

## Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex

### ESSEX POLICE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY BOARD 26 March 2024 10:00 – 12:00

#### Present:

Jane Gardner (JG)	Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (Chair)
Pippa Brent-Isherwood (PBI)	Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, PFCC's office
Ben-Julian Harrington (BJH)	Chief Constable, Essex Police
Suzanne Harris (SH)	Head of Performance and Scrutiny, PFCC's office
Fiona Henderson (FH)	Director of Continuous Improvement and Analytics, Essex Police
Richard Jones (RJ)	Head of Financial Performance and Reporting, Essex Police
David Levy (DL)	Director of Commercial Services, Essex Police
Claire Medhurst (CM)	Director of Kent & Essex Support Services, Essex Police
Rachel Nolan (RN)	Assistant Chief Constable, Essex Police
Janet Perry (JP)	Chief Financial Officer / Strategic Head of Performance and Resources, PFCC's Office
Jeremy White (JW)	Finance Manager, PFCC's office
Brooke Knight	(Minutes), Scrutiny Officer, PFCC's office

#### Apologies:

Roger Hirst (RH)	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Debbie Martin (DM)	Chief Finance Officer, Essex Police
Andrew Prophet (AP)	Deputy Chief Constable, Essex Police
Claire Talbot (CT)	Professionalism Chief Superintendent

#### 1. Welcome and Apologies

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 approved and agreed.

2.1.2. There were no matters arising.

##### 2.2. Action Log

###### **60/23 Collaboration - CSP's**

No update due until Nov 2024

**Open**

###### **66/23 Monthly Performance Report**

The qualitative information coming into priority 12 is now within the performance report.

**Propose Close.**

**02/24 POA**

No update due until May 2024

**Open**

#### **06/24 Monthly Performance Report**

The backlog for rape cases and court backlog is around 15 to 20 cases.

**Propose Close.**

#### **07/24 Homicide Scrutiny**

SH confirmed AP is in the progress of working on the VVU and SH expressed the confidence that this action will be closed off by next month.

**Open.**

#### **08/24 Public Contact Performance and Response to High Harm Crime**

Due date needs to be amended to May 2024 and SH confirmed to amend this date.

**Open.**

#### **09/24 The Procurement Act 2023**

No update due until June 2024

**Open**

### **2.3. Forward Plan**

**2.3.1.** SH noted that a force deployment plan had been added to the Strategic Board Forward Plan for March 2025 and that subsequent reporting to the P&RS Board needed to be scheduled on a quarterly basis. SH proposed to add that from June 2025 for quarterly updates.

**2.3.2.** SH advised the suggestion to add the recommendations that have been made on the Angiolini inquiry onto the Forward Plan. BJH requested May 2024. This was agreed by JG and PBI.

**2.3.3.** SH noted the duplicate entry for the public contact paper and highlighted the annual update needs to be removed.

**2.3.3.1.** SH requested a decision to whether the Draft Unaudited Statement of Accounts extracts is to be on the forward plan for May 2024. SH noted the uncertainty whether this paper should be coming to the P&R board or the Strategic Board. Discussion took place and was agreed for the paper to go to Strategic Board via the route of Joint Audit Committee.

#### **Action 10/24**

**The Forward Plan is to be updated with the amendments discussed in item 2.3.**

### **3. Monthly Finance Report**

3.1. RJ presented the 2023/24 month 11 position with a revenue underspend of £750k. Additional funding of £2.265m in relation to an overachievement of 2023/24 Police Officer Uplift is included in the revenue forecast, based on confirmation that the force will be eligible for a payment.

3.2. RJ advised the legal claim reserve costs for the McCloud judgement over the last three financial years will now be recharged to the police officer pension fund and therefore can replenish the Legal Claims earmarked reserve from the appropriations taken in prior years.

3.3. RJ proposed appropriations to the transformation reserve for estates electrical testing which has been deferred to 2024/25 and funding will be needed for next year to cover anticipated costs. RJ

also proposed additional funding for licence costs in relation to ICCS and the contact management target operating model, all of which will be incurred during next financial year. Discussion took place on the additional funding being put into one decision report to clearly see how the reserves are going to end up once the moving around is complete. RJ confirmed to propose the additional funding within one decision report.

- 3.4. RJ noted a small increase in Police Staff Pay and Allowances in connection to Contact Management and a reduction in forecast for the PFCC's Office pay costs.
- 3.5. RJ confirmed the force are forecast to be 60 over the PUP headcount target of 3,765 for workforce analysis, only needing to be 55 to secure all the funding, showing the force are in good shape for meeting the target.
- 3.6. RJ stated the capital underspend has increased by £95k this is due to subject to approvals, the contingency balance which is being removed for projects less than £50k being the reason for the movement of the cashflow forecast.
- 3.7. JP questioned a credit note for Airwave for approx. £500k and asked if this was included in this forecast. RJ advised it is not and it will show in month 12 forecast. Discussions took place around money coming in and if there is another receipt of £500k due. RJ agreed to take this as an action and confirm at the next meeting what money is coming in.

