

**MINUTES**  
**POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR ESSEX**  
**and**  
**ESSEX POLICE**  
**STRATEGIC BOARD**

11 March 2021, 1400 to 1700, via MS Teams

**Present:**

Roger Hirst (RH)	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner – Chair
Julia Berry (JB)	Head of Finance and s151 Officer, PFCC's office
Pippa Brent-Isherwood (PBI)	Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, PFCC's office
Annette Chan (AC)	Chief Accountant, Essex Police
Jules Donald (JD)	Chief Information Officer, Kent and Essex Police
Patrick Duffy (PD)	Head of Estates, Essex Police
Jane Gardner (JG)	Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Mark Gilmartin (MG)	Director of Shared Support Services, Kent and Essex Police
BJ Harrington (BJH)	Chief Constable, Essex Police
Suzanne Harris (SH)	Head of Performance & Scrutiny (Policing & Crime) PFCC's office
Richard Jones (RJ)	Head of Business Partnering and Management Accounting,
Debbie Martin (DM)	Chief Finance Officer, Essex Police
Janet Perry (JP)	Strategic Head of Performance & Resources, PFCC's office
Tom Richards (TR)	T/Assistant Chief Constable, Essex Police
Tom Simons (TS)	Ch/Supt, Strategic Change, Essex Police
Matt Tokley (MT)	Corporate Accounting Manager, Essex Police Essex Police

**In attendance:**

Michelle Davies (MD)	Superintendent, Head of LPSU and CIP Command, Essex Police
Mat Newton (MN)	Ch/Supt, Head of Leading and Development, Essex Police

Camilla Brandal Minutes, PFCC's Office

**Apologies**

Dr Vicki Harrington (VH)	Director of Strategic Change, Essex Police
Pippa Mills (PM)	Deputy Chief Constable, Essex Police

**1 Introduction and welcome**

RH welcomed all to the meeting and noted apologies from VH.

**2.i Minutes of last meeting**

2.i.1 BJH asked that the item under 2.ii Action Log, Action 05/2020 be amended to reflect that the Ethics and Integrity Committee is a sub-committee of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel and not Essex County Council.

2.i.2 There were no further amendments to the minutes of the December meeting and subject to the amendment above, they were approved.

2.i Matters Arising

2.i.3 BJH would like to note his thanks on behalf of the Force for the approval and support for the Op Talla payment. RH commented that the payment is clearly justified and the Force had his gratitude and thanks on behalf of the public of Essex for the outstanding job that the Force has done over the last year.

2.i.4 RH reminded members that the Strategic Board is a decision-making Board and has Terms of Reference which form part of the Constitution for the PFCC. RH asked that papers presented at this Board are for strategic decision-making purposes and contain recommendations. Performance, information and scrutiny papers should be presented at the Performance and Resources Scrutiny Board.

2.ii Action Log

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| 22/2020 | Capitalised Estates Maintenance<br>The decision sheet (135-20) required some amendments; this is all in hand.<br>Close.    |
| 23/2020 | Replacement of CSI Forensic Drying Cabinets<br>The decision sheet (146-20) is part way through the signing process. Close. |
| 24/2020 | Strategic Transformation Programme<br>Update on Community Safety Hubs from BJH had been shared with RH.<br>Close.          |
| 25/2020 | Taser Update<br>This decision sheet had been withdrawn as it is a duplicate. Close.  |

2.iii Forward Plan

2.iii.1 BJH asked that the Police and Crime Plan development be added to the Forward Plan for June, with an anticipated completion date of November 2021.

**Action 1:**

**SH to add Police and Crime Plan Development to the Forward Plan for June and December.**

2.iii.2 BJH asked if it would be more appropriate for the Force Growth Programme to be monitored at the Strategic Board, rather than the monthly Performance and Resources Scrutiny Board, as the Programme is well established. This was agreed.

**Action 2:**

**SH to move the Force Growth Programme quarterly updates from the Performance and Resources Scrutiny Board's Forward Plan onto the Strategic Board's Forward Plan.**

2.iii.3 SH asked, and it was confirmed, that end of year accounts should go onto the June Board meeting's agenda.

**Action 3:**

**SH to add End of Year Accounts to the Forward Plan for June.**

- 2.iii.4 SH asked, and it was confirmed, that the Budget Setting timetable items be added to September's Board meeting. DM confirmed that the statutory closure of accounts sign off date has been moved to end of September 2021.

