

Performance and Resources Scrutiny Programme 2020/21

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

Title of Report:	Specials Recruitment – Quarterly Report
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Chief Officer	ACC Rachel Nolan
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1.0 Purpose of Report

Quarterly update on recruitment under the Special Constabulary Development Programme.

2.0 Recommendations

No recommendations.

3.0 Executive Summary

The previous paper dated 30th September 2021 provided a narrative on the following areas:

- Recruitment
- Media opportunities
- Employer Supported Policing
- Community Special Constables
- Performance
- Covid 19 response

This paper reports key deliveries against the above from 01 August 2021 to 31st October 2021 and future areas of focus. Highlights include:

Reward & Recognition:

- The Special Constabulary were successful winners of the Queens Award Voluntary Sector (QAVS). The Chief Constable, Special Deputy Chief Officer Derek Hopkins and Supt Shaun Kane attended a function on the 24th September 2021 at Chelmsford Cathedral to celebrate and meet the other winners;
- The Lord Lieutenant of Essex visited Essex Police on the 4th November 2021 to present the Special Constabulary with their QAVS Award in front of members of the Special Constabulary, Chief Officers and the PFCC.

Establishment, engagement & duties;

- 504 officers (as of 02 Nov 2021) ;
- 31 Ethnic Minority officers (6.1% of the establishment);
- Delivered 45,077 hours of which 33,186 were operational hours. This is equivalent to the working time provided by 24.5 full time officers at a cost of £1.23m during this quarter (or 98 full time officers a year at a cost of £4.9m);
- 13 Community Special Constables covering eight parishes with a further 20 CSCs in the pipeline. This includes 10 in post foundation, 2 in foundation training and 8 awaiting start dates.
- 49 businesses (including Essex Police) and 103 Officers who now benefit from the ESP scheme. This is an increase of 10 Officers from the previous quarter.

Recruitment, training & retention:

Essex Police are adopting the SC to PC pilot being led by College of Policing. The College of Policing has confirmed that Essex Police has successfully met the National Minimum Requirements This has not gone live yet, so no data is currently available;

Due to the success of our first Keeping Warm Event on the 23rd June 2021 which was held virtually for 15 candidates waiting to join our courses, during the winter months we have planned further events which are embedded into our recruitment process. We had a successful event on the 27th October and a further one is planned on the 1st December 2021. These events supports those candidates who are waiting for their vetting and medical checks to be finalised. It also ensures they receive continued support whilst on their Special Constabulary journey and are kept updated with Special Constabulary plans and activities;

- 111 applications this last quarter which represent a decrease on the previous quarter of 38 applications (25.5%)
- 19 applications were from BAME applicants
- 3 intakes in the last quarter started with 19 new officers.
- Scheduled for three more Intakes, by 31 January 2022 with a potential for 43 more applicants to start;
- Covid secure Attestations continue with 3 ceremonies and 34 officers attested during this quarter.

Non-operational & service exit:

- 44 leavers represent an increase of 13 (41.9%) from the previous quarter. 14 for Essex regulars, 2 for regs at other forces, 2 due to incompatible job roles, 11 due to a change in personal circumstances, 2 due to a loss of interest, 4 for work/life balance, 4 resigned during training as they could no longer commit, 2 resigned during training as they failed to meet the standard, 1 for medical reasons, 1 was terminated due to discipline/conduct, 1 for other reasons;
- 60 officers (11.9%) are non-operational or leave of absence.

4.0 Introduction

Essex Police remains the second largest Special Constabulary in England and Wales, behind only the Metropolitan Police.

Appendix A shows National Growth of all Forces as of March 2020 which shows Essex Police is one of nine forces recording a growth in recruitment.

5.0 Current Work and Performance

5.1 Recruitment

Essex Police continue to be 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 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. The pilot has not gone live at this time

Essex Police received 111 completed applications between 1st August 2021 and 31st October 2021. This is a decrease from the previous quarter of 38 applications (25.5%).

- 19 applications were from a BAME background (17.1%), compared to 44 applications from the same period the previous year (19.3%), the total number of applications in that period was higher therefore the number of BAME applicants reflects this.
- 41 applicants identified as female (36.94%), compared to 71 from the same period last year (31.41%); this an increase in the percentage.
- The new SC media plan on the 14th December should see an increase in application numbers.
- We are now planning further virtual recruitment “Life as Special” events after the success of the initial one on 4th August 2021. Using Microsoft Teams, members of the public logged on and engaged with the Specials Recruitment Team and Citizens in Policing Team to understand the vast roles and opportunities that they can achieve as a Special Constable or within the Citizens in Policing team.

