

## Performance and Resources Scrutiny Programme 2024

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

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| <b>Title of Report:</b>  | <b>Specials Recruitment – Half Yearly Report</b>             |
| <b>Agenda Number:</b>  | <b>7.0</b>   |
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| <b>Chief Officer</b>   | <b>ACC Andy Mariner</b>                                      |
| <b>Date Paper was Written</b>  | <b>10<sup>th</sup> November 2023</b>                         |
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| <b>Date of Meeting:</b>  | <b>4<sup>th</sup> January 2024</b>                           |
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| <b>COG meeting date / date of approval (Please indicate whether paper presented to COG or not)</b> | <b>COG - 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023</b>                   |

#### 1.0 **Purpose of Report**

Half Yearly update on recruitment under the Special Constabulary Development Programme. This report covers the 6-month period from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023.

#### 2.0 **Recommendations**

No recommendations.

#### 3.0 **Executive Summary**

This paper reports on key deliveries against the below from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 as well as future areas of focus:

- Recruitment, Training and Retention

- Reward and Recognition
- Media Opportunities
- Employer Supported Policing
- Community Special Constables
- Performance

To give some national context, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) reports significant drops in volunteering across all sectors, accelerating after COVID, coinciding with the cost-of-living crisis. Only 16% of adults surveyed in 2022 volunteer at least once a month, which is a 28% reduction from the 2018 position, where 22% of adults surveyed, volunteered at least once a month.

The national position around Special Constables follows a similar trajectory, with a 33% reduction in headcount, over a similar period of 2018 – 2022 with a reduction from 12,000 to 8,000 nationally. In Essex since Jan 2018, we have had a 31% reduction in headcount, now sitting at 284. Essex is consistent with the national decline in Volunteering.

The current Special Constabulary headcount is at 284, we have seen a steady decline since 2021. However, in the last three months Aug-Oct we have stabilised, increasing from a headcount of 281 to 284. Albeit the growth is small, this is the first period since 2021 where we have bucked the declining trend.

#### **4.0 Introduction**

Essex Police remains the second largest Special Constabulary in England and Wales, behind only the Metropolitan Police. Data supplied by the Federation in July 2023, shows that Essex were second largest with West Midlands and Avon & Somerset forces closely behind. We continue to support other forces in sharing best practices and leading the way for ensuring our special constables are supported and valued. Our Employer Supported Policing Co-ordinator, Les Hawkins, was tasked by ESP National Chief Officer, ACC Smith, to review and propose new national ESP strategies. These have now been adopted. Essex has registered most of the ESP businesses nationally in the last 6 months and Les Hawkins has provided ESP best practice workshops for Derbyshire Police, Thames Valley Police, and “All Wales” (4 forces).

#### **5.0 Current Work and Performance**

##### **5.1 Recruitment, Training and Retention**

The vision is to now enter the Special Constabulary back into a period of sustained growth, led by C/Supt Hammett.

Recruitment Events are mainly physical, in person events however there are virtual interviews offered, once a month, to allow more flexibility on interview times.

The SC to PC scheme is up and running smoothly, and there is a one-year review which involves reporting back to the College of Policing to ensure the necessary requirements are being met.

A new Specials Recruitment Focus Group was formed in this period. Made up of special constables, police staff and officers, the aim of the group was to look at what attracted applicants to this volunteer role, and what made them stay. The initial meeting was facilitated to draw on experience and skills to better recruit and retain special constables. This group will also consider the research that came from the National Benchmarking reports concerning recruitment and retention of specials. As a result of this initial meeting several ideas were progressed including:

- PFCC funding received to support recruitment material.
- Outreach recruitment kits created for special constable teams; this will lead to more frequent and targeted recruitment activity.
- A new Specials Recruitment Task Force headed by T/S/Sgt Damian Walters to coordinate activity in an effective manner. This will be utilising the skills of T/S/Sgt Walters who is CEO of a large, national company – The British Institute of Kitchen, Bedroom & Bathroom Installation (BiKBBI).
- Speak to a Special – available on EP website for applicants to learn more.
- Ride A Longs – easier access and encourage to keep applicants warm in pipeline and better understand the role.
- Specials Recruitment Buddies – introduced to support through pipeline, training, and initial months on district.
- A revised way of working with the Media Department, where we can work on campaigns work together, to build capacity.
- Looking to advertise specials in Essex through different forums, such as Indeed and LinkedIn.