**Action 4:**

**SH to confirm Budget Setting Timetable on the Forward Plan for September (liaising with DM outside the meeting for the exact dates).**

- 2.iii.5 TS asked if the Digital Strategy could be added to June's meeting. It was agreed that it would be added to the Forward Plan for June.

**Action 5:**

**SH to add Essex Police's Digital Strategy to the June meeting on the Forward Plan.**

3 Finance

3.i Medium Term Financial Strategy ('MTFS')

- 3.i.1 DM presented the updated MTFS report (which was different from that presented at the Police, Fire and Crime Panel on 4 February 2021) and which set out the approved position, the key assumptions and movements since 4 February 2021. DM confirmed that there was one change relating to the slippage of the programme and that the current report was recalculated using Month 10 financial position.
- 3.i.2 RH noted that there were no recommendations for the Board on the cover sheet, and the recommendation to approve the MTFS should have been included. RH asked for a decision sheet to be prepared for this approval.

**Action 6:**

**Decision Sheet for the MTFS to be submitted to the PFCC's office**

- 3.i.3 It was confirmed that this was an oversight and BJH confirmed that this will be addressed.
- 3.i.4 A discussion took place around the future assumptions within the MTFS and the formation of a working party to address this. The work to be done on assumptions should consider both upside and downside, regarding precept, Police Officers numbers, Home Office funding, pay awards, savings and efficiencies and the associated future programmes of work.
- 3.i.5 It was also agreed that the MTFS working group (consisting of DM, AC, JP and JB) should consider the capital programme, specifically around the capital finance and borrowing requirements. Once the assumptions had been refined, it was proposed to bring the MTFS back to the Strategic Board.
- 3.i.6 The discussion moved on to the planned use of underspend and the need for surge funding in 2021/2022. It was agreed that £1.3m of underspending should be moved to earmarked reserve at year end, and RH requested that Essex Police should submit a decision sheet in relation to this earmarked reserve.

**Action 7:**

**A decision sheet relating to creation of £1.3m earmarked reserve would be sent through to the PFCC's office and allocated a number before being processed.**

- 3.i.7 RH then confirmed that this £1.3m should be shown as an additional underspend in the month 11 financial forecast, thereby resulting in a forecast underspend of circa £3.2m.

**Action 8:**

**The month 11 financial forecast should reflect the additional £1.3m underspend**

3.ii Insurance position

- 3.ii.1 MT presented the update on key insurance issues for the Force along with emphasis on emerging insurance risks in respect of claims and premium costs. MT went through the background to the procurement of insurance cover through South East and Eastern Region Police Insurance Consortium (SEERPIC) and the collaborative opportunities.
- 3.ii.2 The report contained information on current insurance arrangements, reducing the Force's risk profile, lessons learnt around wider liability claims, the significant increase in motor insurance excess (a result of there being less providers to choose from in the Bluelight sector). The report also contained information on the cost of claims, provisions for outstanding liabilities and a recent fund data audit by Marsh.
- 3.ii.3 MT commented on the emerging issues set out in the report, which included cyber-crime risk and non-crime activity. The Force does not currently have specific cyber-crime insurance cover in place. This is currently being looked at via SEERPIC. MT's team will be issuing a memo to all staff regarding awareness of insurance matters.
- 3.ii.4 RH noted that the report contained no recommendations. It was agreed that MT would bring proposals regarding cyber-crime and public liability insurance, along with associated decision sheets, to a future Strategic Board. BJH confirmed that this was the intention and that the report did not contain the required recommendations. It was then agreed that a full update on insurance matters would be added to the Forward Plan for the Performance and Resources Scrutiny Board.

**Action 9:**

**Proposals regarding cyber insurance and public liability insurance would be scheduled for June on the Forward Plan for the Strategic Board**

**Action 10:**

**An item on Insurance would be added to the Forward Plan for the Performance and Resources Scrutiny Board (timing to be determined by that Board)**

- 3.ii.5 JP asked about the upper limits of the policies as only the excess is shown. MT agreed to share this information with JP. JP also asked whether there was any potential to release some of the historic provision but MT confirmed that the value is assessed on a quarterly basis and he was of the opinion that there is nothing in the ongoing claims that is not a current estimate and that the figure of £2.5m is fairly accurate based on information from insurance and legal colleagues. It was agreed that this would be picked up at a future finance meeting.

