

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

27 September 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
Dr Vicki Harrington (VH)	Director of Strategic Change, Essex Police
Suzanne Harris (SH)	Head of Performance & Scrutiny (Policing & Crime) PFCC's office
Darren Horsman (DH)	Strategic Head of Policy and Public Engagement, PFCC's office
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
Camilla Brandal (CB)	Minutes, PFCC's Office

1 Introduction and welcome

RH welcomed all to the meeting and noted that there were no apologies.

2.i Minutes of last meeting

There were no amendments to the minutes of the June meeting and they were therefore approved. There were no matters arising.

2.ii Action Log

12/21 Finance – Insurance position
It was agreed that the information on historic liabilities would now be included in the Insurance Paper giving an overview of provisions already scheduled for P&RSB. Action to remain open until this paper is submitted. Due date December.

- 25/21 Action Log
It was suggested that the required information about Public Liability Insurance could be included in the proposed Insurance Paper already scheduled for P&RSB. It was agreed, however, that the two matters should remain separate and that the Insurance Paper solely focussing on Public Liability Insurance (as originally requested under action 9/21) should remain as a paper for the Strategic Board, now expected in December. Action to remain open. Due date December.
- 26/21 Action Log
Forward Plan amended. Close.
- 27/21 Action Log
To remain open until the Home Office have sent through the outliers for the POA, which will be shared with the PFCC before the final submission is agreed. (Item 9 on today's Agenda is the draft version).
- 28/21 Finance
Tables agreed. Close.
- 29/21 Finance
Decision sheet 086-21 received in the PFCC's office. Close.
- 30/21 Draft Unaudited Statement of Accounts
Explanation provided around reserves query. RH commented that he would like to re-emphasise his request for gross budgeting. Close.
- 31/21 Finance
Decision sheet 087-21 received in the PFCC's office. Close.
- 32/21 AOB – Treasury Management Strategy
Decision sheet received in the PFCC's office. Close.
- 33/21 Finance
Meeting dates agreed. Dates to be lined up better for next year. [confirmed Closed after Finance sections of this Board].
- 34/21 Finance
Confirmed as complete. Removed VH reference. Close.
- 35/21 Insurance – Cyber Crime Cover
Decision sheet 089-21 received in the PFCC's office. Close.
- 36/21 Force Growth
Requested information included in Force Growth paper. Close.
- 37/21 Crime Prevention Strategy
Decision sheet 096-21 received in the PFCC's office. Close.
- 38/21 IT Programme Update
Paper to be tabled at Strategic Board only. Close.
- 39/21 Digital Asset Management Solution (DAMS)
Decision sheet 090-21 received in the PFCC's office. Close.
- 40/21 Capital Programme

- Decision sheet 091-21 received in the PFCC's office. Close.
- 41/21 Capital Programme
Decision sheet 092-21 received in the PFCC's office. Close.
- 42/21 Emergency Services Network Roadmap ICCS
Decision sheet 099-21 received in the PFCC's office. Close.
- 43/21 Capital Programme
Amended Decision sheet 093-21 received in the PFCC's office. Close.
- 44/21 Capital Programme
Decision sheet 094-21 received in the PFCC's office. Close.
- 45/21 Capital Programme
Decision sheet 095-21 received in the PFCC's office. Close.
- 46/21 Essex Police Digital Strategy
Decision sheet 097-21 received in the PFCC's office. Close.
- 47/21 Local Children's Safeguarding Boards
JG confirmed that this had been discussed. Close.
- 48/21 Local Children's Safeguarding Boards
JG confirmed that an approach has been agreed with Mr Baldwin and JG will amend the decision sheet. Action to remain open until decision sheet submitted.

2.iii Forward Plan

SH confirmed that there had been some minor changes to the Forward Plan, including a key to show which papers would be expected for each which item and a record of all changes now referenced at the end of the Plan. All proposed changes were highlighted in red and approval requested. The changes were agreed. SH to look at the dates on the Forward Plan and extend the Plan to December 2022.

3 Finance

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

- 3.i.1 DM presented the latest version of the MTFS which is showing a current forecast of £5.9m shortfall which has been impacted by the Employer National Insurance contributions increase and the South East pay allowance increase. Page 5 of the report set these increases out in more detail. Other items that are included in the table are an increased cashable savings amount, the funding for the extra Bank Holiday in 2022, and forecast one-off detailed expenditures. DM wanted to note that items still to be concluded are the capital bids, the Council tax base and collection deficit and there had been an update to the assumptions to deal with the impact on the funding gap.
- 3.i.2 Other work that will be undertaken will be on the capital programme for Estates, Special Branch funding, pay award, capital financing requirements (Table 4), the MRP and the reserves and provisions (data for which is being collected).

