



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

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1. Recommendations

The Strategic Board is asked to note the update provided within this report.

2. Executive Summary

The 2021/22 Force Growth Programme oversees the recruitment and placement of 184 more officers and 19 additional staff roles. Within this overall uplift 6 posts are allocated to the Regional Organised Crime Unit and will be recruited to directly by the ROCU. The remaining officer and staff posts are being allocated according to the investment plans previously agreed with the PFCC.

Within the first quarter of 2021/22, 49 of the 178 posts were 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. In the third quarter 31 further posts were completed equating to 17.4% of the growth out of the planned 51 posts. This leaves 55 posts (30.8%) to be achieved in the final quarter of the 2021/22 financial year.

There are risks in relation to the successful completion of the Surveillance Team growth within the financial year, due to the protracted and pass / fail elements of the recruitment process. This is detailed further, along with the plans in place to mitigate the impact, within Section 3 (page 9).

At the time of writing this report it is anticipated that by the end of January 144 posts will have been completed. This includes 21 of outstanding 55 highlighted above (equating to an overall completion rate of 80.9%). Of the 34 remaining posts 18 have candidates identified and 16 remain outstanding with focussed activity to identify and complete them.

Within the first quarter, 7 of the 19 staff posts were successfully completed, equating to 37% of the total growth, another 3 being completed in quarter 2 (15.8%) and 5 posts completed in quarter 3 (26.3%) The remaining 4 posts are planned for completion in the final quarter (20.1%).

The growth programme consists of 21 separate growth strands comprising the 178 officer posts and 10 separate staff growth strands. At present 12 of the 21 officer strands have now been completed, and 6 of the 10 staff strands.

3. Background

The 2021/22 investment recommendations put forward by Essex Police were 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.

The table below sets out the approved growth bids. The breakdown includes the additional growth funded by precept uplift:

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

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

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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 been completed since the last report to the Board in December:

- Major Crime
- Disruptor Teams (late January, not reflected on the timeline below)
- SCD – HOLMES (staff)
- OCG Management Unit Analysts (staff)

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

- Serious Violence Unit
- Firearms Training
- MOSOVO
- DA Problem Solving Team
- Surveillance
- Road Crime Team
- DAIT Proactive

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21/22 Force Growth Implementation Timeline (ver 0.18)											Police Officer Growth Plan															
POLICE OFFICER - Ranks											Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Totals			
Description/Heading - Investment in Officers	FTEs	Con	Sgt	Insp	Ch Insp	Supt	Ch Supt																			
4th Federation Officer	1		1																				1			
PSD Investigations	5	4			1									1			4						5			
Serious Violence Unit	30	24	3	1	1	1																	30			
Firearms Training Uplift	6	6													3						1	2	6			
Missing Person Prevention Sgt	1		1																				1			
MOSOVO	14	14												1			1	3	2	7			14			
Crime Prevention Strategy Insp	1			1																			1			
DA Problem Solving Team	22	19	3												2	3				2		8	22			
Major Crime	8	8											1	3	2	1	1						8			
Surveillance	9	8	1																	1		7	9			
Serious & Organised Crime	4	2	1	1										1	2	1							4			
Op Bluebird	6	5	1											1	1	1						1	6			
OCG Management Unit (Intel)	4	3	1												1	1							4			
Athena	5	3	1		1									5									5			
Data Protection	1	1													1								1			
Taser & PST Sgt	1		1												1								1			
Driver Training Instructors	1		1												1								1			
Road Crime Team	7	5	1	1												1				4		2	7			
DAIT Proactive	14	14													3	3	2			2		4	14			
Specialist Dog Handlers	3	3																					3			
DPA Disruptor Teams	35	32	3												18								35			
TOTAL	178	151	19	4	3	1	0							20	27	2	3	9	31	13	14	4	21	4	30	178

