

Performance and Resources Scrutiny Programme 2023

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

Title of Report:	HR Strategic Dashboard Supplementary Report
Classification of Paper	Official
Agenda Number	7.0
Chief Officer	ACO Richard Leicester
Date Paper was Written	11th July 2023
Version Number	V0.4
Report from:	Essex Police
Date of Meeting:	30th August 2023
Author on behalf of Chief Officer:	Mr Adam Pfeiffer
Date of Approval:	July 2023 – ACO Leicester
COG meeting date / date of approval (Please indicate whether paper presented to COG or not)	9th August 2023 - COG

1.0 Purpose of Report

This report provides a narrative to accompany the HR strategic dashboard, which relates to the force's attendance, establishment, strength full time equivalent (fte), turnover and diversity profiles. Additional information is also provided with regards to promotions redundancies / business cases as well as an update from Learning & Development (L&D).

2.0 Recommendations

Not applicable.

3.0 **Executive Summary**

Each section contained within the HR strategic dashboard is summarised under section 4.0 below.

4.0 **Introduction/Background**

This commentary report provides context for the information contained within the HR strategic dashboard and summarises the key highlights from each section. The data has been taken from the force HR system (SAP) as at 30th June 2023, except where alternative data is displayed for trend analysis. The below provides a summary of key highlights from the report:

- With regards to recruitment, a total of 50 officers joined in quarter 1 of 2023/24. The new recruit intake in June 2023 was 39, however, due to a reduction in attrition and an increase in other entry routes (re-joiners, returners and transfers in) the June 2023 strength fte position of 3721.30 is only 2.46 fte under where it was originally projected to be (3723.76 fte).
- With regards to applications, the proportion of ethnic minority candidates and female candidates remains relatively strong.
- Over the last quarter, the headcount of ethnic minority officers has reduced by 3, however, in light of the high numbers of ethnic minority candidates in pre-employment it is anticipated this will increase again following the September 2023 intake.
- The total number of female officers has reduced marginally from 1414 (37.09%) as at 31st March 2023 to 1402 (37.00%) as at 30th June 2023. This is a headcount reduction of 12 and a percentage point reduction of 0.09.
- With regards to officer turnover, a total of 73 left, this equates to a turnover rate of 1.92% for the quarter. This is a marginal increase in the turnover rate when compared to April to June 2022/23 (1.89%). Of note, positively, the actual leavers of 73 was lower than the projection of 90 for the period.
- There were 13 promotions in quarter 1 of 2023/24 (1 to the rank of Chief Superintendent and 12 to Sergeant). Of these, none were ethnic minority and 5 were female (38.46%). As a result, the proportion of female Sergeants has increased as at 30th June 2023 when compared to 31st March 2023.
- With regards to Senior Officers moves, a total of 8 Chief Inspectors and above have transferred roles in quarter 1 of 2023/24.
- Officer absence (average days lost per person) for April to June 2023/24 is 1.93, which is a reduction when compared to the same period in 2022/23 (2.14).
- Staff strength fte has decreased by 32.84 fte over quarter 1. Vacancies remain across the majority of commands, however, there are number of external candidates in process and a number of posts are actively being recruited to.

- Staff turnover has reduced in this period when compared to the same period in 2022.
- For staff absence, the average days lost per person (1.95) has reduced when compared to 2022/23 (2.00).
- During quarter 4 a total of 3 ratified business case moved to their new structure, 1 concluded consultation and 4 new business cases were launched.
- The number of specials has reduced by 26 in the last quarter from 327 to 301. The overall reduction in specials is due to high turnover, but also a reduction in recruitment.
- With regards to specials turnover, a total of 34 have left this financial year to date, which is a turnover rate of 10.83% and higher than the same position in 2022/23 (8.70%). The total of 34 leavers is an average of 11 a month which, whilst high, is lower than the monthly average seen throughout 2022/23 (13).
- Whilst the overall headcount is lower, the Special Constabulary continue to contribute a significant amount of duty hours at a monthly average of 23.57 per special over quarter 1 of 2023/24. The total duty hours worked in June 2023 of 6,570 is the equivalent of 411 specials working a 16-hour month.
- Whilst application numbers remain relatively low, there were 2 intakes in April and May totalling 9, which is positive when compared to the latter months of 2022/23. In addition, it is projected recruitment will increase in July 2023 and August 2023.
- With regards to PCSOs, the strength fte has increased to 96.96 fte, which is 2.11 fte under the establishment of 99.07. This is an increase of 3.39 fte when compared to the position as at 31st March 2023 (93.57 fte). The next intake is due to take place in November 2023.
- For PCSOs, the average days lost per person, due to absence, has reduced to 2.24 for April to June 2023/24, which is a reduction of 0.43 when compared to the same period in 2022/23 (2.67). This is also the lowest level of absence, for this period, over the last 9 years.

Areas of focus going forward will be seeking to increase recruitment of Special Constables throughout 2023/24 to support progress towards a net headcount increase of 100.

The force will continue to prioritise the achievement of the approved recruitment plan and to enhance applications from ethnic minority and female candidates.

Whilst officer absence has improved, it is an area that will continue to be monitored through the Performance Improvement Unit (PIU) and Operational Human Resources (HR).

5.0 Current Work and Performance

Officers

Establishment v Strength and Vacancies

As at 30th June 2023, the strength was 3721.30 fte, which is 33.70 fte under the establishment of 3755.00. This represents a net decrease of -21.83 fte since the last HR report, as at 31st March 2023.

With regards to vacancies, of the 18 Commands identified on the Est v Str tab of the HR Strategic Dashboard, only 5 have a higher vacancy rate as at 30th June 2023 when compared to 31st March 2023. Of the remaining Commands, 7 have remained stable and 5 have a lower vacancy rate.

The **Serious Crime Directorate** has the highest vacancy rate of -17.43%, however this is a reduction when compared to the position reported as at 31st March 2023 (-19.48%). The majority of vacancies are within the Covert and Serious Organised Crime department and Essex – Major, Economic & Cyber department. Whilst some individuals have transferred into the Command, a number of officers who have been successful for roles in the Serious Crime Directorate are still awaiting release dates to be agreed at the monthly Resourcing Deployment meeting.

Learning & Development have the seconded highest vacancy rate (-16.53%), with most vacancies in the roles of Personal Safety Training Instructor, Op Investigative Skills Training and Performance Development Officer (PDO) roles. For information, 6 officers have been successful for roles in Learning & Development and are awaiting release to be agreed at the monthly Resourcing Deployment panel.

Whilst the **HQ Directorate** has the third highest vacancy rate of -12.94% this represents a significant reduction when compared the last update as at 31st March 2023 (-24.76%). In addition, due to the department's low establishment, the vacancy rate of -12.94% only equates to 6.19 fte. The majority of those vacancies are, however, in the Professional Standards department.

With the exception of Learning & Development, the 4 other Commands that have seen their vacancy rate increase have only seen marginal increases. The most significant vacancy rate variation is within the Continuous Improvement and Analytics Command, which has reduced from +11.02 over established to -2.91%. Whilst this represents a significant variation, overall the Command's establishment is low (28.50) and the 2.91% vacancy level only equates to 0.83 fte.

The most notable increase in vacancy rate is ERSOU, which has increased from -2.66% as at 31st March 2023 to -6.37% as at 30th June 2023. However, it should be noted that whilst this represents an increase over the last quarter, the strength of 101.12 fte is still significantly higher than the position reported 6 months ago (87.48 fte as 31st December 2022). The force continues to support the release of officers into ERSOU. At the time of writing, there was 1 officer successful for ERSOU and a total of 25 Essex officers have recently applied for roles in ERSOU, albeit the number successful may be a lot lower.

The other areas that have increased marginally are Local Policing Area (LPA) South (from +0.40% to -2.34%) and Local Policing Support Unit (from -1.25% to -2.30%).

Of the 5 Commands with a reduced vacancy rate, the most significant reduction is in Contact Management which has reduced from -23.28% to -6.14%. Essex Criminal Justice has reduced from -3.39% to +1.30% and the Crime and Public Protection Command has reduced from -13.37% to -9.91%. The 2 other Commands that have reduced are HQ Directorate and Serious Crime, which are detailed above.

Please note, as reported in previous updates, the release of officers into vacancies agreed at the Resource Deployment meeting is dependent on a number of factors, such as current resourcing priorities and vacancy levels.