**Action 11/24**

**RJ to confirm if there are 1 or 2 payments of £500k coming in and confirm the correct payments at the next meeting.**

#### **4. Monthly Performance Report**

- 4.1. FH presented the Monthly Performance Report up to the end of February and advised that crime rates have decreased particularly for high harm. Business crime is still increasing but FH noted this is an area of focus. Solved numbers are up in many places but not for domestic abuse and this is being monitored very closely.
- 4.2. FH highlighted the decision to increase the grading for KSI at the last reporting period and was pleased to say that the positive trajectory has continued into this before this performance period.
- 4.3. FH advised Encouraging Volunteers has been regraded for this report from Requires Improvement to Adequate.
- 4.4. FH noted only bicycle theft is an exception for the end of February and that has been an exceptional decrease.
- 4.5. FH noted that Investment in Crime Prevention remains Adequate. Still seeing reductions in crime of over 5%. Last month was 6.2% which is larger than the previous month. ASB remains low. 12-month confidence is now at 74.9%, which has increased from 73.4% previously. FH went on to present the monthly performance report priority by priority with data up to the end of February.
- 4.6. FH advised in February the force recorded the lowest number of rural offences since March 2021.
- 4.7. JG talked about public perception and it being one of the hardest things to overcome and asked how do we crack this? FH advised the force have incentives such as the victim closure discussions and the engagement portal that will help to get a better understanding. The Force can then spot the things that they are missing in terms of why it's not translating in terms of perception, FH noted

the force are comfortable with what they are doing against these priorities. BJH concurred that the force will continue to improve the public perception as best they can.

- 4.8. JG questioned the adequacy of the engaging volunteers and community support, noting that PCSO numbers are lower than they have ever been in this eight-year tenure. BJH confirmed there has been a paucity of volunteers within the town and parish councils who are willing to meet the standards required but reassured that the volunteering opportunities are in the right trajectory.
- 4.9. JG questioned improving services to support victims of crime and if there is anything the PFCC's office can do to support and help? FH advised she would need greater clarity on what is commissioned from the PFCC's office to answer this. JG noted that Greg Myddelton could put something together to help understand what is commissioned and how this can be improved.

#### **Action 12/24**

**FH to liaise with PBI regarding what is commissioned from the PFCC's office and link in with Greg Myddelton to gather that information.**

- 4.10. BJH noted the increase of referrals of 35.4% 12 months through compared to 12 months for 2019. Within that period, the automatic referral position stopped. SH highlighted this was previously looked at and the data will be within the action log.

#### **Action 13/24**

**SH to check the action log and liaise to BJH when the referral criteria changed.**

### **5. Efficiency and Savings Programme**

- 5.1. FH presented the Efficiency and Savings Programme and advised the current monitoring identifies an in-year over achievement against the plan of £3.8m. This is largely attributable to a significant contribution from the vacancy factor (£3.2m) and force wide non-pay savings (£1.13m). However, there is a forecast full year short fall of £0.335m. The main contribution to this shortfall is with lower than anticipated income realisation through Magistrates' Courts, which now adds a further pressure of £0.152m to the £0.183m outlined in the previous report.
- 5.2. FH noted the 2024/25 Efficiency and Savings plan was approved in February 2024, with the ambition of a £10.4 million in year saving, £10.6 million full year and just under £0.9 million one off.
- 5.3. FH advised planning for 2024/25 is in preparation and they have provisionally identified some savings from income recovery and other areas like non pay and the CMC review.
- 5.4. JP talked about the vacancy factor and believed there would not be a £3.8 million efficiency otherwise there would be a £3.8m underspend. JP advised what we have is more vacancies than the vacancy factor being filled with Police Staff OT and believed the paper required amendment. BJH agreed with JP and confirmed the vacancy factor is the wrong description and the force are developing a discussion on how they describe it being an efficiency.

**DL joined the meeting at 11:22**

**Item 9 was brought forward**

### **9. Transparency, Contracts and Tenders (plan for statutory compliance)**

- 9.1. CM explained the progress for publishing contracts under £60k which has encountered some issues regarding information security and rolling out the new system across 7Forces. CM advised Norfolk and Suffolk are responsible for the information security of the Atomis system, and they have not signed off the contract until single sign off is in place. CM noted Essex and Kent information security have signed off the contract and the licences have been received by Essex and they will be able to use the system as intended.
- 9.2. DL reported that Atomis confirmed that they are putting their response back to Norfolk and Suffolk tomorrow on the information security matters.
- 9.3. JP requested a revised paper with a plan (and is happy to have a meeting with DL and Darren Horsman to create a plan of the timeline of achievement) to be presented at the meeting next month.