There are several Special Constable Recruitment Ambassadors who assist with interviewing candidates as well as attending and organising events to promote our special constabulary. Recruitment is working closely with the new Special Constabulary Recruitment Taskforce to ensure their work is joined up and they support each other in their aims of increasing applications to join the special constabulary as well as increase retention of those already with Essex Police.

- Essex Police received 161 applications on Success Factors between 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023 – 30<sup>th</sup> October. This is a decrease of 26 applications (14%) on the previous 6-month period.
- From the 161 Success Factors applications, 20 were BAME applicants (12.42%) compared to 31 applications (12.6% of total applications), from the same period of the previous year 2022, leading to a small percentage decrease.
- From the 161 Success Factors applications, 48 applicants identified as female (29.81%), compared to 74 (30.08% of all applications), from the same period in 2022, leading to a small percentage decrease.
- 5 intakes started in this period with 22 new officers.
- 4 intakes were cancelled in this period.
- Scheduled for 5 more Intakes, by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, with a potential for 82 more applicants to start.
- There were 2 Attestations in this period with 8 new officers.
- Since January 2023, special constables can join Essex Federation free of charge. As of July, 75% of the command had signed up.

The Recruitment Team has attended many in person events during the past 6 months. Some events attended in this period included a talk to Public Services students at Harlow College, virtual Special Constable Recruitment Information events (RIE), Writtle University College freshers fair, Chelmsford CVS Wellbeing festival, Chelmsford College Progression Fair, multiple college fairs, Job Centre, and career events. We also have a session booked with ARU policing degree students to talk about the opportunity of becoming a Special Constable while studying.

The next RIE is booked for the 6<sup>th</sup> of December and will be virtual as a trial. In the last period, the Recruitment Team hosted three physical RIEs at Essex Police College on 21<sup>st</sup> June, 30<sup>th</sup> August, and 14<sup>th</sup> October. The events went well and supported applications during this period; however sign ups in general were considerably lower than the previous 6 months. A survey submitted, after the October RIE, received positive feedback which has assisted with planning future events, but we also learnt more about why people were unable to attend and have used this to influence decisions on how we organise future events.

## **5.2 Reward and Recognition**

- Due to smaller intakes of students, there is an opportunity, to use the Attestation to celebrate good work. At October's Attestation, 16 special constables and 1 regular officer were recognised for 5-year service, completion of supervisor Professional Development Plans, and exceptional work. Many of these recognised were career specials and plans are now in place to invite further specials to December's ceremony.
- We have introduced a new Gold Challenge Coin to recognise exceptional contribution. Specials can be nominated via the Special Command and those supported are invited along to the Attestation, with their family to be presented. Nine specials and one regular officer were presented with coins and certificates at October's Attestation, including one awarded for retirement after long service.
- We continue to recognise our special constables that have completed their 3- and 5-year service by rewarding them with a Special Constabulary Pin Badge. Those specials reaching 5 years are now invited to attend Attestations with their family to be presented with the pin badge and certificate.
- The National Lord Ferrers Awards in October saw S/Supt Howard Rayner shortlisted for Exceptional Contribution to Policing. In addition, he received a letter of congratulations from the Minister for Crime, Policing and Fire, Rt. Hon Chris Philp MP. This event also saw Essex Employee Supported Policing (ESP) company, The British Institute of Kitchen, Bedroom & Bathroom Installation (BiKBBI), shortlisted for the ESP Award. The company's CEO and Basildon special constable, Damian Walters, attended the ceremony to represent Essex.
- Essex Police Force Awards in October saw 3 special constables shortlisted for Special Constable of the Year. They were S/Sgt Simon Jesse, Witham Community Special Constable (CSC) S/Insp Kelly Bingham, Basildon, and S/Insp Sam Wright from Southend who was the winner. Les Hawkins, ESP/CSC Coordinator, was shortlisted for the Partnership Award, recognising his significant

contribution to partnership working through both ESP and CSC schemes. Jenny Brouard, who was CIP Commander, at the time was shortlisted for the Diversity Award recognising her key role as the Menopause Network chair.