Recruitment Joiners and Applications

So far this financial year to date (April to June 2023), a total of 50 officers have joined the force. This is made up of 1 re-joiner, 1 returner, 9 transfers in from other forces and a new officer intake of 39 that joined on 28th June 2023. Of the 39 new recruit officers, 21 joined under the traditional Initial Police Learning & Development Programme (IPLDP), 12 Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA), 4 Degree Holder Entry Programme (DHEP) and 2 PCDA Investigate First.

For information, the June 2023 intake was originally scheduled to be 62, however only 39 joined. This was lower than originally projected, however, due to a reduction in attrition and an increase in joiners through other entry routes (re-joiners, returners and transfers in), the June 2023 strength fte position of 3722.30 is only marginally under the original projection (3723.76 fte).

The next intake is scheduled for September 2023 of up to 75. At the time of writing, there are 21 candidates cleared for the September 2023 intake and 61 candidates in the pre-employment (clearance) stage, excluding those 'on hold' due to vetting, medical issues, or other matters. Noting our current pass rates, it is projected a further 18 viable candidates, currently undertaking the assessment processes will be viable for the September intake within the necessary timeframes. This will create a total of 99 candidates for the September intake of 75.

Whilst the achievement of this intake is a challenge, applying general pass rates should see the intake being achieved. However, there remain 50 individuals (from the total pool) who still require vetting, a smaller number still to undertake fitness tests and to achieve medical clearances. In addition, approximately 29 candidates are awaiting results for qualifications required under the programme that will not be received until late August. HR are in the process of contacting all individuals to explain the opportunity to undertake the IPLDP, if appropriate, and to gain any insight that may present as a risk to the plans of these individuals. This presents a risk as to the achievement of these numbers. In addition, increases in leavers or failures to transferees in the pipeline may change the intake requirement.

Further information is provided under section 6.3 Risks / Mitigation with regards to the activity being undertaken to enhance the recruitment pipeline and ensure uplift requirements are achieved.

The table below shows the total officer application numbers each financial year from 2019/20 to 2022/23 and the 2023/24 financial year to date (April to June 2023). This includes a breakdown of applications by ethnicity grouping and gender.

Month/Year	Total	Ethnic Minority		Female	
		No	%	No	%
2019/20	2695	263	9.76%	871	32.32%
2020/21	3502	441	12.59%	1239	35.38%
2021/22	2099	238	11.34%	878	41.83%
2022/23	2055	273	13.28%	844	41.07%
Apr-23	100	11	11.00%	28	28.00%
May-23	124	15	12.10%	51	41.13%
Jun-23	112	16	14.29%	40	35.71%
2023/24 YTD Total	336	42	12.50%	119	35.42%

So far this financial year to date, there has been a total of 336 applications. This is an average of 112 applications a month, which is lower than the monthly average seen in 2022/23 (172).

With regards to diversity, of the 336 applications, a total of 42 were ethnic minority candidates. This equates to

12.50%, which is higher than both 2019/20 and 2021/22 and only marginally lower than the proportion in 2020/21 and 2022/23 (13.28%).

With regards to gender, a total of 119 applicates were from female candidates which is 35.42%. Whilst this is a reduction when compared to 2022/23 and 2021/22 it is marginally higher than both 2020/21 and 2019/20. Whilst it is only 3 months of data, the lower proportion is impacted by applications in April 2023 where just 28.00% were from females, although in May 2023 this increased to 41.13% and 35.71% in June 2023.

To ensure a strong pipeline to meet the continued recruitment throughout the year, the force needs 40-50 applications per week. In the last 2 weeks the force has received 82 applications (from 67 for the previous 2 weeks) thus suggesting that, as a result of the initiatives outlined (see section 6.3), the force is starting to achieve these.

Diversity - Ethnicity

So far this financial year to date, of the 50 total joiners, only 1 was ethnic minority, which equates to 2.00%.

To show broader context, the below table demonstrates the proportion of ethnic minority officers that have joined (all entry routes) for the three previous financial years (2022/23, 2021/22 and 2020/21):

Ethnicity Group	2023/24 YTD: Apr to Jun 23			2022/23		2021/22		2020/21	
	H'Count	% of Total Ethnic Minority	% of Total Joiners	% of Total Ethnic Minority	% of Total Joiners	% of Total Ethnic Minority	% of Total Joiners	% of Total Ethnic Minority	% of Total Joiners
Asian / Asian British	0	0.00%	0.00%	35.00%	1.65%	48.15%	3.49%	27.59%	2.60%
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	0	0.00%	0.00%	10.00%	0.47%	25.93%	1.88%	24.14%	2.27%
Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Groups	1	100.00%	2.00%	50.00%	2.36%	18.52%	1.34%	41.38%	3.90%
Other Ethnic Group	0	0.00%	0.00%	5.00%	0.24%	7.41%	0.54%	6.90%	0.65%
Total	1	100.00%	2.00%	100.00%	4.73%	100.00%	7.26%	100.00%	9.42%

The 1 ethnic minority officer that has joined this financial year to date is mixed / multiple ethnic groups, which equates to 2.00% of the total joiners.

With regards to force level officer representation, the overall headcount has decreased by 3 from 156 as at 31st March 2023 (4.09%) to 153 as at 30th June 2023 (4.04%). The current proportion of 4.04% is 2.52 percentage points under the 2011 Economically Active Population (EAP) of Essex (6.56%). Since the last update, provisional data has been obtained regarding the 2021 economically active population which indicates there has been a significant increase in the Essex EAP to 11.29%. This represents an increase of 4.73 percentage points when compared to 2011 and means the current force representation of 4.04% is 7.25 percentage points lower. This data is currently being quality assured and may be subject to change.

As stated earlier in the report, the number and proportion of applications from ethnic minority officers has been strong. However, due to a number of candidates that have failed the recruitment and selection process at various stages this has not yet resulted in an increase in the number and proportion of ethnic minority candidates joining. Further analysis with regards to adverse impact throughout the recruitment and selection process has been undertaken.

Data from March 2022 to March 2023 shows that 58% of ethnic minority applicants were unsuccessful at elements of the selection process, compared to 49% of white applicants. Of the total number of ethnic minority applicants who were unsuccessful at the elements of the process, a total of 82% were unsuccessful at elements outside of the direct control of the force (i.e. the national processes of national sift, online assessment and national eligibility requirements) compared with 18% under direct control of the force (competency-based questions, IPLDP application questions, senior interview and pre-employment clearance processes).

The force is, however, reviewing where there are opportunities to appropriately address any areas of disparity through appropriate support. Areas of review include quality assurance processes, the diversity of the panel composition, specific questions/areas of potential disproportionality and ongoing CPD/development for interviewers. It is also important to ensure that those who enter the process are eligible and likely to attain the correct standards (e.g., eligibility/health /vetting). Therefore, the force aims to provide the provision of sufficient information at the earliest point to manage candidates' expectation. In addition, as a point of note, all ethnic minority vetting rejections are reviewed independently by the Head of PSD to ensure that there is sufficient scrutiny.

Positively, application numbers remain strong, which, considering the above, should still result in a higher proportion of ethnic minority joiners throughout the remaining 3 intakes of 2023/24.

At the time of writing, there were 292 candidates in the selection process, of which 31 were ethnic minority candidates (10.62%). This is a headcount and proportion increase when compared to the last update (29 / 9.90% as at 3rd April 2023).

Of the 31 ethnic minority candidates in process, 1 has cleared and is waiting to join the next intake, 1 is at the final offer stage and 11 are currently undergoing pre-

employment checks. If all 13 joined the September 2023 intake of up to 77, this would equate to 16.88% of the intake.

With regards to positive action, activity remains ongoing to further increase the number of candidates in process. Creative new and pro-active ideas are constantly being devised to make recruitment events and processes as meaningful and productive as possible. Below is a summary of key activity in this area:

- To maximise recruitment opportunities the HR teams have undertaken 11 outreach / recruitment events to promote policing as a career choice between 1st April and 30th June 2023. These have occurred in a wide variety of venues and locations, including community events and job fairs, using Census 2021 and other demographic data, to maximise applications from the most diverse group of people possible.
- The force now has 78 Recruitment Ambassadors, recruited from a variety of commands and teams. HR have recently engaged command leads to provide a single point of contact to brigade ambassador activity and outreach / recruitment engagement opportunities locally. HR are leading a training event on the 25th July to ensure ambassadors are up to date and have all information needed to maximise reach and support to applicants.
- A Positive Action Programme is in place to support those applying for the role of police officer. As of 5th July 2023, there are currently 91 active 'Buddies' with 65 applicants currently receiving bespoke one-to-one recruitment support. Members of the HR Teams always actively try and recruit new Buddies onto the cohort. The Positive Action Team is also looking at the diversity of those on the Buddy cohort as well as those that undertake Senior Officer and Investigate First interviewing, to ensure the option of a more diverse panel is available to those that might require or request these provisions.
- The Positive Action Team is working with HR People Development and Learning and Development and the Superintendent's Association, around a number of new supportive processes aimed at those from under-represented groups in policing. These include the 'Achieve' mentoring programme; online sessions to support those planning on taking Sergeant Promotion exams in 2023 and exploring attachments to teams where under-representation would appear to be a factor.
- The 'We Value Difference' media campaign to attract diverse applicants into policing is entering its third iteration, HR are co-ordinating volunteers to participate in the next campaign, whereby roles will be advertised via social media, Radio and TV. It highlights the range of roles for officers, police staff and volunteers.

