

Performance and Resources Scrutiny Programme 2021

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

Title of Report:	HR Strategic Dashboard Supplementary Report
Classification of Paper	Official
Agenda Number	7.0
Chief Officer	Mr Richard Leicester
Date Paper was Written	7 th July 2021
Version Number	4
Report from:	Essex Police
Date of Meeting:	29 th July 2021
Author on behalf of Chief Officer:	Mr Adam Pfeiffer
Date of Approval:	15 th July 2021

1.0 Purpose of Report

This report provides a narrative to accompany the HR strategic dashboard, which relates to the force's attendance, establishment, strength full time equivalent (fte), turnover and diversity profiles.

2.0 Recommendations

Not applicable.

3.0 Executive Summary

Each section contained within the HR strategic dashboard is summarised under section 5.0 below.

4.0 Introduction/Background

This commentary report provides context for the information contained within the HR strategic dashboard and summarises the key highlights from each section. The data has been taken from the force HR system (SAP) as at 30th June 2021, except where alternative data is displayed for trend analysis. High level comparisons relating to recruitment, turnover, absence and force level strength fte figures have been provided against the last HR data pack as at 31st March 2021.

With regards to the absence data, comparative information has been provided against the same period in 2020/21 and 2019/20. This is because absence throughout 2020/21 was its lowest level for a number of years and, as seen with turnover, was impacted by the COVID-

19 pandemic. Therefore, for better context with regards to current absence levels comparative data has been provided for both periods mentioned.

The report highlights a number of areas that remain on track or have improved significantly. Specifically, the force reports:

- The continued attraction and recruitment of new officers into the force with a new intake commencing in June 2021. Whilst early in the financial year, the force remains on track to achieve the uplifted establishment for 2021/22.
- Significant number of applications in April 2021. Whilst application numbers slowed in the months of May 2021 and June 2021, ethnic minority and female proportions have remained relatively strong.
- Early data for July 2021 shows a similar trend in that overall numbers are slightly lower but the proportion of applications, specifically from females are high.
- The officer ethnic minority position of 3.87% as at 30th June 2021 has increased when compared to 31st March 2021 and represents the highest proportion of ethnic minority officers in force over the last 8 years.
- Similarly, the female proportion of officers has continued to increase and is currently at its highest ever level (34.63%).
- Continued low levels of officer and staff turnover in quarter 1 of 2020/21.
- A reduction in the average days lost per person to sickness for officers and PCSOs.

Whilst the position is mostly positive the report identifies areas of focus along with relevant context and activity in place to improve the position. Areas of focus relate to continuing to seek increases in overall officer application numbers and specifically the proportion of applications from ethnic minorities and females as well as a continued focuses on increasing applications for the special constabulary. Whilst staff absence is not an area of concern (when compared to pre-COVID-19 pandemic years) it has increased in quarter 1 of 2021/22 when compared to the same period in 2020/21 and therefore will continue to be monitored closely.

The report also highlights key areas by Command where vacancies have increased or where there has been an increase in localised absence.

5.0 Current Work and Performance

Officers

Establishment v Strength and Vacancies

Since the last HR data pack (as at 31st March 2021), the projected establishment has increased by 184.00 from 3369.00 to 3553.00 to reflect the approved 2021/22 growth. Note, not all posts have been allocated on SAP, therefore the actual establishment breakdown by Command is currently lower, however this will increase as growth posts are added to the establishment.

As at 30th June 2021, the strength fte was 3437.64, which is -115.36 under the establishment of 3553.00. This represents a net increase in strength fte of 24.81 since the last HR report as at 31st March 2021.

With regards to Commands, a number have a higher vacancy percentage rate when compared to the previous position as at 31st March 2021. This is predominately due to an increase in establishment across a number of the Commands, in line with the 2021/22

Growth Plan. As the growth posts start to become filled, this will result in the vacancy rate reducing.

The Eastern Regional Special Operations Unit (ERSOU) have the highest vacancy rate with -18.17% (up from -16.52% previously), however due to the low establishment this only equates to a reduction of 1.52 strength fte. The force continues to work with ERSOU to ensure all job opportunities are published internally and vacancies will also shortly be advertised externally on the force's website. The vacancy has also been impacted by limited geographical locations of available posts (many are outside of the county). However, a new separate office space with 7 desks at Essex Headquarters has now been provided for the Command, which should help to enhance the interest in roles within this Command. A series of communications to internal officers and staff has also commenced that advertises and focuses on available roles.

Crime & Public Protection Command are not highlighted in the top 3 on the HR Strategic Dashboard, however the strength fte has reduced from 314.76 to 307.14, which has resulted in the vacancy rate increasing from -6.04% to -8.56%. Whilst there are vacancies across a number of departments within the Command, the highest proportion are within the Public Protection Investigation Hubs. Recruitment into these roles is ongoing and this has been supported by a recent intranet article aimed at highlighting current job opportunities available, which specifically included roles within the Investigation Hubs.

The only other significant area of note to report with regards to the Commands is the imminent reduction of 24.00 established posts from Stansted within Operational Policing Command (OPC). This is due to the removal of external funding. Stansted as a department (shown within OPC on the HR Strategic Dashboard) currently has a vacancy rate of -21.34%. The reduction of 24.00 posts by the end of August 2021 and the conclusion of the current firearms course will reduce the vacancies within the Command. This local reduction will not reduce the overall force establishment, as the establishment is being reallocated across the force. This will consist of 9.00 posts into Crime Integrity (Strategic Change), 7.00 into Proactive (Crime & Public Protection Hubs), 6.00 into Local Policing Support Unit and 2.00 into Operational Policing Command.

