

## Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex

### ESSEX POLICE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY BOARD

02 October 2023 14:00 – 16:00

#### Present:

Jane Gardner (JG)	Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (Chair)
Pippa Brent-Isherwood (PBI)	Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, PFCC's office
CC BJ Harrington (BJH)	Chief Constable, Essex Police
Suzanne Harris (SH)	Head of Performance and Scrutiny, PFCC's office
ACO Fiona Henderson (FH)	Director of Continuous Improvement and Analytics
Richard Jones (RJ)	Head of Financial Performance and Reporting, Essex Police
Debbie Martin (DM)	Chief Finance Officer, Essex Police
D/Ch/Supt Lucy Morris (LM)	Deputy Head of Serious Crime, Essex Police
ACC Rachel Nolan (RN)	Assistant Chief Constable, Essex Police
Janet Perry (JP)	Chief Financial Officer and Strategic Head of Performance and Resources, PFCC's office
ACC Andrew Pritchard (APri)	Assistant Chief Constable, Essex Police
Samantha Bardsley	Minutes, PFCC's office

#### Apologies:

Roger Hirst (RH)	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
DCC Andrew Prophet (AP)	Deputy Chief Constable, Essex Police

#### 1. Introductions

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

#### 2.

##### 2.1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1.1. The minutes of the previous meeting were noted by BJH to have typos. On 3.1.4. the pay award should read c. £1.5m not c. £3m. In the same paragraph, instead of NRE it should read funding formula. In 3.1.2., it should read restructuring reserve not restricting reserve.

2.1.2. Otherwise, the minutes were approved and agreed.

2.1.3. There were no matters arising.

##### 2.2. Action Log

###### 20/23 Crime Data Accuracy

This will be completed for the next Crime Data Accuracy Report that is scheduled for the PRSB meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> of October.

**Remains Open**

###### 28/23 PEEL Inspection AFIs update

No update due until December 2023.

**Remains Open**

**34/23 Monthly Finance Report - Waterfall Graph**

RJ advised that, following a monthly monitoring meeting with JP and JW on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September, it was agreed that inclusion of the second waterfall will be deferred until Month 6, so is absent from the Month 5 report. The Month 6 report is due to go to the PRSB meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> October.

**Close**

**39/23 Quarterly Performance Report / MSG Aspirations - Q3 drivers Priority 12**

AP has raised the question of what led to the significant drop in audience numbers last year with the joint Fire and Police Education Team. The answer cited reasons including a reduction in staff numbers and long-term sickness / absence within the team.

BJH and JG queried where the establishment change came from. BJH asked if this was an authorised change to the current strength or if we are recruiting to / holding vacancies.

SH raised this may be best to move over to the Collaboration Board to look at in more detail.

JG will send an email detailing our concerns to Greg Myddelton and colleagues to progress, copying BJH and Rick Hylton in.

**Remains Open**

**39a/23 Quarterly Performance Report**

Agreed to separate the "we wills" section of the report. Now for FH to work with SH and Matt Robbins to come up with a way to split the "we wills" into a separate report.

**Remains Open**

**42/23 Monthly Finance Report - Headcount**

RJ advised that headcount figures have been added to the paper - reference to these is included in the yellow section on page 15, and separately referenced in the Exec Summary on page 3.

**Close**

**43/23 Stop and Search / Use of Force**

This will be completed for the next Use of Force / Stop and Search report that is scheduled for the 27<sup>th</sup> November PRSB meeting.

**Remains Open**

**44/23 Transparency, Contracts and Tenders (plan for statutory compliance)**

SH has noted this as an item to add to the Forward Plan for 2024

**Close**

**45/23 Transparency, Contracts and Tenders (plan for statutory compliance)**

Claire Medhurst advised that meetings are being arranged between herself and Darren Horsman for the beginning of November and January.

**Close**

**46/23 VAWG / RASSO Deep Dive - MoJ Funding**

This has been completed with a date in the diary for a joint risk star chamber.

**Close**

**APri and LM joined the meeting at 14:15**

**2.3. Forward Plan**

2.3.1. No changes have been proposed to the current plan. The diary invites to the 2024 meetings are hoped to be shared next week and the forward plan extrapolated into 2024 for the next meeting.

**3. Strategic Policing Requirement (update paper based on the new SPR)**

3.1. LM presented the SPR paper, covering the seven threats identified in the SPR as follows: Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), Terrorism, Serious and Organised Crime, National Cyber Security Incident, Child Sexual Abuse, Public Disorder and Civil Emergencies.

3.2. We now have strong structure and governance in place around VAWG, heavily invested around training. Project Minerva was also referred to around hotspots along with Safe Spaces and prevention work.

