

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

30 January 2023, 10:30 to 12:30 via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Jane Gardner (JG)	Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (Chair)
Suzanne Harris (SH)	Head of Performance and Scrutiny (Policing), PFCC's office
Janet Perry (JP)	Strategic Head of Performance and Resources, PFCC's office
DCC Andrew Prophet (AP)	Deputy Chief Constable, Essex Police
ACC Glen Pavelin (GP)	Assistant Chief Constable, Essex Police
ACC Andy Mariner (AC)	Local Policing, Essex Police
Fiona Henderson (FH)	Director of Continuous Improvement and Analytics, Essex Police
Debbie Martin (DM)	Chief Finance Officer, Essex Police
Richard Leicester (RL)	Director of HR, Essex Police
Richard Jones (RJ)	Head of Business Partnering and Management Accounting, Essex Police
Helen McGrath (HM)	Scrutiny Officer, PFCC's office (Minutes)

Apologies:

Roger Hirst (RH)	Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner
CC BJ Harrington (BJH)	Chief Constable, Essex Police

1. Welcome and apologies

- 1.1 Apologies noted, as listed above.
- 1.2 Introductions were held, and JG welcomed all to the meeting.
- 1.3 JG offered a special welcome and congratulations to Andy Mariner, who has recently been appointed as ACC for Local Policing and Fiona Henderson, who has recently taken over from Vicki Harrington as Director of Continuous Improvement and Analytics.

2. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

- 2.1 RJ amendments noted.
- 2.2 The previous minutes were agreed subject to the changes listed above.

2.i Action Log

- 40/22 Finance: Year to Date Information
Waterfall presentation now included in financial monitoring report template.

Close.

- 41/22 Public Contact
This relates to a briefing on the Change Projects and has now been scheduled for March 2023, therefore due date to be updated.
Remain open. Due date amended to March.
- 49/22 Report on Force's Attendance Policy
Burglary attendance figures now included in balanced scorecard data.
Close.
- 51/22 Monthly Performance Report
Neighbourhood Watch membership figures now included in report.
Close.
- 53/22 Forward Plan (Draft Closure Timetable)
Draft Closure Timetable has now been received.
Close.
- 59/22 Monthly Performance Report
Action relates to the inclusion of Street Safe data, which will be included in report from February 2023, therefore due date to be updated.
Remain open. Due date amended to February.
- 60/22 Monthly Performance Report
Data breakdown of 'Improving support for victims on crime' to include crime type will be included in report from February 2023, therefore due date to be updated.
Remain open. Due date amended to February.
- 61/22 Monthly Performance Report
With regards to an update on the use of drug wipes, a written update was provided with the papers. During the meeting, GP confirmed 975 officers and 57 specials have been trained on using the wipes, with training continuing to ensure all officers are trained. Furthermore, training on the use of drug wipes now forms part of the operational skills training which new recruits receive immediately after their formal appointment to the force. GP offered assurance that Essex Police has a sufficient supply of drug wipes and there are no capacity issues with obtaining the toxicology reports.
Close.
- 63/22 Use of Force/Stop and Search
SH advised information has been prepared and will shortly be shared with GP.
Remain open. Due date amended to February.
- 64/22 Homicide Scrutiny
Essex Homicide Prevention Strategy is now scheduled for the March 2023 Strategic Board meeting.
Close.
- 66/22 Homicide Scrutiny
SH confirmed the Commissioner is now aware of concerns regarding the timeframe for the Homicide Prevention Fund.
Close.
- 67/22 Engaging with people with Asperger's syndrome/autism
Update provided in log. DCC's request to change due date to March 2023 approved.
Remain open. Due date amended to March.

69/22 Monthly Finance Report

SH aware a decision sheet for the planned Transformation Reserve has been drafted but unaware of reference number. RJ advised Claire Heath is dealing with this matter and agreed to update SH outside of the meeting. It was agreed the action would remain open until the Decision report can be traced.

Remain open.

