

**Police Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex
Essex Police Strategic Board**

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| Chief Officer | DCC Andrew Prophet |
| Author on behalf of Chief Officer | C/Insp Jamie Gingell |
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| Date Approved by Essex Police Finance Department | |

1. Recommendations

The Strategic Board is asked to note the update provided within this report. No specific recommendations are made at this time

2. Executive Summary

The 2021/22 Force Growth Programme is co-ordinating the additional investment by recruiting 184 more officers and 19 additional staff roles. 6 posts are allocated to the Regional Organised Crime Unit and will be recruited to directly by the ROCU, they do not form part of this programme, leaving a total of 178 officer posts to be completed. These officer and staff posts are being invested in line with the investment plans outlined to the PFCC.

Within the first quarter of 2021/22, 49 of the 178 posts were successfully completed, equating to 27.5% of the total growth to be achieved. Within the second quarter, 42 of the planned 53 posts were completed, equating to a further 23.6% of the growth. Therefore at the midway point of the financial year, whilst slightly less than the previously anticipated 57.3% forecast, this still equates to 51% of total officer growth having been achieved.

In line with the current approved timeline, and subject to successful completion of posts, another 51 posts will be completed in quarter 3 (28.6%) and the remaining 36 posts in the final quarter (20.3%) bringing the programme to a conclusion with all posts completed within the 2021/22 financial year.

Currently a risk exists in relation to the successful completion of the Surveillance Team growth within the financial year, due to the especially extended process of recruitment which must be undertaken by candidates prior to being successfully accepted into role.

Within the first quarter, 7 of the 19 staff posts were successfully completed, equating to 37% of the total growth to be achieved, with another 4 being were completed in quarter 2 (21%), 5.5 posts are planned in quarter 3 (28.9%), and the remaining 2.5 posts in the final quarter (13.1%).

The growth programme consists of 21 separate growth strands comprising the 178 officer posts and 10 separate staff growth strands. At present 10 of the 21 officer strands have now been completed, and 4 of the 10 staff strands.

3. Background (to include context, need, current Work and Performance, etc)

The 2021/22 investment recommendations put forward by Essex Police were carefully calculated to ensure that the Force remains local, visible and accessible to communities, responding to the growth in high harm and emerging crimes as well as investing in preventative capabilities.

In **Figure 1** below (Table C in communications to the PFCC) the approved growth bids which form part of the 20,000 uplift are detailed. The breakdown also includes the additional growth through precept uplift of further officer posts, as a bring forward of proposed uplift growth from 2022/23, and staff growth. The breakdown in Figure 1 forms part of the Force Growth Programme in terms of implementation and monitoring, with the exception of the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU) growth listed.

The table sets out in the following colour codes used below, those that are: -

| |
|--|
| Highly visible public facing roles preventing and tackling crime & disorder |
| Tackling crime & disorder |
| Essential supporting roles |
| Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCU) |

Figure 1: 2021/22 growth: Agreed allocation of new posts

Table C - Police Officer and Staff Investment

| Investment in additional Police Officers and Staff | Officers | Staff |
|--|---------------|--------------|
| | FTE | FTE |
| Serious Violence | 30.00 | |
| Domestic Abuse Problem Solving | 22.00 | |
| Management of Sexual Offenders and Violent Offenders (MOSOVO) | 14.00 | |
| Disruptor Teams | 10.00 | |
| Surveillance | 9.00 | |
| Major Crime | 8.00 | |
| Op Bluebird (People Trafficking) | 6.00 | |
| Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking and Serious Organised Crime | 4.00 | |
| Organised Crime Group Management Unit | 4.00 | |
| Missing Persons | 1.00 | |
| Crime Prevention | 1.00 | |
| Firearms Instructors | 6.00 | |
| Professional Standards | 5.00 | |
| Athena Development Team | 5.00 | |
| Federation Officer | 1.00 | |
| Regional Organised Crime | 6.00 | |
| Total - National Police Uplift Programme 2021/22 | 132.00 | - |
| Disruptor Teams | 25.00 | |
| Domestic Abuse - Proactive | 14.00 | |
| Road Crime | 7.00 | |
| Dog Handlers | 3.00 | |
| Driver Training | 1.00 | |
| Taser' Training | 1.00 | |
| Data Protection | 1.00 | |
| Total - Additional Police Uplift | 52.00 | |
| Home Office Large Major Enquiry System (HOLMES) | | 4.00 |
| Investigator Powers Department support | | 1.50 |
| Financial Investigations | | 1.00 |
| Organised Crime Group Management Unit | | 3.00 |
| Special Constabulary Development Team | | 3.00 |
| Enabling Support Roles | | 6.50 |
| Total - Other Investment | - | 19.00 |
| Total Investment | 184.00 | 19.00 |
| Savings Programme | | 0.00 |
| Net Officer/Staff Investment | 184.00 | 19.00 |

The Force Growth project team continues to co-ordinate individual plans for the deployment of these additional officers and staff against the timeline set by Chief Officers. The initial timeline for sequencing was outlined at the Strategic Board on 11 March 2021. The current timeline (as amended) is set out below in **Figures 2 and 3**.

