

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

25 February 2021, 10:00 to 13:00, via Microsoft Teams

**Present:**

Roger Hirst (RH)	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (Chair for part)
Julia Berry (JB)	Head of Finance and S151, PFCC's office
Annette Chan (AC)	Chief Accountant, Essex Police
Jane Gardner (JG)	Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (Chair for part)
Dr Vicki Harrington (VH)	Director of Strategic Change and Performance, Essex Police
Suzanne Harris (SH)	Head of Performance and Scrutiny (Policing), PFCC's office
Darren Horsman (DH)	Strategic Head of Policy and Engagement, PFCC's office
Richard Jones (RJ)	Head of Business Partnering and Management Accounting, Essex Police
Richard Leicester (RL)	Director of HR, Essex Police
Pippa Mills (PM)	Deputy Chief Constable, Essex Police
Glen Pavelin (GP)	Ch/Supt Operational Policing Command, Essex Police
Janet Perry (JP)	Strategic Head of Performance and Resources
T/ACC Tom Richards (TR)	Assistant Chief Constable, Essex Police
Camilla Brandal	Minutes, PFCC's office

**Apologies:**

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

**1 Introduction and welcome**

JG welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from PBI, RN, AP and DM. JG confirmed that she would chair the meeting until RH joined.

**2.i Minutes of last meeting**

- 2.i.1 Page 3, paragraph 3.i.2, PM asked if the inconsistency point on the second line could explain what it was in more detail. JP to look at this and provide wording.

**Action 7:**

**JP to look at second sentence on paragraph 3.i.2 and provide wording around what the inconsistency item is.**

- 2.i.2 PM asked that Page 4, paragraph 4.3, fourth line reads 'Covid related incidents' rather than 'Covid related offences'.

- 2.i.3 PM asked that Page 5, paragraph 5.2, third line reads 'currently producing fluctuating figures as the public get....' and to remove the words 'as the Force'.
- 2.i.4 Page 6, paragraph 8.6, PM asked that the reference to Strategic Estates Board be changed to Strategic Board.
- 2.i.5 There were no matters arising and the minutes of the previous meeting, subject to the amendments above, were agreed.

## 2.ii Action Log

- 50/20 Forward Plan (finance)  
No update due
- 54/20 Monthly Performance Report  
Narrative to include reference to Modern Slavery which has been done.  
Close.
- 56/20 Crime Prevention Strategy  
Revise due date to May 2021 to allow reporting time.
- 59/20 Deep Dive – More Local, Visible and Accessible Policing  
After a brief discussion, it was agreed to close this action. JG would speak to RH outside the meeting to explain the closure.

**Action 8:  
JG to speak to RH outside the meeting to explain the closure of this action.**

- 01/21 Action Log  
To be left open until the format of the cashflow reporting has been confirmed.
- 02/21 Forward Plan  
Timeliness of papers – it has been agreed that when there is an issue with paper submission deadlines being prior to COG sign off, the draft finance paper will be submitted to the PFCC's office on the day of COG. Close.
- 03/21 Monthly Finance Report  
JP has spoken to DM. Close.
- 04/21 Monthly Finance Report  
Redacted version for publishing received. Close.
- 05/21 Monthly Finance Report  
Mobile phone figures in Performance Report. VH would look to see if any comparative data is available for inclusion in the report. Close.
- 06/21 Deep Dive on Domestic Abuse  
Information on DVPNs and DAPOs shared with RH. Close.

## 2.iii Forward Plan

- 2.iii.1 SH informed the Board that she had made some minor changes to the Forward Plan (shown in in red font on the version circulated with the papers) and asked for comments and/or approval.

- 2.iii.2 AC asked if the May Board could also include the Provisional Outturn Report, the draft unaudited Statement of Accounts, the Annual Governance Statement and Narrative, as well as the Treasury Management Report. AC would provide a list of papers to SH.

