

MINUTES
POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR ESSEX
and
ESSEX POLICE
PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY BOARD

31 January 2022, 1400 to 1700, via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Roger Hirst (RH)	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (Chair)
Julia Berry (JB)	Head of Finance and S151, PFCC's office
Pippa Brent-Isherwood (PBI)	Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, PFCC's office
Jane Gardner (JG)	Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
BJ Harrington (BJH)	Chief Constable, Essex Police
Dr Vicki Harrington (VH)	Director of Strategic Change and Performance, Essex Police
Suzanne Harris (SH)	Head of Performance and Scrutiny (Policing), PFCC's office
Rebecca Humphreys (BH)	Head of Resourcing, Essex Police
Richard Jones (RJ)	Head of Business Partnering and Management Accounting, Essex Police
Debbie Martin (DM)	Chief Finance Officer, Essex Police
Rachel Nolan (RN)	Assistant Chief Constable, Essex Police
Janet Perry (JP)	Strategic Head of Performance and Resources, PFCC's office
Andy Prophet (AP)	Deputy Chief Constable, Essex Police
Camilla Brandal	Minutes, PFCC's office

Apologies:

Richard Leicester	Director of HR, Essex Police
-------------------	------------------------------

1 Introduction and welcome

JG welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from RL. It was noted that BH was standing in for RL and would join for agenda item 6.

2.i Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

There were no amendments to the minutes of 30 December 2021 and they were therefore approved. There were no matters arising.

2.ii Action Log

- 30/21 CIPFA Report on FMCR
Workshop scheduled for 8 February. Remain open.
- 41/21 Action Log
Ongoing – due date amended to February 2022. Remain open.
- 48/21 Crime Prevention Strategy
Date to be arranged for meeting to discuss report format. Remain open.
- 52/21 Forward Plan
New template to be trialled in February. Deep Dive to be used as title. Close.
- 57/21 Finance – Treasury Management Report
Additional column requested to be included in the Q3 report. Close.
- 60/21 HR, Sickness and Attendance Management, Staff Performance reports
Additional data requested on ethnicity on change in rank as it is not clear at present whether change is due to promotion in force or appointment from another force. The Force would ensure that the reporting information produced after each promotion process is included in the HR Quarterly reports going forward. Remain open.
- 65/21 Annual Insurance update
Due date changed to February 2022. Remain open.
- 69/21 Use of Force/ Stop and Search
Information to be included in next quarterly update – February board. Remain open.
- 70/21 Use of Force/ Stop and Search
Information to be included in next quarterly update – February board. Remain open.
- 73/21 Forward Plan
Specified Information Order item for P&R to be referred to as National Crime and Policing Measures on Agenda and Forward Plan. Close.
- 74/21 Monthly Performance Report
JG had spoken to RH around national issue of availability of drug/ drive testing kits. Close.
- 75/21 Recruitment of Specials
Meeting scheduled for 8 February. Remain open.
- 76/21 Crime Prevention Strategy
Due date March 2022. Remain open.
- 77/21 Independent SMSR Survey
Draft headline results will be shared with the PFCC's office along with the full analysis following completion of force QA processes. Remain open until first quarterly results shared.
- 78/21 Approval for publishing of documents
Paper for item 8 not to be published. Close.

79/21 Approval for publishing of documents
Redacted paper for item 9 sent to PFCC's office for publishing. Close.

80/21 Approval for publishing of documents
Paper for item 10 not to be published. Close.

2.iii Forward Plan

It was agreed that the annual PSD report will move from March to May.
It was agreed that the Closure Timetable item will be scheduled for November.
It was agreed that RN would provide a date for the Acquisitive Crime Electronic Monitoring paper to SH.

Action: 01/22

RN to provide a date for the Acquisitive Crime Electronic Monitoring paper to SH for the Forward Plan.

It was agreed that the Finance paper in May for Month 1 would be removed as the Force would be producing a Month 12 (April) and a Month 2 (June) report instead.

3 Finance

3.i Finance Report – Quarterly

3.i.1 DM presented the Month 9 position for the Force and it was noted that the board were asked to endorse and approve the appropriations to earmarked reserves (virements and journals).

3.i.2 From the Executive Summary, it was noted that the revenue forecast underspend at Month 9 is at £ £0.141m against the 2021/22 revenue budget of £330.3m. There had been a significant movement between Month 8 and Month 9 forecast underspend figures due to the plans for utilisation of the force underspend endorsed at the Strategic Board on 14 December 2021. The capital position for Month 9 reflects a forecast underspend position of £6.056 compared with the original approved budget of £19.1m. The Police Officer strength forecast at the end of December 2021 is 3,511 FTE and is forecast to be 3,586 FTE at year end. The overspend on Police Officer Pay and Allowances is £1.1m. The Police staff strength end of November is 2,154 FTE. Vacancies at end November were 11 FTEs above vacancy factor. The underspend on Police Staff Pay and Allowances is currently £0.4m.

