

Performance and Resources Scrutiny Programme 2020/21

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

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Chief Officer	ACC Rachel Nolan
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Author on behalf of Chief Officer:	Jenny Brouard Citizens in Policing Commander
Date of Approval:	03 December 2020

1.0 Purpose of Report

Quarterly update on recruitment under the Special Constabulary Development Programme.

2.0 Recommendations

No recommendations.

3.0 Executive Summary

The previous paper dated 08 September 2020 provided a narrative on the following areas:

- Recruitment
- Media opportunities
- Employer Supported Policing
- Community Special Constables
- Performance
- Covid 19 response

This paper reports key deliveries against the above from 01 September to 30 November 2020 and future areas of focus. Highlights include:

Reward & Recognition:

- Deputy Chief Officer Derek Hopkins won the Making a Difference Award: The Millard Trophy at the Force Awards;
- Specials Awards event was held on 25 November with the winner's event at HQ on 8 December;
- British Awards for Women in Policing - Four female special constables were nominated for the BAWP celebrated at a virtual event with the Chief Constable on 27 November.

Establishment, engagement & duties:

- 496¹ officers;
- 36¹ BAME officers (6.9% of the establishment)
- Delivered 49,339 hours (1.5% increase²) of which 37,111 were operational hours (increase of 10.2%²). This is equivalent to the working time provided by 27 full time officers at a cost of £1.4m during this quarter (approximately £5.6m/year);
- 4 new Community Specials Constables for Maldon, Woodham Ferrers and Bicknacre. They join 10 other volunteer police officers covering eight parishes and there are another 25 CSC's in the pipeline. Currently we have 29 businesses and 77 Officers who now benefit from the ESP scheme.

Recruitment, training & retention:

- Virtual recruitment event held 26 November during which 17 members of public joined in a positive evening which showcased how to become a special constable. The event included existing special constables sharing their journey live and pre-recorded;
- 225 applications which represents a slight decrease on the previous quarter by 25 applications. However, it is an increase on the same period last year which is consistent with seasonal recruitment patterns;
- 27 BAME applications (12.6%);
- Scheduled for three more intakes during 2020/21 with a potential for 50 more officers to start;
- Covid secure Attestation Ceremonies continue with 36 Specials Constables attested during this reporting period and a further 16 Constables scheduled to be attested on the 7 December;
- OPC recruitment phase one recruited additional 11 officers with 7 more to transfer to OPC in the new year (phase two).

Non-operational & service exit:

- 11 leavers represent a decrease from previous month (5 to Essex regulars, 2 officers retiring after 24- and 10-years volunteering, 1 from training school and 3 for a mixture of personal reasons);
- 57 officers (11.5%) are non-operational or on a leave of absence;
- 4 of these officers are off due to shielding or self-isolating (Covid).

4.0 Introduction

National Workforce Statistics for March 2020, published in July 2020, show that Essex Police remains the second largest Special Constabulary in England and Wales for the 12 months to March 2020, behind only the Metropolitan Police.

The statistics show that whilst there was a national reduction in headcount of 14% from March 2019, Essex Police had achieved growth of 4 Officers/0.25% and is one of nine forces recording a growth in recruitment (Appendix A).

¹ Correct as of 30 November 2020

² When compared with data from same period in 2019

5.0 Current Work and Performance

5.1 Recruitment

Essex Police received 225 completed applications between 01 September and 30 November 2020. This is a slight decrease on the previous quarter by 25 applications. This represents a small decrease of 1.75% on the same period last year which is consistent with seasonal recruitment patterns.

29 applicants were from a BAME background (12.89%) compared to 26 applications from the same period last year (11.35%). 74 applicants identify as female (32.89%) compared to 69 applicants from last year (30.13%); both represent positive directional shifts and are supportive of the new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy aims.

On 26 November 2020, a virtual Recruitment Information Evening was held using Microsoft Teams during which 17 members of the public logged on and engaged with a variety of Specials and staff to hear about their journeys as part of the Specials Command, how it has impacted on their personal and professional lives and to answer any questions. A further event is planned for 14 January 2021 and will be promoted as part of National Volunteers Day (5 December).

