



POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR ESSEX

and

ESSEX POLICE

STRATEGIC BOARD

26 September 2023, 0800 to 1000

MS Teams

Present:

Roger Hirst (RH) Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner – Chair

Pippa Brent-Isherwood (PBI) Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, PFCC's Office

Fiona Brown (FB) Head of IT Portfolio and Business Engagement, Essex Police

Annette Chan (AC) Chief Accountant, Essex Police Patrick Duffy (PD) Head of Estates, Essex Police

Jane Gardner (JG)

Suzanne Harris (SH)

Claire Heath (CH)

Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

Head of Performance and Scrutiny, PFCC office

Head of Continuous Improvement, Essex Police

Fiona Henderson (FH) Director of Continuous Improvement and Analytics, Essex

Police

Debbie Martin (DM) Chief Finance Officer, Essex Police

Claire Medhurst (CM) Director of Kent and Essex Support Services

Supt Bonnie Moore (BM) Deputy Head Contact Management Command, Essex Police Janet Perry (JP) Strategic Head of Performance and Resources, PFCC Office

DCC Andrew Prophet (AP) Deputy Chief Constable, Essex Police

Jenny Sayle (JS) Technical Revenue Accountant, Essex Police

Borka Price (BP) (Minutes) Personal Assistant, PFCC Office

Apologies:

CC Ben-Julian Harrington Chief Constable, Essex Police

Jules Lawson Director of Kent and Essex Support Services

David Levy Director of Commercial Services, 7 Forces Procurement

ACC Rachel Nolan Assistant Chief Constable

1 Introduction and welcome

1 RH welcomed all to the meeting and accepted apologies from those set out above.

2.i Minutes of the last meeting held 21 June 2023

2.i There were no amendments to the Minutes of the 21 June 2023 Essex Police Strategic Board and they were therefore approved. There were no matters arising.

2.ii Action Log

06/23	DR 031-23 - Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24 - Close
07/23	DR 040-23 - Reserves Strategy - Close
25/23	Workshop re MTFS had taken place – Close
26/23	DR 145-23 for the Budget Setting Timetable had been submitted and was being processed – Remain Open
27/23	Revised table n appendix of report – Close
28/23	Strategic Transformation Programme Highlight Report – changes to savings table included in new reports – Close
29/23	Strategic Board ToR updated and circulated – Close
30/23	Pre-scrutiny meetings for non-Decision Report papers had been introduced since the last meeting – Close
31/23 32/23 33/23 34/23	Strategic Board ToR updated and circulated – Close
35/23	Natalie Mann's contact details would be circulated when she commences employment – Remain Open
36/23	PBI reviewed constitution wording – Close
37/23	DR 069-23 – SERP – Close
38/23	DR 090-23 - Capitalised Maintenance - Close
39/23	DR 086-23 – Joint Fleet workshop – Close
40/23	DR 063-23 SEERPIC had been received on 08 September and would be processed – Remain Open
41/23	SEERPIC paper had been resubmitted with changed sensitivity marking – Close

2.iii Forward Plan

2.iii All proposals that were pre circulated were agreed.

3 Finance

3.i <u>Medium Term Financial Strategy ('MTFS')</u>

- 3.i.1 DM advised the meeting that MTS for September has an updated position showing a gap of £9.6m. An appendix is being prepared to show best- and worst- case scenarios, expected to be shared in draft with the PFCC by close of play. Between June and September, the pay award had been confirmed, adding £3.3m pressure; combined with other smaller adjustments this resulted in the £9.6m deficit for 2024/25. Several workshops had been held on non-pay savings and there was some more work to be done. In October bids for additional money will be considered. Meetings to discuss future changes had been scheduled.
- 3.i.2 RH noted that £9.6m deficit is a challenge, and referenced the possibility of additional challenges, including as incremental pay increases and inflation. RH assured the Board that he would continue to work as APCC finance lead to ensure policing has the resources to sustain the position that has been reached. RH spoke of the importance of public support to provide the tax income required and recognised the effort of the force in squeezing costs and deploying resources to the front line. RH also referenced the importance of support from the Police, Fire and Crime Panel to approve the precept to deliver the proposed MTFS.
- 3.i.3 AP recognised the shared effort working on the challenge to balance the budget. He noted that pay for a new PC rise from circa £23,000 to circa £40,000 in seven years so the wage pressure is very real.