3.i.3 The appropriations to earmarked reserves related to Legal Claims Reserve, POCA ARIS income and future funding of the Dashcam Project, with the appropriations from earmarked reserves related to the Dashcam Project.

A discussion took place around the overall position on the appropriations, the utilisation of the underspends and the forecast outturn figures from last year and now. It was agreed to address the queries from RH around the forecast outturn figures (month 9 compared to month 8) offline and report back separately.

Action: 02/22

DM and RJ to address the queries from RH around the forecast outturn figures offline and report back separately.

- 3.i.4 DM went through the report and updated on the Legal Claims reserve Pension cost recovery (any monies from the rebate will be appropriated to the Legal Claims reserve), movements, variances, supplies and services virements, pay and premises underspend. A brief discussion took place around the income tables and the underspend, mutual aid income and virements.
- 3.i.5 DM updated on the workforce analysis, leavers and joiners, police officers, staff, PCSOs and Specials, moving the IT convergence project into general reserves, Laptops project moved from Chief Constable's reserves to future capital funding reserve. DM went through the capital programme summary which set out the further forecast underspend of £1.4m and programme slippages of £0.972m. A brief discussion took place around the slippage in the capital programme and the extent to which it will impact on operational delivery. It was agreed that AP would find out how much of the £1.5m was movement of capital for DFU and how much was capital no longer needed as it was now being picked up in revenue.

Action: 03/22

AP would find out how much of the £1.5m of slippage was movement of capital and how much was capital no longer needed as it was now being picked up in revenue.

3.iv Police Objective Analysis (Month 9)

- 3.iv.1 DM presented the report which identified the 2021/22 Month 9 in-year monitoring and which included explanations for the main in-year variances to budget (Section 1) and year on year outturn comparisons (Section 2). DM confirmed that the incremental refinement of the POA monitoring process during the year along with the changes to the POA guidance from CIPFA, has resulted in some of the prior year POA classification being recognised differently for 2021/22 which has had an impact on the variance commentary. The Board were asked to note the Q3 POA monitoring position and to endorse and approve the 2022/23 POA reporting timetable.
- 3.iv.2 A discussion took place around the Level 1 table, including items on the variance between the original and current budgets, the benefits seen in the increase in public protection and operational support, the increase of FTEs into teams, the numbers of counter terrorism officers (ROCU) and Command Team. The suggestions and dates proposed for reporting on POA in the timetable presented were agreed.

3.ii Draft Closure Timetable

DM presented the 2021/22 closure programme which incorporated the timetable for producing the Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and Narrative report and it was agreed that the same procedure as last year would be followed, i.e. publishing the unaudited Statement of Accounts by 31 July 2022 and publishing the audited Statement of Accounts by 30 September 2022. A more detailed version of the Closure Timetable was requested, to include dates of meetings with the PCC s151 officer, dates of Board meetings and relevant deadlines for papers.

Action: 04/22

DM to provide a more detailed version of the Draft Closure Timetable.

RN joined the meeting at 1502

3.iii Treasury Management Report

- 3.iii.1 DM presented the report which set out the activity during the previous three months of 2021/22 and the onward plan for the remainder of the year. The report included an overview for how the PFCC's cash balances have been managed, whether there were any deviations to the 2021/22 Treasury Management Strategy and what investments and borrowings had been undertaken.
- 3.iii.2 A brief discussion took place around the report and the net cash and investments of £25.86m and the bank balance of £21.05m difference (it was agreed that DM would send JB the cash reconciliation for December 2021 to address the £4.8m difference as shown in Table 2b and Table 3).

Action: 05/22

DM to send JB the cash reconciliation for December 2021 to address the £4.8m figure shown as a difference between total investments actuals in Q3 £25.86m in Table 2b Treasury Management Summary Q3 and the Total (£21.05m) at 31 December 2021 in Table 3 investments.

- 3.iii.3 A further brief discussion took place around the Prudential Code guidelines and their implementation, and it was confirmed that the guidelines would be included in the 2022/23 Strategy. It was also confirmed that following the expenditure timetable review, a need for external borrowing may be required in 2022/23 around capital funding for IT projects.

3.v Efficiency Savings Programme

VH presented the monthly progress and updates against the current and future cashable and non-cashable savings. The savings identified of £4.662m are being progressed and remain unchanged from the position reported in December 2021 (2021/22 in-year surplus of £612k, and the full year shortfall of £565k). The expected 2022/23 non cashable savings for O365, Agile Working and Vital Signs are to be discussed at the next Efficiency, Savings and Growth Board on 24 January 2022 and reported on in the paper to this Board for February. The report also included an update on the Operational Transformation Reserve live workstreams (Digital Hub, Op Meteor, ECDA and Dashcam).