5.2 Media Attraction

In this quarter we have maximised social media coverage around several events and can evidence where it has positively impacted on recruitment figures directly as highlighted below:

- The Media Team continue to promote good news stories via the 'We Value Difference' campaign;
- Facebook and Twitter continue to be the highest media source for Special applications with 68 new applications received via this channel in October;
- 5 December is National Volunteer Day where an article internally and externally across a range of platforms will be showcasing the valuable work our Specials undertake;
- Essex Police are featured in page 31 within the national Special Impact magazine, which is shared online, see Appendix C.

5.3 Recruitment data from 01 Apr 16 to current date

The table below compares the recruitment and exits of the current year with the 3 previous 3 years. The number of Specials who resign to become a regular officer has increased from a position of 26.6% in March 2017 to 32.1% during 2020/21. However, there has been a significant decrease (47.2% to 32.1%) from last year.

Year	Joiner	Exits	(No. of leavers who have joined regulars)	% of leavers who have become a regular
2016/17	87	105	28	(26.6%)
2017/18	180	116	38	(32.7%)
2018/19	215	127	49	(38.5%)
2019/20	163	163	77	(47.2%)
2020/21 (to date)	83	87	28	(32.1%)
Grand Total	728	598	220	(34.2%)

5.4 **Employer Supported Policing & Community Special Constables**

Employer Supported Policing (ESP):

- 28 businesses support 74 Officers in the ESP scheme (7% of the national ESP). Of these 74 Officers, 35 officers are employed by Essex Police in other roles;
- 123 ESP duties have resulted in 958 hours of policing in this period which is an increase of 7.6% for duties and 9.5% for hours worked;
- Thirteen businesses, who are not registered with ESP, have provided staff a total of 390 paid hours for policing duties during this quarter to support Op TALLA;
- Advanced negotiations are underway with the following businesses: The Financial Ombudsman, Stobart Group Southend Airport and Latham & Watkins (US Law firm);
- A virtual recruitment event for ESP took place with Les Hawkins and Essex Chambers of Commerce on 6 August with plans for future events to follow;
- Avon & Somerset and Hertfordshire have made contact for Essex ESP share best practice to enable them to submit business plans for a dedicated ESP Coordinator.

Community Special Constables (CSC):

- 14 active CSC officers covering 8 councils. This is an increase of 4 officers and 2 councils since the last quarter;
- CSC Specials have worked 79 duties resulting in 485 hours;
- 2 additional officers will be taking posts in the next few weeks. 1 officer (Kelvedon) starts on the 1 December and a retired Metropolitan Police Officer will start in Earls Colne;
- There are currently 25 officers in various stages of the pipeline including 11 in post foundation stage. It is anticipated that 4 of these officers will take up post during the next quarter which will bring an additional 2 councils on board.

5.5 **Cyber Specials Cyber Volunteers (CSCV)**

The CSCV initiative continues to make strong progress by attracting talent from local communities and businesses interested in working in digital capabilities within Essex Police in roles such as Internet Investigation and Intelligence (III) and Cyber and Big Data Analytics. This has resulted in:

- 6 Essex active volunteers have been placed in posts within SCD;
- 2 further volunteers awaiting skills assessment prior to posting;

- Cyber Volunteer Dr Christian Kemp has been successful in obtaining a Home Office grant of approximately £100,000.00 to focus on a Cyber Protect Research project over 18 months. Dr Kemp will gather evidence from a variety of sources in order to create a menu of evidence based tactical options which will assist businesses in protecting themselves against becoming a victim of cyber-crime and will support the prevent and protect agenda;
- Further 9 volunteers will form part of the Data Ethics Committee;
- 5 Cyber Special Constables support cyber investigations and an additional Special is now permanently assigned to the Serious Organised Crime Unit;
- 3 further Specials will be assigned to the Serious Organised Economic Team in early new year.

