

## Performance and Resources Scrutiny Programme 2020/21

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

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Specials Recruitment – Quarterly Report</b>
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<b>Chief Officer</b>	<b>ACC Rachel Nolan</b>
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<b>Report from:</b>	<b>Essex Police</b>
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<b>Date of Approval:</b>	<b>03 June 2021</b>

#### 1.0 **Purpose of Report**

Quarterly update on recruitment under the Special Constabulary Development Programme.

#### 2.0 **Recommendations**

No recommendations.

#### 3.0 **Executive Summary**

This paper reports key deliveries against the above from 01 February 2021 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021 and future areas of focus. Highlights include:

##### **Reward & Recognition:**

- The Special Constabulary were awarded a certificate of achievement for the IESE Awards at a virtual event on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March;
- The Special Constabulary have been nominated for the Queens Summer Awards and winners will be announced on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2021.

##### **Establishment, engagement & duties (as of 30/04/21):**

- 533 officers;
- 28 BAME officers (5.4% of the establishment);
- Delivered 54,494 hours of which 39,731 were operational hours. This is equivalent to the working time provided by 115 full time officers at a cost of £1.5m during this quarter (approximately £6m/year);
- 14 Community Special Constables covering nine parishes with a further 22 CSC's in the pipeline;
- 36 businesses (including Essex Police) and 86 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 20<sup>th</sup> March 2021 from which 232 expressed an interest in attending;
- 178 applications this last quarter which represents a decrease on the previous quarter of 40 applications (18.35%);
- 24 applications were from BAME applicants;
- 5 intakes in the last quarter started with 54 new officers.
- Scheduled for five more Intakes, by 31 July 2021 with a potential for 65 more officers to start;
- Covid secure Attestation Ceremonies continue with 41 Specials Constables attested during this quarter.

#### **Non-operational & service exit:**

- 29 leavers represent an increase of 3 (11.5%) from the previous quarter ; 7 for Essex , 1 joined other force, 1 officer retiring, 2 medical reasons, 4 during training, and 14 others a mixture of personal reasons with 1 related to COVID 19 personal challenges);
- 66 officers (12.4%) are non-operational, leave of absence or suspended.

## **4.0 Introduction**

National Workforce Statistics for March 2020, published in July 2020, show that Essex Police still 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 the only force in the country that have signed to become 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.

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.

Essex Police received 178 completed applications between 1st February 2021 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021. This is a decrease on the previous quarter of 40 applications (18.35%).

24 applications were from a BAME background (13.48%), compared to 34 applications from the same period the previous year (11.04%). 57 applicants identified as female (32.02%) compared to 90 from the same period last year (29.22%); this is a decrease in numbers but an increase in the percentage of female applicants for the number that applied in that period.

On 20<sup>th</sup> March 2021, a virtual Recruitment Information day was held using Microsoft Teams where 232 members of the public engaged with the Specials Recruitment Team and Citizens in Policing Team to understand the vast roles and opportunities as a Special Constable or within the Citizens in Policing team. 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 through social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. This has supported increasing awareness and consequently interest in recruitment.

- 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 continues to be promoted along with support from the Business Chamber of Commerce;
- Essex Police are featured in page 3 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 increased from a position of 26.6% in March 2017 to 29.2% during 2020/21.

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	167	137	40	(29.2%)
2021/22	14	3	0	(0%)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>826</b>	<b>651</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>(35.6%)</b>

The above table identifies the SC Command as a significant pipeline to the recruitment of PCs with 232 recruits having started their policing journey as a Special.

#### 5.4 **Employer Supported Policing & Community Special Constables**

##### **Employer Supported Policing (ESP):**

- 41 businesses support which is an increase of 8 businesses in the last quarter support 84 Officers in the ESP scheme (7% of the national ESP). Of these 84 Officers, 37 officers are employed by Essex Police in other roles;
- 115 ESP duties have resulted in 866 hours of policing in this period which is an increase of 6.3% for duties and 5.1% for hours worked on the previous quarter. This suggests the dip last quarter was as expected, a combination of the seasonal dip combined with the uncertainty of the additional COVID restrictions imposed in October 2020
- Thirteen businesses, who are not registered with ESP, have provided staff a total of 228 paid hours for policing duties during this quarter to support Op TALLA
- Advanced negotiations are underway with the following businesses: Chelmsford City Council, Southend Borough Council, Tendring District Council, Harlow District Council, Morrisons, Asda, South Essex Homes, Marks and Spencer;
- Essex Chamber of Commerce are looking at plans for future ESP virtual events following on from the previous event in January;
- Suffolk Constabulary have made contact for Essex ESP to share best practice to enable them to submit business plans for a dedicated ESP Coordinator.

##### **Community Special Constables (CSC):**

- 14 active CSC officers covering 9 councils. No change on last quarter.
- CSC Specials have worked 116 duties resulting in 784 hours;
- There are currently 22 officers in various stages of the pipeline including 10 in post foundation stage. It is anticipated that 2 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. We are now looking at planning the next steps as we come out of lockdown. There is a meeting with the Head of Digital Forensics on the 7 May 2021 where plans will be put in place. At the moment the volunteers can be summarised as;

- 6 HQ based digital forensics volunteers have not been active due to the pandemic.