5.2 Media Attraction

In this quarter we continue to maximise social media coverage around several events and can evidence where it has positively impacted on recruitment figures directly as highlighted below: -

- The Media Team launched, on 5th October 2021, #FitthebillWVD2 in which Special Constables will feature alongside the campaign for Regular Officers;
- Facebook and Twitter continue to be the highest media source for Special applications;
- A campaign around ESP continues to be promoted and a film featuring ACC Nolan introducing the benefits of the scheme will be advertised over the coming weeks.
- The Essex Chambers of Commerce continue to promote and support our scheme;
- Essex Police are featured in page 15 within the national Special Impact magazine which recognises the 41 years' service Specials Deputy Chief Officer Derek Hopkins has achieved 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 32.5% during 2020/21 which is a success as part of the officer uplift programme.

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	65	83	27	(32.5%)
Grand Total	877	731	259	(34.45%)

The above table identifies the SC Command as a significant pipeline to the recruitment of PCs with 259 recruits having started their policing journey as a Special.

5.3 Employer Supported Policing & Community Special Constables

Employer Supported Policing (ESP):

- 49 businesses (including Essex Police), in the last quarter, support 103 Officers in the ESP scheme which is an increase of 10 Officers from the last quarter. Of these 103 Officers, 45 officers are employed by Essex Police in other roles;

- 120 ESP duties have resulted in 871 hours of policing in this period which is a decrease of 22% for duties and 36.7% for hours worked on the previous quarter
- Thirteen businesses who are not registered with ESP have provided staff a total of 22 duties and 180 hours for policing duties during this quarter.
- Congratulations to the organisation Wave who were nominated by Les Hawkins our ESP Co-ordinator and were Runners-Up for the Employee Supported Policing Award at the Lord Ferrers Award event on 14th October;
- Advanced negotiations continue with the following businesses: Tendring District Council, Morrisons, Asda, South Essex Homes, East of England Ambulance Service and National Express.
- Essex Chambers of Commerce continue to plan for future ESP virtual events following on from the previous event in January;
- The Metropolitan Police ESP Co-ordinator has booked to visit Essex Police to look at our best practices and share ideas.

Community Special Constables (CSC):

- 13 active CSC officers covering 8 councils. Same as last quarter
- CSC Specials have worked 96 duties resulting in 697 hours;
- There are currently 20 officers in various stages of the pipeline including 10 in post foundation training, 2 in foundation training and 8 awaiting start dates.
- Alresford, Hatfield Heath, Little Yeldham, Myland and Rayne Parish Councils have all agreed to become part of our CSC Scheme.

5.3.1 Cyber Specials Cyber Volunteers (CSCV)

The CSCV initiative continues to progress. There are ongoing meetings with the Counter Corruption Unit to develop the role of their 2 volunteers. A new time sheet has been introduced to record hours volunteered and capture contribution. At the moment the volunteers can be summarised as;

- 2 HQ based at Digital Forensics. They have not been active during the pandemic but have now returned and are volunteering with the team.
- We have 2 additional Digital Volunteer roles in Colchester. One of these volunteers is currently awaiting induction course and will be volunteering soon and the other is in vetting;
- 3 Cyber Volunteers report to Digital Change Teams and are working at a high level around cyber incidents;
- 8 volunteers are part of the Ethics Committee and continue to have zoom meetings with the Head of Digital Change;
- 2 volunteers have now been placed in the Counter Corruption Unit which is a brand-new volunteer role currently going through approval process.

5.6 Performance

- 504 officers (as of 02 Nov 2021) ;
- 31 Ethnic Minority officers (6.1% of the establishment);

- Delivered 45,077 hours of which 33,186 were operational hours. This is equivalent to the working time provided by 24.5 full time officers at a cost of £1.23m during this quarter (or 98 officers a year at a cost of £4.9m);
- 13 Community Special Constables covering eight parishes with a further 20 CSCs in the pipeline;
- 49 businesses (including Essex Police) and 103 Officers who now benefit from the ESP scheme.

Over the period 1st August 2021 to 31st October 2021, Specials have contributed a total of 45,077 hours compared to 49,471 hours in the previous quarter. This is an 1% decrease on the same period in 2020, where 46,862 hours were contributed.

The last 3 months has seen 33,186 operational hours - a decrease of 11.12% in operational hours worked the previous quarter (36,153 operational hours and 46,862 worked the same period in 2020). The hours worked by the Special Constabulary across this three-month period is equivalent to the working time provided by 24.5 full time officers at a cost of £1.23m during this quarter (or 98 full time officers a year at a cost of £4.9m).

