

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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Report from:	Essex Police
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Author on behalf of Chief Officer:	Jenny Brouard Citizens in Policing Commander
Date of Approval:	3 March 2021

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 23rd November 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 December 2020 to 21 February 2021 and future areas of focus. Of note, due to paper clearance dates, the report data is not a full quarter. Highlights include:

Reward & Recognition:

- Jenny Brouard Citizens in Policing Commander was awarded the British Empire Medal for her work with Volunteers within Policing;
- The Special Constabulary have been nominated and shortlisted for the Queens Voluntary and Services Award (QAVS) and have been invited to attend a virtual event on the 4 March 2021 where this achievement will be recognised;

- SC Joe Eardley retired after 33 years volunteering for Essex Police and was presented with a certificate of achievement and congratulations by Supt Michelle Davies Head of Local Policing Support Unit and Head of Special Constabulary. In the last ten years SC Eardley had volunteered 4,736 hours.

Establishment, engagement & duties (as of 21/2/21):

- 522 officers;
- 27 BAME officers (5.1% of the establishment);
- Delivered 46,469 hours of which 35,470 were operational hours. This is equivalent to the working time provided by 100.8 full time officers at a cost of £1.3m during this quarter (approximately £5.3m/year);
- 16 Community Special Constables covering ten parishes with a further 22 CSC's in the pipeline;
- 33 businesses and 79 Officers who now benefit from the ESP scheme.

Recruitment, training & retention:

- Essex Police are an early adopter of the SC to PC pilot being led by College of Policing. This is scheduled to go-live summer 2021;
- Virtual recruitment event held on the 14 January 2021 in which 40 potential new applications have been submitted. Existing special constables shared their journey live and pre-recorded;
- 196 applications this last quarter which represents a slight decrease on the previous quarter of 38 applications (16.24%);
- 27 applications were from BAME applicants;
- Intake SD started 12 new officers;
- Scheduled for three more Intakes, by 31 March 2021 with a potential for 52 more officers to start;
- Covid secure Attestation Ceremonies continue with 38 Specials Constables attested during this quarter.

Non-operational & service exit:

- 19 leavers represent a small increase of 2 (10.5%) from previous quarter (1 to Essex regulars, 1 joined other force, 1 officer retiring after 33 years volunteering, 1 from training school, and the others a mixture of personal reasons with 3 related to COVID 19 personal challenges);
- 94 officers (18.6%) are non-operational or on a leave of absence;
- 2 of these officers are off due to shielding or self-isolating (Covid related);
- Death in service – SC Toby Speller passed away from Covid on the 18 January 2021. Toby had served as a SC since 2004 and progressed to the rank of Special Inspector before undertaking his dream role within the Marine Unit. Toby's funeral was held on Wednesday 17 February 2021 and leave behind wife Sarah and 2 children.

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).

5.0 Current Work and Performance

5.1 Recruitment

Essex Police are an early adopter of the SC to PC pilot being led by College of Policing. The pilot is a formal process to enable Special Constables (SC) who have demonstrated competence in role at Independent Patrol Status (or equivalent) to transition more easily into Police Constable (PC) roles.

The process intends to enhance the current recruitment of candidates who are experienced SC to the regular PC role to join as new recruits under the IPLDP (and forthcoming PEQF) programmes. Adopting this national programme will build on the current internal training and evidence collation of SC competency. The intended benefit will be a streamlined recruitment process allowing SC candidates with suitable evidence of competency to bypass the national selection process. They will however be required to complete the remaining aspects of the recruitment process to ensure suitability to the role of PC.

Wider benefit may be realised as greater number and diversity of candidates may be attracted to the SC role and an alternative route into policing.

Further benefit will be Essex Police positioned at the forefront of innovation and well placed to influence national direction and policy.

Essex Police received 196 completed applications between 1 December 2020 and 28 February 2021. This is a slight decrease on the previous quarter of 38 applications (16.24%).

27 applicants were from a BAME background (13.78%) compared to 24 applications from the same period last year (10.25%). 57 applicants identify as female (29.08%) compared to 73 applicants from last year (31.20%); representing a slight decrease. As a strand of the LPSU, CiP and Specials Command response to the Force's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, the weekly pipeline meeting will now begin to interrogate the DEI data to a district level and take positive action in the targeting of its recruitment campaign.