21/22 Force Growth Implementation Timeline (ver 0.18)											Police Staff Growth Plan														
PSE - Scale/Grade											Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Totals		
Description/Heading - Investment in Staff	FTEs	sc 3	sc 4	sc 6	SO1	SO2	PO1	PO2	PO3	PO6															
Systems and Reporting Accountant	1.0							1															1	1	
SCD - HOLMES	4.0			2		2									2	1		1						4	
SCD - Investigative Powers	1.5			1	0.5																		1.5	1.5	
SCD - Prevent & Protect Supervisor	1.0						1																1	1	
SCD - Financial Investigator Supervisor	1.0								1					1										1	
Organised Crime Group Management Unit (sc 6 - SO2)	3.0																	3						3	
Vehicle Recovery Administrator	1.0		1																					1	
Specials Constabulary Development Team	3.0			2	1								3											3	
Clinical Governance	0.5									0.5													0.5	0.5	
Fleet Vehicle Collection & Delivery	3.0	3											3											3	
TOTAL	19.0	3	1	5	1.5	2	1	1	1	0.5			6	1	0	1	0	2	1	0	4	0	0	4	19

KEY: Completed PUP Growth Precept funded PUP & Precept funded (combined)

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 November were achieved, along with some bring forward of posts due in December. All remaining posts due for implementation in November, December and January have been successfully completed with the exception of 1 Op Raptor post, which has been deferred to March whilst recruitment continues to fulfil it.

This post is the last to be filled to complete this strand of growth.

National Firearms Instructors

The remaining tranche of these posts had been deferred to February for completion on the timeline from the original planned October. As a result of a positive response to focussed advertisement and engagement with staff, one post has been brought forward and completed in January, and 2 applicants identified for the remaining posts. Once a date can be arranged through Resourcing Planning for movement into role, this will complete this strand of growth.

MOSOVO

This is traditionally a difficult area to recruit to. Recruitment commenced for the first tranche of this growth in the second quarter with 10 successful applicants identified, however a number subsequently withdrew. Due to the vetting requirements for the role and despite completion of a few posts, completion of the majority could not be achieved as planned in November and were deferred to quarter 4. Positively, all posts now have identified applicants and completion dates will be agreed as soon as possible on completion of required vetting checks.

Domestic Abuse Problem Solving Teams

Recruitment has been ongoing for the November and January tranches 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 3 of the 6 planned posts were completed in November, however only 2 of the January posts have been completed, the third being delayed. This third post, with the remaining 7 posts that do not currently have identified applicants have been moved to March for implementation. Engagement with the Commands and Media continues to progress options to identify applicants and fulfil this strand of growth. This is being overseen at Chief Officer level.

Surveillance

Despite the movement of the bulk of this growth to March, a successful transferee has been accepted into the role and took up their post in January. This leaves 7 posts left to be filled, with 3 candidates still being progressed at this time. The ability to complete this strand of growth has been dependant on the availability of the multiple courses that selected candidates have to complete, each phase being a pass/fail requirement, meaning that attrition rates can be high. The limited availability of courses throughout the financial year has impacted the throughput of candidates, this is a national issue not just an Essex position, and is being raised due to the impact on Forces.

In mitigation, recruitment events and additional advertisement of the role have continued to raise interest in the role to create a pool of candidates to attend the courses as soon as possible to fulfil the remaining 4 places. This is being actively overseen and managed by the SCD Command Team and reported to the Force Growth Board chaired by the DCC.

Road Crime Team

Due to the need to backfill the Sergeant applicant in their current role, and coordinate release dates for the remaining individuals to commence in the Constable role at the same time as a complete team, the implementation date was deferred. The Sergeant post and 3 Constable roles were successfully completed in January. Due to a need to provide appropriate line management, an amendment was agreed through the Force Growth Board to convert one of the remaining constable posts into an Inspector post. Further activity to fulfil the remaining vacancies is being progressed, with candidates for the Constable role being progressed. Implementation of the Inspector post is delayed due to it being interdependent to a staff consultation process. However, once this is completed the Command will expedite this prior to end of March.

DA Proactive Teams (Offender Management)

The range and scale of growth posts advertised, coupled the need to manage the movement of officers in the organisation to retain operational resilience, has led to slippage in implementation. However, 8 of the 10 posts planned for completion between September and November have been achieved. Of the 4 posts planned for January 2 have been successfully completed. The remaining 4 posts have been moved to March for implementation.

LPA Disruptor Teams

The posts deferred to December have been filled. This completes this significant strand of growth.