70/22 Insurance Annual Report

Verbal update on reserves held by other 5 forces in 7F provided by DM. Matthew Tokley had identified the following :

Based on a review of the draft 2021/22 Statement of Accounts for the other eastern region forces, the following Insurance Reserve values have been identified as 31/3/22:

- *Bedfordshire, £1.132m*
- *Cambridgeshire, £1.410m*
- *Hertfordshire, £1.451m*
- *Kent, £3.500m*
- *Norfolk, £0.856m*
- *Suffolk, n/a – insurance contingency element is stated as being covered within wider ‘Budget Reserve’*

Close.

71/22 Insurance Annual Report

DM confirmed that insurance reserve information is contained within the budget setting papers therefore a separate decision sheet is not required. JP concurred.

Close.

2.iii Forward Plan

2.iii.1 SH confirmed the FMCR update was now showing on the Forward Plan (as agreed in action 38/22 in September) and an update on PEEL Inspection AFI's has been added to the Forward Plan for February 2023, as agreed by the PFCC and Chief Constable.

2.iii.2 Following the PEEL Inspection update in February, SH suggested further follow ups be scheduled into the Forward Plan for June and December 2023. AP concurred. This was agreed.

2.iii.3 SH advised the Chief Constable has proposed an update on the Roads Policing Strategy be added to the Forward Plan and PSE Adam Pipe has confirmed this is achievable for March 2023. AP concurred. This was agreed.

3. Finance

3.i Monthly Finance Report

3.i.1 Report circulated with papers and summarised by DM.

3.i.2 JG thanked DM and her team for including the waterfall table, which provided a really helpful way in which to view the budgets and spend. JP concurred. AP agreed and asked whether the Commissioner had also seen this new format and found it useful. JG confirmed that the Commissioner had viewed the report and waterfall diagram and, given his financial background, was pleased to see the data conveyed in this way. RJ added that creation of the waterfall table also provided a useful checking tool for his team.

- 3.i.3 With regards to figures relating to starters and leavers, JP asked how confident the force feels about meeting its recruitment target. RL advised that of the 100 people that applied in the most recent recruitment phase, 74 were successfully appointed (the remaining 26 people did not pass the vetting process) and feels confident the force will meet the forecasted strength by the financial year end. JG acknowledged the incredible recruitment effort by RL and his team. RL accepted the thanks but added it is a force wide effort, with many teams involved in the successful appointment of staff. AP concurred with JG's comments and reiterated that Essex Police will never compromise on vetting checks. DM confirmed reserves are in place for the additional recruitment proposed for this financial year.
- 3.i.4 In relation to external borrowing, DM advised that an additional £3m would be required against capital assets. JP enquired whether this external borrowing would be required if the Op Hazel monies were reimbursed. DM responded that a detailed update would be provided in the paper to Strategic Board on 1st March 2023. JG/JP confirmed the PFCC had received no updates on the reimbursement of Op Hazel costs but will continue to pursue. DM advised the HMICFRS are due to visit Essex Police in week commencing 20th March 2023. JP and DM to discuss further outside of meeting.

3.ii Draft closure timetable

- 3.ii.1 Report circulated with papers and summarised by DM.
- 3.ii.2 The statutory deadline for the 2021/22 accounts was extended to 30th November 2022. Due to the pension information being unavailable the accounts were not published to the deadline and a notice of non-publication was placed on the website. DM said the pension audit was now complete and the required letter had been received. There were a few other outstanding matters, mainly relating to fixed assets, that were still being reviewed by the auditors and DM said the accounts were expected to be signed off by the auditors by 6th February 2023. The audit this year has presented a number of new challenges due to the Force moving into a major local audit category and DM highlighted that there were issues with capacity of the external auditors, as well as the Force's own capacity. DM added that an additional post within the Finance team will assist with capacity however they will not be starting in the role until the next financial year.
- 3.ii.3 In relation to the 2022/23 accounts closure timetable, DM said she believed that it would not be possible for the Force to meet the draft accounts statutory deadline or for the auditors and the Force to meet the final accounts deadline. DM presented and then recommended an alternative timetable which did not meet the statutory deadlines. JP said that further discussion was required with the Commissioner, the Chief Constable, and the Audit Committee before any decision could be made.
- 3.ii.4 JG thanked DM for the update and her explanation of the complexities with this area. With this in mind, JG suggested a further report be provided to this meeting having regard to the Commissioner's desire to meet the statutory deadlines. AP suggested a separate meeting be held to discuss this matter. JG concurred. DM and JP to discuss further, using the statutory deadlines as a framework, and update P&RS Board with proposal.