The following areas of growth have now been completed since the last report to the Board in September:

- PSD Investigations (early November, not reflected on timeline below)
- Serious & Organised Crime
- OCG Management Unit

Recruitment into various roles has also been successful into elements of the following growth strands since the last report:

- Serious Violence Unit
- DA Problem Solving Team
- Major Crime
- Op Bluebird (Organised Immigration Crime)
- Road Crime Team
- DAIT Proactive
- LPA Disruptor Teams
- HOLMES Document Reader/Receiver (staff)
- HOLMES Lead Indexer (staff)

A number of adjustments to the growth strands have been submitted for consideration to the Force Growth Board in previous months, whilst some have involved minor variances to the implementation timescales, those of more significance are set out below.

Investment Amendments/Updates

Serious Violence Unit

The growth into the Serious Violence Unit represents the second biggest strand of growth this year (after Disruptor Teams), but consists of multiple roles to be recruited to, creating complexity and challenges in phasing recruitment adverts and processes with other growth areas and business as usual recruitment. Posts due for implementation in August were achieved, along with the majority planned for September. However, challenges in the completion of vetting clearance led to some posts slipping on the timeline to October. In mitigation however these posts have now been achieved and include several posts due in the 4th quarter which have been successfully brought forward with dates agreed for November.

Additionally there has been significant interest in the Op Raptor posts to be recruited to in January, with applicants exceeding the number of posts to be achieved. Positive progress is being made to recruit to all identified growth roles in this strand.

National Firearms Instructors

The remaining tranche of these posts have been deferred to February for completion on the timeline from the original planned October. Despite advertising attempts both internally and externally insufficient applicants were generated to fulfil all remaining posts at that time. A single external candidate is being processed at this time.

A refreshed recruitment campaign will be considered in the new year, acknowledging that this is specific role type to fill, recruiting from a select/reduced pool of potential applicants.

MOSOVO

Recruitment commenced for the first tranche of this growth in the second quarter with 10 successful applicants identified, this is positive as it will meet both the first and part of the second tranche due to January, in what is traditionally a difficult area to recruit to. Due to the vetting requirements for the role however, this could not be achieved as planned in October and has been deferred to November. As soon as vetting is complete, individuals will be expedited for release to role. Further activity to fulfil the remaining vacancies is being planned.

Domestic Abuse Problem Solving Teams

Successful completion of the September tranche was achieved over both that month and October. Recruitment has been ongoing for the November tranche of the Constable growth, however the broad range of growth posts available, has meant that successful fulfilling of this strand has been challenging. Despite these challenges successful candidates have already been identified for 4 of the 6 planned posts with dates in

November already agreed for 2 of them. Recruitment to the remaining posts, and those due in the final tranche for January is ongoing.

Road Crime Team

Recruitment to this strand of growth led to candidates being identified for all but 2 posts. Whilst one post was completed as planned in October, due to the need to backfill the Sgt applicant in their current role, and coordinate release dates for the remaining individuals to commence in role at the same time as a complete team, the implementation date was deferred to November. Further activity to fulfil the remaining vacancies is being progressed.

DA Proactive Teams (Offender Management)

Similarly to the DA Problem Solving Teams, although recruitment has been progressed, the breadth of posts advertised for completion, coupled with the challenges of vetting clearance and managing the movement of individuals across multiple teams and Commands, whilst retaining operational resilience, has led to slippage of the implementation timeline. 6 of the 10 planned posts for September have been achieved within that month and October, with the remaining being deferred to November, with 2 having start dates already agreed. Recruitment is ongoing to identify candidates for the remaining posts to be completed.

LPA Disruptor Teams

All but 4 of the posts due to be completed in September and October have been completed. The remaining posts have been deferred to December for completion, being cognisant of the operational challenges faced across the Local Policing Areas with the breadth of growth strands to be completed by the Force.

In summary, of the 32 posts identified for completion in November, at the time of writing 10 had been completed, or have agreed start dates, of the remaining 22 posts, 16 have identified individuals to fulfil them once vetting completion and release dates are agreed. Of the 6 planned posts for December 3 already have agreed start dates. Those posts still currently vacant, are actively being recruited to.

4. Options and analysis (to include proposals, benefits, alternatives)

No options are being presented to the Board for consideration.

5. Risks and Mitigations

The primary risk to the Force Growth Programme is an inability to complete growth to the identified roles within the financial year (ending 31 March 2022).