- The Women's Leadership and Development Forum held an event in October, to celebrate all officers, staff, and volunteers, nominated for British Association for Women in policing (BAWP). Three members of the CIP Team were nominated; Jenny Brouard, CIP Commander, was nominated for Leadership, Maria Rawlings, for Police Staff of the Year for her work with Special Constabulary, and Sarah Wright, CIP Development Manager for her Community work.

### **5.3 Media Attraction**

In this half yearly report we continue to maximise social media coverage around several events in which to gain a positive impact on recruitment figures. Recruitment Information Events are promoted via the Essex Police website to increase numbers and social media content has been issued around specific special related stories as highlighted below: -

- In June, National Volunteers Week, was promoted with stories to celebrate Witham Community Special Constables (CSC) 5-year anniversary event, as well as highlighting some of the special operations, how specials were keeping the roads safe, a snapshot of what specials do and the firm support there is for the contribution they make.
- During the Summer, stories included the fundraising by Southend specials for a local defibrillator, in support of a colleague. In recognition of their efforts, the Southend specials were honoured with a plaque. Another story focused on the Witham CSC's work and their delight at the town's new life saving equipment.
- In September, the Business Time Essex magazine featured a free full-page article about Essex Specials and Employee Supported Policing. Funding was provided for future adverts within their Business Directory.
- Recently we have seen external coverage, including BBC Essex News, around the recognition of Witham CSC, S/Sgt Simon Jesse, for his outstanding community work by the Essex High Sheriff. There has also been a further story around the Southend Specials completing a 100 mile walk in October for Cancer Research.
- Future stories include a feature around S/Supt Howard Rayner, who celebrates 40 years of volunteering on 23<sup>rd</sup> November. S/Supt Rayner was also recognised and short listed in the National Lord Ferrers Awards in October for Lifetime Achievement. This will be recognised on 18<sup>th</sup> December at the Specials Attestation and there will be an internal Focus On article as well as external media.
- Media adapted one of the recent videos promoting the #myotherlife campaign and the CSC profile. This is now being used, as part of the effort, to focus on CSC recruitment.

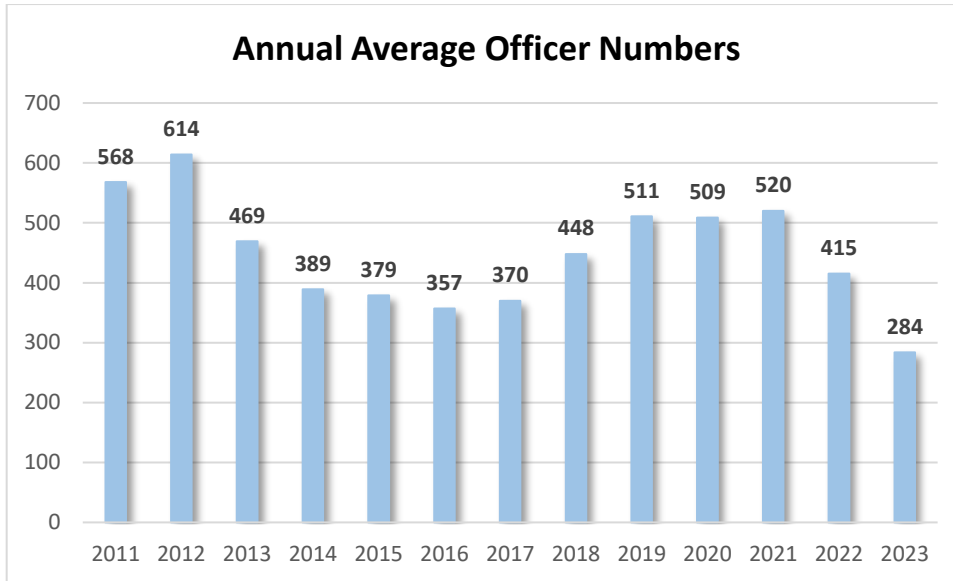
- Media are planning for the new We Value Difference 3 campaign and specials will feature as part of this plan with further activity incorporated to promote recruitment.
- Facebook continues to be the highest media source for Special applications. Media are swapping over the providers for Twitter Licences in December. Special Constabulary are to be allocated 6 licences to cover the LPA teams as well as recruitment and training school. Two of the Witham CSC's will retain their own accounts due to a large following. The new licences will allow users to update both Specials Twitter as well as district Facebook pages with specials related activity.
- We are looking to revise the 'My Other Life' campaign, we could then release this at cost neutral and hopefully increase interest. This will see the Specials Recruitment Team working on the campaign, with media sign off. Opposed to media owning all the work. This collaboration is exciting and should lead to more capacity and reach across our social media platforms.

