:

JP and AC would speak outside the meeting about the previous history of capital expenditure slippage

The revenue to capital transfer will be managed through the Strategic Board and reported back to the P&RS Board.

4 Monthly Performance Report

- 4.1 MJ presented the report for August 2020 and items to note from the Executive Summary were; four of the seven PFCC Priorities had received a recommended grade of 'Good' (Anti-social behaviour, organised crime, child abuse and roads policing). Three of the seven PFCC priorities (More local, visible and accessible policing, breaking the cycle of domestic abuse and tackling gangs and serious violence) had been given a recommended grade of 'Requires Improvement'. The results of the Essex Police confidence survey have resulted in an 8th place in its Most Similar Group (MSG) and 6.5% points below the MSG average. There were four areas that saw a statistical increase in August 2020, namely; Violence with Injury, Death or Serious Injury caused by unlawful driving, Racially/Religiously Aggravated Offences and Public Order Offences.
- 4.2 MJ confirmed that the Force had seen a 2.2% increase in Domestic Abuse (DA) incidents and a 0.9% decrease in repeat incidents for the 12 months to August 2020. However, there was an 13.3% increase in DA arrests and a 32.7% increase in

Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPNs) and Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs) in the 23 months to 12 August. There was a 7.4% increase in the number of solved DA outcomes in the 12 months to August 2020 and due to this increase and the decrease in the High and Medium Risk solved volume, a grade of Requires Improvement has been recommended.

- 4.3 The All Crime comparison for August showed that the figures had fallen by 8.4% but also showed a 4.6% increase since the Covid lockdown, which mainly relates to the changes in the legislation being implemented. Pages 13 and 14 of the report set this out in more detail. The public's perception of what the Force are doing around ASB is 'very good'.
- 4.4 MJ reported that there was an improving picture on the measures (on Page 15 of the report). Where there was a deterioration, it was mainly down to the current Covid situation and police pro-activity around public order and Stop and Search. The general picture is showing some challenges in an increase in demand, but public perceptions are improving along with confidence.
- 4.5 RH asked about the last chart on the report which shows an increase in DA cases month on month. MJ said there had been a shift in categorisation, which had resulted in some of this increase in reporting. Work is being done with Essex University and ECC within the Data Analytics Centre focusing on what has been occurring during lockdown and post lockdown with a focus on child abuse.
- 4.6 JP said it was positive to note that that the number of DA repeat incidents were now showing a decrease, having shown increases in previous months. PM commented that the improving figures with repeat victims is showing the results of the new prevention approach that is being taken. TS confirmed that the repeat incidents are being concentrated on for prevention. RH asked whether there was any disconnect between the immediate problem and the impact likely to come through from lockdown? PM confirmed that through the Force Growth Plan 2020/21, there will be 55 additional officers in High Harm and Investigations in October, with three Inspectors and 12 officers going into DA, which is the planned action for the expected increases in DA cases. MJ confirmed that some further work on DA perpetrators will be done through sharing data with social services via Essex University.
- 4.7 RH asked whether anyone had any comments on the crime tree table which was showing a good level of green but was clearly influenced by lockdown. MJ commented that the increase being seen is with the crime types that involve more social interaction and it remains to be seen whether the Rule of 6 has an impact on crime type in the coming months. PM confirmed that the majority of the violence with injury figures were reported by the Town Centre teams and the proactivity around the Night Time Economy. PM also confirmed that there was more reporting of emergency incidents than priority incidents than this time last year, possibly due to the fact that less people have gone on holiday this year than in August last year.
- 4.8 A discussion took place around any changes that have happened this week following the Prime Minister's statement on Monday. PM would send RH the briefing message that the Chief Constable is delivering to the force today.

Action 41/20:

PM would send RH the briefing message that the Chief Constable is delivering to the force today.