Diversity - Gender

Of the 50 joiners this financial year to date (April to June 2023), a total of 18 were female (36.00%). Total female officers have reduced marginally from 1414 (37.09%)

as at 31st March 2023 to 1402 (37.00%) as at 30th June 2023. This is a headcount reduction of 12 and a percentage point reduction of 0.09.

With regards to the recruitment pipeline, as at 4th July 2023, there were 124 female candidates in progress, which equates to 42.47% of all candidates. This is a marginal reduction when compared to the position as at 3rd April 2023 (143 / 48.81%) but still represents a strong position when compared against the current force proportion, stated above, of 37.00%. For information, this is marginally below the 2011 Essex female EAP of 46.42% and the provisional 2021 Essex female EAP of 47.65%.

Turnover

So far this financial year to date, a total of 73 officers have left the force. This is a turnover rate of 1.92% and is in line with the same period in 2022/23 (72 / 1.89%).

As reported in previous updates, projected attrition was increased for April 2023 (34) and May 2023 (33). This was on the basis that it was expected transfers out would increase once the quarter 4 of 2022/23 transferee embargo was lifted as (based on the latest national uplift data, which continued to report that a number of officers (62 as at 4th July 2023) had outbound applications to other forces).

However, positively there were just 26 leavers in April and 24 leavers in May, which is a total of 50 and is 17 less than projected (67). In addition, the number of leavers in June 2023 was just 22, which is only marginally below the projection set for the remainder of the year of 23 a month. For information, of the total 72 leavers for the period April to June 2023, a total of 10 were transfers out, which is in line with the same period in 2022 and, with the exception of the same period in 2021 where 6 transferred out, it is lower than each financial year going back to 2016/17 where an average of 15 left in quarter 1 of each of those years.

Looking forward, at the time of writing, there were just 21 confirmed leavers for July 2023 against a projection of 23, which means attrition is stable and anticipated to be broadly in line with the projection of 23 a month.

With regards to ethnicity, a total of 5 ethnic minority officers have left this financial year to date (April to June 2023). This is lower than the same period in 2022/23 where 8 left, (albeit 8 ethnic minority leavers in that period was an outlier compared to years prior to that). Of the 5 leavers this financial year to date, 2 resigned, 1 retired and 2 transferred to another force. Of the 2 resignations, 1 cited job security as their reason for leaving as they believed they would not pass probation and the other officer specifically stated that their resignation was no reflection on their team, supervisor or colleagues but left for a new job which provided better pay and better work-life balance. Of the 2 transfers out (both to the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)) 1 cited lack of progression, training or lateral movement, which they believed they would get at the MPS and the other cited financial reasons as their reason for leaving.

Looking forward there are currently 2 confirmed leavers in July 2023 but positively neither are resignations or transfers out.

With regards to gender, a total of 29 female officers have left this financial year to date (April to June 2023). From a headcount perspective this is marginally higher than the same period that in 2022 (22). Of the 29 leavers, 26 were resignations and 3 were retirements.

Police Officer Promotions by Ethnicity

Since the last update, there have been 13 promotions in quarter 1 of 2023/24. Of those, 1 was to the rank of Chief Superintendent and 12 were to the rank of Sergeant. Of the 13 total promotions none were ethnic minority and 5 were female 38.46%.

As a result of the quarter 1 promotions, the proportion of female Sergeants has increased to 29.01% as at 30th June 2023 compared to 28.57% as at 31st March 2023. With regards to Sergeants and above, collectively this has also increased from 28.76% as at 31st March 2023 to 29.04% as at 30th June 2023. Similarly, the proportion of Chief Inspectors and above has increased from 25.27% to 26.37%.

For information, there was also a Chief Inspector promotion process in May 2023 resulting in 11 Inspectors achieving promotion to Chief Inspector. These are not included in the above figures as they are yet to receive their posting and have therefore not officially been promoted. These will be reflected in future updates once posted on promotion.

Looking forward, there is an Inspector promotion process planned for July to September 2023 and a Sergeant process that is due to commence later in summer 2023.

Senior Officer Movement / Transfers

The following table shows the number of Chief Inspectors and above that have changed roles (either on promotion or transfer) by rank and quarter. It should be noted, the below does not include individuals who have reverted from a temporary rank. In addition, the promoted figure will not tally with the previous promotions table as this will not include individuals who were promoted and remained in post (i.e. a Temporary Chief Inspector being promoted substantively and remaining in role).

Category	Rank	2022/23					23/24
		Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Total	Qtr 1
Promotion (inc Tmp Promotions)	Chief Superintendent			1		1	1
	Superintendent	3				3	
	Chief Inspector	3				3	2
Promoted Total		6	0	1	0	7	3
Transferred	Chief Officer				2	2	
	Chief Superintendent		1			1	2
	Superintendent	4	3			7	6
	Chief Inspector	9	1	8	4	22	
Promoted Total		13	5	8	6	32	8
Grand Total		19	5	9	6	39	11

The table demonstrates that in quarter 1 of 2023/24 (April to June 2023), a total of 3 officers have been promoted (inc temporary promotions) and 8 have transferred roles.

With regards to the transfers, the table below provides a breakdown of the Command / position individuals have transferred from and to.

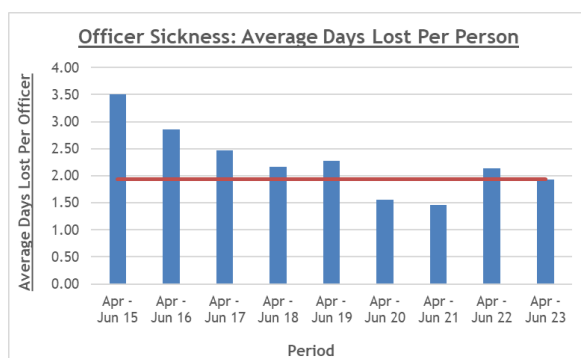
Rank	Command Posted From	Position Name Posted From	Command Posted To	Position Name Posted To
Chief Supt	Local Policing Area North	LPA Ch Supt	HQ Directorate	Professionalism Ch Supt
	HQ Directorate	Professionalism Ch Supt	Crime and Public Protection Command	Public Protection Commander D Ch Supt
Supt	Local Policing Area South	Investigations Supt	Contact Management	Deputy Head of Contact Management
	Contact Management	Deputy Head of Contact Management	Diversity & Inclusion Command	Supt HR Projects
	Local Policing Support Unit	LPSU & CIP Superintendent	Local Policing Area South	Investigations Supt
	Diversity & Inclusion Command	Supt HR Projects	Local Policing Area North	LPA Supt
	Continuous Improvement and Analytics	Supt Athena Strategic Change & Perform	Contact Management	Deputy Head of Contact Management
	Local Policing Support Unit	Hate Crime Lead Superintendent	Local Policing Support Unit	LPSU & CIP Superintendent
Grand Total				

In quarter 1 of 2023/24 a total of 2 Chief Superintendents and 6 Superintendents have changed roles. As previously reported, officers will continue to seek promotion and career changes for a variety of reasons and therefore it is expected that movement will continue to take place. However, the latest quarter's data demonstrates the position is relatively stable as the 8 transfers this reporting period is in line with the quarterly average number of transfers in 2022/23.

With regards to police staff, in quarter 1 of 2023/24 there have been no external joiners to the force in roles graded P05 or above. In the same period there has been 1 promotion into a P05 role or above, which was in Forensic Identification.

