

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

31 July 2023 10:30 – 12:30

Present:

Jane Gardner (JG)	Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (Chair)
Emma Burdett (EB)	Insurance Officer, Corporate Finance, Essex Police
Morgan Cronin (MC)	Ch Supt, Continuous Improvement and Analytics, Essex Police
Ben-Julian Harrington (BJH)	Chief Constable, Essex Police
Suzanne Harris (SH)	Head of Performance and Scrutiny, PFCC's office
Samantha Jackson (SJ)	Management Accountant, Finance, Essex Police
Debbie Martin (DM)	Chief Finance Officer, Essex Police
Rachel Nolan (RN)	Assistant Chief Constable, Essex Police
Janet Perry (JP)	Strategic Head of Performance and Resources, PFCC's office
Andrew Prophet (AP)	Deputy Chief Constable, Essex Police
Matt Robbins (MR)	Head of Strategic Analysis, Essex Police
Andy Waldie (AW)	D/Ch/Supt, Public Protection Commander, Essex Police
Jeremy White (JW)	Finance Manager, PFCC's office
Samantha Bardsley	Minutes, PFCC's office

Apologies:

Pippa Brent-Isherwood (PBI)	Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, PFCC's office
Roger Hirst (RH)	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Fiona Henderson (FH)	Director of Continuous Improvement and Analytics, Essex Police
Richard Jones (RJ)	Finance, Essex Police

1. Introductions

1.1. JG welcomed all to the meeting, apologies were noted from those above

2. Minutes, Actions and Forward Plan

2.1. Minutes of the previous meeting

2.1.1. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved and agreed.

2.1.2. There were no matters arising

2.2. Action Log

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 20/23 | Future Crime Data Accuracy Reports
Due October
Remain Open |
| 25/23 | Disproportionality data in Use of Force/S&S paper
Due August
Remain Open |
| 27/23 | Victim Support paper
Included in this agenda
Close |
| 28/23 | PEEL AFI paper
Due December
Remain Open |
| 29/23 | Professionalism Action Plans
Due August - agreed to add an item to the forward plan for December agenda to provide an update
Closed |
| 30/23 | Resubmission of paper 8 – required for publication
outstanding; but in hand
Remain Open |
| 31/23 | Aggregate crime harm scores
outstanding; new date: August
Remain Open |
| 32/23 | ToR Circulation
Updated and circulated
Close |

2.3. Forward Plan

2.3.1. Professionalism/Casey Review Update to be added to December (as per action 29/23 above)

2.3.2. Transparency, Contracts and Tenders agreed to be added to the August agenda.

2.3.3. The Public Contact paper is listed twice, it was agreed that the October listing be removed and the paper expected in November

3. Finance

3.1. Monthly Finance Report

- 3.1.1. DM presented the month 3 finance report, the first full report of the financial year. This covered revenue, appropriations to/from earmarked reserves and revenue summary.
- 3.1.2. JP queried the uniform spend (£0.5m) and asked if it was a normal spend or unique, DM confirmed this was a one off for a new uniform and not normal standard replacements. AP confirmed this would include coat and trouser upgrades.
- 3.1.3. BJH spoke about the Police Uplift Program money and how we have forecast this coming in, the rules around this are complicated; in terms of what we plan we must be mindful the money is by no means guaranteed, and we must do a lot of work around recruitment/retention.
- 3.1.4. BJH commented on the state visits that happen twice a year, a case has been put forward to the Home Office for us to get agreed funding for this when a head of state comes through Stansted.
- 3.1.5. DM continued discussing the 2023/24 forecast strength, reserves, capital (noting that a £1m variance was good for this time of year), transport (which is seeing issues with the delay in vehicle ordering which is almost a year from ordering new vehicles to their delivery), estates and cash flow.
- 3.1.6. JP asked if DM had picked up the recent correspondence around POCA funds and a fraud issue around getting a portion of the POCA funds taken to the national fraud office, DM has Ch Insp Howard doing a piece of work on POCA and JG asked if JP could share this correspondence with DM.

Action 33/23

JP to share the POCA fraud correspondence with DM

- 3.1.7. JW asked, regarding the cash flow, is it possible for the forecast line to have the original as well as the current to see the comparison during the year. Confirmed this has previously been requested and is in hand.
- 3.1.8. JW asked, regarding the waterfall graph showing the projected actuals to the forecast outturn, could a second waterfall showing the budget to the forecast of outturn be completed.

Action 34/23

DM and JP to discuss if a second waterfall graph showing the budget to the forecast of outturn can be delivered.