5 Collaboration

- 5.1 TS presented the paper which set out the regular reporting on future and current collaboration activity and expected benefits. The report includes updates on the Essex/ Kent police forces joint initiatives, the 7 Forces police collaborations, National Collaboration, Local Collaboration and External and innovative partnerships. TS confirmed that items to note were as follows:
- 5.1.1 Firearms Licencing (Op Hexagon)
TS confirmed that Kent Firearms, Shotguns, Explosives, Licencing (FSEL) have now moved to the same IT system as Essex and work is currently planned to commence in September 2020 with the purchase of Cyclops2 in Kent being ratified.
- 5.1.2 7 Force Strategic Collaboration Programme – Digital Asset Management System ('DAMS')
The DAMS project had progressed in July from the Outline Business Case to the development of an extended Full Business Case.. The pilot proposal and costs will be submitted to Chief Constables and Chief Executives once the scope and timescales for the pilot have been developed.
- 5.1.3 7 Force Strategic Collaboration Programme - Policing Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF)
The contract is now in place with Anglia Ruskin University and the next stage will be to set up the first Steering Group meeting and sign off the Programme Governance and infrastructure.
- 5.1.4 7 Force Strategic Collaboration Programme – IT Integration Programme
An Outline Business Case has been prepared for a 4 Force IT convergence, collaboration and transformation with a meeting on 18 August considering the work outstanding and agreeing what will be presented at the Eastern Region Summit meeting on 13 October (for information, decision or action).
- 5.1.5 Digital Public Contact – Single Online Home (SOH)
This project continues to develop well with work being done to create an integration hub between SOH and back office systems, with the aim of providing an integrated interface with Athena for crime reports to reduce the need for double keying of text.
- 5.1.6 Essex Centre for Data Analytics (ECDA)
No change on the RAG rating which remains at Green. A data ethics framework to assist partners in determining the ethical issues relating to individual projects has been created and is being used. The terms of reference for an externally recruited data ethics committee have been completed and recruitment interviews have taken place. ECDA will focus on 4 areas over the next 12 months, two of which will be: county lines and gangs; and population and demographic demand.
- 5.1.7 Anglia Ruskin University
Following the agreement of the research strategy in October 2019, Op Goldcrest was chosen to be evaluated under the ARU research contract. A further topic for research will look at disproportionality in the Criminal Justice System.
- 5.2 Essex County Fire & Rescue Service
RH wanted to note that the £11.15 million of non-cashable savings against ECFRS would be resolved if Hoffmanns Way were to be sold. PM confirmed that an update on Hoffmanns Way would be provided to RH shortly by Patrick Duffy as there has been some interest in the sale.

- 5.3 Community Safety Hubs
SH commented that there was reference in the report to the Hubs Steering Group which has now been disbanded and Safer Essex has taken over the oversight of the Hubs. SH confirmed that Safer Essex will be monitoring the performance of the Hubs that are currently in place, but it would be very helpful, for the next report, to understand how the work is progressing with the Thurrock Hub. TS confirmed that this could be included. PM wanted to reassure the meeting that the Harlow and Thurrock Hub issues sit with her at the Strategic Change and Co-ordination Board where they are monitored.
- 5.4 JP asked about the mental Health item in the report and how much the Force will continue to be involved with Essex Partnership University Trust (EPUT) in the future. PM confirmed that ACC Kevin Baldwin is the Force's and the 7 Force's Mental Health lead and that the force adopt the Cambridge Model for Mental Health which is a medical response rather than a police response. TS commented that mental health will be an area included in the proposed Crime Prevention Strategy.

6 Public Perception Survey

- 6.1 MJ presented the Q1 2020/21 Survey Results on Public Views and Experience of Policing and Criminal Justice in Essex. MJ confirmed that there were significant increases across a range of measures which are set out on Page 3 of the report. Highlights to note from the report were:
- Quarterly result for 'good or excellent job' is at 81% which is a significant increase. There will be a Part 2 Deep Dive around BAME and victims confidence as the results are falling (Page 17 of the report). Fairness remains relatively stable with confidence in local policing. A significant increase in understanding community issues has been reported along with an increase in police dealing with ASB in their area. People feel informed about local policing and are also more likely to believe they would receive a good service if they reported a crime. The survey included questions about Essex's response to Covid-19 and the answers demonstrate strong public support for Essex Police with 73.3% of people agreeing they are doing a good job and 78.5% of people fully supporting the approach being taken.
- 6.2 A discussion took place around the results of the survey and how to build on the Covid responses through messaging levels, Comms Star Chamber to work out what went well, lessons learnt and how future messaging can be used.
- 6.3 SH asked about the 50% of people feeling well informed and around 75% of people interested in knowing what's going on, which means 25% of people who want to know what's going on, don't feel well informed. Do we feel we understand what their preferred comms methods? MJ is of the opinion that there is an element of a group of people who want to be informed but don't go looking for information. He is working with Robin Punt in Corporate Comms to try and find a way of reaching this group of people. This piece of work will also form part of the research being undertaken around the Covid lessons learnt. PM confirmed that this will be an area for the Star Chamber to look at as Ch/Insp Lily Benbow had had success in producing a hard copy newsletter for Harwich which reached more people than just using social media.
- 6.4 As a result of this discussion, it was agreed that JP would be invited to the next Comms Star Chamber as an observer.