Recruitment Joiners and Applications

Since the last HR report as at 31st March 2021, there has been 1 intake in quarter 1 of 2021/22. This consisted of a cohort of 60 officers who joined on the 1st June 2021.

In addition, 8 officers have transferred in from other forces, taking the total recruitment this financial year to date to 68.

The table below shows the officer application numbers for 2019/20, 2020/21 and the current financial year to date.

Month/Year	Total	Female		Ethnic Minority	
		No.	%	No.	%
2019/20	2695	871	32.32	263	9.76
2020/21	3501	1238	35.36	440	12.57
<i>Apr-21</i>	397	193	48.61	44	11.08
<i>May-21</i>	188	68	36.17	24	12.77
<i>Jun-21</i>	140	49	35.00	14	10.00
Jul-21	20	11	55.00	2	10.00
2021/22 YTD	745	321	43.09	84	11.28

The data shows that application numbers increased significantly in 2020/21 when compared to 2019/20 for all applications including females and ethnic minorities.

The latest data for the current financial year to date (April to June 2021/22) demonstrates that in April 2021 there was a high number of applications, which was due to candidates applying for both regular entry and those wanting to join on the bespoke Detective Investigate First programme. Of the 397 applications, 48.61% were from females, which represents the highest proportion since April 2019.

Whilst overall application numbers have slowed in the last 2 months, the proportion of female and ethnic minority candidates have remained relatively strong and there remains an extremely high number of candidates in process.

July 2021 information has been provided to demonstrate the promising start to the month, which shows that of the 20 applications so far, 55.00% have been from female candidates and 10.00% from ethnic minority candidates.

The next iteration of the #WeValueDifference, campaign is being designed, however, due to strong candidate pipelines a full launch is being considered for September 2021. This is in line with the transition from the IPLDP (Initial Police Learning & Development Programme) to PEQF (Policing Education Qualifications Framework) and continued strong diversity of applicants.

Further information in respect of Positive Action work in this area is outlined in section 8 of this report.

Ethnicity and Gender

Of the 60 new officer recruits that have joined this financial year to date, 4 (6.67%) were ethnic minority recruits. Of the 8 officers that have transferred in, 2 (13.33%) were ethnic minority joiners. Therefore, of the total 68 officers that have joined the force in this period, 6 (8.82%) were ethnic minorities.

This is slightly lower than the proportion of ethnic minority joiners in the full 2020/21 financial year (9.42%) but higher than 2019/20 (6.67%) and is significantly higher than the economically active population of Essex (6.56%¹).

For information the table below demonstrates the proportion of ethnic minority officers that have joined (all entry routes) so far this financial year (April to June 2021/22) by

¹ 2011 National Census Data

ethnicity grouping. The position for 2020/21 financial year has also been provided for comparison.

Ethnicity Group	H'Count	% of Total Ethnic Minority	% of Total Intake	2020/21 Position	
				% of Total Ethnic Minority	% of Total Intake
Asian/Asian British	2	33.33	2.94	27.59	2.60
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	3	50.00	4.41	24.14	2.27
Mixed/Multiple ethnic Groups	1	16.67	1.47	41.38	3.90
Other Ethnic Group	0	0.00	0.00	6.90	0.65
Grand Total	6	100.00	8.82	100.00	9.42

The data is fairly limited as there has only been 1 intake so far this financial year, however of the 6 ethnic minority joiners 3 (50.00%) were Black/African/Caribbean/Black British, 2 (33.33%) were Asian/Asian British and 1 (16.67%) was mixed/multiple ethnic groups.

When measured against the total intake size, 4.41% were Black/African/Caribbean/Black British which, whilst only 1 intake, is higher than the proportion in the 2020/21 financial year (2.27%).

The 6 ethnic minority joiners have contributed towards the force level representation increasing to 136 (3.87%) as at 30th June 2021, when compared to 130 (3.72%) as at 31st March 2021. It should be noted that during that same period, 3 ethnic minority officers have left the force, however, 3 officers have changed their ethnicity to ethnic minority from another grouping. Therefore, the net increase from 31st March 2021 to 30th June 2021 is a headcount of 6 and a percentage point increase of 0.15.

The current proportion of 3.87% demonstrates the highest proportion of ethnic minority officers in the force over the last 8 years and is now only 2.69 percentage points under the economically active population of Essex (6.56%²).

With regards to applications, as at 28th June 2021, there were 82 ethnic minority candidates in process, which represents 8.52% of the 962 total candidates in the recruitment and selection process.

With regards to gender, of the 60 new recruits that have joined this financial year to date (April to June 2021/22), 20 (33.33%) were female. Of the other 8 that transferred in, 3 (37.50%) were female. Therefore, a total of 68 officers have joined the force, of which 23 (33.82%) were female.

Total female officers have increased from 1205 (34.53%) as at 31st March 2021 to 1217 (34.63%) as at 30th June 2021. This is a net headcount increase of 12 and percentage point increase of 0.10.

With regards to current applications, there are currently 382 female candidates in progress, which equates to 39.71% of all candidates.

Turnover

So far, this financial year to date (April to June 2021/22) a total of 45 officers have left the force. When measured as a proportion of the average headcount for that period, this is a

² 2011 National Census Data

turnover percentage of 1.28%. This is a headcount reduction of 1 when compared to the same period in 2019/20 (46 leavers) and a turnover percentage reduction of 0.08 (1.36% turnover for the period April to June 2020).