3.2. Police Objective Analysis (POA) Report

3.2.1. DM presented the first Police Objective Analysis setting out Q1 with no surprises and everything as you would expect to see it.

3.2.2. JW noted training has reduced £4.2m this year compared to last which seemed significant. SJ advised this was net figures, so this reflects the income coming in for training not a reduction in spend on training, training is not being reduced. JP requested can we have a note added in future reporting by way of an asterisk etc please.

4. Insurance Report

4.1. DM presented the annual insurance report, key points included the probability of inflation affecting the new contracts estimating by around 10% but could vary between 5-20%. It was noted that the deductibles (excesses) have increased.

4.2. JP remarked that more than just the motor insurance is coming up in October, can we be sure that there won't be decision reports required for these. DM confirmed that there are several smaller policies coming up in October for under £50k in value.

Action 35/23

DM to check if any policies due for renewal require a decision report.

4.3. SH noted there is quite an increase in public liability claims, table 4 suggests these have almost doubled from the previous year, why is this? DM confirmed there has been an increase in claims and they are more complex and take longer to take to conclusion. BJH confirmed AP is looking into some of these at the Learning the Lessons Board to understand if learning can prevent future claims.

4.4. JP asked if Essex Police can claim the cost of fighting any claims where Essex Police is not at fault from the Home Office (where they relate to protest arrests) – AP was unaware if this had been considered and agreed to question this.

Action 36/23

AP to ascertain if the Home Office would pay for costs when fighting claims where Essex Police is not at fault (e.g. where they relate to protest arrests such as Just Stop Oil)

5. Performance Reports

5.1. Monthly Performance Report

5.1.1. MR presented the monthly performance report, there were no changes since the last report. Five of the twelve PFCC Priorities have been given a grade of 'Good', five have been given a grade of 'Adequate' and two have been given a grade of 'Requires Improvement', these being: 5 Improving support for victims of crime and 9 Improving safety on our roads.

Confidence remains higher than it was pre-Covid.

National Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) changed as regards Stalking & Harassment offences. The “principle crime rule” now applies, meaning that only the most serious crime is recorded (previously, Stalking & Harassment offences were recorded as well as the more serious offence). This has resulted in fewer Stalking & Harassment offences being recorded.

Theft is rising year on year but still below pre-Covid levels.

5.1.2. JG was really pleased to see the decrease in rural crime, still disappointing to see confidence in rural crime is down though.

5.1.3. JG asked in respect of the Domestic Abuse Coercive Control and Harassment and Stalking figures improving, it would be good to know if this is due to the new counting rules or the work that is being completed. MR advised the figures are a combination of re-recording and positive activity which has led to improvements. AP agreed good work is having an impact.

5.1.4. BJH referred to the Crime Tree Data, noting there are some real reductions in victimisation with 100's less victims whilst reporting is still being actively encouraged.

5.1.5. BJH talked about the death and serious injury on the roads element and how we are held to account on the output of Essex police, but it should be on the outcomes of the safer Essex roads partnerships. Enforcement plays a huge part, but where is the scrutiny and accountability for the partnerships on the work that the highways authority and others do around reducing death and serious injury on the roads. JG concurred and was pleased to see SERP (Safer Essex Roads Partnership) is getting an improved media profile.

5.1.6. JP asked for a comparison/scale line to be added to the graphs at the top of each section as on first glance it could appear that offence and solved rates are similar when this is not the case.

Action 37/23

MR to consider the best way to put scale into the charts showing crime offences and crime solved so it does not appear at first glance that they are similar.

5.1.7. SH asked could we have some comparison reporting on Priority 10 for the confidence interval. There should be around 18 months of data on this now that we could build into future reporting to give us some indication on the direction of travel.

Action 38/23

SH to e-mail MR with the details required for comparison reporting for Priority 10 so this can be developed by MR

5.2. Quarterly Performance Report / MSG Aspirations

5.2.1. MR presented the Quarterly Performance Report in its reimagined format covering each of the priorities and commentary from the LPA's on the We Will's.

5.2.2. JG passed on her thanks to MR, the team and Fiona for the new report, it makes a lot more sense and feedback has been positive. JP agreed but wondered if the We Will's would be better in an annex so summaries of each priority could be run through more easily.

5.2.3. SH agreed the report is looking much better; one example is on page 60 where it shows information we couldn't see previously. On collaboration it gives us audience figures by quarter and it shows a real peak on Q3 each year on audience numbers which has driven the annual figures. This raises the question what was happening in Q3 that isn't happening anymore as this is clearly the thing that is causing the downturn for 2022/23 as the peak is not there.

