

Performance and Resources Scrutiny Programme 2024

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

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1.0 Purpose of Report

This commentary report provides a narrative, summarising key highlights from each section of the accompanied HR strategic dashboard, which relates to the force's attendance, establishment, strength full time equivalent (fte), turnover and diversity profiles. Additional information is also provided with regards to promotions redundancies / business cases as well as an update from Learning & Development (L&D).

2.0 Recommendations

Not applicable.

3.0 **Executive Summary**

Each section contained within the HR strategic dashboard is summarised under section 4.0 below.

4.0 **Introduction/Background**

This commentary report refers to data taken from the force HR system (SAP) as at 31st March 2024 except where alternative data is displayed for trend analysis. The below provides a summary of key highlights from the report:

- In the last quarter a total of 62.00 fte officers have joined the force resulting in total recruitment for the 2023/24 financial of 265.00 fte. As a result, the force ended the financial year with a headcount of 3827, which is +62 higher than the minimum headcount requirement of 3765 and +7 above the increased headcount requirement of 3820.
- Overall application numbers were strong in quarter 4 at an average of 237 a month, which is higher than quarter 4 in both 2023 and 2022. With regards to ethnicity, the total proportion of applications from ethnic minority candidates in 2023/24 was 14.78%, which is higher than the previous 4 financial years. With regards to gender, application numbers from female candidates remain strong.
- For the financial year to date, a total of 265 officers have joined, of which 16 were ethnic minority (6.04%). This represents an improvement when compared to the 2022/23 financial year (4.74%). The 4 (7.69%) ethnic minority joiners on the March 2024 intake represented the second highest proportion of ethnic minority joiners on a single intake over the last 3 full financial years.
- With regards to female joiners, a total of 101 (41.51%) joined in 2023/24. Whilst this is a marginal reduction when compared to 2022/23 (43.50%) and 2021/22 (44.62%), it is a higher proportion than all other financial years from 2020/21 to 2009/10.
- From a force ethnic minority representation perspective, the current headcount of 158 is the highest ever end of month number on record and the proportion of 4.14% is the second highest end of year position. With regards to gender, the headcount of 1436 and proportion of 37.59% is the highest ever end of month position on record.
- There has been a reduction in overall officer turnover, however, female turnover increased in 2023/24 compared to 2022/23, albeit, positively quarter 4 was lower compared to quarter 4 in both 2023 and 2022.
- Over this quarter, a further Constable to Sergeant promotion board concluded where 11 passed and a further 8 are subject to a second casefile assessment. In addition, a promotional process for the Assistant Chief Constable for Public Protection and Criminal Justice concluded with the successful officer due to commence their post on 1st June 2024.

- Over the course of the 2023/24 full financial year there have been 66 officer promotions taking effect, of which 3 were ethnic minority (4.54%).
- Officer absence (average days lost per person) for 2023/24 was 8.98, which is lower than 2022/23 (9.49) but higher than 2021/22 (8.55).
- With regards to staff, vacancies remain across the majority of commands, however, there have been positive reductions in the vacancy rate across some of the departments previously identified as an outlier. The force is aiming to achieve a 13.00% vacancy factor in 2024/25, which may reduce the number of roles approved to be recruited, however, recruitment into key vacancies remains ongoing.
- Staff turnover reduced in 2023/24 (250 / 10.82%) when compared to 2022/23 (257 / 12.33%).
- With regards to staff absence, the average days lost per person for 2023/24 is 9.19, which is higher than in 2022/23 (8.66) but lower than 2021/22 (9.33).
- During quarter 4, a total of 2 ratified business cases moved to their new structure, 3 concluded consultation and 2 new business cases were launched.
- The number of specials has reduced from 266 to 251 (a net reduction of 15). This is predominately due to low levels of recruitment. However, positively, there has been a reduction in turnover in 2023/24 when compared to the 3 previous financial years.
- Whilst the overall headcount has reduced further, the Special Constabulary continued to contribute a significant number of hours. In March 2024, a total of 6,714 hours were worked (equivalent of 420 specials working a 16-hour month), which despite the overall headcount reduction, represents a marginal increase compared to December 2023 (6,687).
- With regards to PCSOs, the strength fte has reduced marginally from 95.98 fte to 93.45 (-5.62 under the establishment of 99.07). Recruitment however remains on hold as the force is holding an 11.00% vacancy factor for PCSOs.
- For PCSOs, the average days lost per person has increased to 13.83 for 2023/24, which is an increase of 2.94 when compared to 2022/23 (10.89). However, this is lower than in 2021/22 (15.75).

As reported previously, areas of focus going forward will be seeking to maintain and increase the number of Special Constables.

The force will continue to prioritise the achievement of the approved recruitment plan and to enhance applications from ethnic minority and female candidates.

Whilst officer absence has improved, it is an area that will continue to be monitored through the Performance Improvement Unit (PIU) and Operational Human Resources (HR).

5.0 Current Work and Performance

Officers

Establishment v Strength and Vacancies

As at 31st March 2024, the strength was 3757.63 fte, which is 2.63 fte over the establishment of 3755.00. This represents a net increase of 8.82 fte since the last HR report as at 31st December 2023.

With regards to vacancies, as identified on the HR Data pack, the Serious Crime Directorate continue to have the highest vacancy rate with -12.11%, however, positively, the position has improved when compared to 31st December 2023 (-14.69%). Learning and Development continue to have the second highest vacancy rate with -10.81% but this has remained stable when compared to the previous reporting period (-10.80%). Contact Management have the third highest vacancy rate (-11.31%), however, this is projected to reduce considerably to -4.84% by the end of April 2024 due to the new operating model introduced.

With regards to other areas, the vacancy rate has remained stable in 3 Commands and there have been reductions in the vacancy rate across 4, with the most notable being ERSOU, which has reduced from -7.18% to -1.16%.

The vacancy rate has increased in the Criminal Justice Command (-0.27% to -1.82%) and Local Policing Area West (-1.35% to -2.09%). However, both increases are relatively marginal and positively, looking forward, the vacancy rate is expected to reduce in both Commands by the end of April 2024.

Crime & Public Protection Command are only other Command to increase (from -3.50% to -4.70%) however the overall the vacancy rate is relatively low, and it is projected to remain stable over the coming months.

The Resourcing Deployment panel chaired by the Director of HR and attended by Assistant Chief Constables and Human Resources continues to meet monthly. The release of officers into vacancies agreed at this panel is dependent on a number of factors, such as current resourcing priorities and vacancy levels.

Recruitment Joiners and Applications

Since the last update, a total of 62 officers joined the force in quarter 4 (January to March 2024). This was made up of 52.00 fte new recruits that joined on 28th March 2024, 9.00 fte transfers into force and 1.00 fte re-joiner.

The total recruitment for the full 2023/24 financial year was 265.00 fte. This was made up 232 new recruits, 26 transfers in, 3 returners and 4 re-joiners. Of the 232 new recruits, 97 joined under the traditional Initial Police Learning & Development

Programme (IPLDP), 49 Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA), 42 Degree Holder Entry Programme (DHEP), 21 DHEP Investigate First, 13 PCDA Investigate First and 10 IPLDP Investigate First.

Police Uplift Programme Headcount Position (includes officers on career break)

The force ended the financial year, as at 31st March 2024, with a headcount of 3827, which was 62 higher than the minimum PUP headcount requirement of 3765 and 7 higher than the additional PUP recruitment requirement of 3820 (3765 + 55 additional recruitment).

As reported last quarter, the maintenance headcount requirement for the 2024/25 financial year is officially set at 3810. This is the original PUP maintenance headcount requirement of 3765 and the additional PUP recruitment allocation of 45 (totalling 3810).

Since the last update, Essex Police have been allocated funding for an additional 10 officers in 2024/25, taking the total PUP headcount requirement from 3810 to 3820. As a result, the recruitment plan for 2024/25 has been adjusted to ensure the increased headcount of 3820 is achieved in both September 2024 and March 2025.

The table below shows the total officer application numbers each financial year from 2019/20 to 2023/24 and includes a breakdown of applications by ethnicity grouping and gender.

| Month/Year | Total | Ethnic Minority | | Female | |
|------------|-------|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|
| | | No. | % | No. | % |
| 2019/20 | 2695 | 263 | 9.76% | 871 | 32.32% |
| 2020/21 | 3502 | 441 | 12.59% | 1239 | 35.38% |
| 2021/22 | 2099 | 238 | 11.34% | 878 | 41.83% |
| 2022/23 | 2055 | 273 | 13.28% | 844 | 41.07% |
| Apr-23 | 101 | 11 | 10.89% | 29 | 28.71% |
| May-23 | 125 | 16 | 12.80% | 52 | 41.60% |
| Jun-23 | 113 | 16 | 14.16% | 40 | 35.40% |
| Jul-23 | 170 | 25 | 14.71% | 60 | 35.29% |
| Aug-23 | 257 | 39 | 15.18% | 101 | 39.30% |
| Sep-23 | 167 | 21 | 12.57% | 69 | 41.32% |
| Oct-23 | 129 | 16 | 12.40% | 59 | 45.74% |
| Nov-23 | 222 | 40 | 18.02% | 78 | 35.14% |
| Dec-23 | 183 | 30 | 16.39% | 70 | 38.25% |
| Jan-24 | 222 | 28 | 12.61% | 99 | 44.59% |
| Feb-24 | 248 | 36 | 14.52% | 98 | 39.52% |
| Mar-24 | 242 | 44 | 18.18% | 96 | 39.67% |
| 2023/24 | 2179 | 322 | 14.78% | 851 | 39.05% |

The table demonstrates that there has been a significant increase in applications in quarter 4 of 2023/24.

In quarter 4 there were a total of 712 applications, which is an average of 237 a month. Not only is this higher than the average of all 3 previous quarters in 2023/24 but higher than the quarter 4 average in both 2022 (167) and 2023 (170).