3.3. [REDACTED]

3.4. [REDACTED]

3.5. There is a new national target operating model within the cyber world around national coordination and local delivery. None of the disseminations to the Essex Force Cyber Crime Unit (FCCU) meet the definition of a National Cyber Event and there have been no deployments to support national or regionally managed cyber events in the last 12 months.

3.6. There is a well embedded crime and public protection structure with investigations teams in place as well as a Child Sexual Exploitation proactive team structure and Quest tackling child sexual abuse. There has been a reduction in outstanding visits on the MOSOVO teams from 280 to 36 over the past year and equally a fantastic solved rate in POLIT who currently have an 86% overall solved rate and 100% solved rate for 'paedophile hunter' offences.

3.7. In terms of public disorder, we have a huge capacity and various on call structures to ensure we can stand up and respond to any form of public disorder. This has been tested quite strongly in Essex around deployments for Extinction Rebellion and Just Stop Oil as well as around Operation London Bridge and Operation Orb.

3.8. The SPR requires EP to have contingency planning functions working with the local resilience forum, business continuity plans and the ability to respond to disaster victims identification requirements, all of which is covered off via our Resilience Department.

3.9. JG noted it was clear we are in a fairly good position in terms of response to the SPR and asked, "Do you think we are meeting the requirements of the duties expected?" BJH responded that he was satisfied and comfortable around the risk.

3.10. SH queried on p15 fig 6 whether the numbers 'awaiting sign off' are within the trained numbers or in addition. BJH confirmed they will not be within trained numbers as, although they have been trained, they have not yet been signed off as operationally competent to complete this role solo.

## APri and LM left the meeting at 14:40

### 4. Monthly Finance Report

- 4.1. DM presented the monthly finance report. The revenue forecast overspend as at month 5 is £0.084m against the 2023/24 revenue budget of £363.7m (0.02% variance). This does include the additional funding of £2.025m in relation to an overachievement of the 2023/24 Police Officer Uplift of 45 officers. The capital financial monitoring position for month 5 is a forecast spend of £18.795m, which is an £0.847m underspend against the latest revised budget of £19.642m (4.3% variance).
- 4.2. Section two lists the appropriations to / from earmarked reserves. The 'froms' contain £2m for Capital Expenditure Funded by Revenue via the Capital Funding Reserve which would normally be done at year end but we have done this at month 5 on this occasion. Immediate detriment is also being completed early, taking the money from the legal reserve to fund.
- 4.3. There is a Police Officer Pay and Allowances overspend of £2.457m and Police Staff Pay and Allowances underspend of £2.154m. Transport has an overspend of £0.652m and Supplies and Services are £1.635m overspent.
- 4.4. The main forecast movements since last month have moved from £0.4m to £0.1m. This includes a reduction in police officer pay primarily due to the leaver profile bringing some money back in. Transport shows a big shift in the month relating to the force mileage rate. Due to a change in policy, more claims of a higher value are coming through.
- 4.5. The reserves show the POCA figures reducing as we draw on those to pay for additional officers. The restructuring reserve is showing an estimated reduction down to £0.307m due to two large business cases in progress. The legal reserve is coming down to £0.330m as this includes some immediate detriment payments. The Chief Constable's Operational Carry Forward is down to £0.178 due to a forecast appropriation of £0.472m to fund the one-off expenditure associated with the roll out of replacement uniform. Future Capital Funding also shows £2.126m coming out, bringing this down to £0.100m.
- 4.6. With regard to capital forecasting, which is £0.847m underspent, the big movement is £0.456m on transport. Conversations are being had with regard to this as the spends are fluctuating and it would be good to know if they think they will ever catch up from the upheaval Covid caused.
- 4.7. JW highlighted that, on the capital forecast, the forecast is £18.8m while the actual at month 5 is £4m, and asked whether the force was still confident it would meet this programme. DM confirmed this is what the budget holders were telling them.
- 4.8. JP queried that the report talks about the 59 difference between the PUP (Police Officer Uplift Programme) headcount but what does this mean? DM confirmed this relates to the PUP headcount which is 3,765 and we are forecasting 59 over that number.

### 5. Efficiency and Savings Programme

- 5.1. FH presented the efficiency and savings update. The report updates on the savings and efficiency plan and progress for 2023/24 and the current high-level activity to identify savings and efficiencies for 2024/25.
- 5.2. The 2023/24 Efficiency and Savings Plan was presented to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel on 7 February 2023 and identifies cashable savings of £12.213m in year and £10.915m recurring. The non-cashable savings remain unchanged at a value of £4.696m. Current monitoring identifies an in-year shortfall against the plan of £0.636m and a full year short fall of £0.210m. The main contribution to this shortfall is the profiling of income through Magistrates' Courts around roads policing.

