

**MINUTES**  
**POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR ESSEX**  
**and**  
**ESSEX POLICE**  
**PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY BOARD**

28 January 2021, 14:00 to 17:00, via Microsoft Teams

**Present:**

Roger Hirst (RH)	(Chair) Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Julia Berry (JB)	Head of Finance, PFCC's office
Jane Gardner (JG)	Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Dr Vicki Harrington (VH)	Director of Strategic Change and Performance, Essex Police
Suzanne Harris (SH)	Head of Performance and Scrutiny (Policing), PFCC's office
Elizabeth Helm (EH)	Section 151 officer, PFCC's office
Richard Jones (RJ)	Head of Business Partnering and Management Accounting, Essex Police
Ch Supt Andy Mariner (AM)	LPA North Command Team, Essex Police
Debbie Martin (DM)	Chief Finance Officer, Essex Police
Pippa Mills (PM)	Deputy Chief Constable, Essex Police
Janet Perry (JP)	Strategic Head of Performance and Resources
Camilla Brandal	(In attendance) Minutes, PFCC's office

**Apologies:**

ACC Rachel Nolan (RN)	Assistant Chief Constable, Essex Police
Pippa Brent-Isherwood (PBI)	Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, PFCC's office

1 Introduction and welcome

RH welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from PBI and ACC Nolan.

2.i Minutes of last meeting

- 2.i.1 VH asked that Page 5, paragraph 6.2 be amended to read "PEQF contracts were completed in June and the project was due to go live in January 2022."
- 2.i.2 VH asked that Page 7, line 7 be amended to read "Factor analysis has been completed focusing on these areas to identify the questions that have the greatest impact on confidence. Uniformed presence has little or no effect in driving confidence of BAME respondents."
- 2.i.3 VH asked that Page 7, paragraph 8.5 be amended to read "but the need to strike the right balance between enforcement and engagement was noted,"
- 2.i.4 There were no matters arising and the minutes of the previous meeting, subject to the amendments above, were agreed.

## 2.ii Action Log

- 48/20 Joint Audit Committee action for P&R  
After discussion, it was agreed that this Action would now be reworded and redefined as to what is now required. DM would speak to PM and then to RH, JP and JB.
- 50/20 Forward Plan (finance)  
No update due as this action is due in April. Meeting scheduled for 20 April.
- 53/20 Forward Plan  
Issues now resolved and part of business as usual. Close.
- 54/20 Monthly Performance Report  
Modern Slavery updates to be included in Monthly Performance Report – first one tabled for February.
- 55/20 Recruitment of specials  
Response received from Jenny Brouard in respect of Specials and Roads Policing. Close.
- 56/20 Crime Prevention Strategy  
Op Henderson update due in February.
- 57/20 Crime Prevention Strategy  
MoRile information sent through to PFCC's office. Close.
- 58/20 PFCC Victims Commissioning  
Kirsty Smith provided update to report with caveat on data. Close.
- 59/20 Deep Dive – More Local Visible and Accessible Policing  
101 Comparison data – information received but RH would like to be able to reconcile back to P&R papers from 2016/2017. SH to find information on the original scope to provide full picture to pass to PM.

### **Action 1/21**

**DM to speak to PM and then to RH, JP and JB to agree what can be achieved with regard to cashflow reporting, and feed back to the February Board.**

## 2.iii Forward Plan

- 2.iii.1 SH advised that she had discussed a few proposed amendments with Claire Heath; Insurance Update added to February, Safeguarding Children added to March, Operational Transformational Reserve now included in Efficiency and Savings reports and this is shown against the relevant months, Monthly Finance Outturn report moved to May, making the remaining months for updates July, October and January.
- 2.iii.2 RH asked about the draft Closure Timetable being moved from January's meeting and replaced with a final Timetable for February's meeting. After a discussion around timings for sign off from Chief Officers' Group, it was agreed that a draft timetable could be brought to February's meeting whilst the final timetable would be agreed at COG on 10 February.
- 2.iii.3 After a discussion around the merger of the Quarterly Performance Report, MSG Aspirations and Balance Scorecard, it was agreed that the Balanced Scorecard reporting would remain a separate document. The quarterly Performance Report

would be presented in January, April, July and October, with the quarterly Balanced Scorecard presented in February, May, August and November.

- 2.iii.4 After a discussion about paper deadlines and late papers, it was agreed that further consideration was needed. SH would speak to Richard Jones to consider dates of COG, Force approval of papers, paper deadlines and pre-meets, and identify where things might be moved or changed to assist the process.

**Action 2/21**

**SH to speak to RJ regarding Force approval dates for papers in relation to deadlines and impact on circulation and pre-meets**

**3 Finance**

**3.i Monthly Finance Report**

- 3.i.1 DM presented the Month 9 Finance report and confirmed that the latest forecast revenue underspend has reduced to £1.389m, mainly due to the Op Talla payment to officers and staff. The police officer strength forecast at end of December is 3,337 FTE and at year end is forecast to be 3,369 FTE. DM also confirmed that the Capital Reserve is forecast to be a £9.0m deficit at year end.
- 3.i.2 DM went through the changes to the forecast. A discussion took place around the movement in the month and the forecast outturn differences. DM explained that page 4 and 11 concern the variance between forecast outturn and current budget, whereas page 5 reports on the movement between months (month 8 v month 9). It was agreed that JP discuss this with DM. It was also agreed that where there is no movement in pay month on month (police staff in month 9) the nil variance would be reported.