**Action 14/23**

**JP, DL, DH, and CM to create a timeline of achievement plan and present at the next P&RS Board meeting. This item to be added to the Forward Plan (by SH).**

**DL left the meeting at 11:37**

**6. Public Perception Survey (SMSR)**

- 6.1. FH presented the Public Perception Survey data up to the end of December 2023 and the overall confidence and satisfaction remains high at 75% which is a positive place to be. Ethnic minority confidence remains higher than the confidence of white respondents, almost a 3% difference.
- 6.2. FH advised last quarter was the strongest out of all four quarters in the last year across several areas which is showing good consistency. FH advised Colchester shows an increase in confidence for fairer and respectful stop and search and an increase in how well-informed respondents feel about policing in their area. Basildon features for recording a lower figure year on year for the importance of visible policing. Chelmsford recorded the lowest levels of satisfaction for good service at 35%. Tending recorded the lowest levels for being kept informed at 38% and Castle Point recorded the lowest levels for being informed of the outcome at 34%.
- 6.3. SH noted concerns about the potential that the stop and search figures are affecting the answers to other questions and making some other statistics ungenune and requested that information could be gathered from SMSR as to how they weigh out the responses on other questions in terms of this. FH confirmed to speak to her team who are more focused on this and to arrange a meeting with SMSR to gather further data and present back to the next board meeting and confirm what the plan going forward will be.

**Action 15/24**

**FH to liaise with her team to gather further data from SMSR stats and present findings at the next meeting to agree the plan going forward.**

**JP left the meeting at 11:54**

**7. OPC (focussed update report)**

- 7.1. RN presented the OPC report for the last 6 months providing an overview of the Executive Summary to the board and advised that the overhaul of the tasking process has seen increases of over 100% for arrests. Mutual aid and effective management of duties are still showing a lack of

improvement, RN noted a review supported by FH team to look at where we can improve working practises.

- 7.2. RN complemented the team and their effort for improving some of the cultural challenges they have. Operation Grip continues to have a positive impact and RN stated The Home Office have nothing but praise in relation to the force's response to Operation Grip.
- 7.3. RN talked about the change in legislation to the XL Bully breed dog and the response has been strong with an across force approach. RN narrated the significant pressures on the dangerous dog's budget with only very few kennels able to house dangerous dogs. The budget is over 100% overspent and the force are looking at options on how this can be managed.
- 7.4. RN noted the Knife Crime and Violence Model is being finalised and thanked FH and the team for their hard work and support. The force is looking at a 24 month roll out across the county but will need support from partners.
- 7.5. JG talked about the lower proportion of the force trained in level two public order and the shortfall of level three trained officers and asked what impact does this have to deploy to events and incidents? RN responded that the only thing preventing the forces numbers being achieved is the training calendar, and planning. The level three officers, tend to be those who are new to local policing or community policing teams so there is an abstraction to train them. The implication and impact is minimal because we don't often get asked to supply level three officers.
- 7.6. JG talked about the welfare of the dogs kennelled at Sandon and questioned if there is enough cover with just the two members of police staff; or are the police officers having to do that task? RN confirmed the police officers are fulfilling that task in times of extreme necessity. BJH supported RN and explained there is no issue with recruitment but the two civilians cannot provide 24/7 cover to the dogs while their handler is on leave.
- 7.7. BJH and JG thanked RN and the team for their hard work and support regarding Operation Virtue and the accountability review.

## **8. Strategic Policing Requirement**

- 8.1. FH gave a verbal update on the Strategic Policing Requirement and informed of the new thematic area of VAWG. The force is now able to produce a comprehensive report every 6 months and assess themselves on the current performance, activity, and any risks that the force sees. FH noted the force are comfortable and have the capability to meet those requirements. The force has RAG graded themselves green across the board except for one area which is public disorder which is graded amber because the team are finishing off the training that is required for level two and three officers.
- 8.2. SH complimented FH on the appendix that was received with the report and proposed that it remain in that format, FH agreed it would remain this way.

## **10. Code of Ethics – Duty of Candour**

- 10.1. FH gave a verbal update advising there has been a slight delay this year in launching the new Code of Ethics. FH advised the Code of Ethics has been implemented through a working group that has been led by Ch/Supt Claire Talbot. The original code consisted of nine principles, and an associated Standards of Behaviour. The new Code of Ethics differentiates between the principles and the standards of behaviour; because there was the concern that the focus of some good

principles was becoming more focused on misconduct and in what the force are doing wrong. When it should be a positive document generating some positive behaviour. The nine principles have been replaced with three ethical policing principles, Courage, Respect and Empathy, and Public Service. Each of the previous 9 principles have been mapped into one or more of the new principles so nothing has been lost. It was confirmed that all commands are working through an implementation plan at present.

## **11. Approval for publishing of documents**

11.1 SH advised papers 5 and 8 marked as official sensitive and it was agreed that 3, 4, 6, 7, 9 and 10 would be published.

## **12. AOB & Close**

12.1 There being no further business the meeting closed at 12:24 hours.

### **Future meetings:**

- Tuesday 30 April 2024 10:00
- Tuesday 28 May 2024 10:00