3.ii Final Statement of Accounts

- 3.ii.1 DM advised the Auditors are due on 9 October, subject to vetting and hoping to sign off the Accounts in January 2024. MT and JP will prepare a note to explain late publication and it was noted that this is not a unique position.
- 3.ii.2 RH asked if we have been able to align resources to support the audit taking place after we planned for it. DM confirmed one vacancy within the Management Team which is being advertised. JS has changed role but will cover until the previous role has been backfilled. DM noted the challenge of budget setting and closure happening concurrently, but structural change will help that.

3.iii Treasury Management Quarterly Update 2023/2024 (DR if borrowing required)

3.iii.1 DM confirmed no borrowing was being requested at this time. Year-end forecast suggests £12.2m, with £10m being MiFID amount required and does not anticipate borrowing before March 2024. The March position would be confirmed in the December report. As more work is done on forecasting estates and IT budgets a clearer picture will emerge. DM confirmed that as usual it was

expected to be cash-rich in July and this would decrease by April/May/June. JP asked if we would need to borrow the £10m if the £2.2m were not required, as it would be cash-flow borrowing rather than capital requirement. DM felt this was in line with the prudential code. RH suggested this requirement could be met through an agreed facility rather than actual borrowing. DM agreed to consider the detail as more information was known. JP suggested that debtors could also be reviewed, and DM agreed.

4 Force Growth Programme Quarterly Update 2023/24

- 4.1 AP presented the quarterly update on the Force Growth Programme advising that 17.6 posts have been filled or filled subject to post interview procedures. They will continue to progress recruitment to the four Crime and Public Protection Mental Health team posts as a priority but proposed a short pause in further recruitment to the 10 remaining unfilled posts. Section 14 Appendix 1 sets out the 2022/23 growth allocation and 14.2 summarises recruitment plan and PUP 87 joined in September 2023.
- 4.2 RH asked for confirmation that we can maintain over target of PUP and eligible for supplementary payments.
 RH said we need to think about the public messaging as the figure of 3,600 since 2010 has been referenced. RH noted the FTE figure of 3,755 (headcount 3,800) confirming the full strength of 3,700. RH asked whether the Chief Officer Group was of the same opinion. AP concurred with RH but erred on the side of caution as to the commitment of specific numbers.
- 4.3 AP took an action to liaise with the Communications Team in drafting a communication plan regarding police officer headcount.

ACTION 42/23:

AP with the assistance of the Media Team to draft a communication plan regarding police officer headcount.

5 Strategic Transformation Programme Highlight Report

- 5.1 FH advised this is an update since the last report produced in May 2023. There are 15 active workstreams with no new workstreams being added or closed since the last SCCB meeting. Four of these workstreams are in exception: 'Contact Management Change Programme', 'Office 365', 'Digital Transformation Athena Innovations' and 'Digital Transformation Athena v6'.
- 5.2 FH confirmed that the 'RAG' rating for Contact Management is 'Amber' for time and cost. The cost has deteriorated, was 'Green and reflects the requirement of the programme of work which needs to come out at cost neutral within two years.
- 5.3 In terms of the 'Office 365 Migration' this is at 'Amber' for time and 'Red' for cost due to storage issues at a cost of £100k for each force. This has been added as a management risk.
- 5.4 Regarding Digital Transformation Athena Innovations of the three modules due to come in: 'Collaborative Analytics', 'Public Engagement' and 'Partner Problem

Solving Solutions', there is an issue with the 'Partner Problem Solving Solutions' in that there is only one person across the nine forces that can configure this particular part of Athena.