On 14 January 2021, a virtual Recruitment Information Evening was held using Microsoft Teams where 40 members of the public logged on and engaged with a variety of Specials and staff to hear about their journeys, how it has impacted on their personal and professional lives and to answer any questions. Further events will be planned for the coming months.

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 'The We Value Difference Campaign';
- Facebook and Twitter continue to be the highest media source for Special applications;
- A campaign around ESP is currently being promoted along with support from the Business Chamber of Commerce;
- 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 1 Apr 2016 to current date

The table below compares the recruitment and exits of the current year with the previous 3 years. The number of Specials who resign to become a regular officer has increase from a position of 26.6% in March 2017 to 28.1% during 2020/21 which is a success as part of the officer uplift programme.

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)	133	114	32	(28.1%)
Grand Total	778	625	224	(35.8%)

The above table identifies the SC Command as a significant pipeline to the recruitment of PCs with 224 recruits having started their policing journey as a Special.

5.4 Employer Supported Policing & Community Special Constables

Employer Supported Policing (ESP):

- 33 businesses support 79 Officers in the ESP scheme (7% of the national ESP). Of these 79 Officers, 37 officers are employed by Essex Police in other roles;
- 91 ESP duties have resulted in 685 hours of policing in this period which is a decrease of 23.5% for duties and 27.9% for hours worked on the previous quarter. We are interrogating the data to better understand contributing factors and identifying mitigating action to the trend;
- 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 Essex Chambers of Commerce on 28 January 2021 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):

- 16 active CSC officers covering 10 councils. This is an increase of 6 officers and 2 councils since the last quarter;
- CSC Specials have worked 97 duties resulting in 624 hours;
- 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 progress in line with the last quarter report and can be summarised as;

- 6 active volunteers have been placed in posts across Essex and with Serious Crime Directorate;
- 9 Volunteers are part of the Ethics Committee;
- 5 Cyber Special Constables continue to support Cyber Investigations;

5.6 Performance

Over the period 1 December 2020 to 21 February 2021, Specials have contributed a total of 46,996 hours, a 2.7% increase on the same period in 2019/2020. The last 3 months has seen a decrease of 4.06% in operational hours worked (35,605 operational hours). The hours worked by the Special Constabulary across this three-month period is equivalent to having an additional 25 full time officers, who would attract an annual salary cost of £1.3m during this quarter (approximately £5.3m/year);

Over the last 3 months, 71.43% of Special Constables have volunteered at least 16hrs each month (as required). However, Specials have averaged 30 hrs per month which is an increase from 29 hrs per month in the equivalent period in 2019/2020.

19 Specials have left the Special Constabulary which is an increase of 2 (10.5%) from the previous quarter and no change from the same period last year. 2 of these did so to join the regulars; 1 for Essex and 1 for other forces and 17 left for various 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

- OPC, CPT and LPT Specials are supporting Operation Darker Nights around Crime Prevention from 1 December 2020 until 1 March 2021;
- The Special Constabulary Charity now has a working group in place to modernise and relaunch it, under the guidance of S/Ins 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;
- RET recruitment campaign took place on the 24 January 2021 in which 18 Special Constables attended a virtual event and showed an expression of interest. The applications are now being processed with a view to interview over the coming month to support the growth of the RET by a minimum of 5 SCs.

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 to 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 172 Officers (33%) 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:

- **Promotion Boards** took place in January 2021 in which 6 Special Constables successfully achieved promotion to the rank of Sergeant;
- **QAVS Awards** is to be held virtually on the 4 March 2021;
- **British Awards for Women in Policing** – Several specials were nominated in 2020 and we should see further nominations for 2021;

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 20 March and will be showcase the Special Constabulary and Citizens in Policing which is part of the Essex Police Recruitment Campaign Day;
- Specials Training Team (L&D) response to Covid secure training has enabled increased class sizes. From Intake S10 (14 Feb) 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;
- RET continue to support our recruitment campaign to increase our Special Constable figure to 10 Specials 1 per district.

Reporting & governance:

- Development of 4-year Delivery Plan – Essex Police Specials 2025;
- Review of current reporting format;
- Review of assets and business case to support upscaling of BWV, laptops 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. Essex Police Learning & Development Team are reviewing this programme to establish the best option under the direction of ACC Nolan at the Special Constabulary Review Programme Board.

10.0 Decisions Required by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

Not required.

11.0 Appendices

Appendix A



Police Workforce
Statistics - March 20

Appendix B



SC Force detailed
comms.docx

Appendix C



Special Impact Issue
40 - Autumn 2020.pd