

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

29 March 2021, 10:00 to 13:00, via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Roger Hirst (RH)	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (Chair)
Kevin Baldwin (KB)	Assistant Chief Constable, Essex Police
Pippa Brent-Isherwood (PBI)	Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, PFCC's office
Annette Chan (AC)	Chief Accountant, Essex Police
Jane Gardner (JG)	Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Suzanne Harris (SH)	Head of Performance and Scrutiny (Policing), PFCC's office
Mark Johnson (MJ)	Head of Analysis, Strategic Change and Performance Command
Richard Jones (RJ)	Head of Business Partnering and Management Accounting, Essex Police
Debbie Martin (DM)	Chief Finance Officer, Essex Police
Pippa Mills (PM)	Deputy Chief Constable, Essex Police
Rachel Nolan	Assistant Chief Constable, Essex Police
Janet Perry (JP)	Strategic Head of Performance and Resources, PFCC's office
Tom Richards (TR)	Assistant Chief Constable, Essex Police
Camilla Brandal	Minutes, PFCC's office

Apologies:

Julia Berry	Head of Finance and S151, PFCC's office
Dr Vicki Harrington	Director of Strategic Change and Performance, Essex Police
Andy Prophet	Assistant Chief Constable, Essex Police

1 Introduction and welcome

RH welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from Julia Berry, Dr Harrington and ACC Prophet.

2.i Minutes of last meeting

- 2.i.1 Page 2, 2.ii and Action number 02/21, PM asked that it reads 'an issue with paper submission deadlines being prior to COG sign off'.
- 2.i.2 Page 4, paragraph 8.3, PM asked that this reads 'JG commented that the numbers of Stop and Searches that were carried out fairly and respectfully was a good news item.'
- 2.i.3 PM had submitted some changes to paragraphs 3.1.7.1 and 3.1.7.3 around the narrative reports to reflect the conversations. These had been reflected in a second draft.

- 2.i.4 Page 8, paragraph 4, PM asked that the sentence reads '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.'
- 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 this month.
- 56/20 Crime Prevention Strategy
No update due this month.
- 01/21 Action Log
Due date revised to April 2021.
- 07/21 Minutes of January PRSB
JP to provide wording for January minutes item 3.i.2. PM requested to see a copy of the revised/additional wording when available. Action to remain open.
- 08/21 Action Log (Ref 59/20)
JG had spoken to RH. Close.
- 09/21 Forward Plan
AC had sent through the list of finance items. Close.
- 10/21 Forward Plan
DM confirmed timing for CIPFA reporting and agreed as June. Close.
- 11/21 Forward Plan
SH confirmed changes made to Forward Plan. Close.
- 12/21 Use of Force/ Stop and Search
No update due this month.
- 13/21 Finance
Updates provided and action can be closed. Close.
- 14/21 Finance
Meeting taken place around POA variances in the budget. Close.
- 15/21 Finance
JB content for this action to close as now completed. Close.
- 16/21 Finance
DM to send through the Closure timetable dates to JB. Remain open until action completed.

2.iii Forward Plan

- 2.iii.1 SH confirmed that the version of the Forward Plan circulated with the papers contained three updates; the removal of the Force Growth update paper (now to be presented at Strategic Board), CIPFA item on for June, and a review of the Terms of Reference for

May (for comment at P&RS Board before being presented to Strategic Board for sign off in June). Inclusion of these three items was ratified by the Board.

- 2.iii.2 DM asked if the draft unaudited Accounts for May could make reference to the extracts not the full statement of accounts, as the full statement of accounts will be presented at June's Strategic Board and Joint Audit Committee.

Action 17/21

The Forward Plan to make reference to extracts not the full statement of accounts at May's meeting.