Absence

The average days lost per officer for April to June 2023/24 is 1.93 days which is a reduction when compared to the same period in 2022/23 (2.14). It should be noted that whilst the average days lost per officer is higher than the same period in 2021 (1.46) and 2020 (1.56), the current position of 1.93 is positive and in fact lower than the same period in each financial year from 2015 to 2019. This can be demonstrated in the below graph:



The red line indicates the current financial year to date average days lost per officer (1.93).

This shows that of the 9 periods listed, the current average days lost per officer is lower than in 6 of the previous years positions for the same period.

This, along with the reduction seen when directly compared to the same position last year, suggests that officer absence is improving and, whilst higher than some years, is not deemed a specific area of concern.

As previously reported, the below table shows the total officer payroll hours lost and the percentage of available contracted hours lost for the period April to June 2023/24, as well as the same period in 2022/23 and 2021/22.

Employee Group	2021/22 (Apr to Jun)		2022/23 (Apr to Jun)		2023/24 (Apr to Jun)		Variance 2023/24 v 2022/23	
	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost
Police	41023.58	2.71%	62531.22	3.96%	58704.07	3.56%	-3827.15	-0.40%

The figures demonstrate that there has been a reduction in percentage of contracted hours lost to sickness in quarter 1 of 2023/24 (3.56%) when compared to the same period in 2022/23 (3.96%).

With regards to absence terms, there has been a reduction in average days lost per person across all three for the period April to June 2023/24 when compared to the same position in 2022/23. Short-term has reduced from 0.57 to 0.50, medium-term from 0.42 to 0.37 and long-term from 1.15 to 1.07.

Psychological related absences continue to account for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost (43.77%), which is a marginal increase compared to same period in 2022/23 (41.13%). However, when measured as average days lost per person it is 0.85, which actually represents a reduction when compared to the previous year (0.88). For information, whilst it has reduced it is still higher than the same period in both 2021/22 (0.54) and 2020/21 (0.67), however as reported above, overall absence was lower in these periods.

Of note, respiratory related absences no longer account for the second highest proportion of payroll hours lost (which it did for both the April to June 2022/23 position and the full 2022/23 financial year). So far, for this period, 9.99% of absence was lost to respiratory reasons, which is a reduction when compared to the same period in 2022/23 (18.65%), 2021/22 (15.15%) and 2020/21 (10.86%). This is also reflected in the average days lost per person which was 0.19 for this period compared to 0.40 in 2022/23 and 0.22 in 2021/22.

Miscellaneous related absences account for the second highest proportion of payroll hours lost with 12.22%, which is an increase when compared to 2022/23 (10.68%). When measured as average days lost per person it is also the second highest absence reason increasing to 0.24 from 0.19.

Below is summary of the 12 general absence reasons for the period April to June 2023/24 when compared to the same position in 2022/23:

- Only 1 has increased by more than 0.01 average days lost per person, which is miscellaneous related absences (as identified above).
- A total of 4 have increased by just 0.01 average days lost per person (digestive, ear/eye, infectious disease, skin related absences)
- A total of 2 have remained the same (genito urinary and musculo/skeletal related absences)

- Absences due to headache/migraine have reduced by 0.01, followed by nervous system related absences, which have reduced by 0.02.
- Cardiac/Circulatory and psychological related absences have both reduced by 0.04 average days lost per person, with the most significant reduction being respiratory related absence (a reduction of 0.21) as identified above.

With regards to Commands, of the 18, a total of 8 have higher average days lost per person in the period April to June 2023/24 when compared to April to June 2022/23. However, of those, 2 are in Commands with average headcounts of less than 10, meaning there are much greater fluctuations in absence that can be caused by just one individual being absent. Of the remaining 6, the biggest increase is Learning & Development, which has gone from 1.15 average days lost person to 2.14 (an increase of 0.99), followed by ERSOU (from 1.52 to 1.92). The other 4 Commands to see increases are Local Policing Support Unit, LPA West, Student Constables and HQ Directorate however they are only minor increases (ranging from an increase of 0.14 average days lost per person to 0.04).

The three commands listed on the HR Strategic Dashboard are those with the current highest average days lost per person for the period April to June 2023/24. However, it should be noted that positively all have reduced when compared to the same period in 2022/23.

Continuous Improvement & Analytics has the highest level of absence with 4.11, however this has reduced from 5.46 and is also a small command in terms of overall headcount so bigger fluctuations in absence are expected. Contact Management has always historically had high levels of absence and, for the current period, has the second highest average days lost per person with 3.20. However, positively they have seen the biggest reduction in absence when compared to the same position in 2022/23 (reducing by 2.08 average days lost per person to 5.28). Crime & Public Protection have the third highest average days lost per person (2.57) however, this is a reduction of 0.44 when compared to the same period in 2022/23 (3.01).

Of the Local Policing Areas (LPAs), the average days lost person has reduced in both LPA North (from 2.30 to 2.16) and LPA South (from 1.99 to 1.77). In contrast however, LPA West have increased from 2.11 to 2.24.

For LPA West, the increase for April to June 2023/24, when compared to the same period last year, is an increase of 402 payroll hours lost, which can largely be attributed to an increase of 2092 payroll hours lost for psychological related absence and an increase of 482 payroll hours for digestive related absence. However, these are also offset by significant reductions in some other absence reasons, most notably 1227 hours for musculo/skeletal related absence, -628 hours for respiratory related absence and -338 hours for headache/migraine related absence.

Adjusted and Recuperative Duties (Police) / Restricted Duties (Staff and PSCSOs)

The number (headcount) of officers on recuperative and adjusted duties has increased marginally from 494 as at 31st March 2023 to 497 as at 30th June 2023.

This equates to 13.12% of the total force headcount as at the 30th June 2023 (3789). There have been no significant variations across any of the commands.

As reported in previous updates, Operational HR and the Performance Improvement Unit (PIU) continue to advise on these cases through the Attendance Management Group (AMG) process.

Staff and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)

Establishment v Strength and Vacancies

The staff strength as at 30th June 2023 was 2084.73 fte, which is 297.65 fte under the establishment of 2084.73 and equates to a vacancy rate of 12.49%. This is a strength fte reduction of 32.84 fte and a vacancy rate increase of 0.66 percentage points when compared to the 31st March 2023 (from 11.83% to 12.49%). For information, the establishment has reduced from 2401.60 as at 31st March 2023 to 2382.39 as at 30th June 2023. Whilst there have been minor variations across a number of Commands (both increases and reductions), the primary reason for the overall reduction relates to the Essex Criminal Justice department restructure, which resulted in the establishment reducing by 27.73 from 291.35 to 263.62.

In total there are 11 Commands listed on the 'Est v Str' tab of the HR Strategic dashboard with an establishment greater than 10.00 fte. Of the 11 Commands, a total of 4 have a higher strength fte when compared to the 31st March 2023 position, with the biggest increase seen in the HQ Directorate (+4.25 fte from 125.23 to 129.48). Of the remaining 7, the biggest reduction in strength fte is within Contact Management (-15.21 from 469.05 to 453.84), Essex Criminal Justice Command (-7.47 from 249.88 to 242.40) and Operational Policing Command (-7.13 from 171.46 to 164.33). Local Policing Support Unit, Support Services, Crime & Public Protection Command and Learning & Development have also all reduced marginally.

The Command with the highest vacancy rate is Learning & Development (-30.78%), followed by Human Resources (-22.70%) and Operational Policing Command (-15.91%).

As reported previously, the top vacancies in force continue to be reported through the Strategic Change Coordination Board (SCCB) chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable. The vacancy rates of commands with more than 4.00 fte, are outlined and action being taken to address is discussed, as well as specific departments with high vacancy factors. The SCCB paper includes information relating to the establishment, strength fte, variance fte, vacancy percentage level and current recruitment activity.

Focusing on 100% Essex funded roles, the 2 roles reported with the highest level of vacancies were Resolution Centre Investigator and Communications Officers both of which are managed through volume recruitment. The next intakes for both roles are in July 2023 where up to 36 new starters are due to commence, which will result in the majority of vacancies across the roles being filled. Detention officers had the third highest number of vacancies with the next intake scheduled for July 2023 of up to 3 people, followed by a further intake in October 2023 to fill the remaining vacancies.

With regards to other vacancies, a further 11 roles were cited in the SCCB report, which identified that whilst some roles are being held for different reasons, a significant proportion are being recruited to with candidates at various stages of the recruitment and selection process. In addition, a review was undertaken by Operational HR with regards to the departments with the highest level of vacancies. This review was focused on 8 departments and identified a similar theme in that some vacancies were being held (i.e. for business cases) however a large proportion of vacancies were at various stages of the recruitment and selection process. For information, for harder to fill roles Corporate Recruitment provide relevant support to assist in ensuring they are filled. For example, in the Estates department, the Command and Corporate Recruitment are working with specialist agencies, together with external job boards, to supply individuals for engineer, surveyor and Estates positions.