Action 01/23

DM and JP to meet to discuss 2022/23 closure timetable, with focus on the statutory deadlines, and provide proposal accordingly to the February P&RS Board.

4. Police Objective Analysis (POA) Report

- 4.1 Report circulated with papers and summarised by DM.
- 181 probationers showing on local policing line, in non-established roles at present.
 - Table 1 shows summary and variance for 2022/23
 - Table 2 reflects variance between 2021/22 and 2022/23.
- 4.2 JG asked whether the 24 staff vacancies showing in Roads Policing and the 73 vacancies in Contact Management were accurate. RL confirmed those figures were accurate, with some of these vacancies only occurring in the last month. AP assured the meeting that these capacity shortfalls have been picked up by COG with monthly reviewing and monitoring in place.
- 4.3 SH asked what had driven the overspend on local policing. DM advised this is largely due to new officers in probationary period being on local policing teams.

5. Performance Reports

5.i Monthly Performance Report

- 5.i.1 Report circulated with papers and summarised by FH.
- FH highlighted a decrease in victim-based offences compared with the latter part of 2022, and, in some key areas such as crime harm, domestic abuse, serious sexual offences, violence against the person and violence with injury there is a steady decline in offences.
 - With sexual offences, there is a reduction both in the long term and short term and is significant in some areas e.g. rape.
 - Improved figures also available for burglary dwelling, criminal damage and anti-social behaviour.
 - Solved numbers continue a positive trend in some areas such as vehicle crime, which is recognised as a key priority for the community.
- 5.i.2 JG commented it was pleasing to see a reduction in these offences, particularly the reduction in Domestic Abuse and sexual offences but equally recognises this as a problem area. AP concurred with JG's comments and reiterated FH's point with regards to sexual offences, as detailed on the Crime Tree, with a 14% reduction on the rolling one month data and an 11% reduction on the rolling three month data, so more work to do but a positive direction of travel is evident.
- 5.i.3 In relation to Priority 3 'Protecting vulnerable people and breaking the cycle of domestic abuse', JG highlighted to the 'Good' rating and commented that whilst much good work is being done in this area the results are perhaps not yet at the standard required for 'Good'. FH assured the meeting that Priorities 3 and 4 will continue to be key areas for the force. With VAWG in mind, SH commented it will be interesting to see more detail on this area next month.
- 5.i.4 In relation to Priority 5 'Improving our services to support victims of crime', SH enquired why the number of referrals to Victim Support does not correlate with the offence figures e.g. crime offence data shows a 2% decrease yet referrals have fallen by 31.5%. SH continued to ask whether enough encouragement was being offered to utilise this additional support, especially as the PFCC contributes to funding this service. FH

agreed collaboration is crucial in this area and agreed to include action taken in future reports. SH and FH to discuss further.

Action 02/23

FH to provide update on existing measures in place for referrals to Victim Support.

Action 03/23

SH and FH to discuss Victim Support measures further and how the force can optimise/publicise use of these services to victims.

- 5i.5 With reference to Priority 12 'Increasing Collaboration', SH noted that 'programmes delivered were less than half of the programmes delivered in 2019, and suggested further explanation be provided on this in the next report.

Action 04/23

With reference to Priority 12 'Increasing Collaboration', FH to elaborate on why the number of 'programmes delivered' has fallen to less than half of those delivered in 2019.

- 5.i.6 JG very encouraged by the rural engagement work being undertaken.
- 5.i.7 In relation to cyber crime reporting, JP aware this is recorded by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) but enquired whether any feedback could be provided on Essex related referrals. JP to liaise with FH for clarity on the information required.

Action 05/23

JP to liaise with FH in relation to feedback on Essex related cyber crime referrals.

- 5.i.8 PFCC Monthly Report - Additional Measures also circulated with papers.

5.ii Quarterly Performance Report

- 5.ii.1 Report circulated with papers and summarised by FH.

