

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

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1. Recommendations

The Strategic Board is asked to note the Force Growth Programme 2023/24 position provided within this report. No specific recommendations are made at this time.

2. Executive Summary

The Police Uplift Programme (PUP) ended in 2022/23, meaning this year we return to more limited growth based on force budgeting and any potential precept uplift. The force actively monitors progress of the police office uplift programme through Chief Officer oversight.

The force officer headcount as of 30th September 2023 was 3813, which is 48 higher than minimum headcount requirement of 3765 and +3 against the increased headcount requirement of 3810 for PUP. For information, on top of the additional recruitment of +45, the force has requested and had confirmation of an additional 10 to be achieved by 31st March 2024. This will result in a headcount requirement of 3820 (+55 on top of the maintenance level of 3765) for the 31st March 2024. The table at section 14.1 in this report highlights the good progress being maintained, with the force on course to meet its recruitment ambitions.

An increase of 31.61 staff posts of largely precept and some force funded new growth was agreed for 2023/24, having been through extraordinary budget setting at SCCB (Strategic Change and Coordination Board) on 3rd October 2022, Chief Office Group (COG) on 21st December 2022, and then scrutinised at the Police, Fire and Crime Panel on 7th February 2023.

These posts have now been built on SAP and are actively being recruited to. Given the limited number of growth posts this year, recruitment is being progressed by HR (Human Resources) as part of their business as usual, and they are providing data to produce this quarterly progress report.

3. Background (to include context, need, current Work and Performance, etc)

The 2023/24 investment recommendations put forward by Essex Police were devised to ensure that the Force is fully supported by specialist staff teams, working with, and supporting areas that have seen an increased workload, particularly in relation to the previous years' growth. The table below sets out the finalised growth allocation.

Table 1 – staff investment

Command	Heading	FTE
Corporate Finance	Corporate Finance Restructure	3.0
OPC (Operational Policing Command)	RMU Post – Public Holiday Accruals	1.0
Estates / Media / Other	Estates Transformation*	14.0
Business Services	Finance Services Growth	1.0
HR	Internal Medical Assessments	2.0
C&PP (Crime and Public Protection)	Mental Health Team	3.0
Business Services	Secretarial Team	2.0
Continuous Improvement & Analytics	Continuous Improvement Growth	1.0
OPC	Roads Policing (Spend to Save)	4.6
	TOTAL	31.6

* The Estates Transformation growth is spread across several departments, however all new growth in those areas is marked for supporting estates work.

Post creation took place in March 2023, and recruitment for some posts went live on 1st April 2023. All posts are initially built as non-established, automatically converting to established on the 1st of each planned implementation month. The current implementation timeline is as follows:

Table 2 – implementation timeline

Command	Post	FTE	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23
Corporate Finance	Head of Financial Strategy	1.0						1			
Corporate Finance	Management Accountant	1.0						1			
Corporate Finance	Accounting Technician	1.0						1			
IT (Estates)	IT Networks Technical Lead	1.0	1								
IT (Estates)	Networks Engineer	1.0	1								
Business Services (Estates)	Facilities Assistant Team Leader	1.0	1								
Business Services (Estates)	Facilities Assistant	2.0	2								
Business Services (Estates)	7F Senior Category Manager	1.0	1								
Seven Forces (Estates)	7F Vetting Decision Maker	1.0	1								
Media (Estates)	Estates Change Senior Comms Officer	1.0	1								
Media (Estates)	Estates Change Support Officer	1.0	1								
Estates	Deputy Head of Estates	1.0	1								
Estates	Estates Services Exec Assistant	1.0	1								
Estates	Space Planning Manager	1.0	1								
Estates	Space Planning Officer	1.0	1								
Estates	Senior Project Manager	1.0	1								
Business Services	Business Services Assistant (Finance)	1.0				1					
HR	Practice Nurse Team Leader	1.0				1					
HR	Practice Nurse	1.0				1					
C&PP	Mental Health Team Supervisor	1.0				1					
C&PP	Mental Health Liason Officer	1.0				1					
C&PP	Mental Health Team Administrator	1.0				1					
Cont. Improvement & Analytics	Internal Governance Officer	1.0				1					
Business Services	Business Services Team Leader (Secretariat)	1.0				1					
Business Services	Business Services Assistant (Secretariat)	1.0				1					
RMU	Duties Administrator	1.0							1		
Roads Policing	Case Management Officers	1.0	1								
Roads Policing	Prosecution Support Officer	3.0	3								
Roads Policing	Roads Collision Records Team Leader	0.61	0.61								
	TOTAL	31.61	18.61	0	0	9	0	3	1	0	0

Key
Recruited and In Post
Recruited and Awaiting Posting
Awaiting Readvertisement
Advert/Interview Currently Live

So far, 22.61 posts have been filled, a further 7 posts have successful candidates awaiting posting.