As previously reported, the COVID-19 pandemic has potentially had a positive impact on the workforce in areas such as turnover (and absence as identified later in the report). However, whilst the improved turnover position is positive, it is important to note the reduction is likely to have been impacted by the significant change in the external job market. A reduction in job availability may be a contributory factor resulting in a greater number of people staying in roles longer than they would under normal circumstances.

Early data for the month of July 2021 shows that the trend of low turnover for the start of 2021/22 financial year is continuing. At the time of writing, there were just 14 confirmed leavers on the SAP HR System.

Absence

The average days lost per person has reduced from 1.56 for April to June 2020/21 to 1.46 for April to June 2021/22 (a reduction of 0.10 average days per person). This represents the lowest level of absence for this period over the last 7 years. A combination of lower sickness absence for the period April to June 21/22 and a higher officer headcount, has resulted in the drop of days lost per person, in comparison to the same period for the previous year.

The below table shows the total payroll hours lost and the percentage of available contracted hours lost for April to June 2021/22 compared to the same period in 2019/20 and 2020/21:

	Apr - Jun 2019/20		Apr - Jun 2020/21		Apr - Jun 2021/22		Variance 2021/22 v 2020/21	
Employee Group	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost
Police	57528.42	4.25%	42179.44	2.89%	41023.58	2.76%	-1155.86	-1.35%

The figures demonstrate that 2.76% of contracted hours available were lost to sickness absence in April to June 2021/22, which is a reduction when compared to the same period in both 2020/21 (2.89%) and 2019/20 (4.25%). This is a reduction of 1,155.86 payroll hours for April to June 2021/22 when compared to April to June 2020/21.

With regards to absence terms, short-term and medium-term have both increased for April to June 2021/22 when compared to April to June 2020/21. However, when compared to the same period in 2019/20 short-term absence has reduced and medium-term absence has remained static. Long-term absence for April to June 2021/22 has reduced significantly when compared to the same period in both 2020/21 and 2019/20. Data appears to suggest that the main cause of the difference in long-term sickness absence between 2019/20 and 2021/22, is predominately due to the reduction of those officers off with either musculo/skeletal or psychological concerns. 2019/20 saw 9,518.39 long-term hours lost due to musculo/skeletal reasons, while in 2021/22 this figure had dropped to 1,857.14. Similarly, long-term hours lost in 2019/20 due to psychological illnesses stood at 18,606.64, in 2021/22 it was down to 10,806.80.

Psychological related absences continue to account for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost (36.71%). However, when measured as average days lost per person, this has

reduced to 0.54 for the period April to June 2021/22. This is a significant reduction when compared the same position in 2020/21 (0.67) and 2019/20 (0.96).

Respiratory related absences account for the second highest proportion of payroll hours lost for April to June 2021/22 with 15.15% compared to 7.64% for April to June 2019/20 and 10.86% for April to June 2020/21. When measured as average days lost per person, this has increased to 0.22 for April to June 2021/22 from 0.17 in both 2020/21 and 2019/20. However, respiratory absences include COVID-19, therefore this is an expected increase.

Across the 12 general absence reasons, for April to June 2021/22, many have either reduced or only marginally increased, when compared to April to June 2020/21, with only 3 absence reasons increasing by more than 0.02 average days lost per person.

Miscellaneous related absence has increased from 0.10 to 0.21 average days lost per person and accounts for 14.28% of total payroll hours lost, which is also an increase when compared to April to June 2020/21 (6.40%). The main reasons for this increase are absence due to post-operative recovery, cancer, hospital treatment and reaction to medication.

The other absence reasons that have increased are nervous system related absence and respiratory related absence. It should be noted that nervous system related absence only accounts 0.75% of payroll hours lost. There were 6215 payroll hours lost to respiratory related absence for April to June 2021/22 and absences relating to COVID-19 (confirmed COVID-19, suspected COVID-19, long COVID-19 and a reaction to COVID-19 vaccination) account for more than half of these hours with 3244 payroll hours lost.

With regards to Commands, when comparing April to June 2021/22 to the same period in 2020/21, a total of 6 Commands have seen an increase.

The most significant increases are within HQ Directorate and Local Policing Support Unit (LPSU); however, both of these Commands have an average headcount of less than 40 meaning that small fluctuations can significantly impact the position.

Of the Local Policing Areas (LPAs), LPA West and LPA North have both increased for April to June 2021/22 when compared to the same period in 2020/21. LPA North has increased by 0.17 average days lost per person and LPA West has increased by 0.60. For LPA West, this is an increase of 2597 payroll hours lost, which can largely be attributed to an increase of 919 payroll hours lost to psychological related absence, although there have also been increases in most other absence reasons.

Contact Management and Crime and Public Protection have the highest and second highest average days lost per person respectively. When compared to the same period last year, Contact Management has reduced significantly whereas Crime & Public Protection Command have increased. However, both Commands have reduced when compared to April to June 2019/20, by 2.15 average days lost for Contact Management and 0.82 for Crime and Public Protection.

Of the three LPAs, the North have the highest average days lost per person with 1.70 and, as mentioned above, this is an increase of 0.17 when compared to April to June 2020/21, but when compared to the same period in 2019/20 there has been a significant reduction of 1.03. With regards to the North LPA, psychological related absences accounts for the highest proportion of absence (33.10%) followed by miscellaneous (18.91%).

When compared to April to June 2019/20, the only Command to have increased is HQ Directorate. There were however only 6 instances of absence within the Command for the period April to June 2021/22 and the Command only has an average headcount of 30.