- 5.5 'Digital Transformation Athena v6' there are issues with failed testing which is causing the delay and they are looking at implementing in mid-2024. Version 6.11 will deliver changes to custody, bail and RUI (Release Under Investigation), a number of defect fixes, as well as Phase 1 of the DCF programme (Q1 2024), with Phase 2 of the DCF functionality being in 2025.
- In terms of the savings and efficiency plans there will only be a small shortfall for 2023/24 and making progress for 2024/25.
- 5.7 RH asked AP as to the operational consequences of the delays of Athena. AP said that currently Athena is not very intuitive with officers spending time inputting crime records and correcting the data which is causing delays. The new version will deliver significant operational efficiency and may allow to further refine the target operating model in Contact Management to release efficiency which can be reinvested. It will also provide capacity on the investigation team to carry out reasonable lines of enquiry.
- 5.8 RH noted that the High Sheriff visited the Control Room who lobbied for additional resources to be provided and enquired as progress. AP advised the new operating model is due to go live in April 2024. During the autumn they will be finalising the consultation of the change and training is in place for staff to answer 999 and 101 calls as well as inputting crime which will enable a faster service to the public.

6 Estates Programme update

- PD said that the Boreham C Block Phase 2 refurbishment is complete and they are now progressing to Phase 3.
 - Griffin House is complete and positive feedback has been received from the teams in SCD.
 - There were a few teething issues regarding the Harlow Custody CCTV which have now been resolved. Colchester Custody is closed and due to re-open at the end of October 2023, with Clacton closing thereafter for the upgrade. The risk will be reduced once the work has been completed.
 - The existing units in the EPC Classroom have been demolished and removed with new units being installed which will be a huge improvement.
- The current forecast for capital receipts is £6.013m for 2023/24 which was revised from £5.885m in June's report, with approximately £200k in revenue savings. £4.3m currently under offer and going through conveyancing. PD said that positive feedback has been received from the buyers of the Harlow Conditional Contract. The Inspectorate has asked for a draft Section 106 Agreement which is expected to be signed off within seven days following their decision at the end of October 2023 and a date has been set aside (2 November 2023) for sealing of the document by RH.
- 6.3 Harwich and Dovercourt a separate Decision Report has been set aside on the Agenda.

- 6.4 Police HQ a separate briefing has been arranged with RH for the week commencing 9 October 2023.
- 6.5 Joint fleet workshop RH has been briefed on.
- RH asked the about the length of time for the refurbishment of a custody suite and PD confirmed it was between eight and 12 weeks, depending on the size of the suite. Harlow did take slightly longer due to some issues. Colchester is bigger than Clacton. They also factor in soak periods ie. the CCTV runs for a couple of weeks before it is made live, annual deep clean and any maintenance that is required which is programmed in with Custody Command. AP reported conversations are taking place with the Chief Constable on how many suites are needed eg. there is a saving of £2.5m in having three custody suites instead of four. They are monitoring the arrest data to mitigate any risk regarding decision making.
- 6.7 RH noted that as the disposals programme is coming to an end, progress should be made on the HQ project. PD confirmed there is a lot of activity with regular meetings taking place with Richard Leicester on L&D requirement, the Chief Constable and Deputy Chief Constable regarding the expectations and a progress update will be provided on 6 October 2023.

7 IT Programme Quarterly Update

7.i <u>IT Programme Quarterly Update</u>

- 7.i.1 FB reported a healthy broad IT programme across the force with tight scrutiny through the board with both Deputy Chief Constables for Kent and Essex. They continue to have a significant vacancy factor within IT and are looking at how to make best use of the resources they have.
- 7.i.2 There are 52 active projects across the board with a small number by exception which ITS have put a robust mechanism in place to identify those projects which are in, or at risk of moving into exception. Those by exception are Seven Force Forensics and Digital Forensics Platforms for which there are a number of outstanding faults and this is being reviewed as to when the changes and fixes can be made.
- 7.i.3 Huge progress has been made regarding the integrated platform which will be delivered to all three organisations.
- 7.i.4 Working closely with finance to understand the changes and regular meetings are taking place.
- 7.i.5 Continue to receive a lot of new requests for technology about 17 each month which are prioritised for decision making, based on value and affordability.
- 7.i.6 They are still looking at future plans for the Contact Management Review and exploring technology on how we improve our services to the public. A business case is due at the end of the calendar year.