Looking forward, whilst a number of departments have relatively high levels of vacancies, under the new HR Operational business model, HR Business Partners will work closely with Heads of Department with regards to specific areas of concern or risk areas and provide the relevant support, to fill the vacancies, working with Corporate Recruitment where necessary and identifying bespoke recruitment methods, as needed.

With regards to PCSOs, the strength fte has increased to 96.96 fte, which is 2.11 fte under the establishment of 99.07. This is an increase of 3.39 fte when compared to the position as at 31st March 2023 (93.57 fte). The next intake is due to take place in November 2023.

Diversity - Ethnicity and Gender

With regards to staff, the number of ethnic minority staff has remained at 97 but has increased as a proportion from 4.16% to 4.22%, due to the overall reduction in the total staff headcount. With regards to gender, the headcount of female staff has reduced from 1570 to 1548, however as a proportion the position has remained relatively static (67.39% compared to 67.38%).

With regards to PCSOs, the ethnic minority headcount as remained at 0. The number of female PCSOs has increased by 1 to 69, but as a proportion against the total PCSO headcount this has reduced marginally from 65.38% to 64.49%.

Turnover

So far this financial year to date (April to June 2023/24), a total of 64 staff have left, which is a turnover rate of 2.77%. This is lower than the same period last year where 78 staff left (3.22%).

Whilst this does represent a reduction, it is still relatively high when compared against the same period in other financial years. That said, of the 64 leavers, 28 were in April 2023 and this reduced to just 18 in both May and June 2023. For information, of the 64 leavers, 12 were from FCR, which has been reported as having higher levels of turnover in recent updates, however the number of leavers in

FCR has reduced month on month from 5 in April 2023 to 4 in May 2023 and 3 in June 2023. Of the remaining 52 leavers, there was no specific area of concern identified with the leavers leaving from 29 different departments.

Looking forward, attrition is relatively stable, with 21 confirmed leavers for the month of July 2023. This is lower than the monthly average in 2022/23 of 24.

For PCSOs, there has just been 1 leaver this reporting period, which was a retirement in April 2023.

Absence

With regards to staff absence, the average days lost per person for April to June 2023/24 has reduced to 1.95, which is lower than the same period in 2022/23 (2.00). The below table shows the total payroll hours lost and the percentage of available contracted hours lost for April to June 2023/24 compared to the same period in 2022/23 and 2021/22:

Employee Group	2021/22 (Apr to Jun)		2022/23 (Apr to Jun)		2023/24 (Apr to Jun)		Variance 2023/24 v 2022/23	
	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost
Staff	32277.97	3.71%	34433.89	3.98%	33270.06	3.88%	-1163.84	-0.10%

The figures demonstrate that 3.88% of contracted hours available were lost to sickness absence for April to June 2023/24, which is a reduction when compared to the same period in 2022/23 (3.98%) but an increase when compared to April to June 2021/22 (3.71%).

With regards to absence term, there has been a marginal increase in long-term absence (from 1.05 average days lost per person to 1.06) but marginal reductions in short-term and medium-term absence.

For staff, psychological related absence continues to account for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost (31.75%), and the average days lost per person has increased slightly from 0.58 for April to June 2022/23 to 0.62 for April to June 2023/24. As with officers, respiratory related absences account for the second highest proportion of payroll hours lost (12.509%) but the average days lost per person has reduced from 0.47 for April to June 2022/23 to 0.24 for the same period in 2023/24.

There have been minor fluctuations in the 12 general absence reasons, however, only 3 categories have increased by more than 0.03 average days lost per person (cardiac/circulatory, psychological and musculo/skeletal).

Cardiac/circulatory related absence has increased by the most and the main reason for the increase is due to stroke (+322 hours) and operations (+183 hours).

Psychological related absence has also increased and the main reasons for the increase are due to increases in stress (+1462 hours) and bereavement (+1350 hours).

Of the 17 Commands, 8 have higher average days lost per person for April to June 2023/24 when compared to the same period in 2022/23.

In the previous report (as at 31st March 2023) OPC Operational Policing Command had the second highest average days lost per person (in Commands with higher average headcounts), however for April to June 2023/24 they now account for the highest average days lost per person (2.58), which is an increase when compared to the same period in 2022/23 (1.77). The absence reasons that account for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost in OPC are musculo/skeletal related absence (30.75%) and cardiac/circulatory absence (23.82%).

Contact Management now have the second highest average days lost per person for April to June 2023/24, having previously been the Command with the highest average days lost per person. The average days lost per person of 2.74 are lower than the same period in 2022/23 (3.42) and 2021/22 (2.86) The average headcount in Contact Management (510) accounts for 22.08% of the total staff headcount and the Command is consistently in the top 3 Command with the highest average days lost per person. Therefore, whilst high, this is not a new or emerging area of concern. The absence reasons that account for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost in this Command are psychological related absence (37.79%) and respiratory related absence (17.34%), which is a similar position to officer absence.

Criminal Justice Command are the Command with the third highest average days lost per person at 2.42. However, this is a reduction when compared to the same period in 2022/23 (2.73), 2021/22 (2.90) and 2020/21 (2.63). The reasons that account for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost in Criminal Justice Command are psychological related absence (48.74%) and musculo/skeletal related absences (18.90%).

For PCSOs, the average days lost per person has reduced to 2.24 for April to June 2023/24, which is a reduction of 0.43 when compared to the same period in 2022/23 (2.67). This is also the lowest level of absence, for this period, over the last 9 years.

The below table shows the total payroll hours lost and the % of available contracted hours lost for April to June 2023/24 compared to the same period in 2022/23 and 2021/22.

Employee Group	2021/22 Apr to Jun		2022/23 (Apr to Jun)		2023/24 (Apr to Jun)		Variance 2023/24 v 2022/23	
	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost	Payroll Hours Lost	% of Available Contracted Hrs Lost
PCSO	1966.38	4.84%	2051.80	5.30%	1743.73	4.49%	-308.07	-0.81%

The figures demonstrate that 4.49% of contracted hours available were lost to sickness absence for April to June 2023/24, which is a reduction when compared to 2022/23 (5.30%) and 2021/22 (4.84%).

For PCSOs, musculo/skeletal related absence accounts for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost (49.69%), followed by psychological related absence (14.00%). In terms of average days lost per person musculo/skeletal absence has increased from 0.30 for April to June 2022/23 to 1.12 for the same period in 2023/24 and average days lost for psychological related absence have increased to 0.31 from 0.19.

Although musculo/skeletal related absence accounts for the highest proportion and average days lost per person for PCSOs for April to June 2023/24 there are only three instances of absence within this category. Two of these are for broken bones, which account for 61.05% of the payroll hours lost in musculo/skeletal related absence and one for a fracture. Two individuals that have been absent for musculo/skeletal related absence remain absent at time of writing (11th July 2023).

Psychological related absence accounts for the second highest proportion of payroll hours lost, but there have only been 2 instances of this absence in April to June 2023/24 (both for stress). Of these, 1 instance began in the last financial year and both individuals have now returned to work.

Restricted Duties

The number of staff on restricted duties has reduced from 68 as at 31st March 2023 to 60 as at 30th June 2023 and PCSOs have reduced slightly, by 1, from 9 to 8 for the same periods.

As per the update under the officer's section, Operational HR and the PIU continue to advise on these cases through the AMG process.

Performance Improvement Unit (PIU) and Operational HR Absence Update (Officers and Staff)

The level of absence for Police Staff and PCSOs continues to show a reduction from the previous year. Following recent increases in absence levels when compared to the previous year, police officers are also starting to show a reduction. PIU and Operational HR teams continue the increased focus on the value added through monitoring compliance and in establishing robust Attendance Support Meeting (ASM) processes across all Commands and departments. As at 3rd July 2023, the number of formal stages for both Unsatisfactory Performance Procedures (UPP) or Capability are 31 with PIU and Operational HR providing advice and intervention to managers in support of this process. A further 896 are being monitored through the ASM process.

The interventions and absence support work are also subject to the continued Star Chamber Review, chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable, whereby cases of long-term absence or high Bradford Score are scrutinised. The local absence scrutiny processes following the initial Star Chamber were supported by both Operational HR and PIU.