AC left the meeting at 1440

- 3.i.3 A lengthy discussion took place around the MTFS, the assumptions, the reported accumulated deficit, savings and efficiencies, National Insurance contributions, Council Tax precepts, South East pay allowances and how to show these in the MTFS. It was agreed that the existing table would be amended to show the likely worst case scenario (taking out both precept increase and South East allowance), and a new table would be created to show the reasonably anticipated scenario (including the precept increase, the South East allowance and the funding for the National Insurance increase, the savings likely to be achieved over the timeframe, and any pre-planned deployable reserves).

Action: 49/21

It was agreed that the existing table would be amended to show the likely worst case scenario (taking out the precept increase and National Insurance Contributions increase and assuming the South East allowance increase goes ahead), and a new table would be created to show the reasonably anticipated scenario (including the precept increase and the funding for the National Insurance increase, not including the South East allowance increase, and including the savings likely to be achieved over the timeframe, and any pre-planned deployable reserves).

JP left the meeting at 1502

RH confirmed that he agreed the MTFS with the amendments to the tables above.

3.ii Budget Setting Timetable

- 3.ii.1 After a brief discussion around the timetable, it was agreed that CB would send over the Police, Fire and Crime Panel working group meetings dates to DM and AC. PBI would identify dates for RH and BJH to address the MTFS and Budgets and tie in with the working group meetings.

Action: 50/21

CB would send over the Police, Fire and Crime Panel working group meetings dates to DM and AC. PBI would identify dates for RH and BJH to address the MTFS and Budgets and tie in with the working group meetings.

JP rejoined the meeting at 1505

3.iii Final Statement of Accounts

- 3.iii.1 DM confirmed that as the Essex County Council pensions audit (LGPS) had not been completed, it was proposed that the Statement of Accounts are published with the proviso that there is one external source that has prevented signing and will reference the pension auditors. The aim is to sign with the proviso, meet the statutory deadline of publishing on 30 September but that it will clearly state that we do not have the audit opinion due to not having the sign off from ECC pension auditors. When the LGPS is signed off by the pension auditors (anticipated end October), another notice will be published including the audit opinion setting out the differences between the two. RH confirmed that he is very supportive of publishing now and providing the further notice later as proposed.
- 3.iii.2 A further discussion took place around the signing and publishing of the Accounts and the Joint Audit Committee's recommendations and the statutory sign off decision by

RH, BJH, DM and JB as the corporation soles and S151 Officers. It was agreed that a decision sheet would be drawn up with the recommendation that RH sign the Accounts with the proviso and if there was a change to this, a new decision would have to be taken.

Action: 51/21

A decision sheet would be drawn up with the recommendation that RH sign the Accounts with the proviso and if there was a change to this, a new decision would have to be taken.

- 3.iii.3 BJH confirmed that he would be in agreement with signing the Accounts and noting the proviso around pensions.
- 3.iii.4 BJH requested that it be noted that at the Joint Audit Committee on 24 September, a comment was made that 'the Accounts were one of the best sets of final accounts they have seen given the size and scale of the operation and they were aware of only one other organisation in the public sector that they audit where they are in the same position, subject to the proviso, to be in this position this early on', which confirms all the work that JP, JB, DM, AC and the whole Finance team have put in to achieve this. RH agreed and wanted to commend the Finance Team for achieving an excellent piece of work.

3.iv Annual Audit Findings Report

For noting purposes only.

3.v 2021/22 Initial strategic view of revenue and capital proposals

- 3.v.1 DM gave a verbal update on the initial bids (52 in number) that had been received and which were currently being worked on. There was a current total of £1.9m for one-off bids (made up of £1.1m contractual, £400k service demand and £400k for new investment). There were £3.2m of recurring bids (£600k contractual, £2.1m service demand and £500k for new investment). Following assessment by the Finance Team, these bids will be passed to Strategic Change to make their 7 pillar assessments, then presented to an Extraordinary Strategic Change and Coordination Board, before being presented to COG for the first budget workshop on 20th October.
- 3.v.2 A brief discussion took place around these bids, their prioritisation and the process.

4 Force Growth Programme Quarterly update

- 4.1 BJH presented the quarterly update which showed that within the first quarter of 21/22, 49 of the 178 posts had been successfully completed which equated to 27.5% of the total growth to be achieved. It is planned that a further 53 posts will be completed in the second quarter which, if achieved, will see a 57.3% total growth completed in the first half of the financial year.
- 4.2 A discussion took place around the achievements, some enhanced vetting issues, new recruits and the resource issues attached with this, but BJH confirmed that he did not see any cause for concern around these issues (which are being addressed). RH asked if it would be possible to have an additional column on Figure 1 to show the numbers of completed posts, but it was confirmed that this is shown on the following table Force Growth Implementation Timeline where it is greyed out. A brief discussion took place around the planned MOSOVO business case.