- 5.3. Within the 2024/25 savings programme we know we need to find savings of circa £15.0m. There is a programme of work to sit across this at a strategic level called the Productivity and Efficiency Savings Programme. A monthly board is chaired by FH which sits alongside a weekly tactical board that looks at delivery across the programme which is chaired by Morgan Cronin or Liam Osbourn. This included a review of proposals originally put forward by each command to agree which would progress to business case. To date this process has identified confirmed one-off savings of £0.310m and in-year recurring savings of £3.536m with further options being developed for adoption at the extraordinary Strategic Change Coordination Board (SCCB) of 12 October 2023.
- 5.4. JG asked whether, on the 2023/24 plan, are we still intending to meet the roads policing restructure savings? DM confirmed that we are not expected to meet this this year. BJH confirmed that there had been a long debate on the subject at COG and there is an opportunity to close this with the single justice process initiative.
- 5.5. SH noted that, on the 2024/25 table on pg. 8, there is a numerical cost value quoted on the vacancy factor. We picked up in the strategic board that there is a possibility that the vacancy factor may change, so are these based on the current or the proposed factor? DM confirmed this is on the proposed vacancy factor. SH asked whether, going forward, can we include the vacancy factor as well as the cost amount.
- 5.6. JG asked, on the 2024/25 business cases with staffing impact, what is the likelihood that it might involve officers taking on civilian responsibilities? FH responded that there are some areas of the business, say investigator roles, that are as much operational as they are non-operational, so there is scope, but no decisions have been made yet. We are conscious of the staff / officer balance between roles and where they should be.

## **6. Monthly Performance Report**

- 6.1. FH presented the monthly performance report. A reduction in all crime continues to grow month on month. We are now 6.1% down and, since the beginning of this year, we have been going in the right direction, particularly with regard to violence with injury, which is down for the fourth month in a row, now to almost -10%.
- 6.2. These headlines flow through the high harm crimes. Sexual offences have, since very early in the year, seen reductions and EP is now at -10.4% for all sexual offences, -13% for rape alone and, when looking at the number of crimes, EP is recording 650 fewer sexual offences for the year to August. 360 of those were rapes, so some of our most serious offences are accounting for the reductions we are seeing. Solved numbers are also going in the right direction. Rape solved numbers are continuing to increase, and because of that our solved rate is looking healthier.
- 6.3. Similar circumstances for domestic abuse are reported. EP is almost 20% down year on year. This equates to almost 5,500 fewer offences. There are the recording changes within this for stalking and harassment, however work has been done behind the scenes to make sure this isn't the whole reason. EP has seen a slight reduction in solved outcomes for high-risk DA. This is the first time we have seen this so we will keep an eye out to ensure this is not becoming a trend.
- 6.4. Personal robbery continues to fluctuate with a slight increase in reporting this period. Previous periods had seen slight reductions, and the solved number continues to improve.
- 6.5. Hate crime saw some increase earlier in the year but this seems to have reversed for a few months in a row and we are now 15% lower year on year which is promising.
- 6.6. An increase in acquisitive crime is starting to show itself nationally and regionally. Our head of performance Matt Robbins was on a regional call recently and all forces are reporting an increase in acquisitive crime. Theft, burglary (residential and non-residential) and vehicle theft are all

increasing. Some is being offset by good solved numbers, particularly in burglary, but this demand needs tackling.

- 6.7. Five of the 12 PFCC Priorities have been given a recommended grade of 'Good': 2 (Reducing drug driven violence), 3 (Protecting vulnerable people and breaking the cycle of domestic abuse), 4 (Reducing violence against women and girls), 6 (Protecting rural and isolated areas) and 7 (Dog theft). Five have been given a recommended grade of 'Adequate': 1 (Further investment in crime prevention), 8 (Reducing business crime, fraud and cyber crime), 10 (Encouraging volunteers and community support), 11 (Supporting our officers and staff) and 12 (Increasing collaboration). Two have been given a recommended grade of 'Requires Improvement': 5 (Improving support for victims of crime) and 9 (Improving safety on our roads).
- 6.8. JG thanked FH for the comprehensive report and congratulated BJH on the continuing reduction in all crime. Other forces aren't achieving this, and it seems like we are really starting to see the difference of the work we are doing here.
- 6.9. JG asked whether the reduction in cadets is due to the lack of availability of unit leaders or is it just that young people are not interested anymore. FH responded that it could be either and ACC Andrew Mariner is best placed to answer this question.