### 5.3 **Recruitment Data from 1<sup>st</sup> Apr 2016 to Current Date**

The table below compares the recruitment and exits of the current year with the previous 6 years. The number of Specials who resign to become a regular officer has increased from a position of 26.6% in March 2017 to 39.3% during 2022/23 which is a success as part of the officer uplift programme. Please note that 2023/2024 figures are partial and represent data from 1st April 2023 – 31st October 2023.

| Year               | Joiner     | Exits        | (No. of leavers who have joined regulars) | % of leavers who have become a regular |
|--------------------|------------|--------------|---|--|
| 2016/17            | 87         | 105          | 28  | (26.6%)                                |
| 2017/18            | 180        | 116          | 38  | (32.7%)                                |
| 2018/19            | 215        | 127          | 49  | (38.5%)                                |
| 2019/20            | 163        | 163          | 77  | (47.2%)                                |
| 2020/21            | 167        | 137          | 40  | (29.2%)                                |
| 2021/22            | 82         | 146          | 42  | (28.8%)                                |
| 2022/23            | 31         | 178          | 70  | (39.3%)                                |
| 2023/24            | 27         | 47           | 6   | (12.8%)                                |
| <b>Grand Total</b> | <b>952</b> | <b>1,019</b> | <b>350</b>                                | <b>(34.4%)</b>                         |

The above table identifies the SC Command as a significant pipeline to the recruitment of PCs, both within Essex Police and wider, with 350 recruits having started their policing journey as a Special.



*Please note that the above graph shows Dutysheet data for part of 2023 – 1 January to 1 November inclusive.*

#### **5.4 Employer Supported Policing and Community Special Constables**

##### **Employer Supported Policing (ESP)**

- 76 businesses (including Essex Police), in the last 6 months, support 74 officers in the Employer Supported Policing scheme which is an increase of 8 businesses from the previous period. Of these 74 officers, 34 are employed by Essex Police in other roles.
- 183 Employer Supported Policing duties have resulted in 1344 hours of policing in this period which is a decrease of 5% for duties and an increase of 2.8% for hours worked on the previous half.
- Essex continues to lead nationally with ESP. In the last six months, 15 businesses have been registered onto the ESP scheme. Les Hawkins, ESP Coordinator, has registered 8 of these (53%). These include businesses such as BAE Systems, Ordnance Survey and McLaren. Les Hawkins was recently asked by the ESP National Chief Officer Lead, ACC Deb Smith, Wiltshire Police, to review and propose the three national ESP strategies for the next year. The three strategies proposed were accepted by ACC Smith, as the national ESP Strategy for the next 12 months.
- Essex Police is regularly approached for ESP advice and support from other forces. Les Hawkins has recently provided ESP and Duty Sheet best practice workshops to Derbyshire Police, Thames Valley Police and 'All Wales's (4 forces).
- Currently in various stages of negotiation with over 90 businesses – some initial and others at the stage of final decisions, including Sainsbury's, Vodafone, and Microsoft.

- Essex Chambers of Commerce continue to plan for future events and Les Hawkins attends many of their networking events to promote ESP including the recent Chambers Festival of Business.

### **Community Special Constables (CSC):**

- We have 10 active Community Special Constables officers covering 7 councils. We have growth in the pipeline including 4 in post foundation training and 6 awaiting start dates.
- Community Special Constables have worked 161 duties resulting in 1,131 hours. This is a decrease of 18% duties and a decrease of 11% hours on the previous period.
- In this period, two of our CSCs have retired from specials.
- There have been several recruitment events focused on recruiting CSCs. This includes marketing and advertising workshops hosted by the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) to provide councils with no cost tools to promote the scheme in their areas. We have recently purchased some CSC specific recruiting material that has already been used at events around the county.
- Les Hawkins meets regularly with the CSCs around the county where the team share best practices and ideas around CSC recruitment.