Adjusted and Recuperative Duties

The number (headcount) of officers on recuperative and adjusted duties has increased from 376 as at 31st March 2021 to 384 as at 30th June 2021. Whilst the number of officers on adjusted and recuperative duties has fluctuated slightly across various Commands, the reason for this increase is predominantly due a higher number of officers on adjusted or recuperative duties in LPA North (increase of 6) and Operational Policing Command (increase of 5).

Staff & Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)

Establishment v Strength and Vacancies

The police staff strength as at 30th June 2021 was 2132.90, which is 171.70 fte under the establishment of 2304.60 and equates to a vacancy rate of 7.45%. Whilst the vacancy rate when measured as a proportion has increased from the position as at 31st March 2021 (7.04%), the strength fte has remained static (increasing by 0.72 fte from 2132.18). The reason for the increase in the vacancy rate is due to the establishment increasing by 10.88 fte from 2293.72 to 2304.60.

Whilst the overall strength fte has remained static, there have been fluctuations in the vacancy rates (both increases and decreases) across a number of Commands. For Commands that have seen increases in their vacancy rate, this is due to both the overall strength fte in Commands reducing (due to leavers) and also as a result of the increase in establishment. For example, the Serious Crime Directorates vacancy rate has increased from -11.15% to -12.28%, however, their overall strength has increased by 5.05 fte since the last update from 294.85 to 299.90. Similarly, Strategic Change Performance Directorates vacancy percentage has increased from -6.98% to -8.96%, however their strength has increased by 3.62 fte from 76.00 to 79.62.

By way of exception, the Commands with the highest vacancy rates as at 30th June are Human Resources (-17.81%), Support Services (-13.95%) and Criminal Justice (-12.49%).

With regards to Human Resources, the high vacancy rate is predominately due to a high level of vacancies within Learning & Development (18.42 fte / 22.59%). However, it should be noted, that whilst the vacancies are high, some roles are showing as vacant but are occupied by Kent members of staff. For example, 3.00 fte vacancies e-learning Developer role, however they are filled by Kent members of staff. Similarly, there are a further 4.50 joint funded posts that appear vacant but are occupied by Kent Staff.

Taking account of this, the roles with the highest level of vacancies, not occupied by Kent staff, are Taser Instructors (3.00 fte), Crime Trainer (2.55 fte), Investigative Coach & Trainer (2.20 fte), Leadership Development Trainer (1.39 fte) and Driver Training Manager. All of these roles are actively being recruited to and are at various stages of the recruitment and selection process (ranging from shortlisting to awaiting vetting).

Support Services is the Command with the second highest vacancy rate, however, as with HR, a number of roles within the Command (Payroll, IT, 7F Procurement) are collaborative and therefore are shown as vacant but are occupied by Kent (or another force in the case of Procurement). Estates currently have a high vacancy rate (38.74%), however the restructure has recently been formalised on SAP and now roles are actively being recruited, albeit, they are challenging to fill due to the specialist nature of them.

Criminal Justice have the third highest vacancy rate, with 12.49% (26.43 fte), which is an increase when compared to the position as at 31st March 2021 (-10.49%). There are 11.05

fte Detention Officer vacancies, which are due to recruited to with the next intake scheduled for November 2021. There are also vacancies in the role of Criminal Justice Administrator (6.74 fte) and Caseworkers (4.41 fte) both of which are being actively recruited to or have posts on hold for various reasons.

With regards to PCSOs, the establishment has reduced by 2.00 since the last update from 105.00 as at 31st March 2021 to 103.00 as at 30th June 2021. This is due to the removal of external funding. As at 30th June 2021, the strength fte was 97.29, which is 5.71 fte under establishment and a net reduction of 4.12 fte since the last update. The next intake for PCSOs is currently scheduled for the 1st November 2021, which will be for up to 10 to cover existing and projected vacancies

Ethnicity and Gender

Since the last HR data pack, the number of ethnic minority staff has reduced from 104 / 4.45% to 102 / 4.35%. This is a headcount reduction of 2 and a percentage point reduction of 0.10. Whilst this has reduced marginally, the current proportion of 4.35% is higher than each end of year financial position between 2013/14 and 2019/20. The change in the headcount is as a result of 4 ethnic minority staff leavers and two new joiners. Of the leavers 3 were due to resignation and 1 joined Essex Police as an officer. A review of those leaving stated that they were due to changes in the personal circumstances of the staff member (2 individuals). The other felt the role was not for them at the current time. These individuals were based across different commands so there were no trends in respect of this.

The proportion of females in staff roles remains high at 65.43% (headcount of 1533), which is marginally higher than the same position as at 31st March 2021 (65.20% / 1525).

With regards to PCSOs, the ethnic minority headcount has remained the same at 1, but due to an overall lower PCSO headcount the proportion has increased marginally from 0.91% to 0.94%. Similarly, whilst the headcount of female PCSOs has reduced by 1 from 64 to 63, the proportion has increased from 58.18% to 59.42%. Again, this is due to an overall lower PCSO headcount.

Turnover

So far, this financial year to date (April to June 2021/22), a total of 46 staff have left, which is a turnover rate of 1.96%. This is broadly similar to the same position last year where 44 staff left (1.94%).

With the exception of the same period last year, this level of turnover (both headcount and turnover %) represents the lowest level of turnover for the period April to June 2009/10 through to 2019/20. However, as stated under the officer section, it is important to note the reduction is likely to have been impacted by the significant change in the external job market as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

For PCSOs, during the period April to June 2021/22 a headcount of 2 left, which is a turnover percentage of 1.85%. This is a reduction when compared to the same period last year (3 / 2.54%).