3i Month 11 Financial Monitoring Report

- 3.i.1 DM presented the Month 11 paper and stated that the latest forecast revenue underspend was £1.889m which included Home Office funding for Op Melrose, Home Office funding for medical grade PPE expenditure, Covid19 Income Loss Recovery Scheme and Op Talla recognition payments for Officers, Staff and PCSOs. The police officer strength forecast at the end of February was 3,361 FTE and at year end is forecast to be 3,408 FTE. The Capital Reserve is forecast to have a £5.1m deficit at year end, with the forecast capital expenditure of £12.4m and forecast capital income from property disposals of £6.9m.
- 3.i.2 DM confirmed that there were no further virements for approval this month and asked that the Board note (following the decision sheet to the PFCC) the creation of a new earmarked reserve (Covid Roadmap Violence Reduction Reserve) to support the operational policing plan in 2021/22 and an appropriation to this reserve in 2020/21 of £1.303m in respect of an in year underspend (which had not been reported in the forecast and does not reduce the £1.9m forecast underspend).
- 3.i.3 DM went through the report and commented on leavers, retirements, the Provisional Outturn Report, transformation reserves, Op Melrose summary, Op Talla, reserves tables, the new format for the capital forecasting reporting, capital financing (internal borrowing), variance plan, capital finance reserve and MRP, updated capital programme funding details, and the capital resources summary. The balance to be carried forward at year end is £2.7m which is to fund the short-life assets.
- 3.i.4 RH commented that it was very good to see the increased forecast FTE figure for year end. RH asked about the Op Talla figures showing an overspend of £371k when we have just had an additional £1.3m from the Home Office which we have earmarked for next year. RH said that we should not continue to report an overspend and asked that this be resolved for the final year end report.

Action 18:

There should be no overspend reported for OpTalla in the final year end reporting.

- 3.i.5 A brief discussion took place around cashable savings and the recording of the figures which were dealt with through the Op Talla monthly returns to the Home Office. RJ confirmed that further work is planned to be carried out on the cashable savings around mileage, subsistence, and training etc to keep the levels consistent.
- 3.i.6 A discussion took place around the FTE figures and how the Force is mitigating leavers and recruitment. PM confirmed that a substantial piece of work has been carried out in holding conversations with leavers, reviewing leavers data and the financial projections for 3 months, maintaining the focus on the recruitment pipeline and flexibility for recruitment intakes, i.e not at capacity, space to recruit extra, with a strategic decision

at COG to not have a January intake, so the first PEQF intake is March, with the opportunity for COG to review this decision in June.

- 3.i.7 A discussion took place around the Op Sceptre income, internal borrowing and the capital spends. It was confirmed that the £500k put into the Chief Constable's reserves last year would have the text explanation updated confirming that most of this reserve will be used for the Diversity Equality and Inclusion training procurement and would be drawn down in 2021/22. It was confirmed that the Op Sceptre funding had had 2 years' of funding with 1 further year's funding of £30k, with the table setting out the Q1 and Q2 income to date but that future reporting would clarify this position in more detail. The capital programme amounts currently in the table only included figures for the five years 2021/22 to 2025/26. The variance figure of £13m that RH had made reference to which was not currently in the table would be included for future reporting. JP asked if the capital reporting could be reviewed so that the summary position could be easily recognised within the tables. DM agreed that the reporting should be simplified RH requested that future reports should include an explanation of the changes in the capital position since the previous report. It was also agreed that future capital investment funded from internal financing should have a more detailed explanation, with any external borrowing shown separately and also clearly explained.

Action 19:

Capital reporting to be reviewed to show the summary position clearly identifiable within the tables.

Action 20:

Future reports should include an explanation of the changes in the capital position since the previous report.

Action 21:

Capital investment funded from internal financing should have a detailed explanation With any external borrowing shown separately and also clearly explained.

3.ii Efficiency and Savings Plan

- 3.ii.1 PM presented the update on monthly progress and updates against the current and future efficiency and savings plan as set out in the budget and the Force's Medium Term Financial Strategy. From the Executive Summary the identified savings and efficiencies for 2020/21 totalled £5.833m cashable and £2.220m non-cashable savings, with the target set for 2020/21 being 2.25% of the MRFS of £6.775m, which has been exceeded by £1.278m with a combined cashable and non-cashable savings total of £8.053m. The forecast outcome for 2020/21 remains at a surplus in year cashable savings and a total savings and efficiencies forecast of £8.256m. The Savings Plan confirmed in the 2021/22 budget offers a combined total of cashable and non-cashable savings of £4.882m.
- 3.ii.2 Following a brief discussion around the future cashable and non-cashable savings, RH commented that he was pleased to see such a good report and the delivery of an outstanding plan. He also wanted to recognise the amount of work carried out to deliver an extra saving of £8m to the public of Essex in the current year.

4 Monthly Performance Report

- 4.1 MJ presented the February Performance Report with items to note being six of the seven PFCC priorities being graded as Good, and one of the priorities (no4: Tackling

Gangs and Serious Violence) being graded as Requires Improvement. All Crime had fallen by 12.5% for the 12 months to February 2021 which equated to 21,145 fewer offences which has primarily been influenced by the Covid19 lockdowns.