5 Strategic Transformation Programme Highlight report

- 5.1 VH presented the highlight report and outlined the changes to the 27 workstreams that had taken place since the June Strategic Board. VH confirmed that 2 had been completed (Media Department and Connect Data Gateway), and the Crime and Public Protection Operations Centre had been closed. VH commented that there were some changes to the RAG ratings and out of the 12 projects in exception, 2 have moved into exception (5.2 A4E and 7F Vetting), 4 have moved out of exception (L&D Taser, Athena Innovations, 7F Forensics and 7F DAMS) and Central Referral Unit, Office 365, 7F Specialist Capabilities and Forensics, and 7F DAMS) and one has closed.
- 5.2 VH went through the areas in exception where the RAG status had changed in detail (Analytics for Everyone, Digital Strategy, Taser training, 7F vetting, 7F Forensics, and DAMS). The achievements since the June Board included Chelmsford Police Station, Taser training, Digital Passport, ECDA research on DA analysis, Dot Com, BT Hothouse. VH updated on the items in exception (Detective Pathway, Community Safety Partnerships, Op Hexagon, Analytics for Everyone, Estates Change Programme, ICCS, ESMCP, Home Office Digital Transformation project, Athena, 7F Vetting and ECFRS Collaboration). A brief separate discussion took place around ICCS.
- 5.3 VH confirmed that to date there is an in-year shortfall of £0.088m with a much improved full year position of £0.053m surplus. VH also confirmed that work is ongoing through the Efficiency and Savings Board to develop the 2022/23 Savings and Efficiency Plan.
- 5.4 VH confirmed that there had been no changes to the Risk Register since the last Board meeting.
- 5.5 RH thanked VH and the team for the work that goes into the reporting and the programme overall.

Meeting paused at 1548
Meeting reconvened at 1555

6 Estates Programme Update

- 6.1 PD presented the quarterly update on the Estate Transformation Programme and confirmed that Boreham had completed in August, the disposals of police estate, and the procurement of design consultants for the Harwich & Dovercourt project. PD confirmed that there was a considerable amount of work being carried out, the results of which will be updated at the next Strategic Estates Board.

DH joined the meeting at 1600

- 6.2 SH asked about JCT contracts and the significance of these, PD confirmed that the reference relates to Joint Contracts Tribunal and is a standard reference as part of a contract.

7 IT Programme Update

- 6.1 JD confirmed that this quarterly update was now on the new PFCC template which included the additional headings. From the Executive Summary, JD updated on the IT Portfolio and the delivery of 5 projects and 1 addition, the 4 projects in exception and the 3 projects that have moved out of exception. Following a review of the current 2021/22 Portfolio, recommendations for prioritisation of projects will be undertaken at the next DTOB Board.
- 6.2 JD confirmed that a new addition to this paper is the Portfolio Change log as a result of a recommendation from the IT Deliverability Audit to show the project delivery status. JD also confirmed that a new item had also been included on the report which relates to the new Police and Crime Plan.
- 6.3 RH asked about the national ANPR project and the impact it will have on the Force. A general discussion took place around the national projects (ANPR project, Athena, ESCMP) which RH and BJH would discuss outside this meeting.

8 Capital Programme

8.i Learning and Development Audio Visual Equipment

JD confirmed that this business case had been withdrawn as it was no longer required as a result of measures being put in place during the pandemic.

8.ii Digital Asset Management System (DAMS)

After a discussion, it was agreed to table this business case at a separate meeting.

Action: 52/21

A separate meeting to discuss the DAMS business case would be set up.

8.iii Chelmsford Data Centre

MG went through the background to the bid (which would replace Decision report 44/19) and the request for the work proposed and the new governance structure. The proposal was agreed and it was confirmed that Decision report 115-21 would be submitted to the PFCC's office for processing.

Action: 53/21

The Decision Report (ref 115-21) to be submitted to the PFCC's office for processing. PBI to reference the replacement of Decision Report 44-19 in Decision Report 115-21.

8.iv Forensics Capabilities Investigation Network Accelerometers

TR presented the business case for the purchase of 3 accelerometers for the Forensic Collision Investigation Unit to assist with the UKAS ISO accreditation requirements. JP asked about the capital charges figures which are not shown in the Decision Report and DM confirmed that these are set out separately in the Capital Financing requirements for this financial year. These figures will be included in the new business case templates for 2022/23. The proposal was agreed and it was confirmed that Decision Report 131-21 would be submitted to the PFCC's office for processing.