To mitigate against this risk, oversight of progression of growth is undertaken on a monthly basis through the Force Growth Board, chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable, supported by the Resource Deployment Meeting, chaired by the Assistant Chief Officer of Human Resources, which seeks to balance business as usual resourcing priorities against those of the Force Growth Programme.

There is a specific risk to completion in year of the Surveillance team growth. Whilst sufficient candidates were identified for all proposed growth roles, the recruitment process is an extended and particularly challenging one, with multiple pass/fail courses to be completed. Due to the specialist nature of these courses, they are not especially frequent, placing a challenge on completion of all posts by 31st March 2022. This position is monitored closely through the Force Growth Board and by the Command to track progress of the candidates, identify and secure places on relevant courses at the earliest opportunity, and to identify additional reserve candidates should any fail during the process.

Vetting and the completion of revised or upgraded vetting status clearance for those moving into growth posts remains a challenge to the expedient movement of individuals into roles and completion of growth strands. To mitigate this, a member of the Vetting team now attends a monthly checkpoint meeting to provide dedicated updates on vetting progression and to be advised of current and planned growth implementation in accordance with the implementation timeline. Additionally, staff from the vetting unit have been dedicated to prioritising growth posts as candidates are identified to ensure proactive and robust tracking

HR Recruitment continue to use the delegated authority provided to them to facilitate officer moves, outside of planned monthly meetings, where vetting has been completed and approved, allowing the team to expedite the transition of individuals in a more flexible and responsive manner.

Challenges still remain in recruiting to detective roles and certain complex/specialist posts, as does the challenge of bringing staff into the organisation according to recruitment timescales. These risks are mitigated by the detailed forward planning and identification of milestones to be achieved as part of the implementation timelines, which are shared with HR and growth bid leads within Commands to ensure advertisement of roles and timely recruitment processes are coordinated accordingly.

A proactive article highlighting the remaining growth posts to be filled as part of this year's programme is being devised for release within the 3rd quarter, led by HR Recruitment and Communications. This will link outstanding posts to previous intranet articles, media releases and adverts in a focused effort to increased interest and applicants to the remaining roles.

6. Links to the Police and Crime Plan

The deployment decisions for the 2021/22 Growth Programme have been in accordance with and aligned to the PFCC Police and Crime Plan.

A significant proportion of growth has been aligned to Priority 1, to provide more local, visible and accessible policing, and Priority 2, to deal with Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) in the form of the Disruptor Teams growth.

Further commitment to support Priority 3, breaking the cycle of Domestic Abuse (DA), is provided by the growth into both proactive resources and the establishment and embedding of the new Domestic Abuse Problem Solving Teams (DAPS).

The growth into the newly established Serious Violence Unit continues to focus our sustained effort to deal with Gangs and serious violence in line with Priority 4.

The uplift in a number of differing teams; namely Surveillance, Major Crime, Op Bluebird, the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Team and broader Serious and Organised Crime, and the creation of a dedicated intelligence function for Organised Crime Groups (OCGs), evidence our intent to continue to disrupt and prevent organised crime as set out in Priority 5.

Our growth into the MOSOVO teams and missing persons seeks to further enhance our capability and resilience in protecting children and vulnerable people in line with Priority 6.

The creation of an additional Road Crime Team will further focus on efforts to deny criminal use of the road network and improve road safety in accordance with Priority 7.

7. Financial Implications

Reporting of the financial costs of the Force Growth Programme are also completed monthly to the Force Growth Board. The last reporting update was to the November Board, where the following summary was provided (see **Figure 4** below).

The breakdown provided covers the current budget planning and progress in respect of the Police Uplift Programme, Force funded posts and staff posts.

This indicates that due to the slippage in the implementation timeline for posts being completed throughout the year, an in-year variance now exists in relation to both the PUP and precept (Force funded) original budget plans. Whilst minimal variation has occurred between months, this has continued throughout the year, leading to the current underspend shown. To mitigate this, efforts are being focussed on bringing forward post implementations to the earliest date available where this opportunity is possible, and to minimise potential further slippage in the timeline for the remainder of the year. Despite the current variations shown, the Force Growth Programme currently remains on budget overall for the full recurring year.