For the full 2023/24 financial year there were a total of 2179 applications, which is higher than both 2022/23 (2055) and 2021/22 (2099).

With regards to ethnicity, the total proportion of applications from ethnic minority candidates in 2023/24 was 14.78%, which is higher than the previous 4 full financial years. For information, the 44 applications from ethnic minority candidates in March 2024 is the highest number since April 2021 and, as a proportion (18.18%), is the second highest since April 2019.

With regards to gender, the total proportion of applications from female candidates in 2023/24 was 39.05%, which is marginally lower than both 2022/23 (41.07%) and 2021/22 (41.83%), but higher than both 2020/21 (35.38%) and 2019/20 (32.32%).

Diversity – Ethnicity

Of the total 62 joiners in quarter 4, a total of 5 were ethnic minority. This equates to 8.06% and is a higher proportion than in each of the previous 3 quarters in 2023/24.

Of note, 4 of the ethnic minority joiners were new officer recruits that joined on 28th March 2024, which equates to 7.69% of the intake. This represents the second highest proportion of ethnic minority joiners on a single intake over the last 3 full financial years (2021/22 to 2023/24).

For the full 2023/24 financial year, of the total 265 officers that joined, a total of 16 were ethnic minority. This equates to 6.04% and represents an improvement when compared to 2022/23 (4.74%).

For information, the 6.04% ethnic minority joiners is 5.11 percentage points below the 2021 economically active population (EAP) of Essex (11.15%). Positively however, as cited earlier, the ethnic minority application proportion for 2023/24 was 14.78%, which is 3.63 percentage points higher than the EAP and the latest intake suggests the success rate of ethnic minority candidates is improving.

The below tables demonstrate the proportion and then the headcount of ethnic minority officers that have joined (all entry routes) for the 2023/24 and the previous 3 financial years.

| Ethnicity Group | 2023/24 | | | 2022/23 | | 2021/22 | | 2020/21 | |
|---|-----------|----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| | H'Count | % of Total Ethnic Minority | % of Total Joiners | % of Total Ethnic Minority | % of Total Joiners | % of Total Ethnic Minority | % of Total Joiners | % of Total Ethnic Minority | % of Total Joiners |
| Asian / Asian British | 4 | 25.00% | 1.51% | 35.00% | 1.65% | 48.15% | 3.49% | 27.59% | 2.60% |
| Black / African / Caribbean / Black British | 2 | 12.50% | 0.75% | 10.00% | 0.47% | 25.93% | 1.88% | 24.14% | 2.27% |
| Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Groups | 9 | 56.25% | 3.40% | 50.00% | 2.36% | 18.52% | 1.34% | 41.38% | 3.90% |
| Other Ethnic Group | 1 | 6.25% | 0.38% | 5.00% | 0.24% | 7.41% | 0.54% | 6.90% | 0.65% |
| Total | 16 | 100.00% | 6.04% | 100.00% | 4.73% | 100.00% | 7.26% | 100.00% | 9.42% |

| Ethnicity Group | 2023/24 | | | 2022/23 | 2021/22 | 2020/21 |
|---|-----------|----------------------------|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | H'Count | % of Total Ethnic Minority | % of Total Joiners | H'Count | H'Count | H'Count |
| Asian / Asian British | 4 | 25.00% | 1.51% | 7 | 13 | 8 |
| Black / African / Caribbean / Black British | 2 | 12.50% | 0.75% | 2 | 7 | 7 |
| Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Groups | 9 | 56.25% | 3.40% | 10 | 5 | 12 |
| Other Ethnic Group | 1 | 6.25% | 0.38% | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Total | 16 | 100.00% | 6.04% | 20 | 27 | 29 |

Of the 16 ethnic minority joiners, 4 are Asian / Asian British (1.51%), 2 are Black / African / Caribbean / Black British (0.75%), 9 are Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Groups (3.40%) and 1 identified as Other Ethnic Group (0.38%). Although the headcount of ethnic minority joiners is lower than in 2022/23, this is not unexpected as the total number of joiners is lower and, positively the proportion of joiners that are ethnic minority is higher in 2023/24. Similarly, when looking at the proportion of ethnic minority joiners, with the exception of Asian / Asian British, the other groups represent an improvement when compared to 2022/23.

With regards to force level officer representation, there has been a net headcount increase of 5 from 153 as at 31st December 2023 to 158 as at 31st March 2024. This is a percentage point increase of 0.13 from 4.01% to 4.14%.

For information this represents a net headcount increase of 2 (from 156 to 158 when compared to 31st March 2023 position) and a percentage point increase of 0.05 (from 4.09% to 4.14%).

Of note, the headcount of 158 ethnic minority as at 31st March 2024 is the highest ever end of month number. In addition, the proportion of ethnic minority officers (4.14%) is the second highest ever end of year position (only bettered by March 2022 at 4.17%).

With regards to the recruitment pipeline, as at 2nd April 2024, there were a total of 361 candidates in the selection process, of which 48 are ethnic minority candidates (13.30%).

Diversity – Gender

Of the total 62 joiners in quarter 4, a total of 27 were female which equates to 43.55%. For the full 2023/24 financial year, of the total 265 officers that joined, a total of 110 were female. This equates to 41.51% and, whilst this is a marginal reduction when compared to 2022/23 (43.50%) and 2021/22 (44.62%), it is a higher proportion than all other financial years from 2020/21 to 2009/10.

With regards to force level representation, the total number of female officers has increased from 1421 (37.28%) as at 31st December 2023 to 1436 (37.59%) as at 31st March 2024. This is a net headcount increase of 15 and a percentage point increase of 0.31.

When compared to the 31st March 2023 position, this represents a net headcount increase of 22 (from 1414 to 1436) and a percentage point increase of 0.50.

For information, the current headcount of 1436 and proportion of 37.59% is the highest ever end of month position on record.

With regards to the recruitment pipeline, as at 2nd April 2024, there were 152 female candidates in progress, which equates to 42.11% of all candidates. This is higher than the current force proportion of 37.59% and marginally below the 2021 Essex female EAP of 47.65%.

With regards to positive action, activity remains ongoing to further increase the number of candidates in process. Below is a summary of key activity in this area:

- To maximise recruitment opportunities the HR teams have undertaken 45 outreach / recruitment events to promote policing as a career choice between January and March 2024. These have occurred in a wide variety of venues and locations, such as Universities, Colleges, Schools and Jobcentres, using Census 2021 and other demographic data, to maximise applications from the most diverse group of people possible.

- The force has retained 77 Recruitment Ambassadors, recruited from a variety of commands and teams. HR have recently engaged command leads to provide a single point of contact to brigade ambassador activity and outreach / recruitment engagement opportunities locally. Recruitment Ambassadors continue to support ongoing outreach opportunities across the County.
- The Media & Communications team continues to run the We Value Difference recruitment campaigns across all of our owned channels and a wide variety of external platforms to attract a diverse array of applicants. The force continues to use authentic case studies of serving Essex Police officers to attract recruits and have worked closely with the Multi and Ethnic Support Association (MESA) to ensure representation in this respect.
- A Positive Action Programme is in place to support those applying for the role of police officer. The Positive Action Team, working with the Corporate Recruitment Team, are managing 80 recruitment buddies currently supporting 63 recruit applicants.
- The Positive Action Team are working in partnership with Essex County Council on pathway/promotional/case study advertisements. The ECC Magazine has now been created and this will be a double page spread for Edition 4 (work will continue with ECC for Edition 5). This partnership working will help deliver the Essex Police recruitment strategy further and wider (Partners & Communities).
- Recruitment events are managed through a joint planning diary and attendance is agreed between Corporate Recruitment, HR Innovation, Positive Action, Community Policing Team's and their Community Support Engagement Officers. Considering the 2021 Census information, creative new locations for attendance (and to maximise potential applicant numbers) have been explored. The new Community Mapping system, in conjunction with the Community Engagement tracker, managed through the Quality of Service team, will help inform future events and outreach.
- The Positive Action Team continue to support and, in some cases, lead on organising, significant force events including Autism ADHD Dyslexia awareness & acceptance events, National Inclusion Week, Black History Month and International Men's Day, all of which have their own planning teams to co-ordinate activity.
- The Positive Action Team have been working with Black & Ethnic Minority community groups within the county to promote policing as a career choice. This work has been pivotal in order to help create/achieve a diverse workforce.
- The Positive Action Team are regularly approached by internal departments to review application wording, especially when trying to recruit from our existing talent of Female/Black & Ethnic minority staff/officers. Most recently this has included the Serious Crime Directorate, Roads Policing Department and Operational Policing Command.

- Continued support/assistance with Ethnic minority progression is ongoing. This includes pre-employment stages/withdrawals/no contacts/failing to attend.
- The Positive Action Team continue to work with MESA & the National Black Police Association. These workstreams assist with achieving diversity within the organisation (internally & externally). Most recently MESA and Positive Action held an open day within OCP/Firearms whereby our Black/EM officers were invited to an OPC input and time spent on the range (looking at weapons handling and opportunities to fire the weaponry).
- A review of the recruitment pipeline has indicated that a higher proportion of ethnic minority applicants leave the recruitment process prior to being successful?? when compared to white applicants. This is most evident comparing the ratio of black to white applicants. The reasons for this are currently unknown and the force have commissioned an academic piece of research through the forces Research and Innovation Board to better understanding the reasoning behind this.. In order to reduce any disparity, the Positive Action Team are working with Corporate Recruitment and Communications and Media teams on the following activity:
 - Review of the Indeed recruitment advert has identified the need to introduce an eligibility drop down box, which will help to inform applicants of the essential eligibility criteria to join Essex Police. This will prevent ineligible applicants from entering the recruitment pipeline at the initial point, reducing the current disparity gap. An example of this is where applicants are applying for police officer roles when they haven't resided in the UK for three years or more, and subsequently failing the process on eligibility further down the recruitment pipeline.
 - Creation of an information video which will be attached to the front end of the recruitment application process. The video will be recorded with serving police officers from an ethnic minority background and will cover the important elements of the process, including eligibility requirements, what to expect throughout the process and the level of support that is available, specifically for applicants from under-represented groups.
 - Working with the College of Policing and Essex Police Business Services to mitigate an identified issue with recruitment process emails not being received by applicants, which either delay the process or prevent the applicant from progressing entirely.
 - Reviewing the current training provided to Recruitment Buddies across the force to ensure it is streamlined and that applicants are being provided with the right information and support through the recruitment process and beyond.
 - Commencement of 'Black Community Discussion Circles' to better understand the barriers to black people joining the police service and how we can overcome these together. This includes working with black and ethnic minority community groups across the county to promote policing

as a career of choice, provide clearer information on the support which is available both throughout the recruitment process and subsequently upon joining.