Action: 54/21

The Decision Report (ref 131-21) to be submitted to the PFCC's office for processing.

8.v Harlow and Southend Digital Media Hubs

PD presented the request for capital funds to create media hubs at Harlow and Southend which would achieve ISO 17025 accreditation for forensic service provisions, and to relocate the IT infrastructure into vacant space to ensure PSN-P information security compliance. PD would check the publishing status of the Decision Report and appendix. The proposal was agreed and it was confirmed that Decision Report 132-21 would be submitted to the PFCC's office for processing.

Action: 55/21

The Decision Report (ref 132-21) to be submitted to the PFCC's office for processing.

8.vi Serious Crime Directorate equipment

TR presented the request for a one-off cost for the replacement of equipment for the Serious Crime Directorate. The proposal was agreed and it was confirmed that Decision Report 133-21 would be submitted to the PFCC's office for processing.

Action: 56/21

The Decision sheet (ref 133-21) to be submitted to the PFCC's office for processing.

9 POA Opening position

9.1 DM confirmed that the POA was for noting purposes as the draft statutory return (which originally had a deadline submission of 23 July but which was superseded by an agreed extension for the return to be submitted in August), was submitted on 3 September. The Force are awaiting outliers from CIPFA which will be shared with the PFCC's office before the final POA return for 2021/22 is submitted to CIPFA/Home Office. RH asked that the POA return for 2022/23 be prepared in time for the March 2022 Strategic Board, to ensure it would be shared with the PFCC prior to any submissions to CIPFA/ Home Office.

9.2 DM went through the draft POA which now includes comments and further narrative on levels of information. RH thanked DM and the team for the POA and commented that it will be interesting to see the Home Office's response to the draft submission. A brief discussion took place around the different levels of information which gives a good overview and it was agreed that JP would set up a meeting with Richard Jones and Sam Jackson to go into the further levels and details on the spreadsheet.

Action: 57/21

JP would set up a meeting with Richard Jones and Sam Jackson to go into the further levels and details on the POA spreadsheet.

10 Terms of Reference (Strategic Board and Performance and Resources Board

10.1 SH confirmed that both sets of Terms of Reference form part of the PFCC Constitution and are due to be updated. Following approval of an updated TOR for P&RS Board by that Board, the Strategic Board also recommended that the updated TOR be included in the revised Constitution. The updated Strategic Board TOR were

reviewed and with a small amendment from PBI it was recommended that the updated TOR for Strategic Board also be included in the revised Constitution.

11 PFCC Constitution

- 11.1 PBI presented the outcome of the regular review of the Constitution prior to being presented for approval by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel on 21 October 2021. The recommendations were in two parts; the Constitution and Financial and Procurement Regulations, one of the main updates being that the Decision Report templates had been amended to align the headings.
- 11.2 A brief discussion took place around virements and Financial Regulations (it was agreed to take the Financial Regulations items outside the meeting and feedback any changes to PBI). Any comments on the Constitution to be raised with PBI before 8 October which was the paper deadline for the Police, Fire and Crime Panel meeting on 21 October.

12 Police and Crime Plan

RH thanked everyone for all the suggestions and work that has gone into producing new Plan. DH also thanked the Force for their engagement and support throughout the process. A brief discussion took place around the We Will for collaboration and BJH asked that the point that Essex and Kent's existing collaboration is not lost and that there is a small change to making the We Will read: 'We will continue to maximise the benefit and collaboration between Essex and Kent Police.' DH confirmed that the version of the measures will align with the Plan. RH and BJH were both content with the small changes and the Plan overall.

13 Approval of paper classifications for publishing

A discussion took place around the classifications for publication and it was agreed that the papers for publication were 3i, 4, 8iv, 9, 10, 11 and 12.

14 Any Other Business

- 14.1 SH asked whether the Police and Crime Plan needs to come back to December's meeting and whether there was anything that could come off the December's items? RH commented that for the really large complex items, it might be easier for these to be discussed outside the meeting prior to the Board. DH commented that the Police and Crime Plan does not need to come back to the December Board.
- 14.2 RH confirmed that the preferred candidate for the Chief Fire Officer position was Rick Hylton with a formal start date of 1 January 2022.
- 14.3 RH wanted to thank everyone for all the work that has gone on into producing all the papers in such a way as to facilitate good discussion.

There being no more business, the meeting closed at 1717.