The combined ESP and CSC hours account for 6.2% of all Specials hours (4% last period) and 5.5% of all Specials duties in this period. (3.8 last period)

## **5.5 Performance**

- 284 officers (as of 1 November 2023);
- 14 Ethnic Minority officers (4.95% of the establishment 30 September 2023);
- Delivered 39,947 hours of which 31,515 were operational hours. This is equivalent to the working time provided by 23.4 full time officers at a cost of £1.22m during this half year (or 47 full time officers a year at a cost of £2.44m). Recognising the cost to Essex Police of supporting the Special Constabulary volunteers, the efficiency saving of deploying SCs instead of PCs, during this period was £622,621.
- 76 businesses (including Essex Police) and 74 officers who now benefit from the ESP scheme.
- 10 Community Special Constables actively covering 7 parishes with a further 10 CSCs in the pipeline.

Over the period 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023, Specials have contributed a total of 39,947 hours compared to 49,763 hours in the previous period. This is a 38.2% decrease on the same period in 2022, where 64,604 hours were contributed by 400 special constables.

The last 6 months has seen 31,515 operational hours contributed, a decrease of 20.7% compared to operational hours worked the previous 6 months. During the



same 6-month period in 2022, 51,648 operational hours and a total of 64,604 hours were contributed.

The hours worked by the Special Constabulary during this 6-month period is equivalent to the working time provided by 23.4 full time officers at a cost of £1.22m during this period (or 47 full time officers a year at a cost of £2.44m). Recognising the cost to Essex Police of supporting the Special Constabulary volunteers, the efficiency saving of deploying SCs instead of PCs, during this period was £622,621.

During 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023, there were, on average a command of 289 special constables. During this period, 60% of special constables have volunteered at least 16 hours each month, the minimum number of hours expected.

In addition, the 289 Specials have averaged 23 hours each per month compared to the last 6-month period when 333 Specials averaged 25 hours each. This is a decrease of 13.2% on the equivalent period in 2022, when 399 Specials averaged 26.5 hours per officer.

During this 6-month period in 2019/2020, 516 Specials averaged 32.2 hours each month.

#### **Non-Operational and Service Exit:**

45 leavers represent a decrease of 18 (28.6%) from the previous 6-month period and a decrease of 61 (57.5%) from the same period in 2022.

- 5 for Essex regulars.
- 1 for Other Force Regs.
- 1 for Career Change - not compatible to role of special.
- 2 retired.
- 2 Other - historical resignations - not engaged.
- 9 due to a change in personal circumstances.
- 1 lost interest.
- 1 for medical reasons.
- 1 moving away.
- 2 due to other personal reasons.
- 15 for work/life balance.
- 4 resigned during training - could no longer commit.
- 1 terminated - resigned whilst under investigation.

We currently have 43 specials (16.9%) who are currently non-operational or in a leave of absence (data as of 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023).

The team continues to be part of the LPSU Strategic Co-ordination Group to look at the mobilisation of LPSU resources delivering a partnership approach across different geographical locations throughout Essex. Our special constables played an integral part of Operation Stronghold, 21<sup>st</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> October, a weeklong operation of intensification focusing on night-time patrols and engagement.

During this period, 174 special constables performed 335 duties with 1,605 operational hours contributed including 756 high visibility hours, this demonstrates the specials continue to be a receptive and engaged group. Specials have also been supporting Operation Community, monthly days of action across the force, including high visibility patrols targeting Anti-Social Behaviour and patrolling Operation Grip hotspot areas. All these events have continued to support community engagement and provide crime prevention advice along with supporting their regular colleagues.

The Specials continue to co-ordinate support within their districts for Operation Nightshade - Weekends of Action. The aim is to reduce/prevent High Harm offences and improve outcomes. The 3 LPA S/Supts have been tasked with providing one LPA Operation Nightshade operation each month focusing on a different district. They will assist and add value, covering foot patrols, public reassurance, visibility in High Harm areas, dealing with outstanding High Harm suspects and STORM incidents, warrants, CBO breaches, etc.