**Action 11:**

**MT to advise JP regarding upper limits covered by the policies**

**Action 12:**

**A review of provisions for historic liabilities to be discussed at a future finance meeting**

#### 4 Treasury Management Strategy 2021/22

- 4.1 MT confirmed that the Treasury Management Strategy is prepared annually in accordance with the legal obligation for the PFCC to have regard to the CIPFA Code by approving a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year.
- 4.2 MT highlighted the following items from the report:
- 4.2.1 Treasury Management Strategy; diminishing capital resources, a forecast of £15m internal refinancing requirement for the financial year 2020/2021. This requirement is likely to increase to circa £58m by the end of the financial year 2025/2026. MT also explained the proposed borrowing approach, external borrowing requirement and the borrowing strategy, together with the increased risks around interest rate and Arlingclose advice.
- 4.2.2 Investment Strategy; this Strategy covers specialist investments and activity that the PFCC would not normally be involved in.
- 4.2.3 Capital Strategy; detail around investment plans and the Prudential indicators, including authorised limits and operational boundary figures.
- 4.2.4 Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy; no significant changes for this financial year with the continued use of the asset life method and MRP costs.
- 4.3 MT confirmed that in summary the PFCC's cash balances will require external borrowing across the medium term beginning in 2021/22, with the three Strategy documents providing assurance that the investment programme is realistic, manageable and that there is finance planning in place to address the increased risk.
- 4.4 MT confirmed that following discussions with JB, he will be including some changes to some of the terminology within the report to make things clearer.
- 4.5 RH sought clarification of the recommendations being made to the Strategic Board. It was acknowledged that the recommendation should have been included in the written paper to ask the Board to endorse the proposals contained within it.
- 4.6 RH asked for clarification around the 5 year liability assumption and the peak to trough cash flow showing borrowing of £61m. MT confirmed that the Force is cash rich half way through year through HO grants and CT income providing the peak, but the external cash borrowing will not go beyond £17.5m.
- 4.7 RH asked about the Table 5.4 and the target minimum long term credit rating with investment counterparts at A-, and after a brief discussion, it was agreed that MT would continue to invest in a wide range of money market AAA funds and to alter the long term credit rating to A.
- 4.8 The paper included a proposal to remove the 50% investment limit into Money Market Funds (MMF). RH did not support this proposal and it was agreed that the strategy should be amended accordingly.
- 4.9 There was a brief discussion about next steps and the information required for inclusion in PFCC decision sheets. It was agreed that the three Strategies would be revised to reflect the changes above and that following this a decision sheet would be drawn up for the PFCC's approval of the three Strategies.

### **Action 13:**

**The three Strategies (the Treasury Management Strategy 2021/2022, encompassing the Capital Strategy and Investment Strategy) would be amended to reflect agreed changes and a decision sheet would be drawn up for the PFCC's approval.**

- 4.9 RH wanted to record his gratitude and thanks to those involved for all the work that has gone into preparing these Strategies.

## 5 Capital Programme

### 5.1 IT Infrastructure Technical Refresh

- 5.1.1 JD presented the annual Business Case for the refresh of items including networks, telephony and wi-fi, servers, storage data centres, laptops, mobiles, monitors and printers. JD confirmed that the figures in the Business Case are slightly different for Kent and Essex as the assets are owned separately but this year would provide for a slightly reduced annual figure than previous years. JD noted that from the pandemic's start, IT had supplied over 1,500 laptops for home and agile working but that they were now concentrating again on the laptop replacement programme, which had been paused.
- 5.1.2 RH asked how much of this refresh was already in the budget. DM confirmed the Stage 2 figures were less than originally budgeted for.
- 5.1.3 It was agreed that this decision sheet would be sent through to the PFCC's office and allocated a number before being processed.

### **Action 14:**

**The IT Infrastructure Technical Refresh decision sheet would be sent through to the PFCC's office and allocated a number before being processed.**

### 5.2 NAS ANPR Remediation

- 5.2.1 JD presented the business case for the allocation of funding to replace the physical database servers for both Kent and Essex, which will result in a solution/ infrastructure that will improve reliability for critical operational support for the next couple of years, until the National ANPR Service (NAS) solution is put in place.
- 5.2.2 A discussion took place around the NAS solution and the current Kent and Essex ANPR systems, and it was agreed that this decision sheet would be sent through to the PFCC's office and allocated a number before being processed.

### **Action 15:**

**The NAS ANPR Remediation decision sheet would be sent through to the PFCC's office and allocated a number before being processed.**

### 5.3 Driving School Motor Cycles

- 5.3.1 MN presented the business case for the provision of two additional marked police motorcycles to meet the internal training requirements for Essex Police. MN went through the proposals and the alternative options that had been considered, and explained how the proposal impacts on the Police and Crime Plan and operational implications.