5.6 Performance

Over the period 01 September to 30 November 2020, Specials have contributed a total of 49,339 hours, a 1.5% increase on the same period in 2019. The last 3 months has seen an increase of 10.2% in operational hours worked (37,111 operational hours). The hours worked by the Special Constabulary across this three-month period is equivalent to having an additional 27 full time officers, who would attract an annual salary cost of £1.4m during this quarter (approximately £5.6m/year);

Over the last 3 months, 73.83% of Special Constables have volunteered at least 16hrs each month (as required). However, Specials have averaged 33 hrs per month which is an increase from 31 hrs per month in the equivalent period in 2019.

36 Specials have left the Special Constabulary which is a decrease of 15 (29%) from the previous quarter and a decrease of 17 (32%) from the same period last year. 7 of these did so to join the regulars; 6 for Essex and 1 for other forces and 29 left for personal reasons.

Officers have focused on supporting the front-line response for Covid under the banner of Operation Talla which has consisted of community engagement, licensing checks, adherence to legislation whilst utilising the 4E model (engage, explain, encourage, enforce).

The team continue to support proactive policing for knife crime, gangs and violence under Op Sceptre with operations in each District and with BTP. This approach was successful in the monthly OPC led Op Gambler operations which focuses on travelling criminality at the Essex/London border in conjunction with the Metropolitan Police Service and surrounding forces.

5.7 Covid response (Op Talla)

The Special Constabulary have made the progress in the following areas:

- All online training is now provided via Microsoft Teams;
- There has been a significant reduction in Officers who were non-operational due to self-isolating and/or social distancing from 51 officers (11%) to 3 officers (0.6%);

- Leadership and Command Team meetings now take place via Teams and/or Covid secure face to face meetings;
- Recruitment events are now taking place via Microsoft Teams;
- The online written test for candidates via Teams will be adopted permanently;
- The promotion board process was adapted to ensure it was Covid secure and this will be adopted permanently as best practice;
- Covid secure training review has facilitated class sizes for foundation training to be increased from 10 to 20 for weekend courses and 10-12 for intensive intakes from 13 December;
- Two new additional intakes have been included for early 2021 providing a further 32 places. With all the additional spaces – we have increased our maximum numbers for 2020/2021 from 164 to 214.

5.8 Operational Deliverables

- Between 14 - 17 September, OPC led Operation Gambler which focused on tackling travelling criminality at cross border areas and on 16/17 September Essex led a 7 Force collaboration;
- The Special Constabulary Charity now has a working group in place to modernise and relaunch it, under the guidance of S/Inspector Lorne Campbell. District based champions have been assigned and the aim is to have an active charity operating within an effective model and framework;
- Successfully recruited 3 SC Fast Road Trainers to provide resilience in this area;
- OPC recruitment campaign realised 3 new S/Sgts and 16 special constables to roles across OPC teams. Most of these officers will be in post by 30 Nov 2020. Phase 2 of recruitment is planned to be completed by April 21.

6.0 Implications (Issues)

The greatest risk to the continued growth of the Special Constabulary remains the recruitment of regular officers and the impact of reduced class intakes to implement safe social distancing during Covid 19.

The aspiration is to achieve 600 by March 2021 which will be challenging due 3 additional factors in addition to the regular turnover:

- 1) Exit of Specials who joined during CoVid 'lockdown' such as university students and those furloughed;
- 2) Reduced training capacity to ensure CoVid secure classes;
- 3) Increased conversion rate of specials to regular which is assisting in the officer uplift priority.

6.1 Links to Police and Crime Plan Priorities

The Police and Crime Plan 2016-20 states that the PFCC will '*boost community volunteering, encourage the Active Citizen Programme and grow the police family – doubling the Special Constabulary, with a Special Constable in every community*'.

The Special Constabulary has grown by 153 Officers (30%) since September 2016 and set within the context of a significant reduction in numbers of Specials nationally

and our active recruitment of regular officers, this stands as a considerable achievement. There are Special Constables aligned to each of the Community Policing Teams. The Community Special Constables scheme continues to progress steadily in application numbers and in Specials who are in post.