Action 42/20:

JP to be invited to the next Comms Star Chamber as observer.

MJ left the meeting at 11.55am
The meeting was suspended for 5 minutes

RN joined the meeting at 11.58am

7 Recruitment of Specials

- 7.1 RN presented the new condensed version of the quarterly update paper on recruitment under the Special Constabulary Development Programme. From the Executive Summary, items to note are the key achievements, namely; Essex Police Special Constabulary had a headcount of 505 officers as at 31 August 2020, Essex Police is still the second largest Special Constabulary in England and Wales after the Metropolitan Police Service. Essex has the third largest number of BAME officers with 36 Officers in the headcount. Over the period June to end August 2020 Specials have contributed a total of 51,615 hours, an increase of 2.7% on the same period in 2019. There were 245 new applications between June and end of August which is a decrease on the previous quarter but an increase on the same period last year. Through maximising social media coverage, a positive tweet around licensing was picked up by Sky News and Essex Police has now featured on 4 occasions in the national Special Impact magazine.
- 7.2 RN went through the report dealing with items such as recruitment data, Employer Supported Policing and Community Special Constables, Cyber Specials Cyber Volunteers, Performance and the Specials' response to Covid.
- 7.3 RH thanked RN for her excellent report and progress which is reflected in the hours worked by the Specials across three months being equivalent to having an additional 117 full time officers attracting an annual salary cost of £6m.
- 7.4 SH asked about the Data Table at point 5.3 of the report where the table shows the number of specials 'leaving' to join the regulars. Would it be possible to show the number of 'leavers' who have not joined to become regulars, which would give an instant comparison with the total number of Specials, i.e. if you take the total of 213 from 562, you get 349 which then shows the positive picture that the number of leavers is approximately half the number of joiners. RN confirmed that this would be included in the next reporting cycle.

8 Crime Prevention Strategy

- 8.1 RN presented the report which covers the thematic strands of the Crime Prevention Strategy 2018-21, namely; Dashboard, Work strands at risk, Insights, Delivery achieved previous quarter and Delivery schedule for current quarter. Items to note from the Executive Summary were:
- 8.1.1 Three strands reported a risk of delivery, being DA (resourcing of DA teams), Gangs and Knife Crime (terms of reference of Serious Violence Unit teams and enhanced community representatives to support Essex Police development). All three strands have mitigations in place. The House Burglary and Street Robbery Delivery Plan is being developed by Ch/Supt Simon Anslow and is scheduled for launch in December 2020. The Business Crime Team have worked extremely well with the Chamber of commerce to ensure an informed opening of trade during Covid. EP's Licensing Team have also ensured that there has been a responsive and proactive connection with Local Authority Partners around the reopening of the Night Time Economy (NTE).

AP joined the meeting at 12.20pm

- 8.1.2 RN went through the report and confirmed that the Crime Prevention Strategy 2021-24 is now scheduled to be launched in January 2021, following consultation with partners. The Crime Prevention Strategy will deal with three groups of areas, namely; Serious Violence (including knife crime, rape and NTE), Organised Crime (including county lines and exploitation, organised crime of a high impact and cyber crime and fraud) and Complex Needs (including child sexual abuse and exploitation, domestic abuse, drugs and alcohol, mental health, dwelling burglary and robbery, counter terrorism and prevention, and hate crime).
- 8.1.3 RH confirmed that proposals had been presented to Safer Essex in early September, and asked if it should also go to the Violence and Vulnerability Unit and Violence and Vulnerability Round Table? AP confirmed that it will be taken to the VVU and Round Table. RH commented that it was a good opportunity to allow for partners who would otherwise not be party to this Strategy but who attend the VVU and Round Table to be included in the discussions as it could also include discussions around funding being available. It was agreed that AP, RN and PM would discuss outside of the meeting.
- 8.2 SH asked about the groupings in the Strategy and that some of the items in each group (i.e. knife crime, county lines and CSE) fall into the VVU's remit and it would be good to understand how the groupings have been decided. RN confirmed that the thematic areas and the groupings were agreed upon for ease and neatness of reporting rather than topic owner.
- 8.3 RH thanked RN for the report and the new format and detail, which would enable better collaboration with partners.