4. Options and analysis

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 bi-monthly basis through the Efficiency and Savings and 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 infrequent, placing a challenge on completion of all posts by 31st March 2022. This continues to be monitored closely through the Board and by the Command to track progress of candidates, identify and secure places on 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 potential challenge to the expedient movement of individuals into roles and completion of growth strands. It is a requirement for officers and staff to have both Management Vetting (MV) and Security Clearance (SC), the former being completed by the Essex Police Vetting Unit, the latter by the UKSV Service (Government agency). Delays can arise where individuals fail to complete accurately and expeditiously the required information necessary to complete MV checks, meaning additional information has to be requested or submission returned. Additionally, there is a nationally agreed Service Level Agreement in place with UKSV, whereby a minimum three week period is required to pass before checks can be chased for an update.

In mitigation, 2 staff from the vetting unit have been dedicated to prioritising growth posts as candidates are identified to ensure proactive and robust tracking of MV checks to completion and support to applicants where needed, and 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. Growth posts are prioritised for consideration of risk assessed moves, pending completion of SC checks, where deemed appropriate. Additionally, despite the demands that additional growth has place on the unit in proceeding years, Essex Vetting now has the lowest number of outstanding vetting checks in its recent history and has the lowest level of outstanding vetting checks in the Eastern Region.

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 was released within the 3rd quarter, led by HR Recruitment and Communications, linking outstanding posts to previous intranet articles, media releases and adverts in a focused effort to increased interest and applicants to the remaining roles. A number of additional applicants for a range of growth strands were identified as a result of this activity, and further recruitment methods are currently being explored in order to fulfil all remaining posts within the financial or as soon as is operationally viable.

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 January 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.

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This indicates that due to the slippage in the implementation timeline for posts being completed throughout the year, an in-year variance continues to exist 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 continue 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.

The staff budget underspend has continued 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 due to continuing work with Kent police to ensure parity of funding and post provision within this collaborative Command into the next year. This is subject of continual oversight by Finance, and through the Force Growth Board.

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<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 0.18 FORCE GROWTH BOARD - JANUARY	126.0	2,843,113	5,214,759	6.0	25,899	415,002	52.0	1,726,023	2,752,235	19.0	301,159	618,526
VARIANCE TO ORIGINAL PLAN	0.0	(620,587)	0	0.0	(389,103)	0	0.0	(299,909)	36,226	0.0	(227,898)	(27,526)
FORCE GROWTH INVESTMENT - 2021/22												
	FTE	£	£	FTE	£	£	FTE	£	£	FTE	£	£
PLAN 0.17 FORCE GROWTH BOARD - DECEMBER	126.0	2,983,368	5,214,759	6.0	25,899	415,002	52.0	1,775,739	2,727,253	19.0	325,824	618,526
PLAN 0.18 FORCE GROWTH BOARD - JANUARY	126.0	2,843,113	5,214,759	6.0	25,899	415,002	52.0	1,726,023	2,752,235	19.0	301,159	618,526
VARIANCE TO PREVIOUS FORECAST	0.0	(140,255)	0	0.0	0	0	0.0	(49,716)	24,982	0.0	(24,665)	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 Efficiency and Savings and 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

The increase in service demand brought about by the Insulate Britain protests, coupled with the abstractions in support of COP26 and usual increases relating to 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 minimise implementation in the month of December, with planned and deferred implementation being moved to January, which in the main has been achieved. The original timeline also sought to avoid March due to the proximity to the end of the financial year and commencement of the next growth programme in the April. However the challenges as highlighted earlier in this report leading to the impact on the Force Growth Programme has meant that slippage has been moved to March to maximise the available time in year to complete as much of the remaining growth as possible. This has 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 Efficiency and Savings and Force Growth Board on a bi-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

Detailed plans have and continue to be developed for the 2022/23 Force Growth Programme and the substantial increase in both officer and staff numbers in the next financial year. This includes the assessment and prioritisation of specific growth strands in accordance with Chief Officer objectives and the Force plan as set out in the budget letter; the detailed refinement and quality assurance of proposed new functionality; the geographical and logistical plans for structured implementation of all growth throughout the year, and coordination with interdependent work strands such as the planning and completion of promotion processes.

Separate reporting of the 2022/23 Force Growth Programme and its progression will commence in the next Financial year period.

14. List of background papers and appendices

No additional papers or appendices are provided with this report.