- 7.i.7 Since the programme update was submitted, they have taken the programme of work for next year through the Digital Transformation Oversight Board which has been agreed in principle, subject to budget setting decision making.
- 7.i.8 JP observed there was no reference to the finance system within the update. FB confirmed the Enterprise Resource Planning System (ERP / SAP) is referred to at the end of the paper under Section 10.4, long term planning and they will be looking at the options available, for which funding will be required to carry out a deep dive analysis.
- 7.i.9 RH noted the recruitment challenges and high vacancy factor and asked about the impact. FB confirmed there is an impact, and they are having to prioritise the workload. The programme takes the resourcing available and considers how best they can deliver. The priorities are constantly being reviewed and this in consultation with Strategic Change and the Deputy Chief Constable. Welfare is in place for those staff working long hours and they are looking at how they can retain staff.
 FB advised the level of attrition has dropped as they are getting staff trained so they can retain them and staff are being moved into substantive posts.
- 7.i.10 AP reported that the joint Chief Officer Team is reviewing the long term development plans for IT, providing a bigger department which will ensure long term efficiencies of 7.5%.
- 7.ii Briefing Update on Workforce Management (future DR 095-23)
- 7.ii.1 BM advised the procurement of a Workforce Management solution is a key enabler for the Contact Management Target Operating Model which has a forecasting ability and will remove the need for a manual process. It will also assist in reducing the areas for improvement identified by the HMICRFS following their inspection in 2022.

 The current model is unstable due to age and is not compatible with the Microsoft 365 functionality.
- 7.ii.2 FB confirmed the paper is for pre-scrutiny and highlights the progress and impact on the financial changes as the contract is not ready. The final contract is expected in December which is aligned to bring the final business case to the Essex Chief Officer Group, following the procurement evaluation.

 A range of suppliers have come forward but only a small number have the systems available. The preferred supplier cannot be identified at this stage.

 A Stage B Business Case was approved for a solution used in Kent on premise delivery. The new generation version is hosted by the supplier which means this is now Revenue and not Capital.
- 7.ii.3 The first recommendation is to acknowledge the change from Capital to Revenue and to release the Capital funds that were identified (not fully approved as Stage C).

 The level of funding expected is a maximum one-off payment of £160k and £174k per annum. From a budgetary perspective this is a small increase in the

one-off cost, a reduction of the ongoing cost in 2024/2025 and an increase in

- 2025/2026 onwards. Looking at a contract over first three years to be a 3+1+1 with delivery in Summer 2024.
- 7.ii.4 The Board is asked to approve the Decision Report and Contract between the two Boards, noting the Contract will not be received until December 2023 and will need to be signed as soon as it is received.
- 7.ii.5 RH asked whether the Board will see the Decision Report and will the pricing change. FB thought the figures were high and the preferred option is the lower cost solution but could not confirm this until a full evaluation had been completed.
- 7.ii.6 PBI stated that should there be a significant variation cost change then this could be brought forward and an additional Board meeting convened at short notice.
- 7.ii.7 RH supported the proposed way forward for processing the decision report (ahead of the December Board if ready) as this was a key dependency on the time frame.
- 7.ii.8 AP highlighted the amount of money spent on overtime to fill in the gaps and the tool will be able to predict the staffing levels required.

BM left the meeting at 9.15am.

- 7.iii Pre-Scrutiny of DR 073-23 Mobile First
- 7.iii.1 FB explained that the decision report presented for pre-scrutiny asked for approval from the PFCC to sign a contract with HCL Communications Limited to continue the use of the Mobile First Platform, the software that sits on mobile devices for frontline officers, providing access to Athena, PNC, pocket notebooks, tasking and briefing and other functions. The Contract is due for renewal on 1st January 2024 and this is a new three year Contract with HCL (3+1+1) at a cost of £1.6m. Other options have been explored but this is the most advantageous option for us. The price has increased but they have reduced the number of licences needed and no Capital is required.
- 7.iii.2 RH enquired whether we were content with HCL and FB reported no concerns.
- 7.iii.3 RH asked how the £1.6m compares to what we have been paying. FB confirmed in terms of the budget we will be paying less. The main increase is in licences from £123 to £126, £6k storage costs per annum and the hosting costs, due to energy rise but they have been able to reduce this.
- 7.iii.4 RH supported the proposed approach and timeframe for submission of the decision report ahead of the December Board.
- 8. Decision Reports including capital programme and stage C bids:
- 8.i 088-23 Laindon CEL Phase 2
- 8.i.1 PD said the Decision Report seeks approval for £2,078,040 of capital investment and £318,830 of revenue funding (£208,800 to be funded from the redundancy and relocation earmarked reserve) in order to facilitate and deliver the Chemical

Enhancement Laboratory (CEL) Phase 2 Project by refurbishing and developing Durham House in Laindon. Once completed, the Fingerprint team will be relocated to this location.