6.2 Demand

The impact on demand is best measured through the contribution of performance and operational hours. The improvements in operational performance are described in section 5.6.

6.3 Risks/Mitigation

The following red risks are identified on the force risk register and the action being taken to mitigate these risks is detailed in section 5: -

URN	Score	Risk	Rationale
1196	40 - Red	Unable to meet the Special Constabulary establishment target due to Force recruitment.	There continues to be a successful pathway for SCs to become a PC and this is expected to continue in 20/21 and beyond. Reduced intake numbers to adhere to Covid social distancing are impacting on the recruitment plan.
1659	40 - Red	Regular recruitment compromising Specials recruitment	As a result of local and national funding decisions, Essex Police plans to increase the establishment to 3,369 by March 2021. This means that the current regular recruitment campaign will continue.

6.4 Equality and/or Human Rights Implications

There are no specific equality or human rights implications in this paper.

6.5 Health and Safety Implications

There are no specific health and safety implications in this paper.

7.0 Consultation/Engagement

- Becky Humphreys – Head of Resourcing, Human Resources
- Pru Kingham – Media
- Jason Poole – Learning & Development
- Hannah Scally – Specials Recruitment Delivery Manager
- Les Hawkins – Supported Policing Champion

8.0 Actions for Improvement

The action taken to sustain recruitment over the last quarter has been summarised in section 5 above.

9.0 Future Work/Development and Expected Outcome

Awards & Recognition:

- **National Volunteers Day** is on 5 December and we are working with Media to produce several products and officer profiles to promote the specials;
- **Specials Awards** event was held on 25 November with the winner's event at HQ on 8 December;
- **British Awards for Women in Policing** - Four female special constables were nominated for the BAWP celebrated at a virtual event with the Chief Constable on 27 November.

Communication:

- Review of usage of Essex Specials Twitter account strategically and are looking to create more original and regular content;
- Specials Magazine is a monthly online publication and is to be reviewed in terms of content, messaging and audience.

Recruitment training & retention:

- Stood up weekly 'pipeline' meeting of Specials Development Team, HR, Business Support, Vetting, L&D. ToR is to review numbers at each stage against target, process & attrition from application to attestation to identify any blockers or risks and take action to mitigate;
- Virtual recruitment event scheduled for 14 January and will be promoted as part of National Volunteers Day;
- Specials Training Team (L&D) response to Covid secure training has enabled increased class sizes. From Intake S8 (13 Dec) weekend classes have been increased from a maximum of 10 to 20 and our intensive courses have been increased from 10 to 12;
- Two additional intakes have been added to the training calendar - an intensive course, SE, in February and a new weekend course for the end of March, S11;
- Increased our maximum numbers for 2020/2021 from 164 to 214;
- Specials Training Team are focusing on supporting the investigative specials through their post foundation training so that we are in a position in 2021 to start the next step of their detective pathway;
- The Cyber Special/Cyber Volunteer programme continues to make progress. There are 9 volunteers for the Cyber Ethics Committee with 7 fully vetted. There are an additional 10 volunteers looking to assist the digital world. One of these volunteers was welcomed to Essex Police at the recent Attestation and presented with a certificate as thanks;
- Promotion Boards are scheduled for January 2021; currently there are no S/Insp vacancies and therefore focus will be on S/Sgt posts
- Rural Engagement Team (RET) recruitment process in January 2021 for additional 7 officers to focus on hare coursing and fly tipping.

Reporting & governance:

- Development of 3-year Delivery Plan;
- Review of current reporting format;
- Review of usage and allocation of BWV and mobile devices

9.1 National Overview

In line with the Special Constabulary Strategy 2019-2023, the College of Policing have devised and developed a new Special Constabulary Learning Programme, detailed at Appendix B. This programme aligns with the PEQF and provides a clear pathway from SC to PC for forces who wish to adopt this.

10.0 Decisions Required by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

Not required.

11.0 Appendices

Appendix A

Appendix B

Appendix C



Police Workforce
Statistics - March 20



SC Force detailed
comms.docx



Special Impact Issue
40 - Autumn 2020.pd