Senior Staff Movement / Transfers

With regards to police staff, in quarter 1 of 2023/24 there have been no external joiners to the force in roles graded P05 or above. In the same period there has been 1 promotion into a P05 or above role, which was in Forensic Identification.

Business Case Update

During the period 1st April 2023 to 30th June 2023, no redundancies have been approved. The breakdown of Business Cases during the period are as follows:

The following ratified business cases moved to their new structures during this period (1st April 2023 to 30th June 2023):

- **Criminal Justice Command Restructure** – Restructure of CJ within Essex Police includes proposals to transfer line management of Property Services and Youth Justice Team to Criminal Justice Command. Consultation launched 9th September 2022 for a 45-day consultation, consultation closed 24th October 2022. 166.35 fte posts impacted by the proposals. Full structure implementation date 1st April 2023
- **7 Force Commercial Service** – Collaborative business case; 33 individuals impacted by proposals, 4 Essex colleagues. Consultation launched on the 16th January 2023. All colleagues retained roles. Implementation date 3rd April 2023.
- **Operational HR Restructure** – Collaborative business case; 28 individuals impacted by proposals. Consultation commenced 12th January 2023 and concluded on 10th February 2023. All colleagues retained roles. Implementation date 20th June 2023.

One business case has concluded consultation and remains in their notice period pending start date of new structures during this period:

- **Forensic Redesign** – Collaborative business case proposing full restructure of Forensics across Essex and Kent. Launched 27th October 22, 60-day consultation concluded on 31st December 2022, alternative proposals were reviewed ahead of re-issue to impacted staff. 129 fte impacted by the proposals, 65 individuals are in Essex. Selections were conducted in March and April 2023. Following a few appeals this business case has move into the notice period phase. The new structure implementation date is 31st July 2023.

Four business cases were launched during this period:

- **Crime & Public Protection (C&PP) Assessment centre** – Consultation launched on 19th April 2023 and the initial period of consultation was extended until Friday 26th May 2023. A few counter proposals were received, and these have been reviewed and submitted for consideration to Chief Officers. 33 staff are affected by this business case. The Business Case is to progress, re-issue

document being drafted. The new structure implementation is likely to be mid-October 2023.

- **Crime & Public Protection (C&PP) MOSOVO** – consultation to amend the shift pattern for officers and staff. Consultation launched 9th June 2023 with a 30-day consultation, which is due to end 9th July 2023. 13 police staff are affected by this business case.
- **Criminal Justice Command Custody** - consultation to amend the shift pattern for officers and staff. In addition, the business case will seek to streamline with 'buddy' custody suites (this is the contractual secondary work location for Detention Officers). Consultation launched 30th June 2023 with a 45-day consultation, which is due to end 14th August 2023. Implementation date is anticipated to be 4th September 2023. 100 police staff are affected by this business case.
- **Contact Management Command team** – consultation launched on the 28th June 2023. Two PSE impacted, as their current roles have been removed, new roles are available in the structure at a higher grade, which will be recruited to via a promotional selection process. It is anticipated that consultation will close on 25th July 2023 and selection process to take place 3 – 11 August 2023.

Specials Headcount and Turnover

As at 30th June 2023, there were 301 specials in post on SAP, which is a net reduction of 26 when compared to the position as at 31st March 2023 (327). As previously reported the net reduction continues to be a combination of high turnover and a reduction in recruitment.

With regards to attrition, there have been 34 leavers so far this financial year to date. This is a turnover rate of 10.83%, which is higher than the turnover rate for the same period in 2022 (8.70%). The total of 34 leavers is an average of 11 a month, which, whilst high, is lower than the monthly average seen throughout 2022/23 (13). Of the 34 leavers, 29 resigned, 4 joined Essex police as a new officer recruit and 1 failed probation.

Specials Duty Hours

A total of 21,299 duty hours have been worked for the period April to June 2023, which equates to 23.57 average hours per officer. As expected, due to the overall lower headcount, this a reduction when compared to the same period last year (35,150 hours worked / average of 26.90). It should still be noted however, that the total duty hours worked in June 2023 (6,570) is the equivalent of 411 specials working a 16-hour month.

Recruitment and Applications

In relation to recruitment, there have been 9 joiners so far this financial year to date (5 in April 2023 and 4 in May 2023). Whilst this is low, it represents a small improvement when compared against recent intakes, with only 12 joining the force

from August 2022 to March 2023 and just 1 intake being higher (6 in November 2023) when compared to the 2 intakes so far this financial year to date.

Looking forward, whilst application numbers are relatively low (albeit stable) it is anticipated that recruitment numbers will improve in quarter 2 of 2023/24. At the time of writing, a total of 4 joined on the 8th July 2023 and there is a further intake planned in August 2023 with up to 11 expected to join, albeit this is subject to change. Beyond August 2023, further intakes are planned throughout the remainder of the 2023/24 financial year with an aspiration to achieve a net increase of 100 throughout the year.

Corporate Recruitment and Corporate Marketing, in conjunction with the Specials Command lead, continue to work together to enhance the number of applications received.

Below is a summary of key numbers and recent marketing and outreach activity:

- Advertised across all local volunteering websites
- Recruitment leaflets given to Chelmsford CVS which they will take out on outreach and have around their hubs
- Specials Recruitment Information Event – 50% attendance, resulted in 5 new applications
- HR have attended to 23 events since May promoting all recruitment pipelines
- Specials recruitment has been advertised on Council Volunteer pages

Outreach carried out by the Corporate Recruitment team over the last quarter has included activity / attendance at, Harlow Jobs Fair, Special Constable Recruitment Evening at Essex Police College, University and Careers Fair at Colchester Sixth Form, Southend Job Centre, Clacton Police Station Open Day, Chelmsford College Progression Fair. Schools and college events booked in alongside Corporate Recruitment, HR Innovation and Positive Action will also take place.

Specials recruitment forms a clear part of the strategic marketing plan for 2023/24. Progress of specials recruitment will continue to be monitored weekly through tactical and strategic checkpoint meetings to ensure effective oversight.

Diversity - Ethnicity and Gender

The number of ethnic minority specials has reduced by 1, from 17 at 31st March 2023 to 16 as at 30th June 2023. However, due to the overall reduction in the specials headcount, the actual proportion of ethnic minority specials has increased from 5.20% to 5.32%.

With regards to the number of female specials, the headcount has reduced by 9 from 102 as at 31st March 2023 to 93 as at 30th June 2023. As a result, specials proportion has reduced from 31.19% as at 31st March 2023 to 30.90% as at 30th June 2023 (a percentage point reduction of 0.29).

All Employee Groups Diversity Data

As expected, due to variations in the overall headcounts across the employee groups there have been fluctuations across the majority of protected characteristics for each employee group. There are no significant variations to report when compared to March 2023, however it is worth noting that a number of categories have reduced on a headcount basis, but when measured as a proportion the position has actually increased across a number of the categories. This is due to an overall headcount reduction across employee groups resulting in many proportions increasing.

Health and Wellbeing Services Update

Within Occupational Health, recruitment is underway for 1.50 fte additional Practice Nurses and 1.00 fte Practice Nurse Team Leader to support the Health Surveillance activities and to undertake medical recruitment assessments in house in the future. This follows approval for these additional posts and will enable Occupational Health to flex when recruitment pressures demand additional and responsive services and to develop more outreach and pro-active Occupational Health engagement with the wider force.

Health and Wellbeing Services have supported the NPPC Response Policing Week with outreach activity taking place in Colchester and Chelmsford, where both Occupational Health and Counselling Services provided drop-in engagements. In addition, the new internal physiotherapist has undertaken drop-in clinics in Great Dunmow, Brentwood, Loughton and Colchester recently.

Development of the new Peer Support Programme continues with the first training course for Peer Support Volunteers taking place in July 2023. Following this first course, the first cohort of volunteer Peer Supporters will be active across the force. Further courses are scheduled to develop and grow the network and will be able to provide local support, guidance and signposting for colleagues and promotion of wellbeing activity and interventions held centrally.

Absence Star Chamber

As detailed earlier in this report, the second Absence Star Chamber was held in this period, again chaired by DCC Prophet. A constructive and healthy debate was held in relation to absence trends and interventions in the forces' longest term absence cases and those with the highest Bradford scores. All Chief Officers have been tasked to undertake similar 'absence scrutiny panels' for their commands, getting to the finer detail of these and other absence cases.