2024/25 Recruitment Plan

The table below shows the agreed recruitment plan for 2024/25. It is made up of 4 intakes totalling 252.00 fte (June: 52, September: 71, December: 64 & March: 65), as well as a total of 18.00 fte projected transfers in / re-joiners / returners. The plan also assumes an attrition profile of 23.00 fte a month, however, if attrition continues to track lower, as has in recent months, then the profile will be adjusted accordingly, in consultation with Finance through the monthly Volume Recruitment meeting.

| | 2024/25 | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Police | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar |
| Previous Month End Str FTE | 3757.63 | 3736.63 | 3713.63 | 3744.63 | 3722.63 | 3701.63 | 3750.63 | 3729.63 | 3707.63 | 3750.63 | 3728.63 | 3707.63 |
| Projected Leavers | 23.00 | 23.00 | 23.00 | 23.00 | 23.00 | 23.00 | 23.00 | 23.00 | 23.00 | 23.00 | 23.00 | 23.00 |
| Total Projected Joiners | | | 52.00 | | | 71.00 | | | 64.00 | | | 65.00 |
| Projected Transfers In / Returners | 2.00 | 1.00 | 2.00 | 1.00 | 2.00 | 1.00 | 2.00 | 1.00 | 2.00 | 1.00 | 2.00 | 1.00 |
| Projected Month End Str FTE | 3736.63 | 3713.63 | 3744.63 | 3722.63 | 3701.63 | 3750.63 | 3729.63 | 3707.63 | 3750.63 | 3728.63 | 3707.63 | 3750.63 |
| 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 | -18.37 | -41.37 | -10.37 | -32.37 | -53.37 | -4.37 | -25.37 | -47.37 | -4.37 | -26.37 | -47.37 | -4.37 |
| Projected Uplift Headcount | 3806 | 3783 | 3814 | 3792 | 3771 | 3820 | 3799 | 3777 | 3820 | 3798 | 3777 | 3820 |
| Variance against Uplift Requirement (3810) | -4 | -27 | 4 | -18 | -39 | 10 | -11 | -33 | 10 | -12 | -33 | 10 |
| Variance against Addition Recruitment (3820) | -14 | -37 | -6 | -28 | -49 | 0 | -21 | -43 | 0 | -22 | -43 | 0 |

The first intake in 2024/25 is scheduled for 24th June 2024 of up to 52.00 fte. At the time of writing, there are 43 candidates in the pre-employment (clearance) stage, excluding 22 candidates ‘on hold’ due to vetting, medical related issues, or other matters.

In addition, in pre-selection there is a total of 242 candidates in the pipeline. Noting the current pass rates, of the 242, it is projected 77 candidates currently undertaking the assessment processes will be viable for the June 2024 intake within the necessary timeframes. Therefore, when combining this with candidates in pre-selection, there are a total of 120 potential candidates for the June 2024 intake. It should be noted however, this is based on projections around previous pass rates and current applied candidates and is therefore subject to change.

All departments within the recruitment process continue to push forward and prioritise activity to secure the candidates for 24th June 2024 intake, with oversight through corporate recruitment and Head of Resourcing. The teams retain the ambition of progressing candidates through the pipeline to offer stage, ideally achieving 100% fulfilment, 4 weeks ahead of intake date.

For information, following the recent Angiolini report, the force has confirmed all new officer recruits, from 1st April 2024 onwards, are only to be offered with CTC clearance returned.

Note, there are a further 34 candidates in process for the September 2024 intake due to candidates pending academic qualification results in August 2024.

Turnover

In 2023/24, a total of 254 officers left the force. This is a turnover rate of 6.66% and is a reduction when compared to 2022/23 (6.89%). Whilst it is higher than the turnover in both 2021/22 (6.00%) and 2020/21 (5.68%), it is lower than each financial year from 2019/20 to 2014/15.

The total of 254 leavers is an average of 21 a month, which is under the projection of 23.00.

With regards to ethnicity, since the last update, as at 31st December 2023, there was only 1 ethnic minority leaver in quarter 4 of 2023/24. This is lower than the same period in both 2023 (2) and 2022 (5). For the full 2023/24 financial year a total of 15 ethnic minority officers left, which is lower than 2022/23 (17) and marginally higher than 2021/22 (12).

Of the 15 total leavers, 7 resigned, 3 transferred to other forces, 2 were ill-health retired, 2 were dismissed and 1 retired. As reported last quarter, of the 7 resignations, detailed analysis identifies no specific areas of concern with a range of detailed reasons for leaving provided.

Looking forward there are currently 3 confirmed resignations, of which 2 are in April 2024 and 1 in May 2024.

With regards to gender, it was reported last quarter that the female turnover rate of 5.22% (74 leavers) for the period April to December 2023 was higher than the same period in the previous 4 financial years. Positively however, there was a reduction in leavers in quarter 4 of 2023/24 with just 12 female officers leaving, which is lower than the same period in 2023 (16) and 2022 (21).

That said, whilst the number of leavers did reduce in the latest quarter, the high number of leavers seen in the first 3 quarters has contributed to a total of 86 female officer leavers for the full financial 2023/24 financial year. This is a turnover rate of 6.04%, which is higher than 2022/23 (5.10%) and the previous 3 financial years to that. For information however, the latest turnover position isn't a complete outlier as it is lower than the turnover rate seen in each financial year from 2016/17 to 2018/19. In addition, it should be noted, that whilst female turnover has increased in 2023/24 (6.04%), it is lower than male turnover (7.03%).

Whilst turnover for female officers is relatively high, detailed exit analysis shows a wide range of reasons for leaving were provided with no specific areas of concern identified. This is demonstrated by the fact there were 16 different primary reasons for leaving. Of the 69 resignations / transfers in 2023/24, unhappy at work accounted for the highest with 12, followed by work / life balance (9), securing alternative employment for aspirational reasons (7) personal circumstances (7), financial reason (6) and 5 each for prefer not to say, other, and relocation.

With regards to female officers leaving due to being unhappy at work, this was also the primary reason for leaving in 2022/23 so not an emerging area of concern and is also the most common reason for males leaving (along with relocation).

In light of the increased female leavers during 2023/24, the full exit analysis paper, which is due to be completed and presented by the end of May 2024, will look at analysing detailed reasons for leaving specifically by gender to determine if there are any specific issues or disproportionality between female and male leavers. Therefore, an update on this can be provided in the next quarterly HR Update once the analysis has concluded.

The force Retention Ambassador programme continues to deliver effective early interventions. To date (31st March 2024) there are 34 ambassadors from across 12 commands, covering a wide range of roles and ranks (from Constable to Chief Superintendent). Of the Retention Ambassadors, 16 are female (47%) and 2 are ethnic minority (6%). There have been 85 interventions with individuals since the launch in June 2023. Only 13 of the individuals have, to date, proceeded to leave the organisation and only a further 18 indicate an ongoing intention to do so. This indicates a 64% retention success rate following an intervention.

More broadly the force highlights retention initiatives and the positive aspects of working within the organisation through its 'We Value You' SharePoint web pages. This includes information, advice, and guidance about:

- Health and Wellbeing support; Financial wellbeing support; Development opportunities; Promotional opportunities; Flexible working; Career breaks; Posting exchange initiative

Police Officer Promotions

It was reported last quarter that a promotional process for Constable to Sergeants was completed in quarter 3 (October to December 2023) resulting in 43 officers being successful for promotion. That update also identified a further 17 officers that were successful at the promotion validation discussion, however their future promotion was subject to passing the casefile assessment at their second attempt in January 2024.

Since that update, it has been confirmed that 16 of the 17 passed the second attempt, with the final individual due to resit in the coming weeks. Subject to that individual passing, the total promotion pool for promoting to the rank of Sergeant, will be 60, with all successful officers completing the Be The Change course, ahead of starting their promotional postings in April – May 2024.

In the latest quarter (January 2024 to March 2024), a further promotional process for Constable to Sergeants was completed, of which 11 passed with a further 8 requiring a second casefile assessment, which is due to take place early April 2024. Whilst the number is subject change, if all pass, this would be an additional 19 (on top of the previously cited 60), however their postings will not commence until June 2024 at the earliest.

Also in this quarter, a promotional process for the Assistant Chief Constable for Public Protection and Criminal Justice concluded with the successful individual due to officially start in the role on 1st June 2024.