TR joined the meeting at 1054.

- 4.2 MJ commented that other items to note included a significant increase in anti-social behaviour, with over half of the increase in demand being related to Covid19. The confidence figures have increased by 11.6% compared with year ending December 2019. Modern Slavery referrals had decreased but this is an area of focus for future in order to achieve a greater range and engagement with hard to access groups.
- 4.3 MJ commented on the Exceptions reporting where All Crime, Violence with Injury, Theft of Pedal Cycle (Offences) and Criminal Damage – Offences all experienced significant decreases but with the Theft of Pedal Cycle Solved Rate increasing. MJ noted that the data regarding mobile phone offences is not comparable to historic data – this is due to a legal appeal in October 2019, awaiting clarification in the courts, which has led to a decrease in offences prosecuted.
- 4.4 RH thanked MJ for the report and commented that it was good to see that the metrics were improving. RH asked about some of the ratings on the priorities particularly with regard to Domestic Abuse which is rated as Good; is understood that whilst there is much good work in this area there is still more to be done. RH asked if more external benchmarking could be used against the rating assessments. A discussion took place around the Force's percentage of 'crimed' cases, the partnership element and the confidence in reporting for DA, better analytics, trend comparisons, risk assessments for DA cases (and secondary offences) and Fixed Penalty Notices.

5 Q3 Survey Results

- 5.1 MJ presented the Q3 results and confirmed that the main confidence question has had the second highest results recorded to date with 80% of those surveyed agreeing with 'are the police doing a good/ excellent job?'. Victims of crime and ASB are continuing to report lower levels of confidence and satisfaction than non-victims. 93% of people think that if they were to make a complaint against Essex Police they would be treated fairly, which is a significant increase compared to Q2's figures. Other items to note from the report are that changes to Covid legislation are having an impact on the statistics and further work is being carried out to better understand and address why 65% of the BAME community feel that the use of Stop and Search is being fairly and respectfully carried out.
- 5.2 A discussion took place around understanding community issues, fluctuations in trends, the Crime Prevention Strategy, and the possibility that changes in the importance given to a uniformed presence could link with Covid events, which MJ confirmed was being monitored closely.

6 Special Constabulary

- 6.1 RN presented the update paper on the Special Constabulary and the key highlights under the following headings: Reward and Recognition; Establishment, engagement and duties; Recruitment, training and retention; and, non-operational and service exit. RN outlined the current work and performance being carried out around recruitment, media attraction, employer supported policing and Community Special Constables, Cyber Specials Cyber Volunteers, Covid response, Operational deliverables and future work and development. It was noted that the College of Policing have devised and

developed a new Special Constabulary Learning Programme and the Learning and Development Team are reviewing this programme to establish the best option for a Special to transfer as a Regular without having to 'start again' with training.

RK joined the meeting at 1130.

- 6.2 RH commented that it was really good to see that Jenny Brouard had been awarded the BEM in the New Year's Honours List for her work with Volunteers within Policing. PM confirmed that the Special Constabulary had won a Certificate of Excellence in the IESE Awards which was also a good piece of external recognition. JG wanted to thank RN for her leadership in this programme and was looking forward to the outcomes from the forthcoming Planning Day. JG also wanted to thank Supt Michelle Davies for her important role in developing the Specials.

The meeting paused at 1140 for a comfort break. The meeting reconvened at 1150.

7 PSD Annual Report

- 7.1 PM presented the first PSD Annual report which set out the progress following the changes in Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020 and the Professional Standards Department's response to the changes. As a result of the change in legislation, there has been a significant increase in the number of complaints recorded, as low-level dissatisfaction issues are now required to be recorded as complaints. Covid19 has affected the timings of complaints being made, and the IOPC have not yet provided comparable data following the introduction of the new Regulations.
- 7.2 The report makes reference to the complaints system, the implications of the new legislation, police conduct, public complaints, timeliness of complaints, recording of ethnicity (and work being done around this), police officer and staff misconduct, referrals to the IOPC, reviews to the PFCC, current work in PSD under prevention, learning, confidence and enforcement, and future work and development which would also include a Post Implementation Review of PSD's application of the new Regulations, along with the NPCC report and recording of data on disproportionality as well as Scrutiny Panels including members of the public to gain public opinion on cases which in turn will be fed through to local Independent Advisory Groups.
- 7.3 RH thanked PM and RK for the comprehensive report and the work that is currently being undertaken in PSD. RH commented that under his scrutiny obligation, he would like his office to look into how the PFCC can be better sighted on the feedback from the public and whether there are any discrepancies between the feedback the Force receives and the feedback that the PFCC's office receives.