It is anticipated that the staff budget underspend will increase in year, due to the deferral of a number of the SCD related growth until the 4th quarter, as directed by Chief Officers. This is to allow continuing work with Kent police to ensure parity of funding and post provision within this collaborative Command. This is subject of continual oversight by Finance, and through the Force Growth Board.

| <u>SUMMARY OF FORCE GROWTH 2021/22</u> | <u>PUP GROWTH - 126 FTE</u> | | | <u>PUP GROWTH ROCU- 6 FTE</u> | | | <u>FORCE FUNDED GROWTH - 52 FTE</u> | | | <u>FORCE FUNDED GROWTH - 19 FTE</u> | | |
|--|-----------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| | OFFICERS | IN YEAR OFFICERS | FULL YEAR OFFICERS RECURRING | OFFICERS | IN YEAR OFFICERS | FULL YEAR OFFICERS RECURRING | OFFICERS | IN YEAR OFFICERS | FULL YEAR OFFICERS RECURRING | STAFF | IN YEAR STAFF | FULL YEAR STAFF RECURRING |
| | FTE | £ | £ | FTE | £ | £ | FTE | £ | £ | FTE | £ | £ |
| FORCE GROWTH INVESTMENT - 2021/22 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ORIGINAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (V0.04 COG JAN 2021) | 126.0 | 3,463,699 | 5,214,759 | 6.0 | 415,002 | 415,002 | 52.0 | 2,025,932 | 2,716,009 | 19.0 | 529,057 | 646,052 |
| PLAN 0.15 FORCE GROWTH BOARD - NOVEMBER | 126.0 | 3,018,432 | 5,214,759 | 6.0 | 415,002 | 415,002 | 52.0 | 1,842,361 | 2,727,253 | 19.0 | 325,824 | 618,526 |
| VARIANCE TO ORIGINAL PLAN | 0.0 | (445,268) | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | (183,571) | 11,244 | 0.0 | (203,233) | (27,526) |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FORCE GROWTH INVESTMENT - 2021/22 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | FTE | £ | £ | FTE | £ | £ | FTE | £ | £ | FTE | £ | £ |
| PLAN 0.15 FORCE GROWTH BOARD - OCTOBER | 126.0 | 3,014,920 | 5,214,759 | 6.0 | 415,002 | 415,002 | 52.0 | 1,873,514 | 2,727,253 | 19.0 | 376,325 | 618,526 |
| PLAN 0.15 FORCE GROWTH BOARD - NOVEMBER | 126.0 | 3,018,432 | 5,214,759 | 6.0 | 415,002 | 415,002 | 52.0 | 1,842,361 | 2,727,253 | 19.0 | 325,824 | 618,526 |
| VARIANCE TO PREVIOUS FORECAST | 0.0 | 3,512 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | (31,153) | 0 | 0.0 | (50,501) | 0 |

8. Legal Implications

There are no currently identified legal issues relating to the Force Growth Programme. No legal advice was sought in the production of this report.

9. Staffing Implications

There are no currently identified staffing issues relating to the Force Growth Programme. Any issues which may arise are escalated to and reported upon at the Force Growth Board as a business as usual process.

10. Equality and Diversity Implications

Each strand of recruitment is co-ordinated and supported through Human Resources (HR) to ensure fair and impartial selection processes are adopted.

Specific focus has been directed to ensure that new roles created through growth have been subject of an assessment for the suitability of adjusted duties officers, to maximise the opportunity for such officers to be considered as part of the recruitment process.

Additionally, roles/teams created which may be perceived to be male dominated arenas (Disruptor Teams, Surveillance), have been proactive in their recruitment advertising and processes to encourage underrepresented applicants and positively consider and accommodate flexible working applications.

11. Police Operational Implications

Despite the passing of the summer demand period, challenges continue to exist with new and anticipated increased demand. The increase in service demand brought about by the Insulate Britain protests, coupled with the expected abstractions in support of COP26 and forward planning of resources for the Christmas period, have placed challenges on the Force Growth Programme to release officers to new roles during this time, whilst maintaining operational resilience across the County.

Operational policing requirements will always take precedence in ensuring that the Force plan is met, and deployment of officers to growth roles is carefully considered and managed through the Resourcing Deployment Meeting with these priorities in mind.

The original timeline sought to avoid the month of August for post implementation, with a larger overall tranche planned for July. However the challenges as highlighted earlier in this report leading into the summer period and the impact on the Force Growth Programme has now been captured as learning going forward into the 2022/23 growth programme planning, where the summer months will be avoided for planned implementation of posts next year.

12. Governance Boards

As previously mentioned within this report the Force Growth Programme is governed and overseen by the Force Growth Board on a monthly basis, chaired by the DCC. This is supported by the Resource Deployment Meeting, also held monthly, which is chaired by the Assistant Chief Officer of Human Resources.

Further oversight is also provided through consideration of Force Growth matters at Chief Officer Group (COG) as required.

13. Future Plans (long-term strategic direction)

In line with the broader budget setting planning for 2022/23, work has commenced to develop plans for growth proposals in line with next years' Police Uplift Programme. Bid proposals have been submitted and these are currently being reviewed, refined and subject of quality assurance for further development and discussion by Chief Officers.

The announcement at the Autumn Budget that Government Departments will receive real term funding increases over the next 3 years, will also be assessed in due course, for its potential impact on the Growth Programme, once the exact details of this are known.

14. List of background papers and appendices

No additional papers or appendices are provided with this report.