The table overpage shows the promotions by rank and ethnicity from 2018/19 to 2023/24. Please note, the above-mentioned promotions to Sergeant and ACC will not be shown as those individuals are yet to commence their promotional postings. They will appear in the 2024/25 quarter 1 update.

| Financial Year | Promotion To | Ethnic Minority H'Count | White Grouped H'Count | Declined to State H'Count | Total H'Count | Ethnic Minority % |
|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 2018/2019 | Chief Officers | | 2 | | 2 | 0.00% |
| | Chief Superintendent | | 2 | | 2 | 0.00% |
| | Superintendent | | 6 | | 6 | 0.00% |
| | Chief Inspector | | 8 | | 8 | 0.00% |
| | Inspector | 2 | 20 | | 22 | 9.09% |
| | Sergeant | 2 | 56 | | 58 | 3.45% |
| 2018/2019 Total | | 4 | 94 | 0 | 98 | 4.08% |
| 2019/20 | Chief Officers | | | | 0 | - |
| | Chief Superintendent | | 2 | | 2 | 0.00% |
| | Superintendent | | 9 | | 9 | 0.00% |
| | Chief Inspector | 1 | 13 | | 14 | 7.14% |
| | Inspector | 1 | 19 | | 20 | 5.00% |
| | Sergeant | | 74 | 1 | 75 | 0.00% |
| 2019/2020 Total | | 2 | 117 | 1 | 120 | 1.67% |
| 2020/2021 | Chief Officers | | 1 | | 1 | 0.00% |
| | Chief Superintendent | 1 | 3 | | 4 | 25.00% |
| | Superintendent | | | | 0 | - |
| | Chief Inspector | | 6 | | 6 | 0.00% |
| | Inspector | | 20 | | 20 | 0.00% |
| | Sergeant | 3 | 61 | | 64 | 4.69% |
| 2020/2021 Total | | 4 | 91 | 0 | 95 | 4.21% |

| Financial Year | Promotion To | Ethnic Minority H'Count | White Grouped H'Count | Declined to State H'Count | Total H'Count | Ethnic Minority % |
|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 2021/2022 | Chief Officers | | 1 | | 1 | 0.00% |
| | Chief Superintendent | | 2 | | 2 | 0.00% |
| | Superintendent | 1 | 5 | | 6 | 16.67% |
| | Chief Inspector | 1 | 8 | 1 | 10 | 10.00% |
| | Inspector | | 38 | 1 | 39 | 0.00% |
| | Sergeant | 3 | 33 | | 36 | 8.33% |
| 2021/2022 Total | | 5 | 87 | 2 | 94 | 5.32% |
| 2022/2023 | Chief Officers | | 1 | | 1 | 0.00% |
| | Chief Superintendent | 1 | 3 | | 4 | 25.00% |
| | Superintendent | 1 | 8 | | 9 | 11.11% |
| | Chief Inspector | | 9 | 1 | 10 | 0.00% |
| | Inspector | 2 | 29 | 1 | 32 | 6.25% |
| | Sergeant | 5 | 116 | 4 | 125 | 4.00% |
| 2022/2023 Total | | 9 | 166 | 6 | 181 | 4.97% |
| 2023/2024 | Chief Officers | | | | 0 | - |
| | Chief Superintendent | | 1 | | 1 | 0.00% |
| | Superintendent | | 2 | | 2 | 0.00% |
| | Chief Inspector | 1 | 9 | 1 | 11 | 9.09% |
| | Inspector | 2 | 32 | | 34 | 5.88% |
| | Sergeant | | 18 | | 18 | 0.00% |
| 2023/2024 Total | | 3 | 62 | 1 | 66 | 4.55% |

The table demonstrates that there have been 66 promotions in the 2023/24 financial year. As stated above, this is relatively low compared to previous years due to the timings of the Sergeant promotional postings, which will see up to a further 79 be reflected in the 2024/25 data. Of the 66, a total of 3 were ethnic minority (4.55%), which is marginally lower than the previous 2 financial years but higher than 2020/21, 2019/20 and 2018/19. Of the 3 ethnic minority promotions, 2 were to the rank of Inspector (5.88%) and 1 to Chief Inspector (9.09%).

Senior Officer Movement / Transfers

The following table shows the number of Chief Inspectors and above that have changed roles (either on promotion or transfer) by rank and quarter. It should be noted, the below does not include individuals who have reverted from a temporary rank and does not include individuals who were promoted and remained in post (i.e. a Temporary Chief Inspector being promoted substantively and remaining in role).

| Category | Rank | 2022/23 | | | | | 2023/24 | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| | | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Total | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 |
| Promotion (inc Tmp Promotions) | Chief Superintendent | | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | | | 1 |
| | Superintendent | 3 | | | | 3 | | | 1 | 3 |
| | Chief Inspector | 3 | | | | 3 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 4 |
| Promoted Total | | 6 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 7 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 8 |
| Transferred | Chief Officer | | | | 2 | 2 | | | | |
| | Chief Superintendent | | 1 | | | 1 | 2 | | | |
| | Superintendent | 4 | 3 | | | 7 | 6 | | | |
| | Chief Inspector | 9 | 1 | 8 | 4 | 22 | | 4 | 1 | |
| Promoted Total | | 13 | 5 | 8 | 6 | 32 | 8 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| Grand Total | | 19 | 5 | 9 | 6 | 39 | 11 | 11 | 3 | 8 |

The table demonstrates that in quarter 4 of 2023/24, a total of 8 senior officers changed roles. Of the 8, a total of 4 were temporary promotion to Chief Inspector, of which all remained in the Command of their substantive rank. A total of 3 were to Superintendent, of which 2 were temporary and 1 was substantive. Note, the substantive Superintendent promotion was not stated in the earlier section as the process did not commence or conclude in quarter 4. The individual was successful earlier in the financial year and officially took up their promotion posting in January 2024. The final senior officer move was a temporary promotion to Chief Superintendent.

As previously reported, officers will continue to seek promotion and career changes for a variety of reasons and therefore it is expected that movement will continue to take place. However, the latest quarter's data demonstrates the overall position is relatively stable when compared to previous quarters, with transfers particularly being the lowest number over the time period.

Absence

The average days lost per person in 2023/24 was 8.98, which is lower than 2022/23 (9.49) and marginally higher than 2021/22 (8.55).

The below table shows the total officer payroll hours lost and the percentage of available contracted hours lost for 2023/24, as well as 2022/23 and 2021/22.

| Employee Group | 2021/22 | | 2022/23 | | 2023/24 | | Variance 2023/24 v 2022/23 | | Variance 2023/24 v 2021/22 | |
|----------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | Payroll Hours Lost | % of Available Contracted Hrs Lost | Payroll Hours Lost | % of Available Contracted Hrs Lost | Payroll Hours Lost | % of Available Contracted Hrs Lost | Payroll Hours Lost | % of Available Contracted Hrs Lost | Payroll Hours Lost | % of Available Contracted Hrs Lost |
| Police | 244024.92 | 3.95% | 282791.41 | 4.38% | 273902.37 | 4.13% | -8889.04 | -0.25% | 29877.45 | 0.18% |

The figures demonstrate that there has been a reduction in the percentage of contracted hours lost to sickness for 2023/24 (4.13%) when compared to the same period in 2022/23 (4.38%).

With regards to absence terms, there has been a reduction in average days lost per person across all three terms for 2023/24 when compared to 2022/23. Short-term has reduced from 2.80 to 2.68, medium-term from 1.58 to 1.35 and long-term from 5.11 to 4.94.

Psychological related absences continue to account for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost (39.07%), which is a reduction when compared to 2022/23 (40.19%). When measured as average days lost per person it is 3.51, which represents a reduction when compared to the previous year (3.82). For information, whilst it has reduced it is still higher than both 2021/22 (3.08) and 2020/21 (2.62), however as previously reported, overall absence was lower in these periods.

Respiratory related absences remain the second highest proportion of payroll hours lost with 15.96%, as it did for the 2022/23 report. However, this is a reduction when compared to 2022/23 (20.45%). When measured as average days lost per person it is also the second highest absence reason and has reduced to 1.43 from 1.94.

Below is summary of the 12 general absence reasons for 2023/24 when compared to 2022/23:

- Only 4 have increased by more than 0.01 average days lost per person, which are digestive related absences, genito urinary related absences, headache, migraine and miscellaneous related absences.
- 1 has increased by just 0.01 average days lost per person (skin related absence)
- Nervous system absences have reduced by 0.10, followed by cardiac/circulatory related absence, infectious disease absence and ear/eye related absence, which have all reduced by 0.03 and musculo/skeletal related absence, which has reduced by 0.01.
- Psychological related absences have reduced by 0.31 average days lost per person, with the most significant reduction being respiratory related absence (a reduction of 0.51), as identified above.

With regards to Commands, of the 20, a total of 6 have higher average days lost per person in 2023/24 when compared to 2022/23. However, of those, 1 is a Command with an average headcount of less than 10, meaning there are much greater fluctuations in absence that can be caused by just one individual being absent. Of the remaining 4, the biggest increase is Local Policing Support Unit, which has gone from 7.68 average days lost per person to 13.09 (an increase of 5.41), followed by Criminal Justice (from 5.70 to 10.76) and then ERSOU (from 6.89 to 8.35).

The three commands listed on the HR Strategic Dashboard are those with the current highest average days lost per person for 2023/24 (for commands with average headcounts of more than 10). However, it should be noted that, positively, two have reduced when compared to 2022/23.

Contact Management has always historically had high levels of absence and, for the 2023/24 financial year, has the highest average days lost per person with 18.15. However, positively they have seen a slight reduction in absence when compared to 2022/23 (reducing by 0.18 average days lost per person from 18.33 to 18.15).

Local Policing Support Unit has the second highest level of absence with 13.09, and this has increased, as detailed above, from 7.68. Continuous Improvement and Analytics have the third highest average days lost per person (11.58) however, this is a significant reduction of 14.27 when compared to 2022/23 (25.85). Both Commands however have low overall headcounts so bigger fluctuations in absence are expected.

Of the Local Policing Areas (LPAs), the average days lost person has reduced in both LPA North (from 10.71 to 10.59) and LPA South (from 8.78 to 8.18). In contrast however, LPA West have increased from 9.01 to 9.27.

For LPA West, the increase for 2023/24, when compared to last year, is an increase of 574 payroll hours lost, which can largely be attributed to an increase of 2520 payroll hours lost for psychological related absence and an increase of 1351 payroll hours for digestive related absence. However, these are also offset by significant reductions in some other absence reasons, most notably -3441 hours for musculo/skeletal related absence and -2117 hours for respiratory related absence.