Action 39/23
MR to report back on what occurs in Q3 that drives the higher numbers of audience numbers on the Priority 12 Increasing collaboration graph.

Action 39a/23
It was agreed to add an action under 5.2 to consult with RH re separating the 'we will' updates from the main quarterly report. This would be added as action 39a/23 and owned by SH/JP.

5.3. Force Performance against National Crime and Policing Measures

5.3.1. MR presented the Force Performance against National Crime and Policing Measures. Essex Police is not a Home Office "Outlier" for any of the measures with outlier criteria in place, namely Homicide, Serious Violence and Neighbourhood Crime. Performance is otherwise improving or stable. This has not changed compared to last quarter.

5.3.2. SH noted that confidence has fallen for most demographics but not for other than white and not for victims, this is interesting as we have been trying to improve confidence for ethnic minorities and for victims which is clearly working and if we can roll this out to other demographics, we have a chance to really make a difference.

6. Balanced Scorecard

6.1. MR presented the Balanced Scorecard, of the 4 quadrants there have been 3 changes. Our People has been upgraded to 'good', How We Work has been upgraded to 'good' and Community Focus has been downgraded to 'requires improvement' due to deteriorating confidence levels and 101 performance within the Force Control Room (FCR). Keeping People Safe remains as 'adequate'.

6.2. AP noted that there is a lot of information here that is replicated from other reports. This report has been out for several years now as our internal method of looking at performance. We have asked FH to review and confirm if it is helpful, how does it speak to and complement, not duplicate, other reporting..

7. Firearms Licensing

- 7.1. RN presented the Firearms Licensing paper, providing an annual update on the performance of the Firearms, Shotguns and Explosives Licensing (FSEL) Department. It was noted that the forecast income showed best case scenario and could be misleading if published. Performance has improved on last year, when we were reliant on temporary certificates and as of last week there were only 7 individuals on a temporary certificate. Highlights included the changes following Keyham from IOPC and coroner recommendations. The key point that impacts us is additional checks which include social media checks which will be aligned with other intelligence areas. The other recommendation covered a lack of national training, Essex has however always sent firearms licensing colleagues to a course in West Yorkshire and CPD is completed.
- 7.2. JG praised that Essex FSEL have for the last 18 months conducted suicide prevention workshops with GPs and Adult safeguarding hubs.
- 7.3. BJH praised the work completed and the lack of temporary notices on issue.
- 7.4. BJH noted that although the team provide a source of income generation for Essex Police, at present the costs recovered by the NPCC fixed license fee do not cover the running costs of the department, a pattern which is replicated nationally.

Action 40/23

The report is to be amended before publishing with the removal of the fees section and the table on page 4.

8. Victim Support Paper

- 8.1. AW presented the victim support paper, due to data protection we do not refer all victims, Essex Police operate on a consent only basis for Victim Support Service (VSS) referrals as they are an independent charity. Referral rates have remained consistent all be it consistently low at around 25%.
- 8.2. SH noted the drop in referrals to VSS from 41,000 in 2019 to 28,000 in 2022 as significant, potentially covid had an impact but why has this not recovered since.

Action 41/23

AW to update the key on the graph on slide 3 of the presentation to provide clarity.

9. Policing Vision 2030

- 9.1. MR presented the Policing Vision 2030 paper identifying the plans and strategies that Essex Police and the PFCC have in place to support the Policing Vision 2030 and to identify any significant gaps. An overview of the 5 pillar approach was given, these pillars

consist of; Pillar 1: To help keep our communities safe. Pillar 2: To prevent crime and criminality. Pillar 3: To respond effectively to all appropriate demand and bring perpetrators to justice. Pillar 4: To develop and inspire our workforce and evolve our culture. Pillar 5: To embed a culture of continuous improvement and innovation in policing.

9.2. JP queried if under Pillar 5 there was any work that could be done around finance and ensuring budget holders have the right training and support to properly equip them to deal with these times of austerity. DM confirmed that budget holder training was something that needed improving on and that there is a new member of staff in post that has this within their portfolio.

10. Approval for publishing of documents

It was agreed that the papers for publishing would be 3i, 3ii, 5i, 5ii, 5iii, 6, 7 (to be reviewed prior to publication), 8 (to be reviewed prior to publication) and 9.

11. Any Other Business

SH raised issues with the accessibility of some of the papers not being completed in the template font of Arial 12.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 13:00 hours

Future meeting dates

- Wednesday 30 August 2023 10.30
- Monday 2 October 2023 14.00
- Thursday 26 October 2023 14.00