The Specials Command Team continues to support its regular colleagues with successful deployments and supporting their colleagues with operations such as the King's Coronation on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> May and the arrival of the President of the United States in July.

## **5.6 Operational Deliverables**

- Special Takeover Days - continue to support our Regular Colleagues to focus on case progression, victim contacts, online training and ANPR duties. In this period Special Constables have supported in Southend, Thurrock, Basildon, Colchester, and Chelmsford.
- Op Community – monthly days of actions across the force including High Visibility Patrols targeting ASB and patrolling Op Grip hotspot areas.
- Op Nightshade – continue to support High Harm shifts and activity. Recent activity has seen Op Grip patrols as well as warrant operations such as Op Zeugma in Southend. Specials have arrested, assisted, or attempted to arrest 1,206 individuals and completed 88 positive stop searches. Each LPA has been tasked to provide a special led operation each month.
- Op Golden Orb – in May, saw specials being utilised for the preparation and coronation of HRH King Charles.
- National Volunteers Week - 1<sup>st</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> June, saw 69 specials complete duties including pro-active operations including Op Eagle, Op Vision, and Op Talbot across the county.
- Op Community – High Visibility patrols targeting ASB and patrolling Op Grip area.
- Op Valance – July saw specials supporting Stansted Airport with the arrival and departure of the President of the United States. 15 specials gave their time which included searches, transport, and High Visibility Patrols.

- Op Grip patrols are often incorporated into other operations such as Nightshade and Community. In October, Southend specials undertook an Op Grip duty during the evening, on bicycles, covering Gunners Park and surrounding areas. They were able to provide reassurance and interact with members of the public. They also gained intelligence regarding a serious incident which took place the previous week, recording this through the intelligence system, as well as undertaking public engagement on route.

## **6.0 Implications (Issues)**

The greatest risks to the continued growth of the special constabulary remains the recruitment of regular officers and the current cost of living.

- 1) Exit of Specials who because of change of circumstances due to the continued impact of the pandemic on private and self-employed businesses and the need to make difficult lifestyle changes.
- 2) Cost of living in which there has been an increase in pricing to Petrol, Mortgages, Parking, Food, Gas and Electricity.
- 3) Increased conversion rate of specials to regular which is assisting in the officer uplift priority.
- 4) Media produced a bespoke Special Constabulary #myotherlife campaign in October 2022; however, there needs to be a continued focus from Media to recruit. Areas of focus should be especially around career specials and Community Special Constables which is in line with the PFCC Police and Crime Plan. Our weekly applications continue to be lower than at their height in 2019-2020 when we had a pro-active bespoke media campaign.

## **6.1 Links to Police and Crime Plan Priorities**

The Police and Crime Plan 2021-24 states that the PFCC will '*boost community volunteering, encourage the Active Citizen Programme and grow the police family – increasing the Special Constabulary, with a Special Constable in every community*'.

While the Special Constabulary had grown significantly since April 2016, we have now seen a large decrease in numbers. This is set within the context of a significant reduction in numbers of specials nationally and our active recruitment of regular officers. There are special constables aligned to each of the Community Policing Teams. The Community Special Constables scheme continues to promote the role both with local councils and focused recruitment. The Active Citizen programme has however remained more stable around numbers, not following such a declining trajectory.

## **6.2 Demand**

The impact on demand is best measured through the contribution of performance and operational hours. The improvements in operational performance are described in section 5.6.

**6.3 Risks/Mitigation**

The following red risks are identified on the force risk register and the action being taken to mitigate these risks is detailed in section 5. This risk is led by C/Supt Hammett and will be governed through the Special Constabulary Review Board.

| URN  | Score    | Risk   | Rationale   |
|------|----------|--|---|
| 1196 | 40 - Red | Unable to meet the Special Constabulary establishment target due to Force recruitment and other factors. | There continues to be a successful pathway for SCs to become a PC and this is expected to continue in 23/24 and beyond. |

**6.4 Equality and/or Human Rights Implications**

We are looking at the number of female applications we are receiving in comparison to before the pandemic.