Adjusted and Recuperative Duties

The number (headcount) of officers on recuperative and adjusted duties has reduced from 523 as at 31st December 2023 to 512 as at 31st March 2024. This equates to 13.40% of the total force headcount as at 31st March 2024 (3820). The only significant variations across any of the commands have been increases in LPA South (increasing from 45 to 53) and LPA North (reducing from 105 to 95).

As reported in previous updates, Operational HR and the Performance Improvement Unit (PIU) continue to advise on these cases through the Attendance Management Group (AMG) process.

Staff and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)

Establishment v Strength and Vacancies

Since the last update as at 31st December 2023, the establishment has reduced by 22.19 fte from 2346.54 to 2324.35, with the overall strength fte reducing by a similar amount (-24.10) from 2106.29 to 2082.19. As a result, the overall vacancy factor has increased marginally from -10.24% to -10.42%.

With regards to the establishment reduction, a total of 22.14 fte were removed as part of force savings, of which 9.17 were IT, 6.76 Learning Development, 3.00 OPC and then 3.20 across 4 other Commands. Note, there were other minor fluctuations in the establishment (net reduction of -0.06 fte) in other Commands during this quarter.

As reported in the previous 2 quarters, the Command with the highest vacancy rate is Learning & Development (-22.90%). However, this does represent a reduction when compared to the last HR update (-29.74%), which is predominately due to the establishment reduction cited above. Human Resources did drop out of the top 3 highest vacancy rates at the end of Quarter 3; however, they now have the second highest vacancy rate with -16.90% as at 31st March 2024 (an increase from -13.05%). The Serious Crime Directorate continue to have a high vacancy rate; however this has reduced for the second consecutive quarter from -16.29% as at 31st December 2023 to -14.81% as at 31st March 2024.

Continuous Improvement and Analytics were identified in the top 3 last quarter however positively their vacancy rate has reduced from -13.13% to -9.15%.

Of the remaining 8 Commands (those with a headcount of greater than 10), the most notable increase in vacancy rate is within Contact Management, which has increased from -2.70% to -9.17%. However, it is worth noting that the new Contact

Management structure launched on 2nd April 2024 and recruitment into roles remains ongoing. The next volume recruitment is scheduled for 3rd June 2024 of up to 18.00 fte followed by a further intake on 19th August 2023 of up to 18.00 fte. Outside of volume recruitment, there are a number of vacancies within the PNC Support Officer role, however 7 candidates have been successful for roles, of which 2 are internal and awaiting start dates and 5 are external and currently undergoing pre-employment checks. There are also vacancies within the Customer Contact Administrator role, however, having only filled 1 role from an internal advert this is now progressing to external recruitment. Therefore, whilst Contact Management is an outlier, the ongoing recruitment activity outline should result in the vacancy rate reducing throughout quarters 1 and 2 of 2024/25.

Crime & Public Protection Commands vacancy rate has increased from -7.48% to -11.56%, as well as Operational Policing Command from -12.98% to -14.06%.

Positively, there have been reductions in the vacancy rate within the Essex Criminal Justice Command (from -7.72% to -4.94%), Local Policing Support (from -11.02% to -6.44%), Professionalism (from -9.55% to -8.74%) and Support Services (from -12.58% to -9.32%).

The top vacancies in force by department and role continue to be reported through the Strategic Change Coordination Board (SCCB) chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable.

For information, at the last Efficiency & Savings Board it was reported that the force was tracking above its vacancy factor ambition of 11.00% in 2023/24. Note, this differs slightly to the vacancy factor reported on the HR Strategic Dashboard (-10.42%) due to how the vacancy factor is reported against the official budget and the reporting point in time. However, looking forward, whilst recently every effort has been made to fill vacancies, the force is now working towards achieving a 13.00% overall staff vacancy factor (with certain Command / Department exceptions) throughout 2024/25. Therefore, the weekly vacancy panel attended by Strategic Change, Corporate Finance and Human Resources now places more scrutiny on the vacancy factor when considering requests to advertise and fill roles. As a result, whilst it is expected that key vacancies will continue to be filled, a proportionate increase in the overall vacancy rate is likely in 2024/25 to assist with achieving the force vacancy rate ambition of 13.00%.

With regards to PCSOs, the strength has reduced from 95.88 fte as at 31st December 2023 to 93.45 as at 31st March 2024 (-5.62 under the establishment of 99.07). This is a vacancy rate of -5.67%. The force is holding an 11.00% vacancy rate on PCSOs, therefore there are no plans to recruit at this stage.

Diversity - Ethnicity and Gender

With regards to staff, the number of ethnic minority staff has reduced slightly to 93 and as a proportion of the total staff workforce it has reduced from 4.10% as at 31st December 2023 to 4.06% as at 31st March 2024. With regards to gender, the headcount and proportion has reduced from 1564 / 67.50% as at 31st December

2023 to 1549 / 67.61% as at 31st March 2024. This is a headcount reduction of 15 but a percentage point increase of 0.11.

With regards to PCSOs, the ethnic minority headcount has remained at 0. The number of female PCSOs has reduced by 2 from 67 to 65, and as a proportion against the total PCSO headcount from 63.81% to 63.73%.

Turnover

For the 2023/24 financial year, a total of 250 staff left, which is a turnover rate of 10.82%. Whilst this is lower than the 2022/23 financial year (257 / 12.33%) it is higher than the 5 years prior to that from 2017/18 to 2020/21.

The average monthly leavers for staff during 2023/24 was 21. As previously reported, there was a spike in attrition in the month of September 2023 (36), which was then followed by a further 30 leavers in October 2023. However, attrition reduced significantly in November 2023 (11) and December 2023 (14). During the last quarter of the financial year attrition fluctuated with 20 leavers in January, 15 in February and 27 in March.

Of the 250 leavers during 2023/24, a large proportion (75 / 30.00%) are from Contact Management. However, Contact Management is one of the biggest Commands in force and has always historically had relatively high levels of turnover, therefore this is not deemed an outlier or area of concern. In fact, positively, the 75 leavers for this period represents a significant reduction when compared to the same period in 2022 where 86 left.

Other departments with high numbers of leavers (measured as headcount) are Business Services (18), however this is lower than in 2022/23 (31), as well as Custody (13 leavers) and IT (11 leavers), both of which are only marginally higher than 2022/23.

For PCSOs, there have just been just 6 leavers this financial year (2023/24). This is the lowest level of leavers since the reduced establishment took effect in 2017.

Absence

With regards to staff absence, the average days lost per person for 2023/24 is 9.19, which is higher than in 2022/23 (8.66) but lower than 2021/22 (9.33).

The below table shows the total payroll hours lost and the percentage of available contracted hours lost for 2023/24 compared to 2022/23 and 2021/22:

| Employee Group | 2021/22 | | 2022/23 | | 2023/24 | | Variance 2023/24 v 2022/23 | | Variance 2023/24 v 2021/22 | |
|----------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | Payroll Hours Lost | % of Available Contracted Hrs Lost | Payroll Hours Lost | % of Available Contracted Hrs Lost | Payroll Hours Lost | % of Available Contracted Hrs Lost | Payroll Hours Lost | % of Available Contracted Hrs Lost | Payroll Hours Lost | % of Available Contracted Hrs Lost |
| Staff | 161242.72 | 4.63% | 149584.91 | 4.31% | 156873.22 | 4.58% | 7288.31 | 0.26% | -4369.50 | -0.06% |

The figures demonstrate that 4.58% of contracted hours available were lost to sickness absence for 2023/24, which is a slight increase when compared to 2022/23 (4.31%) but a slight reduction when compared to 2021/22 (4.63%).

With regards to absence term, there has been an increase in long-term absence (from 3.98 average days lost per person to 4.90) but reductions in short-term and medium-term absence.

For staff, psychological related absence continues to account for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost (27.17%), and the average days lost per person has increased slightly from 2.39 for 2022/23 to 2.50 for 2023/24. Respiratory related absences account for the second highest proportion of payroll hours lost (16.72%) but the average days lost per person has reduced from 2.27 for 2022/23 to 1.54 for 2023/24.

There have been increases in 9 of the 12 general absence reasons, with 7 of the categories increasing by more than 0.04 average days lost per person (cardiac/circulatory, ear/eye, genito urinary, infectious disease, miscellaneous, nervous system and psychological).

Miscellaneous absence has increased by the most and the main reason for the increase is due to cancer (+4073 hours) and inflammation (+1400 hours).

The main reasons for the increases in the other absence categories are detailed below:

- Cardiac/circulatory: operation (+1394 hours), hospital treatment (+1341 hours) and chest pains (+1037 hours)
- Ear/eye: dizziness (+1181 hours), Meniere's disease (+527 hours) and blurred vision (+444 hours)
- Genito urinary: post operative recovery (+1032 hours), endometriosis (+575 hours) and gynaecological (+544 hours)
- Infectious disease: post operative recovery (+927 hours), hospital treatment (+503 hours) and operation (+396 hours)
- Nervous system: seizure (+1837 hours)
- Psychological: stress (+2904 hours), mental health (+2384 hours) and M.E./chronic fatigue (+1475 hours)

Of the 19 Commands, 7 have higher average days lost per person for 2023/24 when compared to 2022/23.

Contact Management have remained the Command (of those with higher average headcounts) with the highest average days lost per person (13.92). Positively, this is lower than in 2022/23 (14.21) and 2021/22 (14.78). The average headcount in Contact Management (514) accounts for 22.28% of the total staff headcount and the Command is consistently in the top 3 Commands with the highest average days lost per person. Therefore, whilst high, this is not a new or emerging area of concern. The absence reasons that account for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost in this Command are psychological related absence (30.84%) and respiratory related absence (18.42%).

Crime and Public Protection Command (C&PP) has the second highest average days lost per person for 2023/24 with 9.94, which is an increase when compared to 2022/23 (6.98), but a reduction when compared to 2021/22 (10.03). The absence reasons that account for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost in C&PP are psychological related absence (25.96%), respiratory related absence (15.50%) and miscellaneous absence (15.24%).