- 5.3.2 It was agreed that this decision sheet would be sent through to the PFCC's office and allocated a number before being processed.

**Action 16:**

**The Driving School Motorcycles decision sheet would be sent through to the PFCC's office and allocated a number before being processed.**

**MN left the meeting at 1520.**

5.4 Boreham – Agile Implementation and New Locker facilities

- 5.4.1 PD presented the business case for the approval for capital investment into undertaking implementation of full agile working, facilities upgrade and new locker room provision at the Boreham Complex.

- 5.4.2 After a discussion around funding and the future use of Boreham by other teams, it was agreed that this decision sheet would be sent through to the PFCC's office and allocated a number before being processed.

**Action 17:**

**The Boreham – Agile implementation and New Locker facilities decision sheet would be sent through to the PFCC's office and allocated a number before being processed.**

5.5 Sunflower Rooms

- 5.5.1 PD presented the business case for the upgrade of three existing locations, and the creation of one new location, for Sunflower rooms within existing police stations for the safeguarding and supervision of children and vulnerable persons until suitable accommodation can be arranged by partners.

- 5.5.2 It was agreed that this decision sheet would be sent through to the PFCC's office and allocated a number before being processed.

**Action 18:**

**The Sunflower Rooms decision sheet would be sent through to the PFCC's office and allocated a number before being processed.**

5.6 Harwich and Dovercourt Collaboration

- 5.6.1 PD presented the business case which sought approval for capital investment into building a new Police Station on the existing grounds of Dovercourt Fire Station. PD presented the background to the bid, the benefits of the proposal, the alternative options that had been considered and the financial and staffing implications. There were a number of high risks associated with the full business case but, upon approval of the decision sheet, these will be transferred to the force's risk register and managed as part of the overall project delivery.

- 5.6.2 A discussion took place around the collaborative working that had gone into the business case and the clear commitment to the areas of Harwich and Dovercourt from both services. A further brief discussion took place around the licence agreement and the advice that the PFCC will be taking regarding the land transfer. PD wanted to record his thanks to John Hallworth who has been one of the driving forces behind this piece of work.

- 5.6.3 It was agreed that this decision sheet would be sent through to the PFCC's office and allocated a number before being processed.

**Action 19:**

**The Harwich and Dovercourt Collaboration decision sheet would be sent through to the PFCC's office and allocated a number before being processed.**

5.7 Colchester Local Digital Media Investigators (LDMI)

- 5.7.1 PD presented the business case which sought approval for capital investment into upgrading the local Digital Media forensic analysis accommodation at Colchester Police Station, facilitating the ability for the Force to achieve ISO accreditation. PD confirmed that the procurement work had taken place and the order was ready to be placed.

- 5.7.2 It was agreed that this decision sheet would be sent through to the PFCC's office and allocated a number before being processed.

**Action 20:**

**The Colchester Local Digital Media Investigators decision sheet would be sent through to the PFCC's office and allocated a number before being processed.**

5.8 Truvelo Speed Camera

- 5.8.1 BJH presented the business case for the purchase of three Truvelo 'Lasercam 4' hand held speed enforcement devices.

- 5.8. It was agreed that a decision sheet would be sent through to the PFCC's office and allocated a number before being processed.

**Action 21:**

**The Truvelo Speed Camera decision sheet would be sent through to the PFCC's office and allocated a number before being processed.**

6 Crime Prevention Strategy

- 6.1 BJH confirmed that work is still being carried out on the Crime Prevention Strategy before it is ready to be presented to the Strategic Board. This is partly to ensure a robust partnership approach, with the support of other organisations. The Chief Officer Away Day will be discussing the Strategy in detail as although three of the five proposed strands directly relate to policing, it is felt that some areas require input from other agencies and organisations and Chief Officers recognised the importance of Safer Essex partnership having some ownership of the Crime Prevention Strategy. BJH confirmed that a timetable would be proposed to Safer Essex for agreement. RH welcomed the fact that this would be a collaborative strategy to deliver community solutions and preventions.

- 6.2 After a brief discussion, it was agreed that BJH would bring a Crime Prevention Strategy update to June's Strategic Board.