**Action 9:**

**AC to provide a list of finance Board papers to be included for the May Board to SH.**

- 2.iii.3 Reference to the Public Perception Survey in the Standing items for June to be changed to 'Independent SMSR Survey'.
- 2.iii.4 SH asked if the Vulnerable People quarterly report, which had been included in the Deep Dive, should be put back on the Forward Plan as it was currently missing. After a brief discussion, it was agreed that this report is now an annual report and would next be presented at the Board meeting in July 2021.
- 2.iii.5 SH asked for confirmation that the CIPFA report on Management Capability Review can be added in April. RJ and AC asked that they check with DM before confirming that this is April. JP commented that this item can move to later on the Forward Plan.

**Action 10:**

**DM to confirm to SH the suitable timing for the CIPFA Report to be added to Forward Plan**

- 2.iii.6 SH commented that March's Agenda was looking rather busy and asked if any item could be moved. VH commented that the HMICFRS's inspection report on response to Covid could be moved to April and PM confirmed that the report should only be a couple of pages. It was agreed that the HMICFRS's report could move to April which would still allow for the statutory 56 days for responses to be met.

**Action 11:**

**SH to confirm changes to the Forward Plan in accordance with decisions outlined in 2 iii.1-6**

**The remaining items on the agenda were taken out of order in accordance with availability of attendees required for each item.**

8 Use of Force/ Stop and Search (Quarterly)

- 8.1 GP presented the quarterly update with items to note being that there had been an increase in the Use of Force compared with the numbers for the previous year which had mainly been as a response to Covid and the variety of ways this has been dealt with. GP commented that the numbers of handcuff usages, Firearms incidents and Taser usage was consistent. GP commented on the disproportionality mentioned in the report and wanted to reassure that through the proactive work being carried out by the Force, the tasking and intelligence work being carried out does correlate to the numbers being reported in this paper.
- 8.2 GP presented the Stop and Search part of the report and noted that there had been a number of decreases in the amount of Stop and Searches that had been carried out. These decreases were mainly due to seasonality and Covid issues. GP confirmed that no Section 60s had been authorised in the latest quarter. GP commented on the routine areas for Stop and Search (i.e. stolen items and misuse of drugs), the age range which remains consistent and the disproportionality element. GP confirmed that work will be done on more analysis of data around disproportionality which will be

reported back to this Board. The outcome rate for Stop and Searches for a positive search was higher for Essex Police when compared with the Most Similar Forces in the Group.

- 8.3 JG commented that the numbers of Stop and Searches that were carried out fairly and respectfully was a good news item and that the positive searches and using the intelligence from these is also important.
- 8.4 Following a question from JP regarding how the proportionate number of stops for BAME versus white was calculated, a discussion took place around the way this would be reported in the next paper, once the data has been analysed in more detail. DH asked about confidence also increasing in the BAME communities on the use of Stop and Search, and if GP knew why this was increasing? GP confirmed that the increase in confidence has arisen through the information received through the IAGs and the understanding from each local Command, along with the local groups that the communities are included in. VH commented that a separate column will be included on the next report which will show the disproportionality figures.

**Action 12:**

**Next report in Use of Force and Stop and Search to include separate column to show disproportionality figures (VH)**

- 8.5 A brief discussion took place around the Stop and Searches being carried out fairly and respectfully, and the training (and the ongoing training cycle) that officers receive on how to deliver a Stop and Search.

9 Deep Dives

9.1 Tackling Gangs and Serious Violence

- 9.1.1 GP presented the report on Tackling Gangs and Serious Violence which was a deep dive assessment of the activity to disrupt and prevent gangs and County Lines and the serious violence they commit across Essex and which set out the current structures, resource investment and future challenges.
- 9.1.2 GP spoke to the paper which included items such as the creation of the Serious Violence Unit (SVU), the national scoring mechanism, the current SVU structure, the impact of resources, a Demand Overview, key initiatives and activities, current performance and results, and future work, which includes short term and mid-term aims.
- 9.1.3 JG thanked GP for the report and commented that it was good to hear that the Force is trying new approaches which has resulted in visible public reassurance, on social media for example.
- 9.1.4 A brief discussion took place around the work of Roads Policing which was part of the Operational Policing Command along with the Serious Violence Unit, where both units provide support to each other.
- 9.1.5 DH commented on JG's point on the increase in positive publicity which had focused on results and was interested to know whether GP thought this had an impact on the whole confidence picture for overall policing? GP was of the opinion that visibility has played a key part in the Commands and that the SVU's work seen on social media has had a positive impact on community confidence. VH is also of the opinion that the public knowledge of what the Force are doing in terms of addressing serious crime is a key driver to the high level of confidence.