During 1st August 2021 to 31st October, we had an average of 514 officers. These officers contributed 45,077 hours of which 33,186 were operational. They had contributed 49,471 hours (37,337 operational hours) the previous quarter.

Over the last 3 months, 65.9 % of Special Constables have volunteered at least 16hrs each month (as required). 514 Specials have averaged 29.3 hours each per month compared to 31.2 hrs per month last quarter. This is a decrease of 5.5% on the equivalent period in 2020 where Specials gave 31 hours per officer with many furloughed during lockdown and able to provide more volunteering hours. During this quarter in 2019, 519 Specials averaged 30.7 hours each month.

- 44 Specials have left the Special Constabulary this quarter, which is an increase of 13 (41.9%) from the previous quarter and a decrease of 3 (6.4%) from the same period last year. 14 left for Essex regulars, 2 for regs at other forces, 2 due to incompatible job roles, 11 due to a change in personal circumstances, 2 due to a loss of interest, 4 for work/life balance, 4 resigned during training as they could no longer commit, 2 resigned during training as they failed to meet the standard, 1 for medical reasons, 1 was terminated due to discipline/conduct, 1 for other reasons;

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.

Our Special Constabulary supported their regular colleagues during October for COP26 ensuring that all Community and Local Policing Teams had the help that they need to undertake their duties.

From October through to December 2021 the team will support the Darker Nights Campaign around Burglary.

5.7 Covid response (Op Talla)

The Special Constabulary have made the progress in the following areas:

- All online training continues to be provided via Microsoft Teams;
- There has been another decrease in Officers who are non-operational due to self-isolating and/or social distancing from 4 officers (0.8% of command) in August 2021 to 2 officers (0.4%) in October 2021 – all are self-isolating and no officers are social distancing currently;
- Leadership and Command Team meetings continue to take place mainly via Teams and/or Covid secure face to face meetings. The quarterly Senior Leadership Group meeting was held at HQ with a mixture of attendees, face to face, and online. Social distancing rules were in place ;
- Recruitment events are a mixture of online and outreach events;
- 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;
- We currently have 16 intakes in place for 2021/2022 to accommodate 226 new applicants.
- Covid secure training review continues to be monitored as lockdown restrictions start to ease. We continue to facilitate class sizes for foundation training with capacity for 16 students on weekend courses and 11 for intensive intakes however these can be increased to 14 if required;

5.8 Operational Deliverables

- Special Takeover Days – continue to support our Regular Colleagues to focus on case progression, victim contacts, online training and ANPR duties. This has proved to be most successful and well received by Regular Command Teams;
- Supporting the Darker Nights Campaign against Burglary during October-December 2021;
- The Rural Engagement Team recruitment campaign has now been completed with all 4 Officers now in post.

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 3 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:

- **Queens and Voluntary Service Awards** was held at Essex Police HQ on 4th November 2021 where the Lord Lieutenant presented the award in front of Chief Officer's and Special Constables.
- **British Awards for Women in Policing** – Two specials were nominated in 2021 and presented with a certificate in October 2021.
- **Force Awards** nominations closed 9th May and a ceremony for winners was held on the 18th November 2021.
- **Lord Ferrers Awards** held on 14th October 2021. Business organisation, Wave, were signed up to the Employee Supported Policing scheme and nominated by Les Hawkins, ESP Co-ordinator. They attended the event with SC Perry Woolner and were runners -up for the ESP Award;

Communication:

- Review of usage of Essex Specials Twitter account is being undertaken by Media and once this has been completed, we will then look at how we can create more original and regular content;
- #FitthebillWVD2 started on the 5th October in which promotion and recruitment of Special Constables have a bespoke feature within the campaign.

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 & attrition from application to attestation to identify any blockers or risks and take action to mitigate;
- Future Virtual recruitment events scheduled for Autumn/Winter 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) continued response to Covid secure training has kept class sizes at 16 for weekend intakes and 11 for mid-week and intensive intakes. These intakes can be expanded to a maximum of 14 if necessary;
- The yearly projection for 2021/22 remains at 226 spaces. This is made up of 10 weekend, 4 intensive and 2 mid-week intakes;
- Since 1 April 2021, 65 Students have started training. There are 70 spaces available up until 31 March 2022 for the remaining 5 courses. This can be increased to 90 if given enough notice to add an additional intensive class.
- Mid-week courses are being reviewed and may be changed to intensive ones due to the fact they are not so popular to applicants.
- Next financial year will remain at same numbers of 226 however this can be increased to a maximum of 350 spaces required.
- 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 currently have 2 in post and 2 more officers started end of October 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. Essex Police Learning & Development Team are reviewing this programme to establish the best option under the direction of ACC Nolan at the Special Constabulary Review Programme.

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



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