Criminal Justice Command remain the Command with the third highest average days lost per person at 9.28. This is slightly higher than 2022/23 (9.10) but a reduction when compared to 2021/22 (12.07). The reasons that account for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost in Criminal Justice are similar to Contact Management and C&PP being psychological related absence (32.96%) and respiratory related absence (14.79%).

For PCSOs, the average days lost per person has increased to 13.83 for 2023/24, which is an increase of 2.94 when compared to 2022/23 (10.89). However, this is lower than in 2021/22 (15.75).

The below table shows the total payroll hours lost and the % of available contracted hours lost for 2023/24 compared to 2022/23 and 2021/22.

| Employee Group | 2021/22 | | 2022/23 | | 2023/24 | | Variance 2023/24 v 2022/23 | | Variance 2023/24 v 2021/22 | |
|----------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | Payroll Hours Lost | % of Available Contracted Hrs Lost | Payroll Hours Lost | % of Available Contracted Hrs Lost | Payroll Hours Lost | % of Available Contracted Hrs Lost | Payroll Hours Lost | % of Available Contracted Hrs Lost | Payroll Hours Lost | % of Available Contracted Hrs Lost |
| PCSO | 12411.44 | 7.77% | 8303.83 | 5.45% | 10491.89 | 6.88% | 2188.06 | 1.43% | -1919.55 | -0.89% |

The figures demonstrate that 6.88% of contracted hours available were lost to sickness absence for 2023/24, which is an increase when compared to 2022/23 (5.45%) but a reduction to 2021/22 (7.77%).

For PCSOs, psychological related absence also accounts for the highest proportion of payroll hours lost (34.67%), followed by musculo/skeletal related absence (17.59%). In terms of average days lost per person, psychological absence has increased from 1.52 for 2022/23 to 4.80 for 2023/24 and average days lost for musculo/skeletal related absence have increased from 1.40 to 2.43.

Although psychological related absence accounts for the highest proportion and average days lost per person for PCSOs in 2023/24 there are only 24 instances of absence within this category. The main reason for psychological absence is due to stress, which accounts for 78.36% of the payroll hours lost in this category. This is followed by anxiety, which accounts for 10.47% and mental health, which accounts for 10.34%. Of the individuals that have been absent for psychological related absence, only 2 remained absent from work at the time of writing the report (7th April 2024).

Musculo/skeletal related absence accounts for the second highest proportion of payroll hours lost, but there have only been 20 instances of this absence 2023/24

and the highest proportion of payroll hours lost for this absence relates to broken bones (37.53%) and fractures (34.78%). Of these, only 1 individual remains absent from work at the time of writing (7th April 2024).

Restricted Duties

The number of staff on restricted duties has increased from 71 as at 31st December 2023 to 80 as at 31st March 2024 and PCSOs have increased slightly from 3 to 5 for the same periods.

As per the update under the officer's section, Operational HR and the PIU continue to advise on these cases through the AMG process.

Performance Improvement Unit (PIU) and Operational HR Absence Update (Officers and Staff)

PIU and Operational HR teams are working together to monitor absence through attendance at local Attendance and Wellbeing Management Group Meetings (AWMG) across all Commands and Departments. An added focus has been placed on Officers and staff on recuperative duties to ensure that any individual that has been on recuperative duties in excess of 6 months is reviewed. Local Managers, supported by PIU and Operational HR, will assess the suitability of their current roles to establish if they can be adjusted, returned to full operational duties and assess any reasonable adjustments to support this.

HR Advisers and PIU case advisers continue to provide detailed advice on any case that has met absence triggers and ensure that the administration processes and the actual management of individuals absence is in line with the attendance policy.

Focus on absence is discussed at the Bi-monthly absence oversight meeting to establish which commands and departments have the highest absence and to consider any support that can be offered. This feeds into the quarterly Attendance and Wellbeing board chaired by Director of HR, which looks at the support that can be offered by both Health Services and HR/PIU.

As at 8th April 2024, the number of formal stages for both Unsatisfactory Performance Procedures (UPP) or Capability are consistently being applied with 72 formal processes underway.

The interventions and absence support work are also subject to the continuing Star Chamber Reviews, chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable, whereby cases of long-term absence or high Bradford Score are scrutinised. The last of these was held on 5th April 2024 and updates were given to track progress of previously heard cases and as well as continued scrutiny on new cases. In addition, Officers on recuperative duties over 6 months were reviewed to understand the current position.

Senior Staff Movement / Transfers (P05 Roles and Above)

With regards to senior police staff movement / transfers, there were 0 in quarter 4 of 2024/25. There has been 1 external joiner into the role of 7F Category Specialist.

Business Case Update

During the period 1st January 2024 to 31st March 2024, 1 redundancy has been approved. The breakdown of Business Cases during the period are as follows:

The following ratified business cases moved to their new structures during this period 1st January 2024 to 31st March 2024:

- **Operational Policing Command:** Business Case to remove one police staff post from the Specialist Operations Department. Consultation closed on 6th December 2023. One affected member of staff given notice and redeployment status until 7th March 2024. The individual was redeployed into an alternative role.
- **SCD Holmes shift:** Consultation commenced 13th November 2023 with the proposal to remove shift working arrangements and associated allowances for two Disclosure Officers. Outcomes were confirmed on 18th December 2023; new arrangements were implemented on 17th March 2024.

Three business cases have concluded consultation and remain in implementation/notice period pending start date of new structures during this period:

- **Contact Management Command:** Proposal to amend the Operating Model for call handling and desk-based investigation. 357 members of staff are impacted by the change. Consultation closed on 24th August 2023; 36 counter proposals were received and considered; the business case was re-issued with amendments on 27th October 2023. Two individuals have been displaced as part of the selection process; work continues to identify alternative roles. The Target Operating Model comes into effect on 2nd April 2024.
- **SCD Intelligence Bureau:** Consultation to standardise shift patterns and improve efficiencies for 62 staff (34 Essex/28 Kent). Consultation closed 18th December 2023. No appeals were received. The new shift pattern comes into force on 9th June 2024.
- **SCD MSHT:** Consultation proposed to remove 4 posts, which impacts 5 individuals. Consultation closed on 18th December 2023. Individuals issued with notice and redeployment status as of 2nd January 2024. So far, three individuals were redeployed, the other two remain at risk of redundancy. The notice period ends on the 3rd April 2024.

Two business case launched during this period:

- **SCD Fingerprints Relocation:** Consultation proposing a location change from Chelmsford FHQ to Laindon for 28 staff commenced 5th March 2024. It is scheduled that final outcomes will be confirmed by 31st May 2024. The proposed relocation date is anticipated to be early September 2024.
- **Athena Development Team:** Consultation launched 19th January 2024 affecting three members of staff with the reduction of two staff posts. Consultation closed

on 19th February 2024. Selection Processes are due to be concluded by the end of April 2024. The implementation date for the new structure is scheduled for 1st October 2024.

Specials Headcount and Turnover

As at 31st March 2024, there were 251 specials in post on SAP, which is a net reduction of 15 when compared to the position as at 31st December 2023 (266). As previously reported the net reduction continues to be a combination of turnover and a reduction in recruitment.

With regards to attrition, there were 107 leavers shown on SAP in 2023/24, which is a turnover rate of 37.02%. This is not only lower than in 2022/23 (170 / 42.93%) but also lower than the previous 2 financial years.

Of the 107 leavers, the majority (87 / 81.31%) resigned, with 15 (14.02%) joining Essex police as a new officer recruit, 4 retiring and 1 failing their probation. Of note, whilst the overall turnover is much lower during this period, the proportion of specials leaving to join Essex police as a new officer recruit (14.12%) is much lower than the 2022/23 financial year (31.18%).

Specials Duty Hours

A total of 80,026 duty hours were worked for 2023/24, which equates to 23.80 average hours per officer. As expected, due to the overall lower headcount this is a reduction when compared to the same period last year (119,125 hours worked / average of 26.12 per officer). For information, the total duty hours worked in March 2024 of 6,714 is the equivalent of 420 specials working a 16-hour month, which is a slight increase compared to the December 2023 position (6,684 / 418).

Recruitment and Applications

In relation to recruitment, there were 32 joiners this financial year (2023/24), which is the same as in 2022/23. Since the last update 5 have joined, 4 on 20th January 2024 and 1 on 12th February 2024.

With regards to applications, the monthly average for 2023/24 was 29, which is the same as in 2022/23.

Outreach carried out by the Corporate Recruitment team & Specials Recruitment Taskforce over the last quarter has included activity / attendance at: Dunmow Park Run, Billericay Park Run, Chelmsford Park Run, Colchester Park Run, Council meetings, South Essex College, Network Rail, BT, Battlesbridge Vintage Easter Faire.

Below is a summary of key numbers and recent marketing and outreach activity:

- The most recent Specials Recruitment Information event saw 45 people sign up to attend our virtual offering with a 45% attendance rate, which also resulted in 8 new applications to join.

- New programmes are in place to support candidates throughout their recruitment journey.
- Web pages have been updated, in conjunction with the media department, to better highlight key information, alongside the community special constable and transferee/re-joiner routes.
- Recruitment Information Events have been scheduled through to November 2024, at various locations across Essex including virtual. These have been scheduled for social media posts by marketing to help push the message out.
- A new Specials advert has been filmed, with finished article expected by the end of April 2024.
- A new process is in place with South Essex College that allows their level 3 policing students to undertake a level 4 policing qualification with them and complete their mandatory work experience with Essex Police as a Special Constable. This provides them with a pathway to become a police constable in the future or stay as a special constable after completing their qualification.
- Specials Recruitment are now calling all candidates in process once every 2 weeks to keep them engaged and assist in actively progressing their applications.

Corporate Recruitment and Corporate Marketing, in conjunction with the Specials Command lead, continue to work together to enhance the number of applications received. Specials recruitment forms a clear part of the strategic marketing plan for 2024/25. Progress of special recruitment will continue to be monitored weekly through tactical and strategic checkpoint meetings to ensure effective oversight.