- 9.1.6 SH asked about the drug market survey work that had been carried out by the Force and wanted to know if the results had been shared with partners to make them aware of the demand figures? GP confirmed that work has been done with partners and there are areas that are looking to be developed around dedicated resources that will be used to target the support in the right places.
- 9.1.7 JG thanked GP for the positive and proactive report and asked that thanks be taken back to the team.

**GP left the meeting at 1107.**

9.2 Disrupting and preventing organised crime

- 9.2.1 PM introduced TR who has stepped up temporarily to cover ACC Harman's role.
- 9.2.2 TR presented the deep dive paper which was an assessment of the activity to disrupt and prevent Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) across Essex and set out the current structures, resource investment and future challenges faced.
- 9.2.3 TR explained the key structures that are in place to tackle OCGs, how the specialist resourcing through dedicated Serious Organised Crime units works, the specialist money laundering team, the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Unit, and the support provided to the specialist teams by a range of other Commands. TR explained the impact that dedicated specialist resources are having which is reflected in improving performance, along with the introduction of an OCG management Unit which will assist in identifying new OCGs earlier. TR went through some of the key initiatives and activities that are taking place and the launch of the SOC System Tasking process which has established a Management of Risk in Law Enforcement ('MoRiLE') score for the OCGs and other tactical vulnerabilities.
- 9.2.4 TR explained what the key internal and external influencers have been in the OCG disruption work and how partnership engagement links, communications and campaigns are delivering messaging for how to raise awareness of the crime types and ensure communities are able to mitigate against threats posed.
- 9.2.5 TR set out the Key Performance Indicators for the OCG and went through the details contained in the performance reporting. TR also commented on the future work, development, expected outcome and actions for improvement for 2021 and the end of the plan.
- 9.2.6 JG thanked TR for the insight into a fascinating area of work and was encouraged to hear about the work that will be done in the future.
- 9.2.7 A discussion took place around the ERSOU scoring for Essex, how the work done by the OCGs fits with work done nationally and regionally, the work of the Cyber Crime team, and POCA funding.
- 9.2.8 JG thanked TR again for this report and asked that thanks also be taken back to the team.

**TR left the meeting at 1131.**

**The meeting paused at 1132 for a comfort break.**

**The meeting reconvened at 1140.**

**RH joined the meeting at 1141.**

## 7 HR, Sickness and Attendance management, Staff Performance Reports (Quarterly)

- 7.1 RL presented the quarterly performance report and the HR strategic dashboard which set out the force's attendance, establishment, strength full time equivalent (FTE), turnover and diversity profiles. The performance report also included new details on number of staff business cases since 1 October 2020, absence figures represented as average days lost per person, and an additional section has been included which details the wider declaration of protected characteristics of the workforce.
- 7.2 Items to note from the report that remain on track or have improved included attracting and recruiting new officers, reductions in officer and staff vacancies, police officer application numbers specifically regarding BAME officers, reduction in officer and staff turnover, reduction in officer absence, reduction in staff absence, reduction in sick days, and improved self-declaration of protected characteristics. Areas of focus are: seeking to increase the proportion of female officer applications and a need to continue to monitor PCSO absence.
- 7.3 RL outlined the future work and development that the Force has scheduled which included increasing the number of Specials, continue to increase the BAME officer representation and continue to increase female officer representation.
- 7.4 A discussion took place around the work being done with Specials, understanding cause of sickness absence, recording of absences due to psychological issues, how the Force are dealing with the impact of the pandemic, whether the wellbeing survey is planned to run again and the systems and processes that are in place to assist the workforce.
- 7.5 JG thanked RL for the comprehensive report and asked that thanks be taken back to the team.