**Action 3/21**

**JP to discuss forecasting with DM**

- 3.i.3 JP asked about the reduction in the forecast compared to the previous month and her concern that we may have only factored in actual events. JP asked whether the forecast is likely to increase again before the year end and if so, it seemed to be a short-term view to reduce it this month only to increase again next month.
- 3.i.4 RH asked about the Op Talla table and the surge funding spend. PM confirmed that the surge funding will be spent by the end of the financial year, with DM also confirming that this will be taken up mostly with overtime funding. RH also asked about the police staff pay decreasing and police officer pay increasing in relation to the original budget forecasting, as the hope was that more would be spent on police staff. PM confirmed that the police officer pay increase noted here is mainly due to Op Talla and dual workplace allowances. RJ confirmed that the current virements shown on Pages 16 and 17 reflect any movements in pay, and the figures have been reassessed for next year to bring it more in line with this year. RH asked if this particular issue could be monitored in future months' reporting.
- 3.i.5 It was confirmed that the virement relating to Op Talla in the recommendations was agreed.
- 3.i.6 It was confirmed that RJ would send through a redacted version of this report for publishing.

**Action 4/21**

**RJ to send to SH a redacted version of this report for publishing**

### 3.ii Efficiency & Savings Plan Report

- 3.ii.1 VH presented the report and noted that there were several changes to the 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 figures. The changes to the 2020/2021 figures were the confirmation of the DTO posts in custody being filled, an in-year surplus of cashable savings with the cashable and non-cashable savings set out in Table 3. The figures for 2021/2022 are showing as a decrease in the cashable savings forecast mainly around 2 projects coming off the list. JP commented on how impressive the savings and efficiency process is compared to others she has seen; she also asked about the MTFs figure for 21/22 and it was agreed that this will be updated based on the Police, Fire and Crime Panel Papers.
- 3.ii.2 RH wanted to recognise how much work and effort lies behind this report which has resulted from a powerful and embedded process. RH wanted to pass his thanks to VH and PM (and their teams) for the work done on this reporting.

### **AM joined the meeting at 1500**

### 4 Monthly Performance Report

- 4.1 VH advised that far less reliance can now be placed on the Crime Survey of England and Wales figures as the data only goes to March 2020, with neither the Office of National Statistics nor iQuanta now reporting at force level. VH commented that Essex were in a good position due to the independent survey work undertaken by SMSR on behalf of the Force.
- 4.2 VH presented the Monthly Performance report and from the Executive Summary, it was noted that five of the seven PFCC priorities had been graded as good, with two of the seven (Crack down on anti-social behaviour, and Tackling gangs and serious violence) graded as 'Requires Improvement'. All Crime fell by 8.1% for the 12 months to December 2020 but each change in the rules relating to social distancing has affected the number of All Crime offences reported to Essex Police. A discussion took place around the All Crime Harm (Crime Severity) Score. VH confirmed that the score is based on length of sentence multiplied by volume, and therefore the high level of reporting in Essex impacts on the score. PM commented that she is reassured that there is no missing data which would have an impact on the Crime Data Accuracy figures.
- 4.3 A discussion took place around whether the figures were underestimating the positive impact on ASB and whether they were too confident around the domestic abuse figures. The report shows a higher number of ASB incidents compared with last year but since May 2020 these numbers have included Covid related offences, which have influenced the direction of travel. It was agreed that the Force's analysis of the ASB figures for Lockdowns 1, 2 and 3 would be included in future reporting once it had been prepared.
- 4.4 A discussion took place around the domestic abuse reporting with the previous decrease of incidents growing, and an upward trend in the reduction of repeat incidents. RH commented that he was still not certain about the Good rating around the solved rate figures when used against the MSG. Whilst agreeing that effort, activity and future plans are good, he expressed concerns that this has not yet translated into the full impact on results that we would like to see, and that there is more to be done in this area. After a brief discussion around Key Performance Indicators in the Police and Crime Plan, it was agreed that the indicators would be reviewed for any new Police and Crime Plan.

- 4.5 It was confirmed that additional information on Modern Slavery figures would be included in the February report.
- 4.6 RH asked if Priority 7 could have the data on the mobile phone offences figures put back into the reporting and asked that the historic comparator be put back into the report with a caveat to treat with caution rather than showing no data at all.

**Action: 5/21**

**Mobile phone offences data to be included in future Performance Reporting, including historic data, with a caveat regarding accuracy**

- 4.7 VH asked whether the SMSR survey results could be used solely for the confidence survey data going forwards. RH acknowledged that the ONS data is almost a year old, but stated that he would like it to continue to be included with a caveat in the reporting to explain this.
- 4.8 RH wanted to commend VH and her team on the level of reporting which has resulted in the information produced providing a very good historic picture of where we were when we started and where we are now.