Absence

With regards to the staff absence, the average days lost per person has increased to 1.87 for April to June 2021/22 and whilst this is higher than the same period in 2020/21 (1.67) it is lower than the same period in the preceding 6 years.

OFFICIAL

The below table shows the total payroll hours lost and the percentage of available contracted hours lost for April to June 2021/22 compared to the same period in 2019/20 and 2020/21:

Employee Group	Apr - Jun 2019/20		Apr - Jun 2020/21		Apr - Jun 2021/22		Variance 2021/22 v 2020/21	
	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost
Staff	38462.10	4.70%	27976.51	3.32%	32277.97	3.77%	4301.47	-1.37%

The figures demonstrate that 3.77% of contracted hours available were lost to sickness absence for April to June 2021/22 and, whilst this is an increase when compared to the same period in 2020/21 (3.32%), it is a reduction when compared to April to June 2019/20 (4.70%). The increase in payroll hours lost for April to June 2021/22 when compared to the same period in 2020/21 is 4,301.47 hours.

With regards to absence term, there has been an increase in short-term and medium-term absence in April to June 2021/22 when compared to the same period in 2020/21 but a reduction in long-term absence of 0.08 average days lost per person. When comparing April to June 2021/22 to the same period in 2019/20 there has been a reduction in all absence terms.

For staff, whilst psychological related absence continues to account for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost (27.62%), the average days lost per person has reduced from 0.72 for April to June 2020/21 to 0.52 for the same period in 2021/22. Miscellaneous related absences account for the second highest proportion of payroll hours lost (19.87%), and the average days lost per person has increased from 0.29 to 0.37 for the same periods.

Of the 12 general absence reasons, the average days lost per person has only reduced in psychological related absence for April to June 2021/22. All other reasons have increased or remained static. The largest increase was in musculo/skeletal related absence, which increased from 0.17 average days lost per person for April to June 2020/21 to 0.27 for the same period in 2021/22. The main reasons for the increase in musculo/skeletal are due to increases in slipped disc (0 hours increasing to 634), condition affecting leg (5 hours increasing to 642) and sciatica (257 hours increasing to 441).

Of the 22 Commands, 7 have higher average days lost per person for April to June 2021/22 when compared to April to June 2020/21. However, of those 7 only 1 (Criminal Justice Command) has increased significantly when compared to 2019/20. This is similar to the position seen with officers.

When comparing April to June 2021/22 to the same period last year, Contact Management have experienced the largest increase in average days lost per person (an increase of 1.09 from 1.77 to 2.86), however this is still significantly lower than the same position in 2019/20 (3.39). Therefore, this does not currently represent an area of concern but will continue to be monitored.

Criminal Justice Command have the highest average days lost per person (2.90), and this is an increase when compared to the same period in both 2020/21 and 2019/20. The absence reason that accounts for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost in Criminal Justice Command is Miscellaneous and this is predominantly due to one long-term absence for

cancer (equating to 481 hours) and 4 long-term absence for post-operative recovery (equating to 1154 hours). As at 30th June 2021 3 of these absences were still ongoing.

For PCSOs, the average days lost per person has reduced to 2.46 for April to June 2021/22, which is a reduction of 0.68 when compared to April to June 2020/21. This also represents the lowest level of absence for this period over the last 7 years.

The below table shows the total payroll hours lost and the % of available contracted hours lost for April to June 2021/22 compared to the same period in 2019/20 and 2020/21:

Employee Group	Apr - Jun 2019/20		Apr - Jun 2020/21		Apr - Jun 2021/22		Variance 2021/22 v 2020/21	
	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost
PCSO	2895.40	13.11%	2729.35	6.11%	1966.38	4.62%	-762.97	-7.00%

The figures demonstrate that 4.62% of contracted hours available were lost to sickness absence for April to June 2021/22, which is a reduction increase when compared to the same period in both 2019/20 (13.11%) and 2020/21 (6.11%). This is a reduction of 762.97 payroll hours.

For PCSOs, as with officers and staff, psychological related absence accounts for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost (44.63%), followed by musculo/skeletal related absence (25.28) (28.79%) and both have increased in terms of average days lost per person. Although psychological absence has increased there have only been 4 instances of psychological absence for April to June 2021/22. Two of these instances began in the last financial year and two remain ongoing as at 30th June 2021. The musculo/skeletal increase is due to 5 instances of absence for 5 different reasons. Two of these absences were long-term but only 1 instance was still ongoing as at 30th June 2021. As previously stated, due to the low overall headcount there are greater fluctuations in the absence position.

Recuperative Duties

The number of staff on recuperative duties has increased slightly from 81 to 84 and PCSOs have remained static at 7.

Business Case Update

During the period 1st April 2021 to 30th June 2021, no members of staff have left Essex Police on the grounds of redundancy.

Four business cases went live during this period (April to June 2021/22):

- > **Essex Police Sports Association** - implementation of the revised structure commenced on 5th April 2021.
- > **Crime Scene Investigation, SCD** - Relocation of the Crime Scene Investigations team from Harlow Police Station to Great Dunmow Police Station from 21st June 2021.
- > **Criminal Intelligence Analyst, IPD, SCD** - Relocation of the Criminal Intelligence Analyst from North Kent Police Station to FHQ, Chelmsford from 15th June 2021.

> **Prevent and Protect Gangs Officer** - Relocation of the Gangs Officer from Rayleigh Police Station under the Command of SCD to Boreham, Chelmsford under the Serious Violence Unit, OPC from 1st June 2021.