2019 - 346 female applicants, 35% of overall application numbers

2020 - 312 female applicants, 31% of overall application numbers

2021 - 217 female applicants, 35% of overall application numbers

2022 - 124 female applicants, 31.47% of overall application numbers

2023 – 93 female applicants, 32.17% of overall application numbers

(This is based on Success Factors applications and not including Quick Apply.)

S/Insp Samantha Wright sits on the Women’s Leadership and Development Forum (WLDF) as a Special Champion, along with CIP Commander, Sarah Wright, who is an executive member and Reward and Recognitions SPOC.

Maria Rawlings, Specials Coordinator, is an executive member of the HELP Forum as is S/Insp Martyn Nichols for the Disability Network. S/Superintendent Leon Dias is a HeForShe Ambassador. Joe Belkaid, Specials Coordinator, is a Unison Representative.

We are working with the Federation to create opportunities for special constables to sit on the Essex Federation Council. Jenny Brouard, CIP Commander at the time, was shortlisted in the Force Awards for her work as Chair of the Menopause Network.

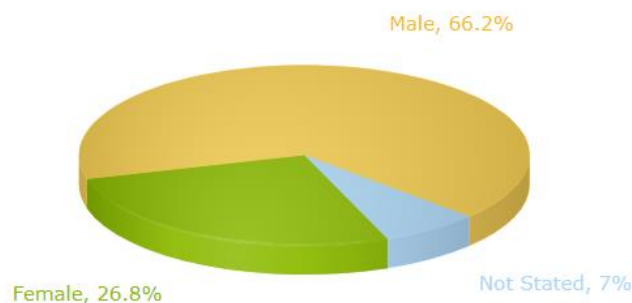
The WLDF Special Champion, S/Insp Sam Wright, has continued to promote diversity within OPC. This has seen the introduction of official OPC secondments via Develop You. At the Force Awards in October, two female S/Insp were shortlisted as special constable of the year, with S/Insp Sam Wright winning the award.

The recent Specials Promotion Boards offered reasonable adjustments which were taken up by 2 specials who then went on to successfully gain promotion. A small

number of specials have taken advantage of the new support available for neurodiversity conditions, such as Dyslexia, since it was introduced last year. Recruitment continues to work closely with Positive Action, HR Innovation, and the new Specials Recruitment Task Force, around a variety of workstreams including the new Buddy Scheme for Specials as well as training for Recruitment Ambassadors. Some of the teams are Recruitment Buddies for regulars and specials or are Retention Buddies for officers and staff.

### **Special Constabulary Gender Breakdown:**

**Force Gender Breakdown**  
(Click to slice out or rotate)



*(Duty sheet, 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023)*

### **6.5 Health and Safety Implications**

There are no specific health and safety implications in this paper.

### **7.0 Consultation/Engagement**

- Pru Kingham – Media
- Chris Gliddon – Learning and Development
- Sam Dawes - Specials Recruitment Delivery Manager
- Les Hawkins – Supported Policing Champion

### **8.0 Actions for Improvement**

The action taken to sustain recruitment over the last quarter has been summarised in section 5 above.

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

#### **Awards and Recognition:**

- We have introduced a new Gold Challenge Coin to recognise exceptional contribution. Specials can be nominated via the Special Command and those are supported, are invited along to the Attestation, with their family, to be presented.

- We continue to recognise our special constables that have completed their 3 - and 5-year service by rewarding them with a Special Constabulary Pin Badge. Those specials reaching 5 years are now invited to attend Attestations with their family to be presented with the pin badge and certificate.
- We continue to work with our Special Command Team and our Regular Colleagues to ensure they send through all good work which they have recognised by our special constables in which we can ensure is recognised through the Chief Constable's Blog, letter of thanks or commendation. There is a new section on the Specials SharePoint page where thanks can be posted.
- Plans to recognise S/Supt Howard Rayner's, 40-year anniversary and shortlisting of National Lord Ferrers Award for Lifetime Achievement. This will be via the December Attestation along with Howard's family. At February's Attestation we will be recognising SC Martin Hall, who has completed 35 years' service.
- Plans to celebrate S/Sgt Simon Jesse's recognition by the Essex High Sheriff for his service to the community via the December Attestation.
- Work is progressing to submit several Chief's Commendations along with nominations for the King's Birthday Honours.