5 Quarterly Performance Report

- 5.1 RH thanked VH for the report for which he has received very good feedback as people read it when it is published on the PFCC's website. The report is a very good backup for the detail produced on the monthly reports.
- 5.2 SH asked about the reduction of the number of live chat interactions reported and PM commented that the live chat system is still a relatively new system which is currently producing fluctuating figures as the Force and the public get used to using it.

6 MSG Aspirations (quarterly report)

- 6.1 VH presented the quarterly report which highlighted that compared with last quarter, the Force were now meeting aspirations in three areas. Since the last quarter the MSG position has improved in three areas; Homicide – solved rate, Homicide – offences and Violence with Injury – solved rate, but has deteriorated in three areas; Killed or Seriously Injured, Trafficking of Drugs – offences and Trafficking of Drugs – solved rate.
- 6.2 VH wanted to note that the comparative data that is available, especially for roads and police sickness, is nearly 12 months old.

7 Force Growth Plan (quarterly report)

- 7.1 PM presented the report on the Force Growth programme, with highlights being the additional investment in recruiting 151 more frontline officers and 60.8 additional staff, the increase in High Harm and Investigations posts, Custody posts and Crime and Public Protection posts.
- 7.2 PM confirmed that there had been some amendments to the timeline for implementation of some growth posts due to the Coronavirus pandemic but that recruitment had successfully been completed in nine business areas. PM commented on the postponement of the Sergeants exams and the Detective's exams and the impact that Op Talla has had on these, but the March 2020 candidates for the Sergeants exams sat their exams in October 2020 with an additional promotion process currently being run. The National Investigators exams had also been

postponed but agreement has been obtained to increase the number of “Investigate First” cohorts to 80 across next year. Actions for improvement included new streamlined processes to standardise the advertisement of roles as they are implemented.

7.3 RH thanked PM for the update on the Force Growth Plan.

**The meeting paused at 1555 for a comfort break.  
The meeting reconvened at 1600.**

## 8 Deep Dive – Breaking the Cycle of Domestic Abuse

- 8.1 AM presented the deep dive assessment of domestic abuse investigations which also set out the long term trends, demand, resourcing, partnership working and future challenges the Force faces.
- 8.2 The report included items on
  - 8.2.1 Police Resources including the Local Policing Teams, Domestic Abuse Investigations Teams, Central Referral Unit, MASH and MARAT, additional resources (Strategic Centre).
  - 8.2.2 Key initiatives and activities: Op Consider, Op Encompass, Op Enforce, Secondary DASH risk assessment central repository pilot, Strategic and Tactical Domestic Homicide Review meetings, Stay Safe at Home campaign.
  - 8.2.3 Key internal and external influencers: SETDAB 2020 social media campaign, Domestic Abuse Best Practice Framework, Domestic Abuse Commissioner and Stalking Protection Orders.
  - 8.2.4 Other items in the report included Performance, Crime Types, Arrests, Outcomes, National Picture, future work/development including the Victim Feedback Panel, the DA Problem Solving Team, TecSOS App, Force Domestic Abuse Strategy and Problem Profile, Domestic Abuse Bill, College of Policing, National Funding, New Victims Codes and Covid19 impact.
- 8.3 RH thanked AM for this extensive report on a really valuable topic for which he is very grateful. RH asked if he could have a more detailed brief on the DVPNs and DAPOs and the differences between them to understand them more fully.

### **Action 6/21**

**AM to provide RH with a more detailed brief on the DVPNs and DAPOs and the differences between them**

- 8.4 JG asked about the training for the Force Control Room staff related to domestic abuse. AM confirmed that an internal training structure is in place to address any of the issues that might occur related to domestic abuse and the training is constantly being updated.
- 8.5 RH asked about the Drive project for perpetrators in Colchester and the impact it had, resulting in the roll out of the Columbus project county-wide, as this was not mentioned in the deep dive. AM confirmed that there was a referral pathway in place with third party commissioned services but the Force also had a specific operation which dealt with high risk high volume repeat perpetrators, and with the new DA team starting, the analytic data provided by VH and her team will allow the identification of this cohort of people.

- 8.6 RH acknowledged the impact of Covid-19 on the planned co-location of CRU and MARAC and asked if the future timeframe for implementation was known. It was believed that the current prevalence of home working had affected the short-term need for co-location, therefore reducing the urgency, although confirmed that it will still be implemented in due course. An update on this would be brought to the next Strategic Estates Board in March.
- 8.7 RH asked about the lower conversion rate of DVPNs and DVPOs, and commented that it is lower than the national rates; is this something that is understood? AM commented that his understanding was the opposite and the Force had a 90-95% conversion rate for DVPNs and DVPOs. After a brief discussion, it was agreed that RH would pass this query through to VH to look into.

#### 9 Approval for publishing of documents

It was agreed that the papers for publishing were items 3i (redacted), 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8.

#### 10 Any Other Business

- 10.1 JP thanked EH for her work as PFCC's s151 officer as this was her last Performance & Resources Scrutiny Board meeting before handing over to JB. RH added his thanks to EH for her contribution over the past 10 months.
- 10.2 There being no further business, the meeting closed at 1646.