**Action 22:**

**SH to add Crime Prevention Strategy update to the Forward Plan for June.**

7 Police Objective Analysis ('POA')

- 7.1 RJ is now a member of the national working group for POA. RJ confirmed that the POA as presented built on the detail that had been presented at the Performance and



Resources Board in February. This had subsequently been reviewed with JP, which had resulted in the variances (and commentary) included in this report. RJ said that the unit costing work being undertaken with PWC would be likely to provide further granularity with regard to the cost of policing.

- 7.2 A discussion took place on the variance analysis. RJ confirmed that work on Q1 position will be undertaken with JP and dealt with at the Performance and Resources Scrutiny Board.
- 7.4 RJ confirmed that there were no recommendations in the report but sought clarification as to whether the POA should be presented to the Strategic Board or the Performance and Resources Scrutiny Board. RH recognised that the POA will need to be adopted as part of the budget, and as such it was agreed the opening position should be presented at the June Strategic Board. It was agreed that the in-year quarterly reporting would be considered at Performance and Resources Scrutiny Board.

**Action 23:**

**SH to add POA Opening Position to the Strategic Board Forward Plan for June, and Quarterly reporting to the Performance and Resources Scrutiny Board Forward Plan**

8 Force Growth (opening of the 2021/22 programme)

BJH presented the Force Growth Programme 2021/22 Implementation Plan and Timeline and confirmed that it had previously been presented at the Police, Fire and Crime Panel in February 2021. There was an addition to the paper; namely, the table at Figure 2 which sets out the proposed Implementation timeline. A brief discussion took place around the colour coding on the table (white PUP, blue precept), and confirmation that the implementation plan is aligned with recruitment, mitigations and building in lead times for specialist training.

9 Strategic Transformation Programme – Highlight report

- 9.1 TS presented the Dashboard and the achievements during the last quarter which included Force Growth, Analytics for Everyone, Athena, Collaboration projects, Areas in Exception, Savings and Efficiency plans, and the Change Programme Risk Register.
- 9.2 A discussion took place around Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) Integrated Communication Control System (ICCS) and the current progress that is being undertaken, particularly around audio fixes, the mitigations that could be initiated, movement to be reflected on Risk Registers, the proposed contract extension and the overall procurement process.

10 IT Programme Update

- 10.1 JD presented the paper which covered items such as the 2020/21 IT Portfolio, progress towards defining the 2021/22 IT Portfolio, a summary of the January 2021 Digital Transformation Oversight Board meeting and an update on 4F ICT Convergence.
- 10.2 JD also updated on the implementation of the Digital Interview Recording project, 7F Corevet system, and the large number of ideas that have been triaged and prioritised into 16 potential projects. JD also confirmed that the ICT Convergence Programme was now being closed down, with the IT Strategy being refreshed, which would contain a new target operating model.

## 11 Estates Programme Update

PD presented the Estates Programme update which dealt with items such as the recent estates team growth consultation, the disposals programme, the refurbishment of Chelmsford Police Station and Police HQ, capital receipts and collaboration opportunities.

## 12 Op Talla Special Constable Payments

- 12.1 MD presented a paper that set out the proposals for Op Talla Special Constable one off payment. This included detail of the options that had been discussed to take into account the Special Constable regulations, tax implications that could arise and the status of a volunteer moving to an office of profit. MD confirmed that HMRC advice had been sought and it had been agreed that a voucher approach would allow the volunteers to retain their volunteer status. The voucher approach removes the income tax liability but does retain the National Insurance contribution of approximately 14%.
- 12.2 Following a brief discussion regarding the amount for each voucher, including consideration of whether the Specials would receive a net amount greater than that of an average member of staff, it was agreed that MD would find out what the difference would be before submitting a decision sheet for the PFCC to approve the Special Constable Op Talla payment.
- 12.3 It was agreed that a decision sheet would be sent through to the PFCC's office and allocated a number before being processed.

### **Action 24:**

**The Op Talla Special Constable Payments decision sheet would be sent through to the PFCC's office and allocated a number before being processed.**

## 13 Approval of paper classifications for publishing

It was agreed that the papers that would be published were items 3ii, 4, 5.iii, 5.v, 5.vi, 5.vii, 7, 8 (with redactions) and 12.

## 14 Any Other Business

- 14.1 SH advised that work is being done on the report templates for this board, with Claire Heath, to help make the papers more uniform.
- 14.2 RH commented that this meeting had been hugely useful and was a good opportunity to discuss and debate issues that had arisen. He wanted to thank all concerned for their contribution.
- 14.3 There being no more business, the meeting closed at 1701.