Three business cases went live during this period (April to June 2021/22):

> **Essex Corporate Finance** - following the closure of consolation on the 11th February 2021 1 member of staff did not secure a new role. Their notice period and redeployment status ongoing and will leave the organisation under redundancy in the next quarter if no role secured.

> **Stansted** - consultation launched on the 4th March 2021 and closed on the 2nd April 2021. Desktop selection processes undertaken for both police officer and police staff posts due to reduction in budget from Manchester Airport Group. All officers allocated posts at Stansted Airport or within the wider Operational Policing Command. In terms of the Police Staff impact, 11 Communications Officers selected for the new posts, 2 found alternative posts and a further 3 were issued notice on 29 April 2021 with redeployment status. Should they not find alternative posts they will be made redundant on the 29th July 2021. The new structure will go live 1 August 2021.

> **Firearms, Shotguns and Explosive Licensing (FSEL) Business Case** - consultation to restructure the roles within FSEL launched on 8th March 2021 and closed on the 7th April 2021. All 29 staff affected have secured a role in the revised structure which will go live on 1st August 2021.

Four business cases launched during this period (April to June 2021/22):

> **Essex Criminal Justice ID and E-Fit Officers** - consultation launched on the 29th April 2021 and closed on the 30th May 2021. This proposal will go live on 1st October 2021 and has sought to realign and redistribute the Identification Officer posts across the county. As a result of this Business Case one member of staff will be made redundant which will become effective in the next quarter.

> **Essex Criminal Justice Detention Officers** - consultation launched on the 14th April 2021 and closed on the 28th May 2021. This proposal will go live on the 17th September 2021 and has amended the shift pattern for the Detention Officers across the county's Custody Suites. All Detention Officers were subject to Desktop Selection and allocated a new shift in the structure.

> **Contact Management - Force Control Room** - consultation launched on the 28th June 2021 which instigates proposals to amend the shift pattern within FCR; Consultation is due to close on the 12th August 2021 with flexible working reviews over the coming months and a projected go live of the 10th January 2022.

Specials

Headcount and Duty Hours

As at 30th June 2021, there were 541 specials in post on SAP, which is an increase of 14 when compared to 31st March 2021 (527).

Since the last update, a total of 52,324 duty hours have been worked for the period April to June 2021, which equates to a year to date average of 32.70 hours per officer. This is a reduction when compared to the same period last year (61,073 hours worked/ average of 39.80), however, the total duty hours worked in June 2021 of 16,976 is still the equivalent

of 1061 specials working a 16-hour month. The significance of this is explained under section 6.2 of this report.

Recruitment and Applications

So far this financial year to date (April to June 2021), a total of 36 specials have joined the force. This higher than the number of joiners in both quarter 1 of 2020/21 (26) and 2019/20 (28).

It should be noted the aspiration is to achieve a total headcount of 600 specials by 31st March 2022, however, as reported last month, there are a number of factors that may impact the ability to achieve this:

- The exit of specials who joined during COVID-19 'lockdown' such as university students and individuals who had been furloughed.
- Reduced training capacity to ensure COVID-19 secure classes.
- Increased conversion rate of specials joining to become an officer (further details below).

With regards to applications, so far this financial year to date (April to June 2021/22), there have been 169, which is a monthly average of 56. This is still relatively strong; however, it is lower than the average number of monthly applications for the same period in 2020/21 (90), 2019/20 (70) and 2018/19 (66). Anecdotal evidence suggests this reduction may be down due to the roadmap out of lockdown whereby, for example, furloughs coming to an end having an impact on application numbers.

As previously reported, regular meetings are scheduled between the Specials Development Team, HR and Corporate Communications with media aspects with the April 2021 meeting looking to finalise enhanced media support for recruitment campaigns to ensure application numbers remain strong.

Turnover

So far, this financial year to date (April to June 2021/22), a total of 18 specials have left, which, as it stands at the time of writing, is the lowest headcount of leavers for quarter 1 in any year since 2009/10. It should be noted however, at the time of writing, this figure is subject to change as a result of backdated leavers needing to be processed.

Of the 18 leavers for this period, 4 left to join as an officer (22.22%), which is marginally lower than the proportion in the full 2020/21 financial year (24.80%).

Ethnicity & Gender

The proportion of ethnic minority specials as at 30th June 2021 was 6.65% (headcount of 36), which is a marginal increase when compared to the last HR update as at 31st March 2021 (35 / 6.64%).

With regards to the number of female specials, the headcount has increased during the same period from 171 to 174, however when measured as a proportion against the total specials headcount it has reduced marginally from 32.45% to 32.16%.

All Employee Groups Diversity Data

The following table provides a breakdown of the protected characteristics data for officers, staff, PCSOs and specials for the 30th June 2021 compared against the latest HR update as at 31st March 2021. The table also includes a summary of the diversity category completion rate for the current position when compared to the 31st March 2016.