### **Communication:**

- The next couple of months will see the changeover of Twitter Licences to a new supplier. Specials will have a total of 8 licences which will allow the user to update Facebook as well. Facebook continues to be the highest media source for Special applications.
- The Essex Chamber of Commerce along with the Essex Association of Local Councils continues to support and promote our ESP and CSC Schemes. Our ESP/CSC Co-ordinator provides an updated report at the Chamber of Commerce monthly meetings.

### **Recruitment, Training, and Retention:**

- Continued work with the new Specials Recruitment Focus Group and Task Force to coordinate activity particularly around outreach events and develop ideas around retention and recruitment.
- Continue weekly 'pipeline' meeting of Specials Development Team, HR, Business Support, Vetting, L&D. Terms of Reference is to review numbers at each stage against target, process and attrition from application to attestation to identify any blockers or risks and take action to mitigate.
- Continue with weekly Specials Oversight Meetings with HR Recruitment Managers and Head of Special Constabulary to focus on campaign.
- Inclusion in weekly force recruitment meetings with HR Recruitment managers to ensure the pipeline of applicants are moving effectively and efficiently through the various stages.
- Seats offered per year is sufficient to grow our establishment but also holds the contingency to increase classroom sizes from 22 to 24 if required, for weekend intakes.
- Reviewing our timetables for the 2024/2025 years, we have scheduled eight weekend courses which allows for a slightly larger gap between intakes, to

support the needs of the stakeholders within the recruitment process, allowing 7 weeks between intakes compared to four or five weeks in years gone by.

- For the 2024/2025 financial year, we will be offering 220 seats. This has scope to be increased, should demand require more seats to be offered.
- The Specials Training Team continues to deliver multiple opportunities for officers holding Directed Patrol status to take part in the Phase Two programme for the Special Constabulary Learning Programme (SCLP). This has received brilliant feedback and is a great opportunity for special constables to develop, further into their career than was originally available before.
- To date in 2023/2024, 80 seats for 4 of the Phase Two modules, were offered to Directed Patrol Status (DPS) and Qualified Special Constable Status (QSC) officers who had completed their Phase One learning year. Phase 2 modules have been attended by 38 officers, with the same number of seats offered for the next financial year.
- Since 1 April 2023, 27 students have started training.
- Engage Safer Essex and Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) to drive the Community Specials Programme. C/Supt Hammett, Pippa Brent-Isherwood and Peter Davey met in November to take this forward. An event is being planned in early 2024 to engage Town and Parish Councils in this area.

### **Reporting and Governance:**

- Development of 4-year Delivery Plan – Essex Police Specials 2025.
- Review of current reporting format.

### **National Overview**

In March 2023, Dr Iain Britton, College of Policing, published a couple of reports based on the National Benchmarking of all Special Constabularies and a bespoke report for Essex Police followed in May 2023. Reports showed a national decrease of special constable numbers along with hours contributed as a result. Several recommendations were provided for forces to consider including strategic development, focusing recruitment on career and older specials, ensuring opportunity for specialisms, develop leadership skills and promoting diversity in particular females.

The College of Policing, Special Constabulary Learning Programme (SCLP) is embedded aligning with PEQF and provides a clear pathway from SC to PC. The Learning and Development Team delivers multiple opportunities for Directed Patrol Specials to attend Phase Two programmes for SCLP and is a great tool to aid retention and development of career specials. This is leading the way nationally compared to other forces and has seen huge amounts of success.

Les Hawkins, our Employer Supported Policing Co-ordinator, is working with the ESP National Chief Officer, ACC Smith from Wiltshire Police, to set the national ESP strategy for the following year. Essex have registered 53% of the ESP businesses nationally in the last 6 months, as well as providing ESP workshops for Derbyshire Police, Thames Valley Police, and “All Wales” (4 forces). Les Hawkins was invited to join the judging panel for the national Lord Ferrers Awards for volunteering in

policing. Maria Rawlings, Specials Support Officer, has now joined the panel of local assessors for the Kings Award for Voluntary Services (KAV).

**Appendices**

Appendix A



Essex Local  
Benchmarking.pdf

Appendix B



Longer serving  
Special Constables - S

Appendix C



ESP Advert - Sep23 -  
v3.pdf