8.i.2 RH thanked PD for the workshops and stated it was a viable solution which is nearly within budget. There were no further questions.

Action 43/23

It was agreed that the Decision Report 088-23 was to be progressed for signing within the PFCC's office

- 8.ii <u>133-23 Dovercourt Construction W</u>orks
- 8.ii.1 PD advised that £1.8m was approved for the capital project a number of years ago and a lot of work has been undertaken. Planning Permission for the new building was submitted in the summer and a procurement phase was carried out in June and July 2023. They had anticipated receiving planning consent prior to the conclusion of the tender closing date. The Council did ask for a bat survey to be carried out and the date scheduled coincided with a fire next to the fire station at the old school and no one was allowed into the area.
- 8.ii.2 PD confirmed that they had received draft planning conditions from the Council, subject to the bat survey which had now been undertaken and we expect to receive planning consent within the next two weeks.
- 8.ii.3 There have been cost increases associated with the project and the first recommendation to the PFCC is to increase the capital budget from £1.8m to £2.768m, which is an increase of £921k, thereby enabling them to award the contract at £2,537m. The difference between the two figures is the money spent on fees and other allowances.
- 8.ii.4 PD referred the Board to the table of bids under Section 3 of the Report. The preferred bidder was the lowest at £2.537m and the highest Bidder was £3.964m. The preferred bidder scored the highest in terms of technical, commercial and price.
- 8.ii.5 A number of considerations have been made and the procurement was for a Design and Build Contract with a number of pros and cons. The risk transfers to the contractor and the lessons learnt from a previous project where the risk sat with us regarding the detail of the building, and the challenges faced. As long as we do not change the requirements, the tender will remain the same to construct the building.
- 8.ii.6 Section 9 sets out the core reasons for the price increase:
 - Our change in procurement/contract delivery from Traditional Detailed Design and procurement to a Design & Build procurement to ensure delivery and risk transfer to the contractor £130,000.
 - Increase in building foundation height due to neighbouring trees with Tree Preservation Orders that require root protection zones, therefore

- increasing the height of the foundations £250,000. There has been some conflicting advice and this is down to the contractor.
- Construction inflation costs £197,806.
- Planning risk Provisional Sum £20,000.
- Investment on improvements to the shared collaborative space within the Fire Station £75,000.
- 8.ii.7 PBI noted that PD mentioned the planning issue and timescales but the delivery partners report attached to the Decision Report recommends that the Contract is not entered into until planning permission has been granted and the Land Transfer to Essex Police has taken place. PBI asked PD to clarify the position. PD stated that the Contract will not be presented for signing and sealing until the planning permission has been granted, which they hope will be confirmed within the next two weeks. There is quite a bit of work to be done on the Contract. PBI observed the Decision Report is to seek approval for the execution of the Contract and suggested this be paused until the timescales align or amend the Report stating the Contract is attached but not ready for execution.
- 8.ii.8 JG advised the Decision Report did go through the Estates Board and an options paper was requested which details the cost increase. RH observed a workshop did not take place.
- 8.ii.9 RH wanted to ensure the Land Transfer takes place at fair value as we could be open to audit and scrutiny regarding a fair process.
- 8.ii.10 RH noted that the disposal value for Harwich Police Station was £450,000 and said that a local comms programme needs to be drafted stating that this is an improvement in facilities for policing for Harwich and Dovercourt. AP took an action to put together a communication plan. RH suggested photos of himself with a Senior Officer outside the new station.

Action 44/23

AP draft a communication plan regarding Harwich and Dovercourt.

8.ii.11 In relation to the land ownership land transfer, PD has briefed Karl Edwards (ECFRS) on the same principles applied for Shoeburyness and there will be an auditable neutral cost value within the next two weeks. PD confirmed it was a standard Contract and Transfer.

Action 45/23

It was agreed that the Decision Report 133-23 was to be progressed for signing within the PFCC's office. (RH stated the Decision Report and Contract would not be signed until the planning permission has been received and there was no requirement for the Decision Report to be amended.)