RN left the meeting at 12.35pm

9 Operational Policing Command (OPC) Update

- 9.1 AP presented the annual review of the Operational Policing Command including how it delivers against the Police and Crime Plan, current resourcing, finance, areas of responsibilities, performance and future plans. The OPC also oversee the Firearms, Shotgun and Explosive Licensing Teams ('FSEL') which will be reported on separately in this meeting.
- 9.2 The report contained updates (including how Covid has been managed) on the Dog Section, Firearms Support Unit, Stansted Airport, Contingency Planning, Resource Management Unit, Operational Planning, Public Order Training, Taser Training, Operational Support Group, Specialist Operations (CBRN and Search), Drone Team, Marine Unit, Roads Policing Unit and the Serious Violence Unit. AP confirmed that the Command that has been most affected by Covid is Stansted Airport with Firearms support being deployed elsewhere. AP also confirmed that no large risks have presented themselves. Certain Commands are busier than others, but this is not unmanageable.
- 9.3 RH asked AP where he thought the most weight of effort is distributed and where do we spend the most money and make the most difference to the public. AP was of the opinion that the spike in Firearms Licencing Renewals in 2022 (covered as the next item on the Agenda) has had an impact, and the Dogs Section have been more proactive with their high volume of stop checks and high volumes of arrest, along with providing more support specialist capability. Other areas that have made progress recently are the Roads Policing Unit and SERP. RH commented that he would like to

see some more details on improving community safety and where the biggest impact would be felt for this.

- 9.4 RH thanked AP for the report but asked if next year's annual report could have a section on the previous year and what has changed, and it would be useful to have headcount figures for each Command in the report.

10 Firearms Licensing

- 10.1 AP presented the paper which outlined the three key areas of work that had been undertaken between May and September, the temporary actions taken in response to Covid and what is being dealt with in the longer term. The Board were asked to note the following:
- 10.1.1 Single Online Home for Essex FSEL went live on 26 February 2020
- 10.1.2 Introduction of Medial Screening for all applications went live for new grants in November 2019 and February 2020 for renewals
- 10.1.3 A risk based approach for low risk shotgun renewal applications was adopted in February 2020.
- 10.1.4 Change in Firearms Licensing decision reducing delegated authority from ACC to Supt
- 10.1.5 A request to adopt 'virtual visits' for all renewals as business as usual, replacing a 'home visit' for renewals only.
- 10.2 AP confirmed that due to the Covid pandemic, the following changes to process with FSEL were the suspension of new grant applications via Single Online Home, suspension of variations to a certificate, issuing of temporary permits where applicants unable to obtain a medical screening form, renewal enquiries conducted by telephone where appropriate and certificate holders under review where no face to face FEO enquiry could be conducted to be held until restriction lifted.
- 10.3 AP confirmed that proposed strategies of possibly offering a discount if early application tendered, extensions to licences, and whether the Specials and volunteers can assist with dealing with the applications, would mean that the peak demand that is forecast in 2022 can be managed in the best way possible and all these proposals will be considered at the next Chief Officers' Group meeting in October.
- 10.4 RH commented that he was pleased to hear that a plan was in place and would be supportive of the idea of offering a discount for early renewals. RH commented on the charts in Appendix 3 where the dates were difficult to read and asked if AP could provide them following the meeting. PM commented that the Force understand exactly where the peak and demands are regarding licences and renewals, and are also very aware of where the risk sits within the Force and there are good systems in place to manage this issue.

11 Any Other Business

PM asked that the meeting dates for this Board for 2021 be circulated. SH confirmed that the dates had been organised and agreed and the invitations would be sent out shortly.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 12.55pm.