The two estates team posts which have not been filled to date but will be subject to external advertisement again soon. These posts are specialist in nature and to date, despite two internal adverts and one external, they have not attracted applications. The job descriptions have been reviewed by the Estates Team and updated to reflect less specialist requirements with a view to attracting suitable candidates.

4. Options and analysis (to include proposals, benefits, alternatives)

No options are being presented to the board for consideration at this time.

5. Risks and Mitigations

The primary risk to the Force Growth Programme is an inability to complete the growth to the identified roles within the financial year (ending 31 March 2024).

To mitigate against this risk, oversight of progression of growth is undertaken on a bi-monthly basis through the Efficiency and Savings and Growth Board, chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable, supported by the Resource Deployment Meeting, chaired by the Assistant Chief Officer of Human Resources, which seeks to balance business as usual resourcing priorities against those of the Force Growth Programme, via a monthly report produced by HR Org Management into growth recruitment progress.

6. Links to the Police and Crime Plan

The Force Growth Programme supports all the priorities outlined in the PFCC's Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024, in particular Priority 1 "Further investment in crime prevention" through the maintaining of growth levels in key posts created. Priority 11 "supporting our officers and staff", is underpinned through much of the 2023/24 growth investment in support staff posts, with the focus of the growth this year being to put in place additional support for key areas across the Force after three years of substantial establishment increases.

7. Financial Implications

With the movement of the Force Growth Programme into BAU (Business as Usual) for the Force, this element has been removed from Efficiency and Savings Board reporting. The financial costs and implications of the Growth Programme, including PUP and staff growth posts, continue to be monitored through Corporate Finance and are included in the Monthly Monitoring Report provided for COG and PR&SB (detailed in Police Officer Pay lines with any relevant PUP commentary and similarly in Police Staff Pay lines).

The force has achieved the PUP requirement of +45 as of 30th September 2023, and as shown at 14.1 below, is projected to achieve the +55 position as referenced in the executive summary, which will ensure the force receives the additional funding as part of PUP.

8. Legal Implications

There are no currently identified legal issues relating to force growth. No legal advice was sought in the production of this report.

9. Staffing Implications

Any issues which may arise are escalated to and reported upon at the Efficiency and Savings and Force Growth Board as a business-as-usual process, supported by the Resource Deployment Meeting and decisions on the prioritisation, allocation, and movement of resources across the organisation.

10. Equality and Diversity Implications

Each strand of recruitment is co-ordinated and supported through Human Resources (HR) to ensure fair and impartial selection processes are adopted.

The Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy forms an underpinning consideration throughout the management and progression of the growth programme, and activity undertaken in support of it.

11. Police Operational Implications

There are not currently any force wide issues affecting recruitment and deployment into growth posts.

12. Governance Boards

As previously mentioned within this report force growth is governed and overseen by the Efficiency and Savings and Force Growth Board on a bi-monthly basis, chaired by the DCC. This is supported by the Resource Deployment Meeting, which is held monthly and is chaired by the Assistant Chief Officer of Human Resources.

Further oversight is also provided through consideration of Force Growth matters at Chief Officer Group (COG) as required.

13. Future Plans (long-term strategic direction)

As we exit a period of large growth funded by the Home Office, any sustained future growth will rely on precept uplift and force funded growth through efficiency savings. This will be subject to wider budgetary pressures, the need to minimise any funding gap that may arise/exist, and the desire to maintain a balanced budget in future years.

14. List of background papers and appendices

14.1 Essex Police Recruitment Plan 2023/24

(Confirmed position up to 30 September 2023, projections up to 31 March 2024)

	2023/24											
Police	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Previous Month End Str FTE	3743.13	3720.06	3702.29	3722.30	3705.28	3672.79	3742.17	3721.17	3699.17	3744.17	3722.17	3702.17
Projected Leavers	26.00	24.00	22.63	20.32	30.48	23.37	23.00	23.00	23.00	23.00	23.00	23.00
Total Projected Joiners			39.00			87.00			66.00			75.00
Projected Transfers In / Returners	3.00	6.00	2.00	4.00	0.00	7.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00
Projected Month End Str FTE	3720.06	3702.29	3722.30	3705.28	3672.79	3742.17	3721.17	3699.17	3744.17	3722.17	3702.17	3755.17
Establishment	3755.00	3755.00	3755.00	3755.00	3755.00	3755.00	3755.00	3755.00	3755.00	3755.00	3755.00	3755.00
Variance	-34.94	-52.71	-32.70	-49.72	-82.21	-12.83	-33.83	-55.83	-10.83	-32.83	-52.83	0.17
Projected Uplift Headcount	3793	3775	3793	3774	3742	3813	3792	3770	3815	3793	3772	3825
Variance against Uplift Requirement (3765)	28	10	28	9	-23	48	27	5	50	28	7	60