Diversity - Ethnicity and Gender

The number of ethnic minority specials has remained static at 12 as at 31st March 2024 when compared to 31st December 2023. However, due to the lower overall headcount this is a percentage point increase of 0.27 from 4.51% to 4.78%.

With regards to the number of female specials, the headcount has reduced from 75 (28.20%) as at 31st December 2023 to 72 (28.69%) as at 31st March 2024.

All Employee Groups Protected Characteristics

The table overpage provides a breakdown of all protected characteristics by employee group. The table includes the latest position as at 31st March 2024 versus 31st March 2023. The columns on the left relate to the number and percentage of each protected characteristic with columns on the right relating to the proportion of individuals who have updated the relevant diversity categories on SAP.

Note, gender and ethnic origin narrative has not been provided as this has been cited throughout the paper.

OFFICIAL

| Diversity Category | Employee Group | Headcount as at 31/03/2024 | % as at 31/03/2024 & Direction of Travel vs 31/03/2023 | Position as at 31/03/2023 | Diversity Category Completion Rates | |
|--|----------------|--|--|---------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| | | | | | Completion Rate % as at 31/03/2024 & Direction of Travel vs 31/03/2023 | Completion Rate % - 31/03/2023 |
| Gender: Female | Officers | 1436 | 37.59% ↑ | 37.09% | 100.00% → | 100.00% |
| | Staff | 1549 | 67.61% ↑ | 67.38% | 100.00% → | 100.00% |
| | PCSOs | 65 | 63.73% ↓ | 65.38% | 100.00% → | 100.00% |
| | Specials | 72 | 28.69% ↓ | 31.19% | 100.00% → | 100.00% |
| Self Declared Gender: Prefer to Self Describe | Officers | 6 | 0.16% ↑ | 0.13% | 72.85% ↑ | 70.75% |
| | Staff | 2 | 0.09% ↓ | 0.13% | 74.30% ↑ | 72.11% |
| | PCSOs | 0 | 0.00% → | 0.00% | 51.96% ↑ | 51.43% |
| | Specials | 0 | 0.00% → | 0.00% | 71.54% ↓ | 73.95% |
| Religion: Declared a Religion | Officers | 882 | 23.09% ↑ | 22.90% | 70.03% ↑ | 67.89% |
| | Staff | 701 | 30.60% ↑ | 29.36% | 70.51% ↑ | 68.04% |
| | PCSOs | 27 | 26.47% ↓ | 26.92% | 51.96% ↑ | 50.48% |
| | Specials | 93 | 37.05% ↑ | 34.56% | 69.96% ↓ | 71.86% |
| Ethnicity: Ethnic Minorities | Officers | 158 | 4.14% ↑ | 4.09% | 100.00% → | 100.00% |
| | Staff | 93 | 4.06% ↓ | 4.16% | 100.00% → | 100.00% |
| | PCSOs | 0 | 0.00% → | 0.00% | 100.00% → | 100.00% |
| | Specials | 12 | 4.78% ↓ | 5.20% | 100.00% → | 100.00% |
| Sexuality: Bisexual/Gay/Lesbian | Officers | 213 | 5.58% ↑ | 5.12% | 72.04% ↑ | 69.94% |
| | Staff | 87 | 3.80% ↓ | 3.82% | 73.25% ↑ | 71.04% |
| | PCSOs | 5 | 4.90% ↑ | 2.88% | 51.96% ↑ | 51.43% |
| | Specials | 8 | 3.19% ↓ | 3.98% | 70.75% ↓ | 73.35% |
| Disability: Yes | Officers | 291 | 7.62% ↑ | 6.64% | 47.62% ↑ | 43.05% |
| | Staff | 227 | 9.91% ↑ | 9.27% | 55.15% ↑ | 50.97% |
| | PCSOs | 19 | 18.63% ↑ | 13.46% | 37.25% ↑ | 33.33% |
| | Specials | 4 | 1.59% ↑ | 1.22% | 42.29% ↑ | 37.13% |
| Nationality: Declared Nationalities Excluding British | Officers | 62 | 1.62% ↑ | 1.60% | 98.95% ↑ | 98.82% |
| | Staff | 44 | 1.92% ↑ | 1.89% | 98.08% ↓ | 98.16% |
| | PCSOs | 0 | 0.00% → | 0.00% | 99.02% ↓ | 99.05% |
| | Specials | 6 | 2.39% ↓ | 2.75% | 98.81% ↓ | 99.40% |
| Marital Status: Married or Civil Partnership | Officers | 1240 | 32.46% ↑ | 32.24% | 50.76% ↓ | 51.86% |
| | Staff | 872 | 38.06% ↓ | 38.28% | 57.46% ↓ | 58.56% |
| | PCSOs | 52 | 50.98% ↑ | 50.00% | 82.35% ↑ | 79.05% |
| | Specials | 29 | 11.55% ↑ | 10.70% | 26.09% ↑ | 23.35% |
| Age Grouping: | Officers: | 18-24: 12.54% 25-39: 50.18% 40-54: 34.71% 55+: 2.57% | | | | |
| | Staff | 18-24: 5.41% 25-39: 31.17% 40-54: 34.05% 55+: 29.42% | | | | |
| | PCSOs | 18-24: 4.90% 25-39: 27.45% 40-54: 38.24% 55+: 29.41% | | | | |
| | Specials | 18-24: 10.76% 25-39: 47.81% 40-54: 33.07% 55+: 9.16% | | | | |

The table demonstrates that for officers, there has been a proportion increase across all diversity categories as at 31st March 2024 when compared to 31st March 2023. The most notable increase is the proportion of officers declaring a disability, which has increased from 6.64% to 7.62%.

For staff, there has been an increase in religion, disability and nationality, however, there have been marginal reductions in self-declared gender, sexuality and marital status. PCSO and Specials overall headcount numbers are much lower and have reduced over the year, which has resulted in fluctuations across all categories.

With regards to completion rates, with the exception of nationality, there has been an overall increase across the majority of categories for all employee groups.

As reported last quarter the force is in the final stages of implementing the latest standardised data set for protected characteristics. The IT department have completed the first draft of the new diversity tile in the test system, which is in the process of being reviewed by HR Organisational Management and the Diversity & Inclusion Teams across both Essex Police and Kent Police. It is hoped the new tile will be live by the end of June 2024.

For information, the revised standards have been agreed through the NPCC DEI Coordination Committee and once implemented, will result in some existing entries within the protected characteristics being removed and/or replaced. This may result in a reduction in some of the completion rates for certain protected characteristics (such as gender identity and marital status), however, once the HR system SAP has been updated, communications will be sent out encouraging individuals to review and update, where necessary, their diversity data in SAP.

Health and Wellbeing Services Update

The Force Peer Support network has 39 Peer Supporters now trained who are providing support and signposting to colleagues. The course is now fully delivered inhouse and has expanded to three days, with two further courses to be delivered this year. The peer support process continues to sit alongside the well-embedded TRiM process for those potentially affected by trauma related to incidents they have been exposed to.

The Peer Support Co-ordinator is leading on a project to support national research via Oscar Kilo, the National Police Wellbeing Service, for the Sleep Fatigue Recovery Programme. Essex Police has been allocated 30 wearable devices, which will be utilised by volunteers within the Force Control Room and will be a critical contribution to the research as the first control room to be part of this trail blazing project in police wellbeing.

The Investigator Wellbeing engagement continues with 585 investigators now having attended the one-hour session and 307 managers having attended the one-day leaders' programme. The initial roll out has concluded, however both sessions will continue to be delivered and form part of the Counselling and Wellbeing proactive activity to ensure new starters to these teams also receive this key input.

During February and March 2024, HR and Health subject matter experts delivered CPD for leaders on key themes: Attendance Management, Managing Risk, Reasonable Adjustments and Creating a Supportive Environment. Over 240 individuals attended the eight sessions, which received excellent feedback.

Planning is now underway for Response Policing Week of Action in June, Suicide Prevention Month in September and Investigator Wellbeing Week of Action in November, as well as winter health to support national wellbeing weeks and internal health and wellbeing campaigns.

Learning and Development Update

Foundation Training

Since the introduction of the Police Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF) in March 2022, 523 new officers have joined the force. The first Intake of the Degree Holder Entry Programme (DHEP) finished their programme in March 2024 with officers joining on the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) entering the third year of their programme and moving towards the completion of their 'End Point Assessment'. The associated protected learning time (PLT) for year 3 of the PCDA has been carefully designed and mapped to mitigate an increase in frontline absences.

The Essex Police and Kent Police collaborative Learning and Development Police Constable Entry Routes (PCER) Team continues to work with Foundation Training on the development of the new Police Constable Entry Programme (PCEP) that replaces the Initial Police Learning and Development Programme (IPLDP) from April 2024. The PCEP design and planning has successfully passed through the high-level evidence stage of the College of Policing quality standards assessment and is awaiting feedback on the further evidence stage, submitted on the 22nd April 2024. The final confirmation event will be held on the 24th May 2024.

Working with the Anglia Ruskin University, the force is shaping the optimised Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) and Degree Holder Entry Programme (DHEP) towards a range of professionalised entry routes that offer a choice of degree and non-degree pathways to recruits from June 2024. All the entry routes will share the common focus on operational policing skills, with an appropriate blend of educational and vocationally focused delivery.

Crime Training & Development

In response to the force priority to increase detective numbers and capability, the number of officers on the Detective Pathway with a National Investigators Exam (NIE) pass is 227 following the March 2024 exam. 16 out of 27 candidates passed that exam giving us a 59.3% pass rate. Some outstanding results were achieved with top scores of 84% and 85%. The lower scores will be discussed with the individuals line management to establish the causes to ensure additional support and improvements in the next exam. At present, 54 candidates have indicated that they will sit the NIE in June 2024 and these are an additional figure to those reflected as being on the pathway with an NIE pass.