- 3 Cyber volunteers report to the Digital Forensic Team and are working at a high level around cyber incidents. (2 more Cyber volunteers are vetted and awaiting placement).
- 9 volunteers are part of the Ethics committee within the Digital Forensic Team.

## 5.6 **Performance**

- 533 officers;
- 28 BAME officers (5.4% of the establishment).
- Delivered 54,494 hours of which 39,731 were operational hours. This is equivalent to the working time provided by 115 full time officers at a cost of £1.5m during this quarter (approximately £6m/year);
- 14 Community Special Constables covering nine parishes with a further 22 CSC's in the pipeline;
- 36 businesses (including Essex Police) and 86 officers who now benefit from the ESP scheme.

Over the period 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021, Specials have contributed a total of 54,494 hours compared to 51,113 hours in the previous quarter, a 3.2% increase on the same period in 2020. The last 3 months has seen an increase of 10.4% in operational hours worked (39,731 operational hours). The hours worked by the Special Constabulary across this three-month period is equivalent to having an additional 115 full time officers, who would attract an annual salary cost of £1.5m during this quarter (approximately £6m/year);

Over the last 3 months, 71.43% of Special Constables have volunteered at least 16hrs each month (as required) However, Specials have averaged 34.4 hours per month compared to 35 hrs per month the previous quarter which is the same as the equivalent period in 2020.

29 Specials have left the Special Constabulary which is an increase of 3 (11.5%) from the previous quarter and a decrease of 16 (55%) from the same period last year. 8 of these did so to join the regulars; 7 for Essex and 1 for other forces and 15 left for various personal reasons and 1 for COVID related reasons.

Officers continue to focus 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 slight increase in Officers who are non-operational due to self-isolating and/or social distancing from 3 officers (0.6%) in January 2021 to 5 officers (0.9%) in April 2021 – all are social distancing and zero officers are self-isolating currently.
- Leadership and Command Team meetings continue to take place via Teams and/or Covid secure face to face meetings;
- Recruitment events continue to 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 continues to be monitored as lockdown restrictions start to ease. We continue to facilitate class sizes for foundation training which has increased from 10 to 16 for weekend courses and 10-11 for intensive intakes;
- With the additional spaces we have increased our maximum numbers for 2021/2022 to date from 164 to 214.

## **5.8 Operational Deliverables**

- Special Takeover Days – which supports our regular colleagues to focus on case progression, victim contacts, online training and ANPR duties which forms part of our force week initiatives. These have proved to be most successful and well received by regulars;
- Operation Sunshade supporting the force as we come out of lockdown and Operation Axle assisting with the upcoming elections on the 6<sup>th</sup> May;
- RET recruitment campaign there will be 2 officers starting on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021 and the second two will start in Autumn 2021.

## **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 2022 which will be challenging due 4 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

- 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** to take place in July 2021 in which Special Constables have the opportunity to achieve promotion to the rank of Sergeant;
- **Queens Summer Awards** will be held virtually Summer 2021, date of which is to be confirmed.
- **British Awards for Women in Policing** – Several specials were nominated in 2021 with one successful applicant that has been shortlisted.
- **Force Awards** nominations close 16<sup>th</sup> May with ceremony for winners planned for November 2021

### **Communication:**

- Review of usage of Essex Specials Twitter account strategically and are looking to create more original and regular content;
- We Value Difference 2 Campaign in which promotion and recruitment of Special Constables will have a bespoke feature within the campaign.
- National Volunteer Week 1<sup>st</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> June 2021 where we will highlight the fantastic work that our Special Constables achieve.

### **Recruitment training & retention:**

- Continue weekly 'pipeline' meeting of Specials Development Team, HR, Business Support, Vetting, L&D. ToR is to review numbers at each stage against target, process and attrition from application to attestation to identify any blockers or risks and take action to mitigate;
- Future virtual recruitment events scheduled for Summer 2021 and will showcase the Special Constabulary and Citizens in Policing which is part of the Essex Police recruitment campaign;
- Specials Training Team (L&D) response to Covid secure training has enabled increased class sizes. From Intake SE Intensive Course (27<sup>th</sup> Feb), S11 Intake (28<sup>th</sup> March) weekend classes have been increased from a maximum of 10 to 20 and our intensive courses have been increased from 10 to 12;
- Additional intakes have been added to the training calendar which includes a Tutor Training Course and Leadership Course.
- Increased our maximum numbers for 2021/2022 from 164 to 214;
- Specials Training Team are focusing on supporting the investigative specials through their post foundation training to start the next step of their detective pathway. Two PIP1 courses were run during March ;
- The Cyber Special/Cyber Volunteer programme continues to make progress.
- RET continue to support our recruitment campaign to increase our Special Constable figure to 10 Specials 1 per district. We have 2 officers in post that will start on the 1<sup>st</sup> June and 2 officers who will start in Autumn 2021.



**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. This new programme commenced on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

**10.0 Decisions Required by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner**

Not required.

**11.0 Appendices**

Appendix A

Appendix B

Appendix C



Police Workforce  
Statistics - March 20



SC Force detailed  
comms.docx



Special Impact - Issue  
42 - Spring 2021.pdf