In addition to the scheduled Chamber, an additional meeting focussing on Contact Management and Crime and Public Protection Commands to further dive into the absence in these areas. The next quarterly Absence Star Chamber is scheduled for 1st September 2023.

Review of the Reasons for Referral to Occupational Health and Counselling & Wellbeing Services:

This section of the report is based upon data gathered from internal survey submissions completed by OH Advisers and Counselling and Wellbeing Counsellors between 12/12/22 to 30/06/23.

Occupational Health Data

In the period reviewed there have been 351 Occupational Health submissions. The data collection form surveys information on three categories of referrals; musculoskeletal, psychological and respiratory.

Musculoskeletal

Of the 142 submissions in this category, 25 (18%) resulted from injuries on duty. Of these 25 cases, 9 were arrest/restraint, 5 were manual handling, 6 were RTC related and 5 were as a result of a slip, trip or fall. There were 21 cases (15%) resulting from off duty incidents.

Consequently, the number of cases in each category of musculoskeletal referrals does not lead to a particular causation requiring intervention, albeit that back ache and back pain generated 35 referrals and, as such, it is wise to remind individuals of the need to complete DSE risk assessments and to use office equipment correctly.

The new in-house physiotherapist has commenced in post and, in addition to providing hands-on therapy, is undertaking outreach activity at local stations, providing immediate advice and guidance and this local activity will continue as he embeds into his role, with the above information shared with him to inform his proactive practice topic areas.

Psychological

There were 88 submissions in this category, the underlying causes being assessed as 23 (26%) private related, 25 (28%) work related, 39 (44%) were a combination and 1 (2%) n/a. The highest of the three categories is where work and private issues combine together.

Respiratory

There have been only 11 responses in this category, 3 of which were breathing problems and 2 of which were upper respiratory tract infections, the other categories selected were 1 case only. The straightforward nature of a return to work plan for this absence type, may account for the limited number of OH referrals from line managers. Additionally respiratory sickness absence does not trigger an OH referral at 7 days as set out in policy L180, whereas referrals for both psychological and musculoskeletal are required at this point.

Counselling and Wellbeing Data

In the period reviewed there have been 171 submissions from our counselling team. Of these, 90 (53%) were for private related reasons, 38 (22%) work related and 43 (25%) were a combination of private and work. Of the 90 'private' cases, 71 were

triaged to our Employee Assistance Programme. The highest number of cases were therefore for reasons classed as private rather than work.

Underlying Reasons – Private

Of the 90 referrals driven by private reasons, 26 were for loss/bereavement, 14 for personal trauma, 14 related to other health issues, 29 related to relationships, 50 related to personal stress or anxiety and 9 related to depression. All other categories were 5 cases or less. Please note that more than one reason may be recorded in each case and thus percentages cannot be calculated.

Where the referral to Counselling and Wellbeing Team is for private reasons or where the majority of the cause is considered to be driven by private issues, then at the triage stage the client will be referred to the EAP. During the period under review, 71 individuals were referred to the Employee Assistance Programme. Many officers and staff also self-refer directly to the EAP and, whilst the data on these referrals is available from our provider, it does not form part of this report.

Underlying Reasons – Work

Of the 38 referrals driven by work reasons, 13 were related to trauma, 23 were related to stress/anxiety. All other categories were 6 cases or less. From the data collated, it is reasonable to assume that trauma referrals tend to be incident at work related and stress/anxiety tend to be day to day work related. If this viewpoint is correct, then 'day to day work' generated a higher number of referrals than traumatic incidents.

Underlying Reasons – Combined

Of those 43 referrals where both private and work-related issues were identified as the cause, 40 were related to stress or anxiety and 10 were for trauma. All other categories were cases 3 or less. Please note that more than one reason may be recorded in each case and thus percentages cannot be calculated.

Learning and Development Update

Foundation Training

The 3-year Police Uplift formally came to an end on 31st March 2023. Throughout the period Essex Police recruited 1153 constables (since April 2020). Since the introduction of PEQF in March 2022 473 new officers have joined the force. The force is awaiting further information on the 'fourth entry route,' which is being developed by the College of Policing; the full specification is expected in September 2023.

The first intake of PEQF officers have commenced their second year, which sees the introduction of protected learning time (additional learning to complement the time spent in EPC in their first year). L&D have worked closely with the Strategic Change Team, Local Policing leads and the Resource Management Unit to ensure these duties are planned to minimise the impact on the frontline, as well as ensuring the officers are supported with the necessary mandatory time to progress their learning. The first cohort has given positive feedback, which will continue to be monitored.

In discussion with ACC Mariner, there have also been changes to the Investigative Development Module (IDM), which provide alternative learning opportunities whilst supporting frontline deployable resource levels.

Crime Training and Development

In response to the Force priority to increase detective numbers and capability, the number of Officers on the Detective Pathway with a National Investigators Exam (NIE) pass is 266 following the June 2023 NIE. The pass rate for this exam in Essex was 47.1%, which was below the national average and against a trend of otherwise high pass rates in the preceding exams (74.5% in March 2023 and 67.6% in November 2022). There is no obvious explanation for this drop in performance, with no difference in the planning and preparation of candidates from the force. At present there are 48 candidates who have indicated that they will sit the NIE in November 2023, moving forward these will be counted within national reporting on Detective Pathway data, but only at the point of NIE registration (which opens in the month prior to the exam occurring).

Specialist Child Abuse Investigations Development Programme (SCAIDP) portfolios continue to receive additional focus and support through a dedicated Investigative Coach, and this has seen the number of fully accredited specialist investigators rise to 68 as of the end of June 2023. There are a further 23 officers working toward this accreditation having already received the required training course.

The Virtual Crime Academy (VCA) continues to expand and deliver valuable support to investigators across all areas of business and has received over 24,000 visits in the last 90 days. Recent updates include a court skills page, which contains articles from the judiciary aimed at improving court standards and a case file page that is in the final stages of development. The Domestic Abuse hub has also been revised and updated, as have the forensics pages. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is a key feature of the VCA, and upcoming events include Family and Criminal Court joint working protocols and evidence led prosecutions, which is delivered in conjunction with the CPS. The VCA format has been shared with other forces including Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire who are looking at replicating it within their own areas.

Public and Personal Safety Training (PPST)

There has been little progress from the College of Policing in publishing the Approved Professional Practice (APP) or the new curriculum, which will enable forces to fully introduce the scenario-based training for Police and Public Safety Training (PPST) by April 2024. The First Aid Learning Programme changes have been defined, however in the last month a further mandatory training requirement has been added following the recommendations from Volume 2 of the Manchester Arena Inquiry, relating to JESIP. This mandates annual training for all operational officers which equates to a further 3 hours per officer. Work is underway to understand the impact of this new requirement and how it could be accommodated. Taking into account the growth of contact time for PPST, First Aid and JESIP, each officer will need an additional 9 hours of annual mandatory refresher training going forward, equating to circa 27,000 extra hours of training per year.

Two members of the force's Independent Advisory Group (IAG) spent the day on 7th June 2023 observing personal safety and first aid training. Feedback was very positive on the standard of delivery. The PPST Team are working with Chief Superintendent Claire Talbot and Diversity Manager Vernal Scott to set up IAG's for both Taser and Personal Safety Training, enhancing both teams' visibility and community engagement and links directly to the broader use of force review and scrutiny panels.

Taser Training

There are currently 752 Standard Trained Officers in Essex against the force establishment target of 737. The force is now fully operational on the Chronicle system, which improves further the audit and control associated with training and operational matters, as well as device allocation.

Driver Training

There has been a net increase of response drivers across the force since May 2022, when the need for additional trainers was identified. Since then, the impact has been positive but, in some cases, restricted by the training and assessment requirement for each of the new driving instructors, which has also impacted on the availability of existing instructors. However, the growth of response drivers on LPA teams has been accelerating since May and there are now 270 response drivers on LPAs with almost 100 course spaces available between June and October, which will see the numbers increase to approximately 325 in that period. The feedback from the officers has been extremely positive.

Leadership Academy

Since March 2023, the Leadership Academy have delivered further 'Be the Change' leadership courses (1 Sgt and 2 PSE). Over the coming months (Jul-Sep) the plan is to provide four combined PSE/SGT courses training approximately 80 additional supervisors in key leadership roles across the force.

Furthermore, a new course has been developed which is 'Be the Change' for Chief Inspectors. This will launch in September 2023 and consist of 2 face to face development days with a rolling programme of further 3 inputs, which will be accessible between the 2 face to face days. The attendees on the first course will be those who have recently passed the Inspector to Chief Inspector promotion process; however all Chief Inspectors will attend the programme over the 12-month period from September.