## 3 Finance

### 3.i Performance report – Month 10

- 3.i.1 AC presented the paper on the month 10 position for the Force. AC confirmed that there were no virements this month but that there was a recommendation to transfer £703k underspend of one-off revenue consequences of capital to the Transformation Reserve to allow expenditure to be incurred in 2021/22. RH said the transfer would be considered once the year end position was clearer and therefore would not be agreed at this stage. It was agreed that RJ would seek clarity on the projects that might be brought forward into 2021/22, and would present the virement requests to the PFCC as part of the year end process.
- 3.i.2 From the Executive Summary the latest forecast revenue underspend is £1.789m, following a transfer of £1.527m to the General Reserve, there will be an increase to the March intake of starters which will be reflected in the month 11 financial reporting. The police officer strength forecast at the end of January was 3,369 FTE and at year end is 3,371 FTE. The Capital Reserve is forecast to be a £2.4m deficit at year end with the forecast capital expenditure at £12.4m and forecast capital income from property disposals at £8.2m.
- 3.i.3 AC went through the tables in the report which reported on the forecast variances based on the current budget, the main forecast movements since Month 9, the top five forecast overspends, the top five forecast underspends and noted that the Police Objective Analysis ('POA') had been included as a new piece of reporting on Pages 18 and 19.

- 3.i.4 JP asked about the movement in the forecast outturn with her concern being that the forecast is focused on each month and not the forward look. She noted that forecast had moved from £1.8m underspent at month 8, then £1,4 m underspent at month 9, was now back to £1.8m underspent at month 10. It was agreed that further work would take place in the monthly finance meetings to consider the forecasting. JP questioned the significant movement in the capital forecast and whether there was likely to be any further movement. AC said she thought there would not be any further significant movement. RH asked about the POA expenditure variances to budget, in particular roads policing, public protection and transfer to the General Reserve. It was agreed that JP would meet with RJ to go through the detailed explanations before the POA would be presented at March's Strategic Board; the variance explanations would be included in that paper.

**Action 13:**

**Forecasting to be considered and discussed at the monthly finance meeting**

**Action 14:**

**JP and RJ to meet to discuss the detail of the POA variances to budget before the Strategic Board meeting**

- 3.i.6 A brief discussion took place around the capital expenditure and the funding mix behind the borrowing from the Revenue Reserve due to slippage of the schemes. JP stated that her understanding was that there would be no external borrowing in 2020/21. AC confirmed that JP was correct.

3.i.7 Draft Closure timetable

- 3.i.7.1 AC presented the report which outlined a high level view of the proposed Closure timetable for production of the Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and Narrative Report, known as the Statement of Accounts. These Statement of Accounts refer to both the Chief Constable and the PFCC Group accounts. Appendix A of the report set out the key dates. AC explained that the timetable is based on the statutory dates but it was likely that these would be extended and should this be the case the timetable would be reviewed and updated. It had been agreed that a soft close will not take place this year due to the impact of Covid. AC confirmed that it was proposed that the Narrative Report for this year would be a much shorter more concise report.

- 3.i.7.2 JP asked that an item on the timetable be included for JB (as the PFCC's s151) before 27 May to be sighted on the draft SOAs. It was agreed that AC would include this in the timetable.

**Action 15:**

**AC to include an item for JB to be sighted on the draft SOAs prior to 27 May.**

- 3.i.7.3 A discussion took place around proposals to refine the contents of the Narrative Reports for the PFCC Group/PFCC Statement of Accounts and the Chief Constable's Statement of Accounts for 2020/21 with the Chief Constable's Corporate Finance Team working collaboratively with the PFCC's Office to tighten the narrative for this year. With regard to the PFCC Group/PFCC Narrative Report, it was agreed that the contents would be reviewed but a more in-depth review would be performed after the results of the PCC Review are known and in time for the 2021/22 Narrative Report. It was agreed that a new version of this paper would be sent through with the updated recommendation to reflect this discussion.

**Action 16:**

**It was agreed that a new version of Closure timetable paper would be sent through with the updated recommendation to reflect the discussion.**

3.ii Efficiency & Savings Plan Report

VH confirmed that the Board had seen the figures contained in the report as it had been approved by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel on 4 February.

4 Monthly Performance Report

Due to time constraints on this meeting, VH confirmed that there had been no notable changes to the priorities other than the ASB priority moving to good as agreed by the Board at January's meeting.

5 Balanced Scorecard (Quarterly report)

See 4 above.

6 Insurance update

This item will be presented to the Strategic Board in March.

10 Approval for publishing of documents

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

11 Any Other Business

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 1301.