Specialist Child Abuse Investigations Development Programme (SCAIDP) portfolios continue to receive additional focus and support through a dedicated Investigative Coach. As of the end of March 2024, there are now 69 accredited specialist investigators registered with the College of Policing and a further 24 working toward this accreditation. These 24 have already received the required training course. As a result of a continuous drive to achieve value for money we recently trialled a new hybrid Video Recorded Interview course (VRI) attended by 28 students. This involved a 3-day face to face teach with all 28 students, then 2 subsequent days back for the students in groups of 6 for the practical assessment and observations.

This enabled the training of a larger volume of officers in one go (normally 6 learners), which helped to clear a backlog of students requiring this training. Feedback from students was positive in terms of the teach still being a positive experience. There will be a detailed formal review of this new approach before formal adoption.

Essex Police are pleased to have been chosen as a pilot force for delivery of the Serious Sexual Assault Investigator's Development Programme version 2 (SSAIDP2) and are awaiting release of the curriculum and materials from the College of Policing (COP). Essex staff from our Crime and Public Protection command are attending an inaugural course delivered by College of Policing. The delivery and student feedback will be assessed by CoP before rolling out the programme to pilot forces. Once received the intention is to attend the train the trainer events and commence delivery of SSAIDP2 from September 2024. This course requires a portfolio to be completed and then allows for staff to be accredited, thereby professionalising our response to RASSO (rape and serious sexual offences).

The RASSO First-Responder training will also commence in September 2024 and will be delivered to nearly 3,000 members of staff. This modular training has been produced by COP in conjunction with Op Soteria. The aim is to ensure that all staff who are likely to deal with victims of these type of crimes have the right mindset and are equipped to support and deal with the early stages of the crime being reported.

The Virtual Crime Academy (VCA) maintains its expansion and delivery of valuable support to investigators across all areas of business and has received over 36,223 visits in the last 90 days. The VCA is undergoing a PIR (Post Implementation Review) which is looking at all aspects of the platform, how it is performing and a review of all the content. The review is being conducted by the Strategic Change Directorate and is nearing completion with the results, and its recommendations being worked through.

Essex Police shared details of the VCA with the College of Policing practice bank and showcased the produce to the Chief Executive of the College of Policing during a recent visit to the force. We have also had a new benchmarking request from Met Police, having previously shared the VCA details with Beds Herts and Cambs. Recent new pages include Investigate First, Burglary and Robbery pages.

Personal Safety and Taser Training

On 1st April 2024, the force went live with the new scenario-based training for Personal and Public Safety Training (PPST). This will provide officers with a three-day training package that includes the fitness test, emergency first aid, JESIP and a heavy focus on practical scenarios for officer safety training. Improvement work has taken place in the current gym, which will see increased capacity and a cell relocation area to accommodate the new training.

The annual fitness test has now been confirmed as level 3.7 of the multi-stage fitness test (MSFT); the standard will remain 5.3 for new recruits and Taser officers and higher for other specialist officers. Any officer failing to meet the standard will not be allowed to progress to PPST. In these situations, the line manager and

Performance Improvement Unit will work together to implement an action plan with support from PPST trainers to assist officers with meeting the standard. Work is underway at national level to determine the fitness standard required for officers in the longer term, as 3.7 MSFT is only the required standard to undertake the training and is not suggested as the standard of fitness required for the role.

Initial Taser training courses have now been reduced from four days to three to bring in line with the national standard as part of licensing arrangements; the additional inputs that were provided on the extra day in Essex will be converted into online CPD where appropriate.

Driver Training

There are now a total of 1,438 response drivers in the force, compared with 1,152 in May 2022 (286 more) when the decision was made to invest in more driving instructors. The uplift in driving instructors has meant that there are far more response drivers than ever before. There is work to do to maintain the skill in the right area of LPT and this is now presented to the Resourcing Deployment Panel to make decisions on allocation of courses to address the needs.

As part of the ongoing implementation of licensing in the driver training area, all instructors have had to undergo an uplift in their qualification level. The driving instructors have all been taken through a programme of additional courses (Certificate in Education and Training - Level 4) or by mapping across skills to achieve the additional units of evidence required. This has been achieved throughout the last 12 months whilst continuing to deliver against the force objective of increasing response drivers.

Leadership Academy

The 'Be the Change' courses have three levels of training. These include the First Line Leaders course (FLL) (which has seen 287 sergeants, 25 ready now PC/DCs and 103 police staff trained), the Middle Line Leaders course (MLL) (which has trained 65 inspectors to date), and the Senior Line Leaders course (SLL) which has commenced training for 31 Chief Inspectors and 19 police staff. As part of a drive to improve national consistency in leadership training, a quality standards assessment for Police Leadership Programmes will be conducted by the College of Policing. All forces will initially be issued with a 12-month provisional licence to deliver leadership training from the 1st April 2024.

There are changes expected through the Sergeant and Inspector Promotion and Progression (SIPP) workstream from the College of Policing in the next few years. The Leadership Academy (alongside the Professional Assessment Team and HR People Development) have a working group to stay abreast of the changes and ensure that the force is prepared for the proposed adaptations. A small number of forces are trialling SIPP (not Essex), and no changes are expected before 2027.

With regards to the Professional Assessment Team (PAT), there are currently 78 Sergeant candidates and 40 Inspectors in the assessment process. A further 57 Sergeants have started the 12-month programme in March 2024.

Performance Design & Evaluation (PDE, E-Learning Developers and IT Training) With the launch of Athena V6 having been delayed, the Learning and Development (L&D) department are consulting with regional colleagues to utilise their internally created online refresher training to overcome training fade for Essex officers and staff. The Athena 9 force L&Ds are meeting biweekly to monitor the timeliness of these packages. The refresher training packages, along with the original eLearning will support officers and staff when Athena V6 is given a new proposed release date, which is anticipated to be this year.

The training for the Law Enforcement Data Service (LEDS) (the replacement of PNC) is progressing well with changes to training released from the Home Office being monitored and released on the Essex Police learning management system, Learning Hub. All forces were invited to a workshop to discuss training proposals for new learners for the future, which is anticipated to be delivered online, therefore reducing classroom abstraction time.

6.0 Implications (Issues)

Not applicable, however section 6.3 identifies area of risk.

6.1 Links to Police and Crime Plan Priorities

Ensuring the force is sufficiently resourced is a specific ambition within the narrative of the Police and Crime Plan. The provision of a sufficient number of skilled, equipped and supported resources closely links to the delivery of all seven of the priorities. This ambition is supported through recruitment, retention and attendance management activities.

Recruitment numbers remain fairly positive with the police uplift headcount requirements being met in both September 2023 and March 2024. Application numbers are also relatively strong.

Whilst the representation of ethnic minority officers is below the EAP, the current headcount of 158 is the highest ever on record with the proportion of 4.14% being the second highest end of year position on record. In addition, the number and proportion of female officers is at its highest ever. Having a workforce that is representative of our communities will give the force a broader range of skills, knowledge and experience that can positively contribute towards the priorities.

Whilst the overall number of specials has continued to reduce, the special constabulary continue to contribute a significant number of hours to policing, with the latest month (March 2024) at 6,714 which is the equivalent of 420 specials working a 16-hour month.

6.2 Demand

Whilst the national uplift programme has concluded, demand remains high within Human Resources, Business Services and Learning and Development due to the need to effectively resource and train the force accordingly. As previously reported,

demand is expected to continue in Learning & Development, Operational HR and Resourcing due to the overall impact that increased workforce numbers have on the departments in terms of the ongoing support they provide.

6.3 Risks/Mitigation

As previously reported, the officer recruitment pipeline remains a risk albeit a relatively low one on the basis that all police uplift headcount requirements have been met to date, application numbers have improved, and overall turnover is tracking below the projection.

Whilst the overall risk is relatively low, this is an area that is monitored daily. Whilst the recruitment plan has been set for 2024/25, there is a flexibility if required in the recruitment plan to increase intakes if attrition was to rise to ensure the ongoing uplift requirements are met.

6.4 Equality and/or Human Rights Implications

As previously reported, the Chief Constable continues to chair the Corporate Diversity, Equality and Inclusion board.

The overarching aim of all Local Diversity, Equality & Inclusion Boards is to provide clear local leadership and governance for implementing the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy at a local level. It also ensures the workforce and key stakeholders, including Independent Advisory Group members or relevant leads, can actively participate and bring their perspective. All activity from the local boards is then reported back via the Force level board. A specific local board is in place for HR, L&D and Business Services to ensure many issues covered within this paper can be explored, as necessary.

6.5 Health and Safety Implications

Not applicable

7.0 Consultation/Engagement

Operational Human Resources
Performance Improvement Unit
Learning and Development

8.0 Actions for Improvement

Specials Recruitment

The overall headcount of the special constabulary continues to reduce but this is a trend seen nationally. Activity remains ongoing between Corporate Recruitment and Corporate Marketing, in conjunction with the Specials Command to enhance the number of applications received, resulting in higher numbers of joiners to ensure the number of specials remains stable throughout 2024/25.

9.0 Future Work/Development and Expected Outcome

1. Maintain the number of specials throughout 2024/25

Expected Outcome: it is likely the overall special constabulary headcount will reduce, however if attrition remains lower in the 2024/25 financial year and application numbers improve resulting in higher number of individuals joining, it is hoped the position will be more stable in 2024/25 compared to previous financial years.

2. Continue to increase ethnic minority officer representation in 2024/25

Expected Outcome: in light of relatively stable attrition, the ongoing work by the Positive Action Team and increased applications, it is expected the headcount and proportion of ethnic minority officers will continue to improve in 2024/25.

3. Continue to increase female officer representation in 2024/25

Expected Outcome: the proportion of female officers has improved year on year since 2015/16 to 2023/24 and in light of strong of application numbers and high proportions of female officer joiners it is expected this position will continue to improve. Whilst female officer attrition was high in 2024/25, it reduced in quarter 4 and therefore this is not expected to have a significant impact on the ongoing progress in this area.