As well as the core leadership programs, the Leadership Academy continues to provide several other established training products, namely promotion and interview preparation inputs, exam support workshops, delivery of the 'Headway Programme,' custody sergeant & detention officer training, Tutor Constable training (recently increased from 2 to 5 days to recognise the importance of this role) as well as a bespoke Acting Sergeant course.

Professional Assessment Team (PAT)

There are currently 96 Sergeant candidates and 21 Inspectors in the assessment process, with a further batch of newly promoted Sergeants to join the cohort in the

next month. The force is currently engaged with the College of Policing with regards to consultation on the early proposals to revise the police promotions framework nationally. The timescales are protracted with estimated implementation for all forces set at 2026 with an option to delay until 2028. The work is linked to the PEQF new entry route as well as the leadership levels and so it is unlikely that rapid progress will be seen in this area due to the interdependencies and complexities involved.

Performance Design and Evaluation (PDE, E-Learning Developers and IT Training)

The latest round of Flex Training has been attended by over nine hundred LPT Officers. The subject matter of 'Operational Performance and Roads Policing' is very relevant in light of the Force 'Vision-Zero' initiative and recent CoP guidelines to increase training time for JESIP. The interactive training had inputs from Specialist Officers covering such topics as JESIP, Firearms, Public Order/OPC, Contact Management, Op Innerste (Dealing with migrant children), CRASH reports and wider Roads Policing skills.

The IT training team are focussed on supporting the force with the delivery of phase 1 of version 6 Athena training, which will commence in September 2023. This will be followed by Digital Case File (DCF) upgrades in January 2024. Law Enforcement Data Service (LEDS) training (replacement of PNC) is progressing well, and we have successfully gone live with the Property Application, Drivers Application and Vehicles Application. Training has been well received and we are expecting to receive the next module of 'Wanted Persons' in July 2023 and are planning to go live to users throughout August 2023.

6.0 Implications (Issues)

Not applicable, however section 6.3 identifies area of risk.

6.1 Links to Police and Crime Plan Priorities

Ensuring the force is sufficiently resourced is a specific ambition within the narrative of the Police and Crime Plan. The provision of a sufficient number of skilled, equipped and supported resources closely links to the delivery of all seven of the priorities. This ambition is supported through recruitment, retention and attendance management activities.

Recruitment numbers remain strong, which has resulted in the uplifted establishment and year 3 of the National Police Uplift requirement being exceeded.

The representation of ethnic minority officers (4.04%) remains relatively strong and female officers (37.00%) continues to increase with current headcounts proportions at the highest ever levels. Having a workforce that is representative of our communities will give the force a broader range of skills, knowledge and experience that can positively contribute towards the priorities.

Whilst the overall number of specials has continued to reduce, the special constabulary continue to contribute a significant number of hours to policing, with the latest month (June 2023) at 6,570, which is the equivalent of 411 specials working a 16-hour month.

6.2 **Demand**

Whilst the national uplift programme has concluded, demand remains high within Human Resources, Business Services and Learning and Development due to the need to effectively resource and train the force accordingly. As previously reported, demand is expected to continue in Learning & Development, Operational HR and Resourcing due to the overall impact that increased workforce numbers have on the departments in terms of the ongoing support they provide.

6.3 **Risks/Mitigation**

The force's strategic recruitment plan resulted in year 3 of the national uplift being exceeded by 51, however the strength was 11.87 fte below the establishment of 3755.00. So far this financial year to date, a total of 50 officers have joined, however, due a reduced recruitment pipeline only 39 joined in June against an original projection of 62. The below provides an update on activity to enhance the recruitment pipeline and ensure future intakes are achieved.

- An additional 100k investment has been approved and will be used to focus on recruitment attraction and process efficiencies to increase the volume of candidates in the pipeline. Various initiatives are active or are in development to support the September 2023 and March 2024 uplift headcount requirements.
- Currently there are 15 Outreach Events booked over the July and August period and a further 5 events booked thereafter so far. Additional events are continually scoped through the Corporate Recruitment and Positive Action Teams.
- Extensive changes to the preselection and preemployment process have taken place including early undertaking of the interview process, biometric checking, and medical scoping on immediate pass at interview. In addition, an extra assessment process has been provided following consultation with the College of Policing.
- More recent opportunities have included a 'call us' campaign in the last week which has yielded 8 early queries so far, which will be followed up where viable.
- An internal campaign for current police staff of bespoke briefing and workshop events, Connexion articles, as to date has so far led to 3 early enquiries and 1 individual commencing an application.
- In terms of outreach, currently there are 21 Outreach Events booked over the 2nd quarter period, so far. Additional events are continually scoped through the Corporate Recruitment and Positive Action Teams.
- As detailed above a joint HR, Positive Action & Media Ambassador training/orientation event is scheduled in July at Essex Police College to build on the Ambassador network and improve advocacy within Essex Police. Divisional commands are in support of the Ambassador programme and supporting where

possible for officers and staff to be part of the outreach events to widen the reach to the communities.

Further media activity which is ongoing is below:

- A specialist recruitment media-placement agency (Croton) has been retained to schedule Essex Police content on Job Boards in/near to Essex.
- Social media material continues to be scheduled and boosted on all owned channels. Posts have more than doubled but content remains an issue in terms of supply. The force is able to utilise content from Passing Out Parades as well as links to good news stories, as well as existing videos. Links to outreach are being strengthened to maximise promotional opportunity.
- Funnel ads have been working well in terms of reach (one peaked at 14,000 clicks in the first day) but these marketing leads are not seemingly converting to applications.
- A review and test of the website is being undertaken, which will lead to improvements to ensure the user journey becomes less intensive and to ensure branding and messaging are clearly defined and aligned to other marketing activity.
- Employee Advocacy. The force has created a format for officers (including senior leaders) and have had 6 submissions to date. The information is currently being used for news features and social content and, longer-term, will be added as profiles to the website. Next steps will be to ask Recruitment Ambassadors to take part to keep momentum going.
- Advocacy materials (recruitment packs and assets) have been re-ordered and are expected to arrive imminently. Recruitment merchandise packs have been compiled and are in the process of being disseminated to local policing teams. The remainder will be given out to Recruitment Ambassadors at the recruitment event at HQ on July 25th to be disseminated at local events/outreach.

6.4 Equality and/or Human Rights Implications

As previously reported, the Chief Constable continues to chair the Corporate Diversity, Equality and Inclusion board. This is now complemented by the 12 local boards that have been established.

The overarching aim of all Local Diversity, Equality & Inclusion Boards is to provide clear local leadership and governance for implementing the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy at a local level. It also ensures the workforce and key stakeholders, including Independent Advisory Group members or relevant leads, can actively participate and bring their perspective. All activity from the local boards is then reported back via the Force level board. A specific local board is in place for HR, L&D and Business Services to ensure many issues covered within this paper can be explored as necessary.

6.5 **Health and Safety Implications**

Not applicable

7.0 **Consultation/Engagement**

Operational Human Resources
Special Constabulary
Performance Improvement Unit
Learning and Development

8.0 **Actions for Improvement**

Specials Recruitment

As stated in the report a lot of activity has been undertaken by the Media and Communications department to help bolster interest in the Special Constabulary. Whilst applications have yet to increase significantly, it is anticipated the number of new special recruits will increase in quarter 2 of 2023/24.

9.0 **Future Work/Development and Expected Outcome**

1. Increase the number of specials throughout 2023/24 in line with the aspiration to achieve a net headcount increase of 100 by 31st March 2024.

Expected Outcome: progress towards a net increase in specials did not happen in quarter 1, however, whilst the latest 2 intakes were relatively small, they are improved on the latter months of 2022/23. In addition, July and August intakes are expected to increase to higher levels but due to relatively high turnover net increases in the overall headcount are unlikely in quarter 2.

2. Continue to increase female officer representation throughout 2023/24.

Expected Outcome: although the current number and proportion of female officers has reduced in the last quarter the position remains strong and applications from female candidates remain strong. It is anticipated that further progress is expected throughout 2023/24.

3. Continue to increase ethnic minority officer representation throughout 2023/24.

Expected Outcome: there are currently 31 ethnic minority candidates in progress, of which 1 has cleared, 1 is at final offer and 11 are in pre-employment. In addition, application numbers remain relatively strong and therefore progress is expected throughout 2023/24. As identified earlier in the report activity continues in this area to enhance the number and conversion of applications.