### **Action 47/23**

#### **FH to liaise with AM to understand the reason behind the declining numbers of cadets.**

- 6.10. SH stated that the priorities that require improvement include priority 5 (improving support for victims of crime), and it's worth noting victim confidence has fallen below 60%. We need to take on board that it has dropped to this point as it feels like a milestone in the wrong direction. FH advised that we know that national trends are looking similar and that victims of different crime types have a disparity here.
- 6.11. JG noted a curiosity around acquisitive crime going up and whether we understand why. BJH believes that when people have money they hurt each other, when they don't they steal things. There is now serious and organised crime around stealing meat and baby milk. When we look at business crime, we have reduced through the work of the business crime teams and town teams the amount of violence against shop workers. Although there is an increase in shoplifting, there is also an increase in shoplifters caught.
- 6.12. SH raised that, looking at priority 10 (Encouraging Volunteers and Community Support), we have spoken before about seeing a continued decrease in Specials and some other volunteering roles, and asked if "adequate" is going to be the appropriate grade as we move forward. It feels like we have been on a downward trajectory for a while here. FH agreed to make sure that the right thought is being given to this, particularly in the quarterly report where the detail is scrutinised by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel.

### **RN joined the meeting at 15:20**

## **7. Public Perception Survey Results**

- 7.1. FH presented the public perception survey. In the 12 months to June 2023, 72% of people believed Essex Police do a good or excellent job. Confidence has remained stable quarter on quarter over the last year, with individual quarterly results of 73%, 72%, 71% and 74% in the most recent results. This is a reduction on last year which was 78%.
- 7.2. Castle Point district reported significantly lower confidence than any other Essex district in the SMSR survey. However, this view is not reflected in the statistics, which show that ASB reduced significantly in the 12 months to June 2023, as did overall crime.

7.3. Other highlights discussed included that victims are less likely to have confidence in Essex Police than non-victims, ethnic minorities reported a higher level of confidence than white respondents and, in general, victims of lower harm offences were less satisfied and a uniformed presence continues to be of the utmost importance to public confidence.

7.4. JG was very encouraged that DA victims feel more confident.

**8. Operational Policing Command (OPC) (full annual report)**

8.1. RN presented the OPC Annual Report firstly praising the work of Simon Anslow. Under his direction and leadership there has been a real increase and noticeable focus on the objectives of the force plan. The volume of incidents attended and some of the numbers of arrests and cases solved are also evident throughout the paper.

8.2. The wider engagement of this historically quite isolated command was also noted, as demonstrated by its ability to add value operationally, supporting / mentoring, contributing to wider force performance and the formal tasking processes. They have also been more visible than ever with our cadettes and with opportunities for special constables.

8.3. OPC is alive to the Casey review and the challenges they have with a number of small male dominated teams within the command. OPC has introduced a professionalism, trust and confidence tracker to further safeguard against any cultural issues that may arise. This said, EP were proud of being one of the best represented firearms units in terms of females employed in the country.

8.4. Some of the issues that were highlighted by the paper, which were generally reflected nationally, covered vehicle supply for roads policing, which are currently slow to be delivered and slow to be fixed due to a shortage of parts. The Dog Unit is seeing rising kennel costs around dangerous dogs. The budget for dangerous dogs was exceeded by a considerable margin and that has resulted in an increase being requested for the next financial year.

8.5. [REDACTED]

8.6. JG asked what is happening around the dog section and the total spend outstripping the funds available. RN confirmed this was surrounding the costs associated with dangerous dogs that are seized. Some negotiation with partner agencies has occurred and the CPS has now agreed to pay for dangerous dog assessments. The Dangerous Dog Manager is exploring options for a restorative justice process to aid in further income generation from the offer of educational courses and the opportunity to educate dog owners to reduce the likelihood of further offences.

8.7. JP spoke around the efficiency savings to roads policing and asked if these were operational posts being affected. RN confirmed the efficiency arrangements are around back-office functions and no operational posts are being affected.

8.8. SH noted that SAP was hindering the allocation of duties for the RMU and was conscious of similar issues within the control room and asked if there could be a single solution that works for both. RN advised it is too early to say and acknowledged SAP is really effective for the business and finance element but as a duty planner it is not user friendly for those utilising it or putting data into it. It is not believed any force has an effective duty management system, certainly not one that we would be confident to pick up.

8.9. SH noted that taser capability is usually referenced in the report but was not on this occasion and asked whether there any concerns here. RN confirmed that we do not have any issues with capacity or training.

8.10 [REDACTED]

**9. Approval for publishing of documents**

9.1. SH highlighted that papers 3 (SPR) and 5 (Efficiency and Savings) are marked official sensitive and should not be published.

9.2. BJH advised that the OPC report is to be redacted or marked official sensitive.

**Action 48/23**

**RN and SH to decide how the OPC report (Paper 8) will be amended, either redacted for publishing or changed to an official sensitive marking.**

**10. Any Other Business**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 16:06.

**Future meeting dates**

Thursday 26 October 2023	14.00 (October meeting)
Monday 27 November 2023	10.30 (November meeting)
Thursday 4 January 2024	10.30 (December meeting)