8.iii 134-23 Harlow Rest Area Refurbishment

- 8.iii.1 PD advised funding was approved at £400k but the Contract Value is £402,984. The Decision Report seeks approval for the additional cost of £2,984 which will enable the Contract to go ahead. The refurbishment will improve staff morale and welfare.
- 8.iii.2 PBI was content with the Decision Report, but more work is required on the Contract.

ACTION 46/23

PBI and PD to review the Contract prior to finalisation. Following review of the contract the Decision Report 134-23 was to be progressed for signing within the PFCC's office.

8.iv 141-23 Mobile Telephone Replacement Contract

- 8.iv.1 FB said that we have a suite of mobile phones that frontline officers utilise for which the technology needs a refresh. The costs are covered within the technical refresh signed earlier in the year and the costs have come in as expected. The Decision Report is to seek approval for the award of the Contract at a cost of £1,056,780. The Contract has been procured via the London Procurement Partnership framework. The Reg 84 has been presented and waiting on final Contract to come through. RH asked if we were using Samsung and FB confirmed it is a standard product that we need and is compatible with some of the other hardware. The supplier will hold providing we are in a position to move forward. The devices will give us the opportunity to slightly extend the replacement timescale due to the technology. RH noted the second refresh following original decision.
- 8.iv.2 RH asked whether officers will be content, and AP confirmed no issues have been reported. Officers do use the mobile technology.

Action 47/23

It was agreed that the Decision Report 141-23 was to be progressed for signing within the PFCC's office

The following were noted as deferred to December 2023:

- 8.v 070-23 Replacement of Breath Tests Across the Force RH noted due to readiness.
- 8.vi 068-23 SERP Relocation Stage C Capital Bid RH noted that this has been a programme for quite some time. AP advised there have been conversations within Essex County Council regarding the relocation and they are waiting on a Director to review the planning so the decision can progress. PD confirmed ACC Rachel Nolan is dealing and there has been a push back from service users who have requested a site visit. There are internal issues within Essex County

Council. RH asked whether Cllr Scott has been briefed and it was agreed that RH would follow up.

ACTION 48/23:

RH to discuss the issues regarding SERP Relocation Stage C Capital Bid with Cllr Scott.

- 8.vii 124-23 FCR Platform FB confirmed this is linked to the Contact Management Technology Review and a Business Case is due at the end of the year. AP reported the integrated command and control system platform for phone calls sits within the Workforce Management Tool which is separate.
- 8.viii EV Charging Infrastructure RH noted due to being a huge project.
- 9 7 Force Procurement/Commercial Services:
- 9.i 074-23 Marine Launch

CI Richard Baxter joined at 9.55am.

- 9.i.1 RB said the Decision Report seeks approval to purchase a replacement vessel costing £400k from Ultimate Boats, which can be used in all weathers and offers protection in the winter.
- 9.i.2 AP asked whether there was any loss in capability and RB confirmed no loss.
- 9.i.3 RH asked about the legal challenge and PB confirmed this was resolved with Procurement. Agreed.
- 9.i.4 PD has been assisting David Stovell regarding the disposal of the 'Alert IV' vessel through the auction process but anything over £10,000 requires approval. Once sold at auction then the paperwork needs to be signed quickly. PD asked whether a Decision Sheet can be drafted without the disposal value. PBI confirmed the disposal will be subject to a separate decision report and it was agreed PD would draft a Decision Report with no value.

ACTION 49/23

PD to draft a separate Decision Report with no value for the disposal of the 'Alert 4' vessel through the auction process.

9.i.5 In terms of the forward plan SH asked if a Decision Report will come before the December Board. RH confirmed it was agreed for disposal at auction with a final decision regarding the disposal figure. The decision report does not need to be presented to the Board.

RB left the meeting at 10am

The following was noted as having been approved between Boards:

9.ii 115-23 7 Force Contract Standing Orders - duly noted and no questions raised.

10 Approval of paper classifications for publishing

RH enquired as to the classification of papers which was confirmed by AP to be as per the Agenda. Papers for items 5, 6, 7i, 7ii, 7iii, 8i and 9i would not be published.

11 Any Other Business

DM asked for clarity regarding the next meeting and SH confirmed it was 18 December 2023.

Meeting closed at 10.05am.