Diversity Category	Employee Group	30th June 2021 Position		31st March 2021 Position	Diversity Category Completion Rates	
		No. Declaring	% as at 30/06/2021 & Direction of Travel vs 31/03/2021		30th June 2021	31st March 2016
Self Declared Gender: Prefer to Self Describe	Officers	3	0.09% →	0.09%	64.35%	-
	Staff	3	0.13% ↑	0.09%	65.77%	-
	PCSOs	0	0.00% →	0.00%	48.11%	-
	Specials	0	0.00% →	0.00%	77.82%	-
Religion: Declared a Religion	Officers	778	22.14% ↑	21.52%	60.68%	25.39%
	Staff	669	28.55% ↑	27.70%	61.20%	32.06%
	PCSOs	26	24.53% ↑	24.55%	46.23%	27.12%
	Specials	159	29.39% ↑	28.65%	75.79%	28.23%
Sexuality: Bisexual/Gay/Lesbian	Officers	153	4.35% ↑	3.98%	63.24%	26.16%
	Staff	72	3.07% ↑	2.91%	64.19%	33.75%
	PCSOs	3	2.83% ↑	3.64%	49.06%	26.69%
	Specials	19	3.51% ↑	3.98%	77.63%	30.38%
Disability: Yes	Officers	189	5.38% ↑	4.90%	29.19%	15.49%
	Staff	198	8.45% ↑	7.95%	39.05%	24.69%
	PCSOs	9	8.49% ↑	8.18%	17.92%	10.59%
	Specials	3	0.55% ↑	0.19%	22.74%	26.88%
Nationality: Declared Nationalities Excluding British	Officers	37	1.05% ↑	1.03%	98.78%	99.93%
	Staff	41	1.75% ↑	1.71%	98.12%	99.90%
	PCSOs	0	0.00% →	0.00%	100.00%	100.00%
	Specials	22	4.07% ↑	3.98%	99.08%	97.31%
Marital Status: Married or Civil Partnership	Officers	1267	36.06% ↑	36.59%	59.35%	94.81%
	Staff	938	40.03% ↑	40.44%	63.17%	83.72%
	PCSOs	57	53.77% ↑	53.64%	89.62%	98.73%
	Specials	42	7.76% ↑	7.97%	18.30%	61.29%
Age Grouping: (31/05/2021)	Officers:	18-24: 11.81%	25-39: 50.23%	40-54: 36.31%	55+: 1.68%	
	Staff	18-24: 5.59%	25-39: 32.99%	40-54: 35.25%	55+: 26.16%	
	PCSOs	18-24: 1.89%	25-39: 30.19%	40-54: 42.45%	55+: 25.47%	
	Specials	18-24: 30.50%	25-39: 44.55%	40-54: 19.78%	55+: 5.18%	

The table demonstrates that there has been an increase across the majority of diversity categories for all employee groups.

The table also shows the significant improvement in the completion rates for each of the diversity categories as at 30th June 2021, when compared to the position as at 31st March 2016. As previously reported, the force encouraged staff to update personal diversity information on SAP self-services. This was communicated via the Chief Constable's blog and through diversity, equality and inclusion webinar training sessions and local boards. In addition, the diversity tile on SAP where this information is captured was changed to a different colour, so it stood out for staff when logging onto employee self-services.

6.0 Implications (Issues)

Not applicable.

6.1 Links to Police and Crime Plan Priorities

Ensuring the force is sufficiently resourced is a specific ambition within the narrative of the Police and Crime Plan. The provision of a sufficient number of skilled, equipped and supported resources closely links to the delivery of all seven of the priorities. This ambition is supported through recruitment, retention and attendance management activities.

Essex Police, despite the current COVID-19 pandemic, have been able to adapt their processes to ensure that recruitment has been able to continue. This, as previously reported, has resulted in the uplifted establishment being exceeded in 2020/21 and with the June 2021 intake being achieved, alongside lower levels of attrition, the force remain on course to achieve the uplifted establishment for 2021/22.

The representation of ethnic minority officers continues to increase and the current proportion of 3.87% represents the highest proportion over the last 6 years. Having a workforce that is representative of our communities will give the force a broader range of skills, knowledge and experience that can positively contribute towards the priorities.

The special constabulary continue to contribute a significant number of hours to policing, with the latest month (June 2021) at 16,976, which is the equivalent of 1061 specials working a 16-hour month. The force continues to focus on ensuring the special constabulary headcount increases by ensuring that there is increased training availability for candidates in 2021/22 following the reduced training capacity in 2020/21, due to the restrictions because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

6.2 Demand

As previously reported, Human Resources, Business Services and Learning and Development were provided with growth posts across a number of departments in 2020/21 to ensure the increased demand on the services was managed, all of which have been recruited and/or selected for. As a result of this investment, the departments (working with other key stakeholders) were able to deliver the growth for year 1 of the national uplift.

It should be noted however, that the high demand across the departments remains, due to the need to effectively resource the force during year 2 and potentially year 3 of the national uplift programme. This includes the overall impact that increased workforce numbers have on the departments in terms of the ongoing support they provide. In some cases, units are likely to bid for resources from the 22/23 uplift to meet the ongoing demands.

It is noted that whilst the Special Constabulary headcount has increased to 541 as at 30th June 2021 from 516 as at 30th June 2020, the contribution in terms of average hours has reduced. This situation is a direct consequence of the pandemic impact and has materialised in different connotations affecting the Specials contribution. By way of example a significant amount of people furloughed during this period enabling volunteering hours to increase. Subsequently over the last few months period, people have returned to work reducing availability.

Additionally, the impact of self-isolating, shielding and some conscious scaling back (to prevent spread of the pandemic within stations) has also occurred. This has also had an effect on the hours and engagement rate and gives some context of what's behind those figures. It is predicted the force will see a return to levels of hours and engagement stabilising (and increasing) over the next few months as the country continues on the roadmap out of the pandemic and more restrictions are lifted. This will be something continually tracked and supported as the force will have more opportunities with those restrictions easing. Therefore, whilst we have seen an increase in our Specials, these aspects have directly impacted their contribution.