Action 22:

PM to ensure that information from Essex Police Scrutiny Panels is shared with SH.

- 7.4 RH commented about the ethnicity recording on complaints and looked forward to the outcome of the work being done around this. A brief discussion took place around Op Pershore which deals with the abuse of position for sexual gain and is on the controlled strategy for the whole of the South Eastern region. JG thanked PM and RK for the work that has been done around the understanding and lessons learnt regarding complaints, and wanted to offer reassurance around the current timeliness issue that is being experienced in the PFCC's office following the change in legislation and confirmed that actions have been implemented to address this. PBI commented that it

would be helpful to understand whether the increase that the Force is seeing in initial complaints is proportionate to the increase that the PFCC's office is seeing in requests for reviews compared with requests for appeals that would have been lodged under previous regulations. PM confirmed that she would ensure that the initial complaints proportion issue is considered as part of the Post Implementation Review and that the results will be brought to the PFCC's quarterly scrutiny meeting. SH confirmed that she would be looking at the numbers of conversion rate of complaints to appeals and complaints to review requests with RK outside the meeting.

Action 23:

SH to liaise with RK regarding conversion rates of complaints to appeals and complaints to review requests

RK left the meeting at 1223.

8 OPC six monthly review

- 8.1 PM presented the paper which covered six areas of Operational Policing Command and which had been prepared in response to specific questions raised by the PFCC's office. The areas covered were; Dog Section, Stansted Airport, Contingency Planning, Taser Training, Drone Team and the Marine Unit.
- 8.2 RH asked about the budgeted Roads Policing team being increased by 21 but the figures in the paper do not reflect this. PM confirmed that 19/20 uplift had to be delayed slightly due to Covid and the Roads Policing numbers were the ones that suffered from that. There were 4 officers put into the Roads Policing units in 19/20 but the staff have all now been posted as at end of May 2020/21 but with the normal variances.
- 8.3 SH had a question around the dog camera funding from POCA funds but it was confirmed that the criteria had not been met. SH also asked about the Emergency Plan backlog being behind their update schedules due to Covid but could not find the comparable data. PM confirmed that this was not covered in this particular report but would speak to SH outside the meeting.

9 Strategic Policing Requirement

- 9.1 TR presented the paper outlining the response of Essex Police to the 2015 Strategic Policing Requirement ('SPR') and the progress against the tactical plans for each strand of the SPR.
- 9.2 The update contained items on Terrorism, Organised Crime, National Cyber Security Incident, Threats to Public Order or Safety, Civil Emergencies and Child Sex Abuse and Exploitation. The paper also included an update on the implications and future issues involved with the above items and mitigations that either are already or will be put in place.
- 9.3 RH thanked TR for the thorough report which had provided a huge amount of reassurance around the ability to fulfil the requirements of the the SPR, not only within Essex but cross border and nationally. A brief discussion took place around the use of Mounted Police under the Public Order area of work and how Essex would be covered, and it was confirmed that there is a national availability of resource which is monitored through the National Police Operation Co-ordination Centre.

- 9.4 Brief discussions took place around the Cyber Crime Team and what lessons have been learnt from Covid19 regarding sharing information, and whether Ports policing was a specific part of the SPR (it was not but there was a strong relationship link with the Ports Authority and the 7Forces in the Eastern Region).

TR left the meeting at 1307.

10 Safeguarding Children Statutory Duty Compliance

- 10.1 KB presented the paper which reported on the work being done to ensure the compliance of Essex Police with the statutory duties under Sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004 and the statutory guidance in the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 guidance.
- 10.2 The report covered items such as the Local Safeguarding Children Boards, local arrangements, current work and performance, implications from Covid19, funding contributions, and future work and development.

MJ left the meeting at 1312.

- 10.3 RH thanked KB for the report which provided reassurance around this very important area of work. A discussion took place around partnership working and sharing of information, responsibilities and referrals, commissioning arrangements paying due regard to safeguarding (now discharged largely through 7F Procurement Team picked up through Strategic Procurement Governance Board – PBI to speak to Karen Georgiou) and whether there had been any breaches of GDPR (none that had been brought to KB's attention).

11 Approval for publishing of documents

It was agreed that the papers for publishing were items 3i, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 10.

12 Any Other Business

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 1328.