5.iii Force Performance against National Crime and Policing Measures

- 5.iii.1 Report circulated with papers and summarised by FH.
- 5.iii.2 FH highlighted that Essex Police is not a Home Office 'Outlier' for any of the measures with outlier criteria in place.

11:52 GP joined the meeting.

6. Balanced Scorecard

- 6.1 Report circulated with papers and summarised by FH.
- 6.2 Four graded areas referenced by FH.
- 6.3 With regards to 'Keeping People Safe', SH highlighted a further decrease in the Emergency Response Grade of Service and enquired as to when we might expect to be at target. AP advised this area will take some time to resolve but direction of travel will be helpful.
- 6.4 Under the same category, SH asked when the MOSOVO Outstanding Visits target is likely to be back on track. AP responded that this area is almost back on track.

6.5 In relation to the percentage of residential burglaries attended in the 12 months to September 2022, JG recognised 83.1% as encouraging but noted target is 90%, which is key priority for members of the public and subsequently in building public confidence in the Police.

7. HR, Sickness and Attendance Management, Staff Performance

7.1 Report and HR Strategic dashboard circulated with papers and summarised by RL.

- Acknowledged the current vacancies, which have already been discussed and reassured the meeting that plans are in place to resolve.
- 355 officers recruited this financial year, including those from ethnic minorities, with a strong proportion of female officers appointed and promoted across the ranks. Plans continue to ensure these groups of people are fully encouraged and supported to apply for roles with Essex Police.
- Turnover has slightly increased than in previous years, however this correlates nationally, with other forces and continues to be monitored.
- Absence continues to be focus; a number of respiratory illnesses have been recorded in this period, which are not necessarily covid related but nonetheless has, in some cases, had an impact on people's respiratory health generally. In order to analysis the highest contributing areas of absence an approach is being undertaken to fully explore management intervention and proactive measures already in place, to gain a greater understanding of medium and long term absences. This approach will look much like the former Absence Scrutiny meetings, to ensure compliance levels are as they should be.
- In the last 5 weeks, referrals for all Occupational Health interventions will be categorised to fully understand the causes, particularly for psychological cases. RL happy to share any findings with this group.
- With regards to specials, significant efforts continue to stabilise the position.
- In relation to wellbeing, training and development, the forces 'Be the Change' Leadership Programme continues to receive positive feedback across the force and this will be extended over the next financial year for all supervisors, 1st line and 2nd line managers.

7.2 JG thanked RL for the comprehensive report and particularly pleased to learn of the work being undertaken to better understand psychological health issues. In relation to this, SH requested an insight into the difference between stress being caused by incidents against stress being caused by day to day working practices.

Action 06/23

RL to provide some information about the different causes of stress, including that which is triggered by single incidents and that which is brought about by day to day working.

7.3 With regards to staff turnover at 10%, SH requested further information on staff retention measures. RL advised this figure is low than other sectors, where staff turnover figures are nearer to 15%.

8. Firearms Update

8.1 Report circulated with papers and summarised by GP. This provided data requested by the Minister via PCCs which would be a 6-monthly requirement going forward.

- 8.2 Essex Police is in a strong position, which the force proactively writing to all certificate holders, requesting that they renew early to deal with the anticipated demand in 2022.
- 8.3 JG thanked GP for his informative report and reminded the meeting of the new requirement for biannual updates to be provided. GP agreed to the new reporting frequency.

Action 07/23

SH to update Forward Plan to include Firearms Update twice a year to this meeting, with the next update to be scheduled for July 2023 (deferred from June).

- 8.4 In relation to the 35 renewals currently on a temporary licence, JG asked whether this delay was due to staff/Police delays or delays caused by the applicant.

Action 08/23

GP to provide further breakdown of the renewals currently on a temporary licence (this would be based on the live number at the time of update).

- 8.5 SH advised that the Commissioner has requested information on firearm wait times, by type of licence (initial and renewals), in the form of a graph. SH and GP to discuss requirement for this and for the level of detail in future reports.

Action 09/23

SH and GP to discuss requirement for future data on firearms, with graphs provided on wait times and by type of licence.

9. Approval for publishing of documents

- 9.1 It was agreed that there were no papers with official sensitive marking and therefore all papers were approved for publishing.

10. AOB

No items.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 12:23.