6.3 Risks/Mitigation

Whilst the current situation regarding COVID-19 continues to create a risk for the recruitment of all roles, as previously reported, clearances and selection processes are currently continuing to be progressed with virtual options, self-declarations or policy decisions in relation to risk assessing each element of the process.

The current COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to reduced levels of turnover both in 2020/21 and the start of the 2021/22 financial year. Whilst there is no evidence to suggest turnover is increasing, there is a risk that if it were to increase it could impact the delivery of the national uplift. However, there is flexibility in the recruitment and training plan to account for increases in turnover and this is a position that will be monitored at the monthly recruitment review meeting and through monthly Chief Officer group recruitment and retention updates.

Similarly, with regards to absence, it was previously reported there was a risk this could increase in 2021/22. As identified in the report, there have been increases in some areas this year when compared to the same period last year, however in many cases absence is still much lower than the same period in 2019/20.

As with turnover, this is something that will be monitored monthly and work will continue by Operational HR and the Performance Improvement Unit (PIU) to ensure absence is monitored and actions put in place where applicable.

6.4 Equality and/or Human Rights Implications

The Chief Constable continues to chair the Corporate Diversity, Equality and Inclusion board. This is now complemented by the 12 local boards that have been established.

The overarching aim of all Local Diversity, Equality & Inclusion Boards is to provide clear local leadership and governance for implementing the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy at a local level. It also ensures the workforce and key stakeholders, including Independent Advisory Group members or relevant leads, can actively participate and bring their perspective. All activity from the local boards is then reported back via the Force level board. A specific local board is in place for HR, L&D and Business Services to ensure many issues covered within this paper can be explored as necessary.

6.5 Health and Safety Implications

Not applicable.

7.0 Consultation/Engagement

Operational Human Resources
Special Constabulary

8.0 Actions for Improvement

Recruitment and Positive Action

The transferee attraction and recruitment process has been revamped and is now implemented, with recognition of existing skills and the transfer experience being the key focus of the changes. HR Innovation also lead the attraction of detectives from other forces,

whilst supporting work towards advertising the detective pathway to internal staff through recruitment events and utilising HR career preference data.

With regards to Positive Action, the next iteration of the #WeValueDifference campaign is being designed and a full launch is programmed for September 2021.

The below provides a summary of recent key activity carried out by the Positive Action Team (PAT):

- A virtual event was held to attract talented diverse applicants for the Chief Inspector promotion process. A total of 7 people attended the event of which 1 was subsequently successful through the process to join the force.
- The launch of the Positive Action Roadshow on the 21st June 2021. The first day saw 25 schools dial in to hear inputs on cybercrime, bullying, knife crime, child sexual exploitation, DotCom, gang culture, Positive Action, recruitment and barriers between diverse communities and the Police. The event closed on the 2nd July 2021 following which attendees will be surveyed enabling learning and best practise to be identified.
- Further virtual training has been held to attract more 'Buddies'. As a result, the force now has 94 trained buddies and 93 candidates have been allocated a buddy.
- A new outreach plan is being developed with corporate recruitment to maximise the opportunities the forthcoming PEQF provides to attract a diverse pool of candidates.

Absence

The PIU and Operational HR teams continue to review Commands with the highest absence figures and ensure attendance at local AMG meetings to provide advice and support especially on the longer-term absence issues.

Contact Management have been identified as having the highest officer absence and, as a result, this Command are working closely with PIU and the Command continue to hold fortnightly AMG meetings.

With regards to the high levels of staff absence identified in Criminal Justice, the Command are currently subject to an Operational HR and PIU deep dive to review the absence and working environment to seek to identify contributing factors.

Health Services

Health and Wellbeing virtual wellbeing sessions continue and a total of 141 sessions have now been delivered with 3796 attendees (Essex and Kent). Sessions continue at approximately two-three per week. A recent Suicide Prevention Fortnight has been the key focus for the sessions recently with a number of sessions delivered regarding this difficult subject. Sessions were developed and delivered by the internal team and were fortunate to also have the support of guest speakers from two charities delivering sessions, namely Police Care and SoBs (Survivors of Bereaved by Suicide), who were able to provide other support avenues and details of the services they are able to provide.

The Wellbeing Steering Group continues to meet monthly and provides a direct link with any issues being raised within the workforce and the initiatives the Health and Wellbeing teams can develop to provide support in real-time. This is evidenced in relation to the progression

through the Government's roadmap out of restrictions and development of sessions to address the new anxieties that were being articulated in relation to these changes.

The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), continues to provide 24/7 assistance via an app and telephone counselling and the second year of service has now commenced. The support is available to both staff, officers and members of the special constabulary. This support extends to immediate family members at no additional cost to the organisations. This ensures access to support via whichever means an individual prefers and includes articles, podcasts, information sheets and financial support tools.

9.0 Future Work/Development and Expected Outcome

1. Increase the number of specials throughout 2021/22 in line with the aspiration to achieve 600 by 31st March 2022.

Expected Outcome: for reasons stated earlier in the report, significant progress towards 600 specials may be challenging, however additional training capacity totalling 16 intakes for up to 226 candidates was scheduled for the 2021/22 financial year and recruitment marketing will continue to focus on this area.

2. Continue to increase ethnic minority and female officer representation throughout 2021/22.

Expected Outcome: as reported, the current proportion of ethnic minority and female officers is the highest level it has been over the last 6 years and with strong numbers of candidates currently in process. Progress throughout 2021/22 is expected, however the #WeValueDifference campaign and outreach and support from the Positive Action Team will continue as a core activity.