7 Deep Dive - Protecting vulnerable people and breaking the cycle of domestic abuse

- 7.1 RN presented the report and summary of key updates in Essex Police's response to Domestic Abuse, including an overview of crime and incident levels, resourcing, partnership working and future challenges. From the Executive Summary, items to note were that the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced new offences and additional requirements on Police Forces involving children and victims, DA crime has fallen, the proportion of DA related homicides has increased, DA is treated as a key priority by the Force and public confidence remains high with regards to the Force's response to DA.
- 7.2 RN commented that it was disappointing that Essex were not included in the pilot for the new Domestic Abuse Protection Notices and Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (which will replace the current DVPNs/ DVPOs) with the anticipation that the Force can become involved in the work done in this area in 2023. Both RH and JG commented that if there was anything that they could do to get the Force onto the pilot at the beginning, to please let them know.

- 7.3 RN went through the report which included items on volume and performance, Protective Orders, Domestic Homicides, resources and the different Teams that are in place, the DA survey, Media and communications, work done around MOSOVO, and future planned work around the Force's DA Strategy and the DA Strategic Domestic Plan (4P Plan). It was noted that the conversion rate for DVPOs/DVPNs had fallen to 77%, and RN agreed to provide feedback on likely reasons for this.

Action: 06/22:

RN to report back about the fall in DVPO/DVPN conversion rate to 77%

- 7.4 A brief discussion took place around taking the work done on SETDAB and the interaction with local authorities and it was agreed that RN and JG would take this offline and report back to RH.
- 7.5 A further discussion took place around what was needed to improve the overall position, how to achieve more successful positive outcomes and more work to be done around perpetrators.
- 7.6 RH thanked RN for the work done on the paper and looked forward to the further reporting in this area.

RN left the meeting at 1613

RJ left the meeting at 1613

The meeting paused at 1613

The meeting reconvened at 1619

4 Monthly Performance Report

- 4.1 VH presented the Monthly Performance Report for December 2021 where there was one change in gradings where Priority 1 (More local visible and accessible policing) had moved from Good to Requires Improvement which was mainly due to the Harm (Crime Severity) Score in Essex is 2.2 points higher than the MSG average and the emergency response attendance being below target.
- 4.2 The report presented 4 of the 7 PFCC priorities being graded as 'Good', 3 of the 7 priorities (Tackling Gangs, Breaking the cycle of Domestic Abuse and More local visible and accessible policing) are graded at 'Requires Improvement'. All Crime increased by 2.8% for the 12 months to December 2021 compared with the 12 months to December 2020, and there was a 5.5% decrease in all Crime in the 12 months to December 2021 compared with the 12 months to December 2019 (equating to 9,227 fewer offences).
- 4.2 A discussion took place around why the Harm (Crime Severity) Score rating had deteriorated and whether it was a sentencing issue as well as volume and crime types. VH confirmed that this would be monitored over the coming months to see whether it was a trend around the sentencing issue.

5 Quarterly Performance Report/ MSG Aspirations

VH presented the Quarterly Performance Report and the work that is being done under each of the 7 priorities. VH also presented the Most Similar Group ('MSG') aspirations (from slide 18 onwards) where the Force is meeting their aspirations in 1 area, not meeting their aspirations in 8 areas, the improvement in the MSG position in 5 areas and the deteriorated in the MSG position in 1 area. VH also commented that there is

no current aspiration for Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI) or for Homicide offences which is not to say that it is not reported on but that the Force reports on the ranking but does not have an aspiration against the MSG. A brief discussion took place around the KSI reporting, how it is monitored and whether it would be worth comparing the data used at the Safer Essex Roads Partnership against other Forces.

8 Approval for publishing of documents

The papers for publishing were agreed as 3i, 3ii, 3iii, 3iv, 4, 5 and 7.

BH joined the meeting at 1642

6 HR, Sickness and Attendance management, Staff Performance

- 6.1 BH presented the report which included items on current work and performance around Officers (establishment v strength and vacancies, recruitment joiners, ethnicity, turnover, absence) and Staff and Police Community Support Officers (establishment v strength and vacancies, recruitment joiners, ethnicity, turnover, absence). The report also included redundancies, business cases, an update from Learning & Development and additional data on Specials' reasons for leaving and data on police officer promotions by ethnicity.
- 6.2 A discussion took place around the Specials and the reasons for leaving – BH confirmed that there were no trends around the reasons for leaving. A brief discussion also took place around recruiting to the Police Uplift targets and the strong recruitment campaigns that the Force have in place/ have planned, and the PEQF recruits and possible challenges that might arise.

9 Any Other Business

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 1705.